Fact Sheet: A Guide to Grant Writing for Resources or Recovery Assistance

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A successful grant proposal to request recovery assistance or other funding requires two key elements: The applicant seeking the funds must establish a clear connection between the mission of the grantor and the need the resources will fulfill. The proposal itself must then be thoughtfully planned, well prepared, concisely packaged and delivered on time. Successful applicants thoroughly understand the proposal requirements before investing time in preparation. They build a network of foundations, corporate funders and federal or state agencies to develop long-term working relationships. Some suggestions for preparing the grant proposal:

Prepare a Plan

- Consider the need for funding in a critical way. Craft a detailed plan considering all aspects of the endeavor to be funded and how performance will be evaluated.
- Assess the ability, skill and prior history of how the applicant has delivered programs or services as they relate to the proposed endeavor.
- Prepare clearly stated objectives detailing how the funds would be used before searching for grantors. Obtain consensus from all co-applicants.
- Determine the priorities for allocating potential funding with all co-applicants.
- Analyze all elements of the plan and review it for responsiveness to the offer.

Identify and Select a Potential Grantor

- Review funding opportunity announcements and select those that best match the need.
- Grantors can be searched via www.grants.gov, subscription-based search engines or government agency or foundation websites.
- Understand the grant maker's offer, timeline and eligibility requirements for applicants. Certain grants may require tax exempt status, or a cash match from a non-federal source or from in-kind services or donations.

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- Research the history, background and past awards of the grantor.
- Assure that the grantor's mission and organization matches applicant need.
- Research agencies, public or private organizations that may be under grant awards doing similar work to avoid perceptions of duplication of effort.

Write the Proposal

Follow all instructions and formatting requirements provided by the grantor. A typical proposal contains:

- Cover page
- Introduction or executive summary
- Table of contents
- Qualifications of the organization
- Need for project or program
- Goals and objectives
- Methodology/program details
- Timeline or milestones
- Program evaluation plan
- Plans for obtaining long-term funding
- Budget or budget narrative
- Financial statement
- Appendix
- Clearly state the benefits of the endeavor and how it fits into a larger picture. Consider all possibilities—does it increase knowledge or awareness, provide a more global solution, benefit the grantor, and critically, how it serves the community.
- Use clear language and write simple, short sentences. Be explicit.
- Most grants require some level of self-reporting and program administration. When developing a budget, an accountant or bookkeeper can assist.
- Grant funding is given for a specific time period. Specify how the endeavor would continue after grant funding is expended.
- Obtain and include supporting letters of recommendation.
- Create simple graphics, charts and art elements that appropriately support content.
- Demonstrate how the grantor will be involved in expected outcomes.

Submit the Proposal

- Review the grant proposal for continuity, clear language and solid reasoning.
- Assemble the package and proofread all content. Have all questions in the proposal been answered accurately and completely? Assure all attachments are included.
- Make copies and submit the proposal as grantors request it, online, mailed or delivered.

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