Learning Objectives

By the end of this tutorial, you will:

• Understand the importance of reading and closely following a Request for Proposal (RFP)
• Be able to identify the basic sections of a grant proposal and what they entail
Outline

Throughout this tutorial, you will cover the following topics:

• Introduction to Request for Proposals
• Explanation of the sections of a grant proposal
As you go through this tutorial, keep in mind that a good grant proposal begins with a thoroughly planned and well thought out project.
Before beginning, you might want to ask yourself:

- What is my project?
- Who will implement the project?
- Why do I need the money?
- Where will funds be directed?
- When do I need the money?
- What is my evaluation plan?
You also need to be realistic about how long it takes to put a grant proposal together.
Here are some general tips:

- Start planning as early as several months in advance
- Give yourself and others enough time to edit thoroughly
  - Make sure to look for neatness and consistency
- Plan for unforeseen problems, such as:
  - Technical problems with electronic submission
  - Difficulty acquiring data or required documents
When you do start writing a grant proposal, follow the instructions in the Request for Proposal (RFP) carefully.
What is a Request for Proposal (RFP)?

- Are solicitations made by an organization to another organization for a grant proposal
- Include the instructions for completing a grant proposal

The specific RFP for the grant you are applying for should be read *thoroughly*!
It may seem like common sense, but following instructions matters! Grants may not even be considered if the format is not correct.
For example, page limits matter!

Make it as long as necessary to answer each and every question in the RFP.

If the RFP includes a specific page limit, DO NOT go over that number.
Every grant is different, but now we will go through some of the most common sections of a proposal.
A grant proposal usually includes the following:

1. Proposal summary
2. Organization description
3. Problem statement (or needs assessment)
4. Project objectives
5. Method or design
6. Timeline
7. Evaluation
8. Budget and future funding
Make sure your proposal is organized and sections are clearly identified. Let’s go through each section.
1. The proposal summary:

- Is an outline of the proposed project
- Appears at the beginning of the proposal
- Is brief (no longer than 2 or 3 paragraphs)
The summary is vital to the grant proposal. It will be the first part reviewed and often the only part reviewed before deciding whether to consider the project any further.
2. The organizational description:

- Is an introduction to your organization
- Contains a brief biography of the board members and key staff members who will be working with the project
- Discusses the organization’s goals
- Discusses the philosophy of the organization
The organizational description can also include:

- Track record with other grantors (if any)
- Success stories
  - Show yourself off!
  - This is only place where successes and strengths of the organization will be described.
  - The information you provide should be relevant to the goals of the granting agency.
3. The problem statement:

- Is a clear, concise, and self-supported statement of the problems your project or program will address
- Mentions the ways the problems might be resolved
This is more than just one sentence! You should:

- Describe needs
- Describe how those needs were identified
- Define programs to meet the identified needs
For example:

A problem statement might provide a detailed description using statistical and community data to show:

- The low rate of breastfeeding mothers in a given population
- The lack of educational resources available
- The lack of adequate breastfeeding support

To increase the breastfeeding rate, a program might be designed to:

- Increase the educational resources of breastfeeding in the area
- Create breastfeeding support in the local hospitals
Good problem statements are several pages long and are very specific. Ensure that enough detail is given to thoroughly describe the problem and how you plan to address it.
4. The project objectives:

- Include the goal, or purpose of the program
- Include the objectives, which are measurable results that will achieve the goal of the program
Project objectives should be SMART!

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time-bound
When developing your project objectives:

- Consider quantities or things that are measurable.

- Refer back to the problem statement and the outcome desired.

- What is the purpose of your program?
- How will you achieve the purpose of your program?
- What will change?
- How will we know that important changes have taken place?
There are two types of objectives, process and outcome.
Process objectives:

- Relate to how well the program is implemented
- Can include the number of people reached, the number of classes taught, the amount of time spent with each person, etc.
- Example: *Provide individual counseling to a minimum of 90% of the participants in the breastfeeding program within two months of their beginning the program.*

Outcome objectives:

- Relate to the amount of change the program creates
- Can include increases in breastfeeding knowledge, increases in breastfeeding initiation, increases in breastfeeding intention, etc.
- Example: *Increase breastfeeding rates among African American mothers in the target population by at least 10% in the first 3 years.*
5. The program method and design:

• Fully describe how your project will work
• Discuss how will it solve the stated problem statement
• Highlight innovative features
• Include a description of activities, resources, and staff
• Use appendices to provide details, summary data, references, and information regarding in-depth analysis
Make sure you include:

- This is what I will do
- This is how I will do it
- This is what I have done
- This is what is being done now (through other organizations/resources)
To achieve the best understanding of your project, illustrate it!
You can:

Describe what will be done using a real life scenario

Use a flow chart to describe the organizational features of the project

Utilize a diagram to show the program design
6. The timeline:

- Describes how long you will need to achieve the program goals and why
- Goes over the timeline for spending funds
- Might be best described through graphics
7. The evaluation:

• Describes how the project will be measured and how the results will be given to donor

• Contains two types of evaluation - process and outcome
### Process Evaluation

- Measures whether the project has met the process objectives
- Looks at how the project was conducted
  - Is there consistency with the stated plan of action?
  - What was the effectiveness of the various activities within the plan?

### Outcome Evaluation

- Measures whether the project has met the outcome objectives
- Looks at the results due to the project
Be sure to also address:

**When will the evaluation start?**

- Ideally, the process evaluation should start early in the project whereas the outcome evaluation can begin at the end of the project.

**How long will the evaluation take?**
8. The budget:

- Includes an itemized budget that matches the proposed program
- Justifies all expenses
- Is consistent with the proposal narrative
- Is thorough (Look at utilities, building rental, equipment rental, salary increases, food, telephones, insurance, transportation, leases, evaluation systems, software, etc.)
But what happens if your grant proposal does not get approved?
You can resubmit your proposal!

- Few people get funded the first time
- Persistence pays off
- Carefully use reviews to revise submissions for next time
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To improve funding chances, remember to:</th>
<th>Pick a good topic - something both feasible and that you are passionate about</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be clear in your program/project design and focus on quality</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Speak directly to the issue of fit</td>
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<td>Describe how your objectives match the grant objectives</td>
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<td>Talk to the program officer in advance</td>
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Conclusion

• It is extremely important to read through the Request for Proposal carefully.

• Most grant proposals will include a proposal summary, an organization description, a problem statement (or needs assessment), the project objectives, the method or design, the timeline, the evaluation, and the budget and future funding.

• If you do not get approved the first time, revise your proposal and resubmit!
References


* The Writing Center. (2012). Grant Proposals (or Give me the money!). University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Retrieved from https://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/grant-proposals-or-give-me-the-money/