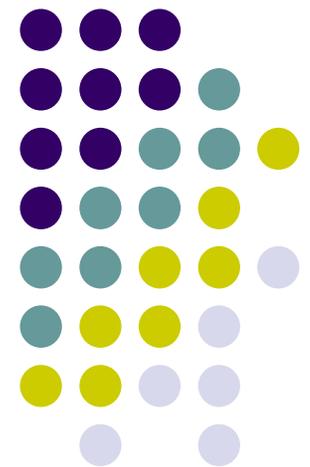


Writing Proposals

Main Elements of a Proposal,
Common Errors,
Tips on Writing Winning Proposals





*“Proposal Writing Is An Art.
You Were Never Taught How To Do This
In School. Now Is The Time To Learn
How”*

Dan Safford

Two-Stage Submission Process – Letters of Intent



- Usually short – 2 to 5 pages long
- concise, brief, and clear.
- Read the instructions of the funding agency, sometimes they specify the format and sections needed.
- If format is not provided by funding agency then a letter of intent should include the following:

Concept Paper/Letter of Intent



- A. Project Title and Introduction (Do some homework about agency)
- B. State the problem that needs to be addressed
- C. Project Description (Objectives, Approach, new methods and benefits)
- D. Time and Support Needed (If Budget is not requested don't include)
- E. Contact Information



Main Elements of a Proposal

The following are major elements to be included in a proposal:

1. Title Page
2. Abstract (Executive Summary)
3. Statement of Need
4. Project Description (Objectives, Methodology, Staffing, Administration and Evaluation)
5. Budget & Budget Justification
6. Biographical Data and References
7. Appendices



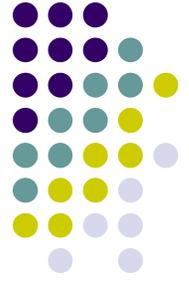
1. Title Page

- When Provided by the Sponsor Agency – Should be Accurately filled out

It Contains:

- Project Title
- Project Team
- Institution Details
- Funding Agency Name
- Submission Deadline, or the Date of Preparation

2. Abstract/ Executive Summary



- This section is a summary of the whole proposal and the most important section.
- It should serve as a description of the whole proposal – It must stand alone – even if separated from proposal
- It must be understood by both experts in your field and by generalists.
- It might be the only section read by all members of grants committee who are not the primary reviewers but nevertheless their score is taken into consideration

2. Abstract/ Executive Summary (Cont.)



The Contents of the Abstract should:

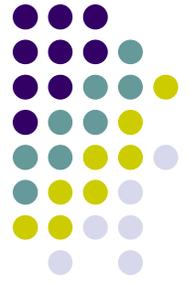
- Define the problem that will be addressed,
- Provide a short description of the main aims and objectives,
- State the project's significance and potential contribution,

2. Abstract/ Executive Summary (Cont.)



- State the expected benefits of the proposed project,
- Clearly identify the project's end-products
- Mention how proposal is related to the mission and objectives of funding agency.

3. Statement of Need



1. This section represents the reason behind your proposal and should specify the problem to be solved and the need to solve it or research it.
2. Has to be persuasive: Include the facts and evidence, statistics that support the need for the project.



3. Statement of Need

3. Include an explanation of the project's significance and how compatible it is with your organization's programs.
4. Give the reader hope.



4. Project Description

- This section should have 5 subsections
 - A. Objectives
 - B. Methods
 - C. Staffing
 - D. Project Administration
 - E. Evaluation

4a. Objectives



It is extremely important to state/list your objectives clearly.

- They must be tangible and specific indicating precisely what you intend to change through your project.
- They must be practical, logical, realistic and measurable, indicating how each objective contributes to achieving your overall goals.

4b. Methodology



The methodology describes the specific activities that will take place to achieve the objectives: how, why, when, and who.

HOW: Description of what will occur from the time of the project begins until completion.

WHY: You may need to defend your chosen methods, especially if they are new.

WHEN: Present the order and timing of tasks.

AND



4c. *Staffing*

WHO: Who will do what?

- Include information on the number of staff, their qualifications, and their roles on the project.
- For paid staff, must include who will work full time and which who work part-time on the project.
- Identify staff that is already part of your organization and those to be recruited specifically for the project.

4d. *Project Administration*



- Describe the plan for administering the project.
- Crystal clear description on who will be administering the grant, in terms of subcontracting expertise, reporting, for financial matters.



4e. *Evaluation*

- Include Evaluation Plan - Define the measures and tools you will use to evaluate the success of project.
- One can measure the product
- Analyze the process and or strategies adopted
- Determine the impact on the beneficiaries
- Include Evaluation Costs in budget



5. Budget

- The budget must be calculated with reasonable accuracy.
- As you start preparing the budget, go back through the proposal narrative and make a list of all personnel and non-personnel items related to operation of the project.
- The budget must be divided into direct and indirect costs.



5. Budget (cont.)

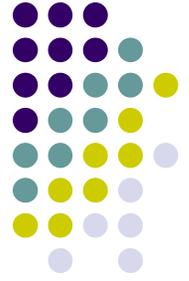
- **Direct Costs:** Are costs related *to the direct implementation of the project* and include such expenditures as personnel and non-personnel costs.
- **Indirect Costs** are the project's and university's operating costs but not directly linked to the project activities.



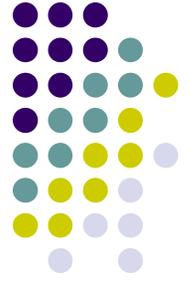
5. Budget Narrative

- It is not always needed if costs are straightforward and the numbers are clear
- However if needed, you can structure it in two ways:
 - Footnote style numbers on the budget and explain them below the budget Or
 - If an extensive explanation is required you can write it as straight text.

6. Biographical Data and References



- Biographical data must be submitted with proposals to show the background, areas of interest, research qualifications, capabilities, and publications of the person submitting the proposal and those who will be working on the project.
- A current list of references to relevant literature in the field.



7. Appendices

- This section includes documents and information which support the proposal such as:
 - Illustrations,
 - Figures and graphs,
 - Letters of support,
 - Certifications.



Common Errors Made

- The proposal is too ambitious.
- There are no clearly defined priorities and timetable.
- There are no results of pilot studies or other preliminary data.
- The Budget is unrealistic.

Common Errors Made



- The application is fragmented and disjointed
- Carelessness – “I don’t have to go into detail, trust me and look at my track record” Cannot rely on your reputation, it does not work.
- The proposal tends to be too cautious and does not venture into new, unexplored areas

TIPS For Writing Winning Proposals



- **Read** the Request for Proposals (RFP) and Follow the **Guidelines**.
- Clearly State your **goals and objectives**.
- Explain and justify the project **design, approach and methodology**.
- If requesting **resources**, you will need to justify their need.

TIPS For Writing Winning Proposals



Abstract & Review

- **Abstract** - Make sure that the 1st sentence contains the idea of what you aim to do and why.
- Address stated **review criteria** thoroughly
- Have the proposal **reviewed** by a colleague

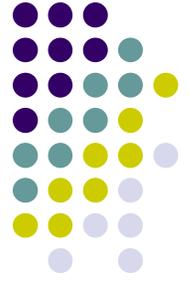
TIPS For Writing Winning Proposals

Layout and Structure



- Include a **table of contents** that clearly identifies the various proposal sections.
- Make your proposal **look good**. Lay the application out well with clear sections and subsections.
- Use **tables and figures** as information can be read more easily.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST



- *CONTACT OGC*
- *Obtain University Clearance and Support*

**If the Proposal gets rejected
Write, Modify and Re-apply
and**

DON'T GET DISCOURAGED!