

Key General and Online Grant Seeking Terms

Solicitations / Notices of Funding Opportunities
NOFA – Notice of Funding Availability
RFP – Request for Proposals
SGA – Solicitation for Grant Applications
RFQ – Request for Qualifications
CFDA – Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
RFA – Request for Applications
RFI – Request for Information
LOI – Letter of Intent
Federal Forms
SF-424 –Application for Federal Assistance
SF-424A – Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
SF-424B – Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
E.O. 12372 – Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs
Grants.gov
AOR – Authorized Organization Representative
CCR – Central Contractor Registration
DUNS – Data Universal Numbering System
EIN – Employer Identification Number
POC – Point of Contact
SAM – System for Award Management

Proposal Writing Tips

Executive Summary: Umbrella statement of your case and summary of the entire proposal - The first page of the proposal is the most important section of the entire document. Here you will provide the reader with a snapshot of what is to follow. Specifically, it summarizes all of the key information and is designed to convince the reader that this project should be considered for support.

Statement of Need: Why this project is necessary - The statement of need enables the reader to learn more about the issues; it presents the facts and evidence that support the need for the project and establishes that your organization understands the problems and therefore can reasonably address them.

Project Description: Nuts and bolts of how the project will be implemented and evaluated - This section of your proposal should have four subsections: objectives, methods, staffing/administration, and evaluation. Together, objectives and methods dictate staffing and administrative requirements. They then become the focus of the evaluation to assess the results of the project. Taken together, the subsections present an interlocking picture of the total project.

Organizational Capacity: Demonstration of your organization's ability to carry out the proposed project - This could include descriptions of past or ongoing projects with similar goals and at similar scales. It could also include existing collaborative partnerships that strengthen capacity, staff experience, governance, matching resources, and fiscal controls and processes.

Budget: Financial description of the project plus explanatory notes - The budget for your proposal may be as simple as a one-page statement of projected expenses. Or your proposal may require a more complex presentation, perhaps including a page on projected support and revenue and notes explaining various items of expense or of revenue. As you prepare to assemble the budget, go back through the proposal narrative and make a list of all personnel and non-personnel items related to the operation of the project. Be sure that you list not only new costs that will be incurred if the project is funded but also any ongoing expenses for items that will be allocated to the project.

Organization Information: History and governing structure of your department/agency/nonprofit; its primary activities, audiences, and services - It is not necessary to overwhelm the reader with facts about your organization. This information can be conveyed easily by attaching a brochure or other prepared statement.

Conclusion: Summary of the proposal's main points - Every proposal should have a concluding paragraph or two. This is a good place to call attention to the future, after the grant is completed. If appropriate, you should outline some of the follow-up activities that might be undertaken to begin to prepare your funders for your next request. Alternatively, you should state how the project might carry on without further grant support. This section is also the place to make a final appeal for your project. Briefly reiterate what you want to do and why it is important. Underscore why your agency needs funding to accomplish it. Don't be afraid at this stage to use a bit of emotion to solidify your case.

See also: The Proposal Writing Short Course (www.foundationcenter.org)