Critical Strategies in Grant Writing for ILCs

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Today’s focus areas

• Priorities
• Mission Check
• Collaborative Partnerships
• Program Development
• Budget
• Final Thoughts
Mission Check

• Review your agency’s mission.
• Develop a funding priority list.
• Know the needs of your community.
• Search for grants that fund the types of projects on your priority list.
  • Fee-for-service or project grants?
  • Look at funders for similar programs.
  • Look at agencies that pay for those programs.
• Think creatively, but do not stretch beyond your capacity.
• It is about perspective and buy-in from your administration and program staff.
Collaborative Partnerships

Use collaborations to create a balance in service provision.

- How can partner agencies supplement your service provision and fill your gaps?
- Can partner agencies extend your reach?
- Do you need to stay within your circle of similar service providers or go outside and partner with other types of providers?
- Can partners bring additional expertise or enhanced visibility to your project?
- Nurture your partner relationships – they can lead you to other funding opportunities.
Program Development

• Develop a vision for the project.
• Discuss the project with the personnel working on the programs closest to your vision for the project: learn the work flow, the strengths and weaknesses, and the gaps in service.
• Talk to other agencies or programs – how do they do it?
• Listen to the “wish lists” and use them to develop the program and the budget.
• Use outlines, work plans, logic models to organize yourself.
• Think it through carefully and cover all details – you have to be the expert.
• Build up the enthusiasm among your program staff so they are interested and ready to jump when the award is made.
Budget

- Take your time, listen to program personnel input, collect accurate information.
- Define the needs of the project – staff, space, utilities, supplies, printing, advertising, resources, equipment, etc. Rethink, ask questions, and rethink again. What are you missing?
- Work on the budget concurrently with program development.
- Incorporate subcontractors or partner agencies when possible and practical. Negotiate the budget.
- Match the budget you need to the budget you are allowed.
- Is there room to purchase something that would benefit this program and provide additional capacity to your agency?
Final Thoughts

• Create a time schedule for proposal preparation and stick to it.
• Be clear about funder expectations and your resources.
• No one has time – make time to talk to other ILC grant writers, partners, and your agency staff and gather input.
• Leave time to review and revise, not to mention website glitches and staff emergencies.
• Develop relationships with local MWBE vendors to ease that part of the proposal submission.
• Proofread - enlist the assistance of your favorite grammar nerd.
• Call or email me.
You have the right to remain you

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