Grant Writing Basics Series
Workshop 2 – Understanding the solicitation, proposal overview, & story telling
May 8, 2020
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Review from Session I:

• What concept or idea stood out to you?

• Session I Topics:
  • Start with your passion
  • Create a 1-page concept paper
  • Consider what distinguishes your project
  • Consider Big picture—project planning, impacts and alignment to campus priorities
  • Where to start for finding funding

• Any revelations or new insights over the last two weeks on your potential project ideas?
Understanding the Solicitation

• What is a solicitation?
  • Sometimes known as RFP, FOA, NOFA, RFA, Grant Guidelines
  • Gives you all the information about the grant competition
  • READ EVERYTHING!

• Why is it important?
  • Provides details about grant criteria, eligibility, and scoring

• What do I look for?
  • Alignment to your needs, eligibility, deadlines, amounts
  • You are looking for the right fit
Application: Solicitation Interpretation

• Let’s look at a solicitation together...
You’re the Judge!

• You are part of a Review Panel

• In groups, select your winning proposal
  • Does everyone agree?
  • What caught your attention?
  • What is well done?
  • What are obvious issues?
Proposal Section Overview

• Need (supported by data, tells a story)
• Goals & Objectives
• Plan of Action
• Evaluation
• Budget Narrative
• Other possible sections: Research, Personnel, Resources, Dissemination, Project Abstract, Logic Model
Need Section

• Why is this important? Grabs Attention!

• The section addresses:
  • What is the problem/need? (directly relate to your objectives)
  • What has already been done? Why not enough?
  • Compare local data to national/state data
  • Present a compelling case for a larger benefit
  • Data, tables, figures, or charts present a strong case

• May be the most important section
Farmers do not earn an economically viable income in Maui. As the cost of living in Hawaii is high, resources must be stretched further, making farming a difficult career to enter.

The 2017 median hourly wage for farmers in Maui County—the target location—was $14.67 compared to farmers in the state of Hawaii at $17.24. Moreover, the median overall hourly wage for Hawaii is $19.37. As Hawaii holds the highest cost of living in the nation at 189% the national average, farmer’s wages are drastically below the $35.20 hourly wage estimated to afford a 2-bedroom home in Hawaii.

According to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) 2017 Agriculture Overview for Hawaii, 78% (5,487) of the state’s 7,000 farmers achieved less than $25,000 in sales. In the most recent USDA Census for Maui County, 54% (604) of Maui farmers reported income loss.
Goals & Objectives

• Why is this important? Tells what you will do!

• The Goal is the focus of your project and foundation for objectives
  • Ex: Increase agriculture and related food industry business growth

• Objectives state exactly what you will be achieving
  • Should be Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relate to goals, and Time-bound
  • Be realistic and supported with baseline data, if possible
  • Ex: In 3 years, 75% of participating farmers and food industry business owners will show an increase in overall profit.

• This is what your funder is BUYING
Plan of Action (Methodology)

• Why is this important? Details your plan
• The section addresses:
  • Exactly what you will do (the heart of the project)
  • Specific actions you will take to achieve your objectives
  • Justification on the reason you choose the action
  • Who will carry out each activity
  • May include timelines, task charts, or logic models
Evaluation

• Why is this important? Measures Success

• This section addresses:
  • How each objective will be measured/evaluated
  • Data collection (what, when, how, and by whom)
  • If applicable, the statistical measure you will use
  • The qualification of the evaluator, if required
  • TIP: Seek guidance and expertise on this area
Budget Narrative

• Why Important? Shows how money will be used.

• This section provides:
  • A financial story of your proposal narrative
  • Should directly support your objectives and activities
  • Reveals if a project is carefully planned and feasible
  • Serves as a planning tool once the project is launched

• A reviewer can tell what you are doing by your budget

• Consider drafting the budget prior to writing activities
In Summary: Tips from Today

• Read solicitation THOROUGHLY and understand what is being asked
• Respond to every point and detail in the solicitation
• Make sure your project aligns to the solicitation (reframe if needed)
• Tell your story through your need section, this might be the most important part!
• Support your need section with data
• Your proposal should logically progress from need, to objectives, to plan, and then evaluation
• Your budget should be within the range of the available funds (not too much, not too little) and tells a savvy reviewer exactly what you plan to do
• Serve on a grant review panel if you can