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HOW TO...

Prepare and Submit
a Last-Minute Grant
Proposal Without Pulling
Out Your Hair

EVEN THE LOSERS...

Life Beyond the 13
Development
Pre-Application

THE SPOTLIGHT

on Literacy and How
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GRANTSEEKING

STRATEGY: HOW TO
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GRANTS OFFICE WILL BE PRESENTING AT THIS YEAR'S GRANT PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE!

Dan Casion, Manager of Grants Development and Administration
Workshop Title: Understanding the Consolidated Tribal Assistance Solicitation
Description: CTAS undergoes multiple changes each year-this can leave applicants lacking confidence in their proposal. Gain confidence by learning program changes, award trends, and tips for application preparation.
Friday, October 19 at 10:15 am

Chris LaPage, Senior Grants Development Consultant
Workshop Title: Finding & Securing Funding for Health Care Projects
Description: Every year the government dishes out over \$400 billion in grants, with emphasis on health care projects. Know where to look for the health funding and how to maximize your chances of pulling it down.
Friday, October 19 at 1:45 pm

Susannah Mayhall, Grants Development and Administration Coordinator
Workshop Title: Writing For Success: How to Craft Your Best Proposal Yet
Description: Grant writing presents challenges for writers of all skill levels. During this workshop, we will focus on key persuasive writing skills that will help you craft the best proposal possible.
Saturday, October 20 at 9:30 am

We will also host an exhibition booth where you can meet our team and learn more about the grants solutions we have to offer.

For more information on the conference, please see <http://grantprofessionals.org/professional-development/conference>.

We hope to see you there!



PROGRAM SNAPSHOT



STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SAFER)

SUMMARY SAFER grants provide financial assistance to help fire departments increase frontline firefighters, rehire firefighters that have been laid off, retain firefighters facing imminent layoffs, or fill positions that were vacated through attrition. The goal of the SAFER Grants is to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities in order to respond to emergencies, assuring communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.

PROJECT PRIORITIES

1. First priority: Rehiring laid-off firefighters;
2. Second priorities: Retention of firefighters who face imminent layoff and/or filling positions vacated through attrition but not filled due to economic circumstances; and,
3. Third priority: Hiring new firefighters.

DEADLINE The FY12 application period will opens on July 16, 2012. The final deadline to submit an application is August 10, 2012. Applications should be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST).

ELIGIBILITY Volunteer and combination fire departments are eligible.

AWARD AMOUNTS The estimated funding available through this program is \$320,625,000. The period of performance is 24 months. Cost sharing is not required.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE <http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/safer/index.shtm>

HOW TO...

PREPARE AND SUBMIT A LAST-MINUTE GRANT PROPOSAL WITHOUT PULLING OUT YOUR HAIR

By Susannah Mayhall

It's every grant manager's worst nightmare: your supervisor asks you to submit a proposal to a grant program with a deadline just days (or hours) away. While most writers prefer to have the lengthiest runway possible to prepare a full proposal, that doesn't always happen. Whether you weren't aware of the program until late in the game, or didn't know an application was needed until weeks after the solicitation opened, sometimes last-minute proposals make their way to your plate. Use the tips below to avoid a meltdown and keep things on track.

1. GET IT TOGETHER.

The first step you must take is to make a list of all of the components needed to submit an application. Do you need to create/update a login to an online submission portal? How many narratives are there, what do they entail, and how many pages do you need for each? What documents will you need to provide? Who will need to be involved to compose, collect, and approve of the various components?

2. SET ASIDE TIME.

Whether you have a couple of weeks or a couple of days, it is imperative that you estimate how much time to dedicate to proposal development and secure meeting times with others who will be involved, whether for brainstorming sessions, proposal review,

data collection, or any other necessary collaborations. Prevent last-minute scrambling to track down needed signatures and approvals by making your team aware as soon as possible of what is required of them. Prioritize this proposal with your other projects so that you don't lose any more time.

3. USE WHAT YOU HAVE.

With little time for crafting the proposal, see if you can locate any writing you already have on the project, whether from a past grant proposal, white paper, notes, or other documents. If some of the work has already been done, be sure to find it to cut down on writing time so that you can put forth your best efforts to polish the proposal. However, be careful to tailor the information you include to the specific program to which you're applying. Reviewers will notice if you

do not pointedly address the priorities of the grant program and will deduct points.

4. DELEGATE, DELEGATE, DELEGATE.

Whether or not you could pull off a satisfactory proposal on your own with enough time simply doesn't matter when that time is taken away. You may be primarily responsible for the proposal's completion and submission, but, depending on the level of difficulty of the application, delegation to other members of your organization or partner entities is crucial to getting it finished on time and in a high-quality fashion. Identify items that can be delegated as early on in the process as you can and communicate regularly with all hands involved. If other team members are not available to help or you need additional assis-

tance, consider hiring a consultant grant writer. An experienced grant writer may be especially helpful if you are not well-acquainted with grants or this program in particular. He or she can help guide you through the process, write out concepts in thorough, compliant language, and ensure a timely submission of your grant application. Should you choose to bring in a consultant, be sure to check his or her references and set forth clear expectations for both parties so that the process goes as smoothly as possible for everyone.

5. SET A PROJECT CUTOFF TIME BEFORE THE DEADLINE.

While everyone wants to put together the most comprehensive proposal possible, when you are working with a limited time frame, it is imperative that you set a cutoff time well before the actual deadline and cease to add information to the proposal, change budget numbers, or make significant project changes. Work with what you have at the cutoff to polish the writing and make sure everything lines up as it should. Be sure to clearly communicate the cutoff time to your team so that you have all of the absolutely

necessary components in place before the cutoff. It is strongly discouraged to attempt to make significant changes while submitting the proposal or just before the deadline, particularly with online submissions. If you change one budget number, you will likely have to change the numbers in numerous places throughout the proposal, and run a high risk of providing inconsistent information to the funder. The same goes for other project details. If you are submitting online, making last minute changes could very well cause you to miss the deadline, when 4:59 pm is on time and 5:01 is late. Assume that late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances (which is often the case), and stay as far ahead of that deadline as you can.

6. KNOW WHEN TO PULL THE PLUG.

Sometimes, despite the best efforts of the project developers and writers, a last minute submission is simply not possible. If you are missing key components or getting uncomfortably close to the deadline without having some time to thoroughly review the proposal, it may be best to decide

not to submit the application. Many grant programs are opened annually. If you are not ready to submit a quality application by this year's deadline, consider setting the project aside for now and returning to it next year when you will have more time to work on it. Federal programs are typically released on similar timeframes from year to year, so by anticipating a similar deadline next year, you can give yourself plenty of time to develop your project and put yourself in a better position to get funded. Alternatively, if you choose to submit an incomplete or low-quality proposal, you may hurt your chances of receiving funding in future solicitations if this proposal is denied by presenting yourself and/or your project in a negative light to reviewers. Keep in mind that, no matter how perfectly this program aligns with your goals, there will be other funding sources in the future. No matter how well the program matches what's in your head, if you can't get it on paper for the reviewers, your proposal is not likely to be successful.

While last-minute proposals should be avoided if possible, sometimes they are unavoidable. Hopefully, these steps will help you to keep your head straight during a whirlwind proposal development process. 



PROGRAM SNAPSHOT



INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO LITERACY

SUMMARY The Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program supports high-quality programs designed to develop and improve literacy skills for children and students from birth through 12th grade within the attendance boundaries of high-need local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools.

DEADLINE Proposals are due by 4:30 pm EDT on August 10, 2012.

ELIGIBILITY Eligible applicants for IAL grants are:

1. A high-need LEA;
2. a national not-for-profit organization that serves children and students within the attendance boundaries of a high-need LEA;
3. a consortium of one or more national not-for-profit organizations that serve children and students within the attendance boundaries of one or more high-need LEAs; or
4. a consortium of high-need LEAs.

AWARD AMOUNTS The estimated funds available are \$28,599,844. The estimated range of awards to LEAs is \$150,000 to \$750,000. The estimated average size of awards is \$500,000. Thirty awards are anticipated. The estimated range of awards to national not-for-profit organizations is \$3,000,000 to \$14,000,000. The estimated average size of awards is \$4,500,000. Up to four awards are anticipated. Cost sharing is not required.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovapproaches-literacy/index.html>

THE SPOTLIGHT

ON LITERACY AND HOW LIBRARIES CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE

By Ali Palmieri

In light of the recently-released Innovative Approaches to Literacy Program and the importance it places on literacy for children from birth through 12th grade, now is a good time for reading-focused organizations such as libraries to explore Federal funding opportunities that may be available to them. Libraries can work to maintain the spotlight placed on preschool and K-12 literacy by implementing programs that follow suit. There are several grants that libraries can apply for that can help to advance a variety of programs. The Institute of Museum and Library Services has programs such as the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program, Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums and Learning Labs in Libraries and Museums Grants. The National Endowment of the Arts has a program called Challenge Grants.

The Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program supports projects to recruit and educate the next generation of librarians, faculty, and library leaders; to conduct research on the library profession; and to support early career research. It also assists in the professional development of librarians and library staff. All members of the library community are invited to play an active role in ensuring that the profession is prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The grant amount ranges from \$50,000-\$500,000. The deadline is September 17, 2012. <http://www.ims.gov/applicants/detail.aspx?GrantId=9>

The Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums are small grants

that encourage libraries, museums, and archives to test and evaluate specific innovations in the ways they operate and the services they provide. Sparks Grants support the deployment, testing, and evaluation of promising and groundbreaking new tools, products, services, or organizational practices. You may propose activities or approaches that involve risk, as long as the risk is balanced by significant potential for improvement in the ways libraries and museums serve their communities. The grant amounts range from \$10,000-\$25,000. The deadline was February 1, 2012 and is anticipated to be similar annually. <http://www.ims.gov/applicants/detail.aspx?GrantId=19>

Grants for Learning Labs in Libraries and Museums will support planning and design activities for spaces that foster experimentation and creativity for middle- and high-school youth in library- and museum-based, out-of-school-time settings. The labs should be grounded in evidence-based research on youth, and should be designed to support youth learning in such 21st century skills as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). The awards are available up to \$100,000. The deadline was June 15, 2012 and is anticipated to be similar annually. http://www.ims.gov/applicants/learning_labs_guidelines.aspx

Challenge Grants are capacity-building grants, intended to help institutions and organizations secure long-term improvements in and support for their

humanities programs and resources. Through these awards, many organizations and institutions have been able to increase their humanities capacity and secure the permanent support of an endowment. Grants may be used to establish or enhance endowments or spend-down funds that generate expendable earnings to support ongoing program activities. Awards have ranged from \$30,000-\$1,000,000. The deadline was May 2, 2012 and is anticipated to be similar annually. <http://www.neh.gov/grants/challenge/challenge-grants>

Even though these programs are well established, with the introduction of Innovative Approaches to Literacy, libraries, whether public or academic, are able to take advantage of the spotlight that has been placed on literacy. With the landscape for libraries looking towards innovation, 21st century skills and capacity building, it is a perfect time to evaluate new projects and keep an eye on the future of library science in order to ensure optimal results from grant makers. ♦



GRANTSEEKING STRATEGY: HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL WITH NATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

By Chris LaPage

In many ways, engaging foundations for funding is a similar process regardless of whether they give on a local, regional or national level. There will be a formal application process or more likely, there will be an initial letter of inquiry that is required. However, even the most successful organizations when it comes to local and regional funding struggle to breakthrough with nationally-focused foundations. The truth is that you should have more traction with foundations in your own backyard, but there is no reason you shouldn't be able to leverage some of these institutions that give on a national basis as well.

1. DON'T MAKE THE MISTAKE OF COMPARING APPLES TO ORANGES

So why do we hear time and time again from organizations that they “just don't do well with foundations outside their area”? It essentially boils down to a flaw in the underlying philosophy of their grantseeking strategy. First and foremost, while there are some common elements to engaging foundations regardless of where they reside, potential applicants cannot take a one-size-fits-all approach. In other words, don't group all foundations together as if they are all individual store sites belonging to one large retail chain. Foundations that give on a local or regional basis typically have a vested interest in the people of that geographic area. In other words, they measure success based on the number of individuals impacted from that area as a result of their grantmaking. Grantseekers that are successful at this level typically are very gifted in demonstrating the aforementioned community, regional, or statewide impact.

2. CONSIDER THE BROADER IMPACTS OUTSIDE YOUR AREA

Make no mistake about it, national foundations care about the impact their funds are making as well. So in a sense, that component carries over. However, national foundations do not have the same vested interest in the residents of your community. If you are going to be successful with national foundations, you have to take it one step further once you prove that the project will make an impact. National foundations want to see model demonstration projects that have the potential to be replicated, inform policy decisions, or transform a particular field (health care, education, public safety). National foundations seek to develop a reputation for funding innovative projects that break new ground and explore new areas. There is a certain amount of prestige that comes along with funding from certain national grantmakers that have developed such a reputation, such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Commonwealth Fund, and William Randolph Hearst Foundations. In order to have success with these

type of foundations, you have to dedicate proposal space to not only show the project will have an impact, but to discuss potential replication, implications for the field, and dissemination efforts. Once you take these other areas into consideration, you start to have the trappings of a true demonstration project.

3. EXPLORE REGIONAL CONCEPTS AND COLLABORATION

In addition to developing a demonstration project, there are some other things to keep in mind with national foundations. Many will not consider funding a project unless it has at least a regional impact. Thus, cross-community collaboration is much more crucial with national foundations than you will find at the local level. Going regional with a project is not the only way to catch the eye of a national foundation. In fact, in many ways a more successful strategy is to find a potential project partners (organizations like yours) across the country and position a pilot project with multiple sites. For instance, a hospital in rural Georgia may team up with a clin-

ic in Detroit and a major academic medical center in California. If they were rolling out some type of chronic disease management program, they would now have the ability to improve patient outcomes in several areas while also testing whether geography (urban, rural) and type of clinical service (inpatient, outpatient, specialty services) effect implementation and impact. While we used healthcare as an example, you could envision a very similar situation involving any type of organization, such as rural/urban/alternative schools across the country attempting to address educational achievement and advancement. In either scenario, the funder now has before it an applicant with a demonstration project that may be able to not only make an impact, but draw some conclusions as to how results may be replicated in different areas.

4. DEVELOP A NEW RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING STRATEGY

Another reason folks may be successful on the local level but fail with national foundations is that

they are very good at relationship-building. Building long-term relationships in much easier on a local level, where you can invite local foundations staff on-site, or to community events where you may not be seeking funding right away. Grantseekers that are skilled in this area typically throw their hands up with national foundations because they can't employ the same strategy. While we admit is not as easy, that does not mean relationship-building is not possible. In particular, once you are able to break through with a national foundation and complete a successful project, they may seek you out in the future to expand upon your initial efforts or to roll out a new project tackling one of the foundation's priorities. With today's technology and video conferencing capabilities, there are certainly ways to do some old school "face-to-face" relationship building with these national foundations as well. The other piece to consider is that these national foundations typically have board members from all over the country. Identify their board members and circulate those names amongst your own governing body,

politicians and other supporters of your organization that might be well connected. You never know who just might know someone on that list and be able to make a personal connection to start the relationship-building and get a foot in the door.

5. CULTIVATE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

No one is saying national foundations are an easy source of funding. As previously stated, it should be easier to secure funds in your own community where local foundations have a presence. But on the flip side, it is nowhere near as impossible as many grantseekers believe. As simple as it sounds, the first step is the adoption of an "it can be done" positive attitude. From there, you can start to look at your initiative and transform it into a demonstration project with broad implications; thereby, making it more attractive to national foundations. It's all about having a successful strategy, which requires flexibility and a willingness to make adjustments. ♡



EVEN THE LOSERS...

LIFE BEYOND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S INVESTING IN INNOVATION (I3) DEVELOPMENT PRE-APPLICATION

By Dan Casion

On July 2, the Department of Education announced that of the 654 Investing in Innovation (i3) Development pre-applications received, they have selected 124 to submit full applications. While this is welcome news to those 124 applicants, what about the 530 applicants that were denied? What steps can they take to be among the elite that are invited back to submit full applications for next year's competition? The short answer is there is much that can be done between now and early next year. Specifically I recommend the following strategies:

1. GET YOUR PRE-APPLICATION REVIEW AND SCORING.

Obtaining this information will be invaluable in ascertaining exactly what

part(s) of your pre application needs to be revised, retooled or even removed. This is one of the most direct actions you can take to make sure that you will be able to submit a more qualified pre-application next year.

2. NETWORK WITH SUCCESSFUL I3 APPLICANTS.

Besides gathering reviewer commentary, there's no other better source of information than speaking with folks who have "been there and done that." You might want to explore the DOE's i3 website to review the list of 124 qualified pre-applicants or previous year's i3 awardees. Oftentimes, they will be able share their experiences (both good and bad), processes, and project details. This information can help you guide your project appropriately and avoid hard-learned lessons. Keep in mind

that these applicants may be in the swing of full development of their application and may not be in the best position to have a meaningful conversation with you at this point in time, but would probably be willing to share their experiences with you after the application period ends.

3. BEGIN PROJECT DEVELOPMENT NOW!

Writing the grant application in most instances is the easy part. The difficult part is constructing the actual project that will be articulated within the application. Assemble an "i3 task force" with relevant personnel and stakeholders to start developing the project. I suggest meeting monthly, or bi-weekly (ideally), to hammer out all of the details of your project. Be sure to take minutes of your meetings to keep a



record of your progress and retain any ideas that surface. To ensure that your project will address the goals and priorities of the program, use the i3 pre-application and full application guidance documents (available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html>) to help you shape your project.

4. START PREPARING YOUR PRE-APPLICATION EARLY.

Another way to get a jump on the competition is to begin the preparation of your pre-application in advance of the next year's solicitation. Now that you've constructed your project with i3 in mind, you can start to put pen to paper. Use the most current guidance available to direct the writing of your proposal. This will allow you to work your project into the basic context of the i3 pre application, circulate early, preliminary drafts to key personnel and stakeholders, and work out all of the wrinkles in your application well in advance of the deadline. When the next year's solicitation is released, you'll want to carefully read and review the new guidance document and instructions and amend your pre-application as necessary to reflect any changes in the grant program's priorities, instructions, and directions. One of the biggest complaints that I hear from folks is: "If only we had more time" or "I wish I had started this process earlier!" You absolutely can. If you can extend your runway for proposal development, why not do it?

Hopefully you'll be able incorporate one or more of these strategies into your process so that you find your organization as part of the "winning team" or, following the i3 Development pre-application process, part of the "chance to be a winning team."🍏



124 Highly-Rated Investing in Innovation (i3) Development Pre-Applicants Announced!

Out of 654 submissions, the Department of Education has selected 124 pre-applications to move on to the full application round of its 2012 i3 Development Grants competition. While these applicants have not won a grant award yet, they are one step closer to successfully pulling down a portion of over \$140 million available through the funding program. The pre-applicants selected to move on fall relatively evenly across the program's five absolute priorities, with the lowest number of applicants among Absolute Priority 1, Improving the Effectiveness and Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals, and the highest number of applicants in the Absolute Priority 2 category for projects focusing on STEM education. The list represents 31 states and the District of Columbia, with a large percent of applicants (over one third) located in California and New York.

Approximately 10-20 awards of up to \$3 million each are anticipated for the Development competition. The remainder of the available funds will be awarded for Scale-Up and Validation grants through the other two legs of the i3 program. A list of the highly-rated pre-applicants can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/2012/i3devhratedpreapp.xls>. Full applications are due August 17, 2012. Awards will be announced no later than December 31, 2012.



UPCOMING WEBCAST EVENTS

- Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program: Revitalize Your Community with Grant Funding Coming Soon-Sign up for an invitation at <http://www.grantsoffice.info/Webcasts.aspx>
- Community Challenge Planning Grant Program: Bring Innovative Projects to your community Coming Soon-Sign up for an invitation at <http://www.grantsoffice.info/Webcasts.aspx>
- Plan Ahead: Prepping for Funding in 2013
August 7, 2012 at 2:00PM EST
- Funding Decontamination for Emergency Management—Sponsored by RSDecon
August 16, 2012 at 2:00PM EST
- Practice Makes Perfect: Funding Health Professional Education & Training Initiatives
October 23, 2012 at 2:00PM EST

RECENT WEBCAST RECORDINGS

- Getting the Most out of your 2012 Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) Application
Recorded June 20, 2012
- Making the Most of Expected Homeland Security Funding – Sponsored by VueTOO
Recorded May 22, 2012
- Maximizing K-12 Title Funding for Technology Initiatives – Sponsored by Cisco
Recorded May 17, 2012
- Transforming Healthcare: Grant Funding for Promising Innovations in Service Delivery & Patient Safety – Sponsored by AT&T
Recorded May 1, 2012

These and other recordings are available for playback or download at <http://www.grantsoffice.info/Webcasts.aspx>

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