

2020-2021 Collaborative Grant Writing Workshop Series

Session 2 – Proposal Development



Welcome & Ground Rules

Poll #1

- 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?
 - ✓ Significance – why? what? for whom?
 - ✓ 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

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

- 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

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

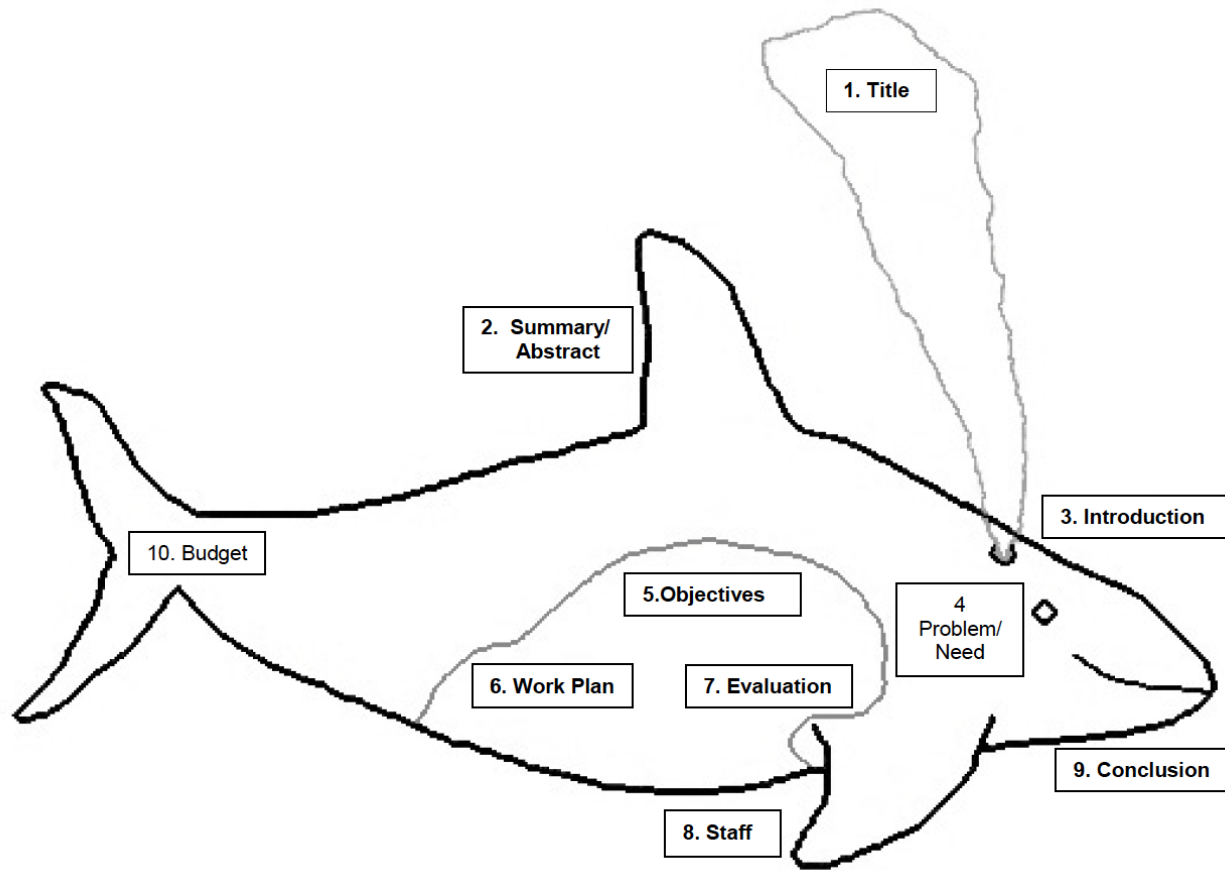
- Address what you want to do, how you plan to do it
 - Statement of need
 - Overall goals, objectives
 - Plan of action, methodology, timeline
- How you will know if you succeed (assessment plan – not just at the end)
 - Include potential pitfalls and contingencies
- What benefits will be realized if 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>
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>
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*.
- Bhargava, E. (n.d.). *Preparing a Strong Proposal*. Connection Lab, LLC.
https://www.chna15.org/images/pdfs/Grant_Writing_Tips_and_Tricks.pdf
- Greater Public. (n.d.). *Grant Seekers Toolkit Step 5: Write the Proposal Narrative*.
<https://www.greaterpublic.org/resources/grant-seekers-toolkit-step-5-write-proposal-narrative/>
- National Science Foundation. (2015). *Proposal Preparation*. Grants Conference.
[PowerPoint slides]
- University of Washington. (n.d.). *Writing Your Proposal Narrative*.
<https://www.lib.washington.edu/commons/services/workshops/funding/human-socsci/narrative-handout>
- 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

