2020-2021 Collaborative Grant Writing Workshop Series
Session 2 – Proposal Development
Welcome & Ground Rules

• Co-Presenters
  • Bemidji: Jenna Trisko, Grants Specialist
  • Mankato: Kristel Seth, Director of Research and Sponsored Programs
  • St. Cloud: Jodi Kuznia, Director of Research Development
    Megan Robillard, Associate Director of Research Development
  • Winona: Brett Ayers, Director of Grants & Sponsored Projects
    Katie Subra, Grants Specialist

• Interactive Format
  • Ask questions as they arise. We will use breakout rooms for final Q/A.
  • Authentic examples, Useful infographic, and polls
Learning Objectives

• Introduction to proposal sections
• Become familiar with typical narrative components
• Consider your project/program design
• Increase your funding competitiveness
• Importance of and how to build collaborations
Priorities

✓ Communicate idea clearly, concisely. Create title and short abstract:
  ✓ Purpose – why? what?
  ✓ Methods – how? when? who / with whom?
  ✓ Evaluation – how? what next?

✓ Identify and connect:
  ✓ Stakeholders (department chair, Dean, business office, grants office)
  ✓ Collaborators (co-PI’s, partner institutions)
  ✓ Granting agency contacts
  ✓ Diverse audience of experts, non-experts to gather insights

✓ Create a timeline for drafts, internal review, and submission
Sample Timeline – Working Backwards

• 1-3 days prior to submission deadline – submit early!
• 7-10 days prior to submitting, complete external funding request / transmittal form through sponsored projects / grants office
• 2-4 weeks prior to submission – finalize proposal and all required documents
• 3-12 months prior – develop project ideas, research grant opportunities, discuss plans with potential co-PI’s, internal and external stakeholders, read RFP / NOFO / NOA carefully
• NOTE: You can request copies – Freedom of Information Act
Building Collaborations

• Identify what partnerships are needed for the project, co-PI’s and others...
  • Can be based on expertise, equipment, access to participant population, etc.
  • Can be a way to secure required matching contribution
• The guidelines may also mention necessary collaborations
  • School districts, local county agencies, etc.
• Making those connections through:
  • Professional relationships
  • Cold calling, but check with University to see who can help (i.e., University Advancement for Foundations, Strategic partnerships for industry)
• Allow time to get their contribution on specific project-related involvement

*Join Pop-ups on 11/20:
  2.1: Project Design
  2.2 Identify Stakeholders
Writing Tips

When you write:

• Follow guidelines explicitly (READ RFP)
• Address review criteria
• Use their headers and titles, they are looking for their words
• Draw on your strengths, strengths of the institution
• Use clear, precise language – avoid jargon!
• Make use of bullets, tables
• Include a Table of Contents, identify proposal sections that meet the criteria
• Ask colleague or someone outside your area of expertise to read it
Components: **Cover Sheet**

- Information requested is usually on behalf of University
- Authorizing signatures:
  - Will be those for University
  - Start thinking about signatures now
  - Work through sponsored program / projects offices to secure
  - Person who accepts the award on behalf of the University (e.g., VP of Finance & Administration)
- Take into consideration collaborating universities, agencies, and their review / timeline requirements
Components: **Project Summary / Abstract**

- Overview of the project, cover all key elements, answer all questions from Priorities (slide 4)
- First (sometimes only) point-of-reference for reviewers
  - Engages them and provides basic road map
- Agency-required sections (e.g., NSF’s requires you to address broader impacts, intellectual merit, intellectual property; regional impacts)
  - Can also be requested in narrative too; duplicate when requested
- Could also be published (if funded)
Components: Proposal / Narrative

• Address what you want to do, how you plan to do it
  • Statement of need
  • Overall goals, objectives
  • Plan of action, methodology, timeline

• How you will know if you succeed (assessment plan – not just at the end)
  • Include potential pitfalls and contingencies

• What benefits will be realized if successful (broader impacts)

• And remember to include:
  • Reporting, deliverables
  • Qualifications of project personnel
  • Sustainability
Examples: Local & Federal

Let’s pause to look at two example application requirements for project description and narrative:

1. “FY21 Early Care & Education Wrap Around Grant Application”
   MDE GEER Fund 2020 through Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation
   [https://smifoundation.org](https://smifoundation.org)
   Funding amount: up to $10,000

2. “Maternal and Child Health Bureau Division of Maternal and Child Health Workforce Development”
   U.S. Department of HHS – Health Resources & Services Administration
   [https://mchb.hrsa.gov/training/healthy-tomorrows.asp](https://mchb.hrsa.gov/training/healthy-tomorrows.asp)
   Funding amount: up to $50,000/year for 5 years
Great Grant Whale Metaphor

1. **Project Title** – Plume announces whale’s presence
2. **Project Summary** – Whale is approaching
3. **Introduction** – Blowhole provides scope
4. **Problem/Need Statement** – Eye-to-eye understanding of situation
5. **Objectives** – Core / belly of the beast
6. **Work Plan** – Core / belly of the beast
7. **Evaluation** – Core / belly of the beast
8. **Staff** – Flippers steer through rough seas
9. **Conclusion** – Last thing prey sees
10. **Budget** – Flukes power the project
Components: **Budget & Justification**

*Join Session 3 in February*

- Think about this right away:
  - Personnel
  - Subawards
  - Match requirements
  - Indirects (aka Facilities & Administrative costs)
- Realistic and reasonable – establishes your credibility
- Well-justified, establish need – tells a story & your project’s organization
- Complies with all agency guidelines – what’s allowable, what’s not
- Make updates as the scope of work changes
Components: Bibliography, Biography, Appendices

• Bibliography / References Cited
  • Follow scholarly practice for providing citations
  • Should be current, to-date references

• Biographical Sketches / Resumes / CVs
  • Format varies by agency, can change annually or by program / call
  • Senior personnel and external consultants (relevant experiences only)

• Appendices / Supplementary Documentation (if allowable)
  • Materials that add important data but are cumbersome in a narrative
  • Can include: Letters of Collaborations / Support / Commitment,
    Documentation to identify unusual circumstances, Postdoctoral Mentoring
    Plans, Data Management Plans
Components: **Agency-Specific Requirements**

- These can also be requested in abstract too; duplicate when requested

- Examples:
  - Current & Pending Support
  - Facilities, Equipment, and Other resources
  - General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)
  - Research on Human Subjects
  - Conflict of interest
  - Disclosure, certification forms
Occasional Components

• Letter of Intent
  • Provides agency an idea of what the review panel needs will be

• Preliminary Proposal
  • Reduces effort if chance of funding is small
    • i.e. Exploratory initiatives where there is a major new direction but small number of actual awards
  • Will have minimal components
    • Total budget amount requested, rather than detailed annual
  • Increases overall quality of a full submission
Resources

• AASCU Grant Resource Center. (2009). Developing Competitive Proposals.
• Winona State University. (n.d.) Proposal Tips. https://www.winona.edu/grants/proposaltips.asp [The Grant Grant Whale, Writing for the Reader, etc...]
Wrap-up / Closing Thoughts / Survey
Contact us as soon as you start thinking about external funding.

• BSU Grants Office  
  jenna.trisko@bemidjistate.edu
• MSU Research & Sponsored Programs  
  507-389-5275 or RASP@mnsu.edu
• SCSU Research & Sponsored Programs  
  320-308-4932 or ResearchNow@stcloudstate.edu
• WSU Grants & Sponsored Projects  
  507-457-5519 or grants@winona.edu

• Time for large group general Q / A
• Breakout session - institution-specific Q/A:
  • Potential collaborators
  • Who signs?
  • Timelines
  • Types of awards