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**SMALL
BUSINESS
FUNDING**

**THE GRANT
WRITER'S
ROLE AS
STORYTELLER**

**H-1B TRAINING
GRANTS**

**NURSE
EDUCATION,
PRACTICE,
QUALITY AND
RETENTION
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**FUNDING
TECHNOLOGY
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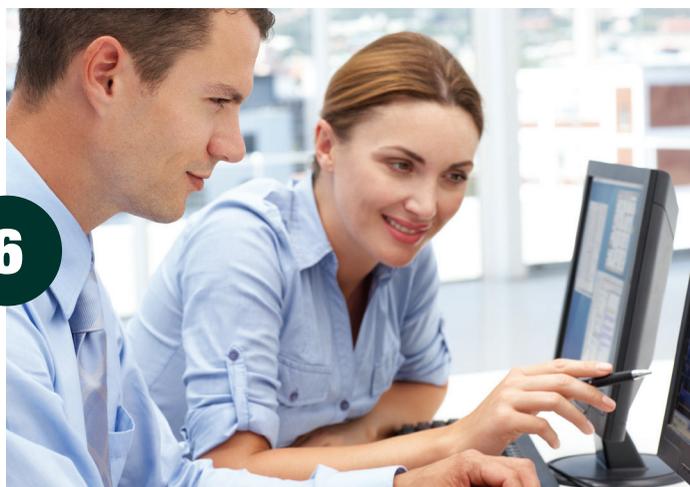
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PROGRAM SNAPSHOT



H-1B TECHNICAL SKILLS TRAINING GRANTS

SUMMARY H-1B technical skills training grants are financed by a user fee paid by employers to bring foreign workers into the United States under the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program. The grant program is designed to provide education, training, and job placement assistance in the occupations and industries for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers, and the related activities necessary to support such training.

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Two types of grants are available: On-the-Job Training (OJT) grants and those that use other training strategies. The majority of funding will go to OJT projects. At least \$45 million will go to health care industry training and at least \$60 million to projects that serve the long-term unemployed.

DEADLINE The last deadline for this program was November 17, 2011. A similar deadline is expected in 2012.

ELIGIBILITY Grants are awarded to partnerships of private and public sectors entities, including business-related nonprofits, community colleges and other education providers, workforce investment entities and economic development agencies.

AWARD AMOUNTS Award amounts vary. Approximately \$240 million was available in 2011.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE http://www.doleta.gov/grants/pdf/SGA-DFA-PY-10-13_Final_H-1BSGA.pdf

ONCE UPON A TIME: THE GRANT WRITER'S ROLE AS A STORY TELLER

By Susannah Mayhall

Grant writers have a lot on their plates: narratives, budgets, documentation, forms, and more. Amid all the moving parts of a grant application, it can become easy to lose sight of the proposal's overall message and how it all ties together. Sometimes it can help to take a step back and look at the proposal with fresh eyes, asking the most basic of all writing-related questions: Does this proposal tell a story?

On the outset, stories and grant proposals may seem to have little in common. After all, many of the most popular stories are children's tales involving magic and fantastical locations and characters. However, aside from all of the research, documentation, and facts, a well-written grant proposal contains many of the same elements as some of our favorite stories. After all, the job of a proposal is to draw the reviewer in and convince him or her that what you are saying makes enough sense to demand support. Among other things, grant writers are also storytellers. A closer look at a few basic elements of a good story can help to spark the idea for how to frame your proposal in the most compelling way possible.

1. CLEARLY DEFINE THE SETTING.

Most stories begin by introducing three things: the setting, the main characters, and the major problem or conflict.

Setting the scene is one aspect of proposal writing that can be easily overlooked. As a grant writer who is probably familiar with the organization applying for the grant, and possibly even living in the same city where the organization operates, you might skip over setting details because they're already ingrained in your mind. However, reviewers need to understand where the project will take place in order to determine if the project is warranted and if its impact is worth the money invested in it. They may not be familiar with your area and crucial elements of your story could be lost if you fail to properly set the scene. For instance, if you are writing a grant requesting funds for starting a distance learning program, it's important for reviewers to know if the project will take place in an area where traditional classroom lessons are impractical or ineffective, such as a mountainous region with brutal winter weather that prevents students from attending classes. In another example, if your region has been

experiencing problems such as significant population decline or a severely depressed economy, this information should be conveyed to reviewers as they consider the impact your project will have. Setting the scene allows reviewers to understand where you're coming from and how your project will impact your community.

2. INTRODUCE THE MAIN CHARACTERS.

Another crucial element of a well-told story are the main characters—the hero, the villain, and other characters that play important roles in the story.

From a grantwriting perspective, you must clearly articulate who your organization is and why it will be effective in carrying out the grant's mission. If the applicant organization is the hero, why are they qualified to address the problem, and what proof can they provide that their efforts will be met with success? As with setting the scene, sometimes this step can be easy to overlook if you are familiar with your organization's accomplishments and ability. Keep in mind that the reviewers may not be at all familiar with the organization and, furthermore, might be

looking at hundreds of similar organizations. Be sure to tell them why your organization stands above the rest.

3. DEMONSTRATE THE CONFLICT/PROBLEM.

All great stories are wound around a central conflict—a dragon terrorizing the village, a famine starving the country, a curse debilitating one or more characters, etc. The conflict is the “hook” of the story—the reader understands the problem and wants to see it resolved.

Yet another grantwriting factor that can be easily overlooked at the hands of familiarity is the problem or need statement. All too often, a proposal fails to properly demonstrate why the project itself is needed. One particularly tricky mistake is to see the lack of funding itself as the problem. It is imperative to remember that every organization applying for grant funding is likely experiencing this problem as well. It is not singular to your organization, and the goal of the grant program is probably not merely to provide a financial boost. Funders want to know that their support will be used to help a community or solve a problem. Find out as much as you can about your particular problem—what it is, who experiences it, why they experience it, how your project will help to fix it, and why the grant program to which you’re applying has the same goals as your project.

4. FOLLOW THE RHYTHM OF THE STORY.

Stories, in their most basic form, follow a series of events. Once the reader has met the characters, knows where the story takes place, and understands the major conflict, he or she is led through the story in a forward motion until a climax and resolution occur.

While the layout of your grant proposal may not necessarily be your choice as many funders dictate a specific outline, it is up to you to make sure that reviewers can follow your thought process. Whenever possible, simplify your writing and continue in a logical progression. You want to help the reviewer to see things your way and come around to your way of thinking—this is the most basic purpose of a persuasive essay. Don’t risk losing your reader by using confusing or circular logic or trying to “dress up” your writing with complex syntax and ten-dollar words.

5. HAPPY ENDINGS!

All stories certainly don’t have happy endings, but many of our favorite children’s tales do come to a satisfying resolution. In this one respect, the grant proposal will not match up with the story pattern because you are asking the grantor to help you reach a happy ending! Hopefully, by this point you’ve clearly demonstrated the need for grant support and how your project syncs up with

the funder’s goals. A successful grant proposal will have an overall sense of thoroughness so that the reviewer knows you are “shovel ready,” pending their support. This proposal will instill a sense of confidence in the reviewer that you are the best candidate for the job and that you will carry out the project well and generate the positive outcomes anticipated in the proposal.

Successful proposals require effort, organization, ability, and collaboration. However, by treating every proposal like an opportunity to tell your organization’s story, you can increase your effectiveness with reviewers and hopefully ensure a happy ending for your funding goals. ♦



FUNDING TECHNOLOGY WITH GRANTS

By Chris LaPage

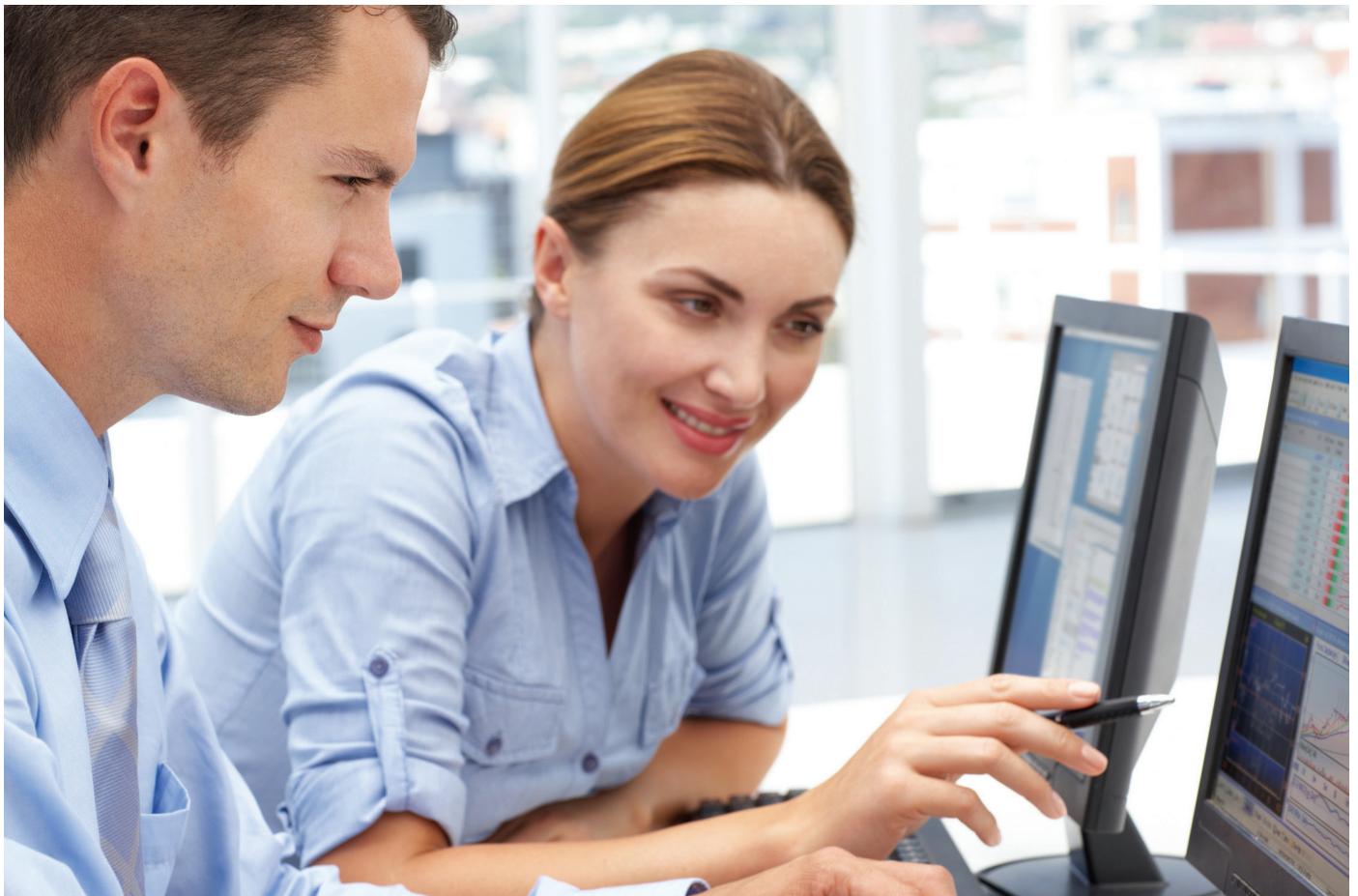
THE REAL WORLD

We are now a society driven by the proliferation of the Internet and an insatiable appetite for instantaneous information, often times expecting the analysis to already be completed, distilled and presented as the bottom line. It should surprise no one that public safety agencies, schools, hospitals

and non-profit organizations adopt this bottom line approach and typically express their needs in terms of the technology and products necessary to accomplish their organizational objectives. After all, this is the real world. Public safety agencies need communications equipment, schools must provide student access to computers, and hospitals are trying to move into the 21st Century with electronic health records.

GRANTS FUND PROJECTS... NOT PRODUCTS

When it comes to grants, the industry mantra is that “grants fund projects... not products.” Unfortunately, this approach does not always mesh nicely with the bottom line, real-world perspective. Grant programs are created with the intended purpose of solving some type of dilemma in new, unique and innova-



tive ways. The simple acquisition of technology products in and of itself rarely accomplishes such hearty and far-reaching objectives. In the grants world, technology should be viewed as an enabler of projects. In that respect, technology can be supported by grants insofar as the products are key components of a broader project that advances the specific goals and objectives of the funding opportunity. Furthermore, in addition to equipment, a well-rounded project will typically include a budget for personnel, training activities, contract services and a variety of other elements necessary to carry out the initiative.

The key questions you must ask yourself are “Why do I need this particular product, or piece of technology?” and “How does the technology and overall project advance the objectives of the grant program?” For instance, a grant program may be available to increase the number of students interested in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) careers. Leveraging hardware and software associated with distance learning technology may be a component of a project that seeks to connect students with real-world professionals, such as professionals that work for NASA. The idea is that providing such immersive experiences will increase interest in students to pursue such careers and the technology simply enables a school in Oregon to connect with NASA in Florida.

WRITING TECHNOLOGY INTO YOUR PROPOSAL

Understanding how technology can be leveraged in grant-friendly projects is only half the battle. Many

folks trip up when it comes time to put pen to paper. It may be true that technology is a primary enabler for a particular projects and absolutely critical to the overall success of a particular project. However, that does not mean the technology and products associated with the projects should be placed front and center in the proposal. Too often folks will focus on specific technologies and the product descriptions provided by the vendor. Most funders are more interested in a well-thought out vendor selection process that highlights the specific functionality of the required technology. Certainly you will need detailed pricing from specific vendors in order to create a budget as well as provide proper justification. However, you must avoid the tendency to allow the technology to dominate the project narrative. Remember that the grantmaker is providing funding to address a particular problem. The narrative must focus on the overall project and how it will meet the objectives of the grant program. In order to be com-

petitive, the project must be unique and innovative. Simply leveraging a piece of advance technological equipment does not in itself make a project innovative. The narrative must explain how the accompanying changes in workflow, process and overall approach of the project is innovative, not just the technology.

IN CONCLUSION...

Although it may seem like two worlds colliding, the good news is that grants are indeed a great source of funding for technology. Doing so requires the formulation of a well-rounded project that provides a proper context for the enabling technology. Next time you are analyzing the viability of a particular grant program for your technology-enabled project, be sure to do so with these lessons in mind. Now you have the proper mindset... time to go get the money! 🚀

Grants Office has years of experience aligning technology needs with grant funding.

We offer a variety of services to help you find funding for your technology initiatives, from grant Research Reports and Consultation through our Helpdesk to direct grantwriting support. Our team has the experience and insight to help get your project off the ground. We have helped hundreds of clients such as K-12 school districts, police and fire departments, nonprofit organizations, universities, hospitals, and more successfully apply to grant programs and win funding for their technology projects.

Contact us today at (585) 473-1430 or info@grantsoffice.com for more information about how we can help you find the funding you need for the technology you want!

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT



Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention (NEPQR) Program

SUMMARY The Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention (NEPQR) Program supports projects that strengthen the nursing workforce and improve nurse retention and quality of care by expanding the nursing pipeline, promoting career mobility, providing continuing education, and supporting retention activities.

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Projects will be deemed highly competitive if the project:

1. cultivate practice environments in which emergent nurse leaders have an opportunity to demonstrate leadership in inter-professional team building, collaborative problem-solving and care-coordination,
2. provide inter-professional clinical training opportunities for nursing students, and
3. demonstrate innovation in Inter Professional Collaborative Practice (IPCP).

DEADLINE The last deadline for this program was May 29, 2012. A new RFP is anticipated in November 2012 with a deadline in January 2013.

ELIGIBILITY Eligible applicants are accredited schools of nursing, health care facilities, or a partnership of such a school and facility.

AWARD AMOUNTS Award amounts vary. Approximately \$10 million will be available in FY2013. Applicants may apply for up to \$500,000 per year for a three year project period.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE <https://grants.hrsa.gov/webExternal/FundingOppDetails.asp?FundingCycleId=2428200F-27D6-472D-9C94-D57EBA581FB4&ViewMode=EU&GoBack=&PrintMode=&OnlineAvailabilityFlag=&pageNumber=&version=&NC=&Popup=>

SMALL BUSINESSES AND THEIR PLACE IN THE AMERICAN DREAM

By Ali Palmieri

In the recent presidential debates, there was a lot of mention of small businesses and how they make America tick. Also, in recent years, there has been a push for people to shop small and shop local and from this push came Small Business Saturday. People have defined owning your own business and working hard to achieve success in entrepreneurship as part of the American Dream.

The Small Business Administration's (SBA) philosophy and mission began to take shape in a number of predecessor agencies, largely as a response to the pressures of the Great Depression and World War II. Officially, the SBA was created on July 30, 1953, by President Eisenhower with the signing of the Small Business Act. Its function was and is to "aid, counsel, assist and protect, insofar as is possible, the interests of small business concerns." The mission of the SBA is to maintain and to strengthen the nation's economy by enabling the establishment and viability of small businesses and by assisting in the economic recovery of communities after disasters.

Programs are put into place to focus on small and disadvantaged business, Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUBZone), minorities, veterans and women in business and to give them the tools they need to succeed.

The 8(a) Business Development Program is an important resource for small businesses seeking business-development assistance. Named for Section 8(a) of the Small Business Act, this program was created to help small and disadvantaged businesses compete in the marketplace. It also helps these companies gain access to federal and private procurement markets.

The SBA regulates and implements the HUBZone Program by determining which businesses are eligible to receive HUBZone contracts, maintaining a listing of qualified HUBZone small business that federal agencies can use to locate vendors, adjudicating protest of eligibility to receive HUBZone contracts and reporting to the Congress on the program's impact of employment and investment in HUBZone areas.

Minorities, veterans and women have their own offices they may reference when seeking assistance with their small businesses. There is the Minority Business Development Agency and Veterans may certify their businesses as Veteran-Owned or Service Disabled Veteran-Owned in order to take advantages of the resources that are available to them.

Women owned small businesses (WOSBs) or economically disadvantaged women owned small businesses (EDWOSBs) have specific advantages that have been put into place to level the competitive playing field in the small business landscape. A woman is presumed economically disadvantaged if she has a personal net worth of less than \$750,000, her adjusted gross yearly income averaged over the three years preceding the certification does not exceed \$350,000, and the fair market value of all her assets (including her primary residence and the value of the business concern) does not exceed \$6 million.

Some business grants are available through state and local programs, non-profit organizations and other groups. Some states provide grants for expanding child care centers; creating energy efficient technology; and developing marketing campaigns for tourism. Recipients may

have to match grant funds or become part of a loan program.

Loans are available for starting businesses, disaster assistance, export assistance, veterans and the military and others for special purposes. They range from assisting in acquiring and expanding a small business to providing financing to eligible small businesses for the planning, design or installation of a pollution control facility.

SBA has a Loans and Grants Search Tool that helps entrepreneurs identify what government financing programs may be available by using a series of questions including what state you are located in. The results will direct you to available funding through federal, state and local governments. There are also great resources such as checklists for loan applications.

In today's difficult economic climate, it is good to know that the presidential candidates are placing the spotlight in small business. America could not function without them and the fact the Small Business Administration is available can give entrepreneurs hope for achieving the American Dream. ♦



EVENTS



GRANTS OFFICE

UPCOMING WEBCAST EVENTS

- Practice Makes Perfect: Funding Health Professional Education & Training Initiatives—Sponsored by AT&T
October 23, 2012 at 2:00PM EDT
- Funding to Enhance Technology in Your College Workforce Development Programs—Sponsored by Cisco
November 13, 2012 at 2:00PM EDT
- Funding Educational Innovation—Sponsored by Cisco
December 11, 2012 at 2:00PM EDT
- Getting a Handle on 2013 Funding for Public Safety Initiatives—Sponsored by Cisco
January 15, 2013 at 2:00PM EDT
- 2013 Homeland Security Funding: Bringing IT Home—Sponsored by Cisco
February 12, 2013 at 2:00PM EDT

RECENT WEBCAST RECORDINGS

- Funding for Federally Qualified Health Centers—Sponsored by Cisco
Recorded October 4, 2012
- Finding Technology Dollars in K-12 Title Funding—Sponsored by Cisco
Recorded September 18, 2012
- Realizing Student Achievement in the 21st Century—Sponsored by Cisco
Recorded August 28, 2012

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

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