

For
Faith and
Community
Based
Organizations

The Grantwriting Guide

(Selected Portions)

2 0 0 4

Developed by
Concurrent
Technologies
Corporation,
this training
guide is made
possible by a
grant from the
U.S. Depart-
ment of Labor
for free
distribution to
faith and
community
based organi-
zations.

Organizational Readiness

Sample Articles of Incorporation: www.mapnp.org/library/legal/articles.htm

Sample By-Laws: www.boarddevelopment.org/display_document.cfm?document_id=69

Strategic Planning Manual: www.uwex.edu/li/learner/spmanual.pdf

Prior to pursuing grant funds, an organization should first assess its readiness to commit the needed resources to grant seeking and grant management. Seeking grant funds can be a time-consuming and lengthy process. Additionally, most funders require grant recipients to be certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, track and document funded project outcomes and performance measures, demonstrate proper accounting functions and financial management practices, and meet other institutional capacity requirements. Federal grants have significant reporting and documentation requirements in the administration of grant funds, following federal policy guidelines and meeting performance goals. Some grants require cash and/or in-kind matches from the organization while others require documentation of community support or partnerships. Be sure that your organization has the resources to properly pursue grant funding and the institutional capacity to manage those funds if received. In particular, organizations should examine the following areas to ensure that the adequate policies and procedures are in place.

- ↳ Board and Management Issues
- ↳ Organization's Mission Statement, Objectives and Goals
- ↳ Community Partnerships and Local Support
- ↳ Staffing Levels and Volunteers
- ↳ Budgeting and Accounting Procedures
- ↳ Other Internal Controls

Organizations that have very small budgets often have difficulty managing a large infusion of cash from a grant which only lasts a short period. The organization may need to hire additional staff require current staff and volunteers to dedicate more time to the funded project. After the grant period ends, revenues may not be in place to continue the higher level of operations and plans for long-term sustainability may not be in place. Small organization's who plan on pursuing grant funds must assess their capacity to meet the increased level of activity while planning for program sustainability after the grant funding goes away.

Keep in mind the specific issues related to faith-based organizations. See www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/guidance/index.html for federal standards.

For more information see the online resources below.

- ↳ Nonprofit Assessment Tool: www.uwex.edu/li/learner/assessment.htm
- ↳ Board Orientation: www.boarddevelopment.org/display_document.cfm?document_id=30
- ↳ The Alliance for Nonprofit Governance: www.angonline.org/resources-governance-questions.asp
- ↳ United Way - Outcome Measurement Resource Network: <http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/library/ndpaper.cfm>
- ↳ Establishing a Nonprofit Organization: <http://fdncenter.org/learn/classroom/establish/index.html>
- ↳ Where to Start When Creating a Nonprofit: www.nonprofit-info.org/npofaq/02/
- ↳ HUD Training Webcasts: www.hud.gov/webcasts/archives/index.cfm

Conceptualizing a Proposal

A two or three page concept paper will help formalize the project plan and provide potential funders with information needed to determine interest in a full proposal. This document can be developed early and grow as the project idea develops. The concept paper can provide a quick overview of the project to potential partners and other stakeholders. The appropriate content for a concept paper will vary by project, but generally, the concept paper should address the following items.

- ↳ A brief description of the project goals and general strategies, the need it addresses and expected results (i.e. benefits or outcomes)
- ↳ An explanation of how the project matches the funder's interests and priorities as well as the priorities of the applicant entity
- ↳ An overview of the project's objectives, methods, timetable and evaluation strategies
- ↳ The capability of the applicant entity and project director
- ↳ A summary of resources needed, a rationale for seeking funding and the total amount of funds requested from funder
- ↳ A list of other funding sources committed or anticipated
- ↳ Future funding plans, if applicable
- ↳ A contact person

Address the following questions in moving from general solution strategies to specific project design.

- ↳ What is the goal of the project?
- ↳ What needs or problems does the project address?
- ↳ What evidence exists to document the needs or problems?
- ↳ What are the project objectives (i.e., what measurable outcomes should the project produce)?
- ↳ What methods or activities will be conducted to achieve the objectives?
- ↳ What is the rationale for the selected methods or activities? Are these the most appropriate and potentially effective methods or activities?
- ↳ What is the target population of the project? How many people will the project serve?
- ↳ What is the expected result of the project; how will it meet the need or solve the problem?
- ↳ What resources are needed to carry out the project, e.g., personnel, materials, equipment, supplies, space, travel funds?
- ↳ Is commitment from another organization necessary?
- ↳ What is the estimated budget needed to carry out the project?
- ↳ What resources can the applicant entity provide, e.g., space, computers, management?
- ↳ Are matching funds required? What is the potential for matching funds?
- ↳ Is proof of project sustainability required? If so, are you prepared to document sustainability?
- ↳ What is the potential for future funding?
- ↳ What is the timeline for implementing the project?

- ↳ Who will administer the project (i.e., the recipient of the funds), and who will provide the hands-on direction of the project?
- ↳ What are the qualifications of the project administrator and director? Are these qualifications adequate?
- ↳ How will the project be monitored?
- ↳ How will the project be evaluated? Who will conduct the evaluation?

Building Partnerships

Before you seek funding, find out if there are existing organizations or consortias already providing the services you plan on providing. If so, partner with them. If not, determine if there are other groups that provide complimentary services that would make your project stronger. Many funding sources look for projects that leverage resources from several groups. Partners should be selected based on an evaluation of the costs and benefits of each partnership in light of project and funder requirements. It may be that your organization does not have all the skills needed to successfully complete the project or the impact of the project would significantly increase if partners where added.

Partnership benefits can include:

- ↳ Greater skills, expertise and experience,
- ↳ Additional matching funds and in-kind contributions,
- ↳ Increased project value and impact, and
- ↳ Increased competitive advantage in securing grant funds.

Partnership costs can include:

- ↳ Decreased control over project design or direction,
- ↳ A division of future grant funds among project partners,
- ↳ Increased project costs, and
- ↳ Additional time and resources required to maintain partnerships.

Some partnerships simply involve members of the business community, community leaders or local/state officials lending their support and recommendation for the project. Grant seekers should secure letters expressing support and/or funding commitments from these types of partners to include in future proposals.

Other partnerships involve collaboration between organizations in carrying out project work. For these types of partnerships, partnership expectations, roles and responsibilities and outcomes should be outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other partnership agreement. These agreements may require some time to negotiative, but will prevent conflicts and ensure mutual confidentiality and effective cooperation in the future.

Project partners should be involved in the further development of the project concept and in future proposals, preposals and letters of inquiry as well as project outreach activities, marketing, implementation, review/evaluation and continuation planning.

Identifying Potential Funding Sources

Find another good reference on finding grant funding at:
www.cardi.cornell.edu/cd_toolbox_2/tools/grantwriting.cfm

Sources of Grant Funds

There are so many sources of grant funds that staying informed about potential opportunities is almost more time consuming than the actual proposal writing. In general, sources of grant funds can be divided into the following three main categories.

- ↳ Federal agencies
- ↳ State agencies
- ↳ Private Sector and Local Funds

Grant seeking can be a very fruitful activity for your community or organization. Many Federal and State government programs provide funding through competitive grants. Foundations provide many opportunities for creative problem solving, as corporations and individual philanthropists earmark funds to address social and community development issues.

The amount of money awarded through grants is staggering. The Federal government, for example, awarded over \$338 billion in grant funds in the 2001 fiscal year. Over \$12.5 billion was awarded to South Carolina and Georgia recipients. Private Foundations distribute over \$19 billion in grant funds annually.

To determine the most appropriate funding source for a project, learn about the interests of potential sources and pursue those whose interests most closely match your project goals. Remember, even a perfectly written proposal will fail if it is not consistent with the goals and priorities of the funding source.

See Section 4 for additional resources for identifying potential funding sources and funding opportunities.

Some of the key information resources on funding sources are as follows.

- ↳ Libraries
- ↳ The Internet
- ↳ Annual Reports
- ↳ Guides for Grant Applications
- ↳ The Foundation Center
- ↳ Chronicle on Philanthropy
- ↳ National and State Foundation Directories
- ↳ Federal Register
- ↳ Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
- ↳ Council on Foundations
- ↳ Subject Area Newsletters and LISTSERVES
- ↳ Commerce Business Daily

Organizations can request information from foundations or other funding sources to begin the basic research for appropriate funding sources. If an organization is researching a government agency, copies of any laws and regulations that pertain to the specific program should also be requested.

Keys to Federal Agency Funding

Federal grants and contracts require a high level of administrative and fiscal management to document expenses and outcomes, track performance and meet reporting requirements. Additionally, federal guidelines prohibit the use of federal funds for religious activity. Be sure your organization and program can meet these requirements or partner with an organization with experience in government grants and contracts.

Federal Funding Agencies

The following Federal agencies are of primary interest to community-based and faith-based organizations.

- ↳ Department of Labor
- ↳ Department of Health and Human Services
- ↳ Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ↳ Department of Justice
- ↳ Department of Agriculture
- ↳ Department of Education

Applicant Eligibility

A very important consideration with any Federal funding source is applicant eligibility. Read all application information carefully to determine if the organization is eligible to apply. Since many formerly discretionary grant programs have been converted to block grants/formula grants, state or local governments may be the initial recipients and make subgrants or contracts to non-profit organizations. If there are restrictions that make the organization ineligible, remember the key word “collaboration”. Organizations may be able to find an allowable applicant to collaborate with and to submit the proposal.

Funding Cycles

In terms of funding cycles and deadlines, most federal agencies keep a fairly consistent schedule of grant deadlines. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, for example, generally issues a “SuperNOFA” (Notice of Funds Availability) about mid-way through the Federal fiscal year (October 1 – September 30) that covers most of the funding opportunities for the year.

Advance Development

Knowing the deadlines allows organizations to start proposal development months in advance. However, organizations should wait to write the bulk of the proposal until after the application instructions have been released. As part of early development work, organizations should talk to the program officer about the idea and the potential plans for the project. Advance development work is critical because applications are frequently due thirty to forty-five days after the announcement in the Federal Register which does not allow enough time to put together a top-notch project.

Find federal grant programs using the Federal Funds Catalogue online at: www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbc/catalogue.pdf or visit the grants.gov web site at: www.grants.gov.

Sources of Information About Federal Funding Opportunities

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) — The CFDA is the Federal Government directory of all loans, grants and contracts. It is published annually and is generally available at the reference section of the public library. A searchable version is available online at www.cfda.gov.

Federal Register and *FedBizOpps.gov* — All Federal agencies provide information about grants through the *Federal Register* and contracts through the *Commerce Business Daily*. Both are published each weekday and are available online at www.gpoaccess.gov/fr and www.fedbizopps.gov. These announcements provide closing dates, funding criteria and related information.

Keys to State Agency Funding

State funding opportunities have many of the same capacity and program requirements and as federal sources, but represent another potential source of project funds for your organization.

Pass-Through Funds

Funding from state agencies varies from one state to another. Often, what is classified as state grant money is actually a pass-through of Federal funds to states or a combination of Federal funds and state matching dollars. Some pass-through money is to be redistributed according to formulas prescribed in Federal statutes. Other program funds may be made available on a competitive basis or a combination. For example, a grant could be a pass-through by a formula to local governments that then holds a competition among local community organizations requesting funding.

Sources of Information about State Funding

Section 4 provides more detail on specific state agencies of interest to faith and community-based organizations in South Carolina.

Agency Publications — Announcements from state agencies provide information about grant opportunities. Learn about how states publish grant information.

Mailing Lists — Frequently state agencies maintain mailing lists to notify potential bidders of upcoming contract or grant opportunities. Contact these state agencies to determine if they maintain such a list and ask to have your organization added. Links to all South Carolina state agencies can be found at www.state.sc.us/stateage.html. The South Carolina government portal is www.mysc.gov.

South Carolina Materials Management Office (MMO) - The SC MMO is the state equivalent of the *FedBizOpps.gov*. Procurement for all state agencies is done by the MMO, which can be found online at www.state.sc.us/mmo.

Keys to Private Sector and Local Funding

Types of Private Sector and Local Funding

Foundations — There are several different types of foundations, including independent, corporate and community.

- ↳ Independent foundations are the most numerous and award grants from the assets provided by a family or an individual's endowment.
- ↳ Corporate foundations provide a method for businesses to make tax-deductible contributions to the community and support innovations or address needs that are of particular interest to their board or executives.
- ↳ Community foundations accept donations from individuals and groups and use the funds to meet local needs, again in response to a board or other advisors.

Corporations — In lieu of establishing a foundation, some corporations may award grants through a corporate giving program reflecting the corporation's interests. With the major corporations, you may have a lot of competition for funds, but remember that local discretionary money is set aside by many large corporations to enhance projects specifically in the local area. Contact the community relations office to get information about corporations that serve your area.

Local businesses, civic clubs, community agencies — Local businesses, clubs or community agencies also make grant awards that you may be able to take advantage of, especially if you collaborate with other local groups. Contact owners, officers or executive directors to gather specific information about their funding interests.

Comparisons to Federal or State Funding

Finding and winning private-sector funds is different than seeking government funds. First of all, there is much more likely to be a friendly relationship between the applicant and a private-sector source. Many successful foundation grant recipients have taken the time to develop a working relationship with foundation staff so that they are known entities when it comes time to submit grant applications. Within these working relationships, funders may help you develop your project idea or advise you on how to strengthen your proposal.

Another difference with private-sector sources is that they can be much more flexible in their giving because they are not bound by government regulations and public accountability. They can set their own rules and fund more risky projects. If you are trying for an experimental or particularly innovative project, private funding may be your best bet.

Private-sector funds vary greatly in size, scope and type of assistance. While there may not be as much red tape as in government, there may be other restrictions to consider that may include the following.

- ↳ Restrictions on geographic area – a foundation may fund projects only in one county, region or state
- ↳ Restrictions on type of applicant – foundations may exclude certain types of applications like individuals or for-profit agencies, or they may limit funding to a certain type of applicant, like minorities or women returning to school
- ↳ Restrictions on subject or type of activity – again, foundations may specify a certain type of activity or subject area that they want to fund, such as teacher training or career development education, or they may exclude certain possibilities, such as physical facilities or equipment

Sources of Information about Private-Sector Funding

More information about identifying private-sector and local funding can be found in section 4.

The Foundation Center publications — The Foundation Center is an independent national service organization established by foundations to provide information on philanthropic giving. The Foundation publishes several unique and indispensable books that can aid serious grant seekers, and many of the publications are available in public, college and state libraries.

Each state also has one or more Cooperating Collections located in libraries, community foundations or other nonprofit agencies. Cooperating Collections maintain a core collection of Foundation Center publications and a variety of supplementary materials and services. The key publications available from the Foundation Center include the following. (For a complete listing of publications, visit www.fdncenter.org.)

- ↳ The *Foundation Directory* covers over 20,000 of the largest foundations with total assets over \$400 billion and donations exceeding \$19 billion.
- ↳ The *Foundation 1000* provides detailed information about the 1,000 largest foundations. It includes information on program areas, application information, names of program staff and sample grants.
- ↳ The *Foundations Grants Index* provides information on recently awarded grants, giving an indication of its future funding priorities. This directory covers 1,000 of the largest independent, corporate and community foundations covering 100,000 grants of \$10,000 or more.
- ↳ *Foundation Center Databases* — The Foundation Center maintains several databases including data on funders and the grants distributed. The databases can be purchased on CD ROM or through an online subscription.
- ↳ *Internal Revenue Form 990-PF* — Private-sector funders must submit their funding information to the Internal Revenue Service annually to maintain their tax-exempt status. Their return, on the IRS Form 990-PF, indicates the size of their assets and what was funded in the past year. Copies of the 990-PFs can be searched online at the Foundation Center's web site at: www.fdncenter.org.

State Foundation Directories – States frequently publish directories of the foundations operating in their state. Additionally, the Foundation Center web site contains an index and links to community foundations by state. To purchase state directories for Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, contact the following organizations.

Georgia

Georgia Giving: The Directory of the State's Foundations

A comprehensive directory of 836 foundations available on CD ROM for \$55.00

Capital Development Services
111 Hampton Woods Lane
Raleigh, NC 27607
800.729.4553
www.capdev.com

North Carolina

North Carolina Giving: The Directory of the State's Foundations

A comprehensive directory of over 1,100 foundations available for \$120

Capital Development Services
111 Hampton Woods Lane
Raleigh, NC 27607
800.729.4553
www.capdev.com

South Carolina

South Carolina Foundation Directory

A comprehensive directory of South Carolina Foundations available for \$15

South Carolina State Library
1500 Senate Street
P.O. Box 11469
Columbia, SC 29211
803.734.8666

You can also download a free copy of the directory from the Library's web site at: www.state.sc.us/scsl/pubs/founddir/ and learn more about SC grant opportunities at: www.state.sc.us/scsl/grants.html.

Research Associates also has state directories and can be contacted at www.researchassociates.co.com or P.O. Box 1755, Irmo, South Carolina 29063 (803.750.9759).

More information about foundations and fundraising can be found at www.fundsnetsservices.com.

A list of South Carolina's top foundations is provided in Section 4.

Preliminary Proposals and Inquiry Letters

Preliminary Proposals

Note: If a written concept paper has been developed and project partners secured, preliminary proposals and inquiry letters will not require a lot of work to put together.

A preliminary proposal is sometimes required by the funding agency and the content requirements may or may not be specified. Always follow the directions specified. Preliminary proposals are:

- ↳ Usually 2 to 3 pages
- ↳ Useful to introduce unsolicited proposals
- ↳ An extension of the cover letter and is an abbreviated proposal

Typically, a preliminary proposal should include the following sections.

- ↳ Need
- ↳ Organizational Capability
- ↳ Project Plan
- ↳ Expected Outcomes
- ↳ Contact Person

Inquiry Letters

Many grantmakers permit grant applications by invitation only; therefore, organizations must first submit an inquiry letter. The goal of the inquiry is to receive an invitation to submit a full funding proposal. Generally, inquiry letters include the following main elements.

- ↳ Organization Overview and Purpose
- ↳ Reason for and Amount of Funds Requested
- ↳ Need or Problem (including target populations, statistics, example)
- ↳ Project or Program Description
- ↳ Prospective and Committed Project Funders
- ↳ Request for Funding Application

Introduction to Proposal Writing

Once the project has been thoroughly conceptualized, the process of writing is ready to begin. Although proposals have many standard features, there are many variations in the specific content and arrangement that individual funders want in a proposal. Obtain all guidelines or application forms from the potential funder and review the instructions carefully. Strictly adhere to the directions provided.

Outline the proposal before starting, taking care to ensure a logical flow among the objectives, methods, and evaluation. Also ensure that all resources are addressed in the budget and that the budget does not imply any activities that were not described previously.

Remember these key rules for proposal writing:

Rule #1: Follow directions carefully

Rule #2: Ensure a logical flow between sections

Rule #3: Do not include any “surprises” in the budget

Common Weaknesses in Proposals

- ↳ Applicant is not eligible to apply
- ↳ Project does not meet the funder’s goals
- ↳ Applicant did not follow instructions
- ↳ Project does not address a significant need or problem
- ↳ Documentation of need is not based on hard evidence and research and/or is not explained
- ↳ Objectives are unclear and/or not quantifiable or qualitative
- ↳ Project personnel lack the experience to carry out the plan or the proposal gives insufficient information about their qualifications
- ↳ Project director would be unable to give sufficient time to the project
- ↳ Budget is unrealistic—request is inadequate to support planned activities
- ↳ Evaluation plan would not accurately assess achievements and weaknesses of the stated objectives
- ↳ Proposal is poorly organized and written
- ↳ Proposal is submitted after the deadline

Typical Components of a Proposal

Copyright SeaCoast Web Design and Non-Profit Guides 1996-2002. This document is reproduced and distributed with the permission of SeaCoast Web Design and Non-Profit Guides. It is distributed electronically online at www.npguides.org to provide free information, and resources to non-profit organizations, charitable, educational, public organizations, and other community-minded groups.

The components of a proposal include and are usually addressed as follows.

- ↳ Cover Letter
- ↳ Cover Sheet
- ↳ Narrative
 - Needs Assessment
 - Goals and Objectives
 - Methodology
 - Evaluation
- ↳ Budget
- ↳ Qualifications
- ↳ Conclusion
- ↳ Appendices

Cover Letter (1 page)

Section 3 contains a sample cover letter on page 3-2.

It is customary to include a cover letter with the proposal. It should provide a clear, concise overview of the organization, the amount of funds requested along with a brief explanation of how the funds will be used and why. Show how the proposed project furthers the funding agency's mission and goals and how it matches their grant application guidelines. Cover Letters should be typed on the organization's letterhead; signed by the board chair, chief executive officer or executive director; and should include the applicant's contact information.

Cover Page

Section 3 contains a sample cover page on page 3-3.

The cover page usually includes project and organization identification information; however, the required information varies by agency. Some agencies release multiple requests for proposals at once, and the cover page allows the reviewers to quickly see who is applying for what grant.

Executive Summary or Project Overview (1 page)

Note: The proposal will be an expansion of the previously-developed concept paper, pre-proposal and/or inquiry letter. If the preparatory work has been completed, the proposal simply finalizes the project details.

Many organizations request an executive summary or a project overview. The executive summary introduces the proposal and the organization seeking funding, presents a clear, concise summary of proposal and a framework of project. It includes the purpose of the funding request, need or problem, objectives, methods, total project cost and amount requested. It provides an opportunity to sell the project and the organization requesting the funds.

Narrative (10-15 pages)

Needs Assessment (Problem Statement) (3-4 Pages)

The needs assessment objectively addresses specific situation, opportunity, problem, issue, or need; and the community the proposal addresses. Support the statement with qualified third-party research and/or evidence to justify the need or problem. Clearly and concisely demonstrate that a relevant, compelling problem or need exists. Describe the target population and define the community problem to be addressed.

Samples of narrative descriptions appear in Section 3 on pages 3-8 and 3-15.

Program Goals and Objectives (1 - 2 pages)

This section of the proposal should describe the outcome of the grant in measurable terms, in a succinct description of the proposed project outcome and accomplishment, including the overall goal(s); specific objectives or ways in which the goal(s) will be met. Goals explain what the organization wishes to accomplish, and objectives define how the organization will meet those goals. Program Goals and Objectives should include the following.

- ↳ Minimum of one goal for each problem or need in the problem or statement
- ↳ Description of the benefiting population
- ↳ Performance - the action that occurs within a specific time frame at an expected proficiency.
- ↳ Process - the method by which the action will occur
- ↳ Product - the tangible results from the action's performance and process.

Methodology (4+ Pages)

The methodology is an explanation of how the organization will accomplish the program goals and objectives. Describes the process in a rational, direct, chronological description of the proposed project. The methodology should answer the following.

A sample schedule is included in Section 3 after the first yellow divider.

- ↳ What are the problems to be addressed?
- ↳ What specific actions will be undertaken to accomplish the objectives?
- ↳ What will be the impact of the proposed activities?
- ↳ How will the activities benefit the community?
- ↳ Who will carry out the activities?
- ↳ What is the time frame for the proposed project or program?
- ↳ What are the long-term strategies for maintaining and sustaining the program?
- ↳ What is the project going to accomplish?
- ↳ When will the activities be undertaken?
- ↳ Who will be doing the work?
- ↳ Who will be served and how will they be selected?

Evaluation (1 - 2 Pages)

See the sample evaluation materials in Section 3 on pages 3-33 and 3-34.

The evaluation section explains how the organization will measure whether or not the program achieved the stated goals and objectives. Organizations should provide a means of measuring the programs' effectiveness and identify who will be involved in evaluating the program.

Evaluations should include the following.

- ↳ Plan for evaluating accomplishment of objectives
- ↳ Plan for modifying process and methodology
- ↳ Provide methods - criteria, data, instruments, analysis

Budget (1-2 pages)

The budget section explains through both narrative and numerical form how the requested money will be spent. This section also includes information about other funding sources for the proposed project. Include committed and pending sources of income. Include fees for services, government funds, corporate/private grants, individual donations, etc. Remember, if the funding agency requires matching funds, include proof that the matching funds have been committed or awarded.

The organization should clearly delineate costs to be met by the funding. Line items should separate both administrative (indirect) and program costs. Include separate budgets for the general operating and special projects. Show income and expenses in columnar form (according to general accounting/bookkeeping principles).

Separate costs for the following categories.

- ↳ Personnel
- ↳ Equipment
- ↳ Indirect Costs
- ↳ Fringe Benefits
- ↳ Supplies
- ↳ Other Direct Costs
- ↳ Travel Costs
- ↳ Contractual

Indirect costs include facility operations (rent/mortgage, utilities, maintenance, taxes, etc.), general office supplies, etc. Items such as postage and printing are typically considered indirect costs, unless they are specifically used for the proposed project, in which case they would be accounted for under supplies. Generally, the federal government defines equipment as only those items whose value exceeds \$5,000.

The detailed budget should be consistent with the proposal narrative and organizations should include a narrative budget justification for all items included in the budget request.

A sample budget appears on the following page.

Category	Funds Requested	Matching Funds	Total Budget
Personnel	\$80,471	\$123,445	\$203,916
Fringe	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$50,000
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
Contractual	\$25,000	\$270,000	\$295,000
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0
Indirect	\$114,476	\$176,555	\$291,031
Total Costs	\$249,947	\$600,000	\$849,946

Another sample budget appears in Section 3 after the second yellow divider.

Qualifications (1-2 pages)

The qualifications section allows the organization to explain why it is uniquely qualified to do the proposed project. The organization should demonstrate capacity to solve the problem or meet the need within 12-15 months or the timeframe specified by the funding organization. This section should include the following.

See example proposals in Section 3 on pages 3-8 and 3-15 for examples of qualification statements and conclusions.

- ↳ Organization's identity, purpose, constituents and service area, history, mission and goals
- ↳ Organization's current programs, activities, service statistics and strengths/and/or accomplishments
- ↳ Evidence and support of accomplishments (include third party statistics or references)
- ↳ Number of board members, full time paid staff, part-time paid staff and volunteers
- ↳ Evidence of Board involvement
- ↳ Key staff members' qualifications and administrative competence

Conclusion (1/2 page)

The conclusion should present a brief, concise summary of the proposal that restates the organization's case including the problem, proposed solution and sources and uses of funds.

Appendices or Attachments

Attachments are at the funder's discretion, and generally, funding agencies do not wish to receive elaborate proposals with videos, CDs, brochures, etc. Appendices generally include the following.

- ↳ Verification of Tax-Exempt Status (IRS determination letter)
- ↳ Certificate of Incorporation and By-Laws
- ↳ Listing of Officers and Board of Directors
- ↳ Financial Statements for Last Completed Fiscal Year (audited, preferred)
- ↳ Current General Operating Budget and Special Project Budget (if applicable)
- ↳ List of Clients Served (if appropriate)
- ↳ List of Other Current Funding Sources and Uses – proof of matching funds, as appropriate
- ↳ Biographies (or resumes) of Key Personnel (only if requested)
- ↳ Support Letters or Endorsements (limited number)
- ↳ Diagrams for Equipment or Schematics for Building Requests (if applicable)

Other Sections

In addition to the core components, funders also require other information related to applicant capability, project management and future plans. These sections vary widely among funding agencies, so proposals must follow the specific instructions given; however, many of these sections address the following.

- ↳ Staffing/Personnel
- ↳ Applicant Capability
- ↳ Facilities and Resources
- ↳ Management Plan
- ↳ Dissemination Plan
- ↳ Future/continuation funding

Tips for Successful Grant Writing

Target the Grantmaker

1. Target the proposal to appropriate grantmakers, but do not limit funding requests to one source.
2. In locating potential funding sources, start with a review of the funding purposes and priorities and applicant eligibility to determine whether the grantmakers' goals and objectives match the grantseeking purposes. Don't ignore a funder's guidelines in the hopes they'll fit their niche to your proposal!
3. Preview successful applications from grantseekers whose projects are similar to yours. You'll not only get some good ideas, you'll also improve your understanding of the competition.
4. Contact the grantmaker before writing the proposal to clearly understand the grantmaker's guidelines. Estimates show your chances of success improve by as much as 300% when you contact the funder before, and during the proposal-writing process. Don't ask for hidden agendas, but find out about general trends or new ideas that currently interest the funder.
5. Try to get program officials to review a 3-5 page summary of your plan first, to make sure you're on the right track. Don't underestimate the importance of the original letter contact when dealing with foundation or corporate funders. Make it as strong as possible, and keep it to the point.

Tips in this section are adapted from CD Publications, 1999, Montana State University (www.montana.edu/wwwvr/checklist.html), Non-Profit Guides, 2002, Non-Profit Guides and SeaCoast Web Design (www.npguides.org).

Manage the Process

1. Once you verify available funding, divide your efforts into three areas: writing the proposal, marketing, and management.
2. Before starting the application process, be clear about what you want to accomplish. Draw up a long-range plan that projects goals at least five years ahead.
3. Writing the proposal should only take about 40% of your time.
4. Don't overlook marketing. It should take at least 10% of your time. Make sure your organization will appeal to a potential funder, try to look professional, and involve key figures in your community if possible.
5. Give thought to the idea of cooperation. Many funders, particularly federal agencies, like applications where more than one organization is involved. If you submit a cooperative proposal, make sure that there is both a formal and informal relationship between grantees.

Develop A Coherent Strategy

1. Document a significant community need or problem in the proposal.
2. Deliver an answer to the need, or solution to the problem, based on experience, ability, logic and imagination.
3. Demonstrate project logic and outcome, impact of funds and community support.

4. The items requested for funding should support the proposed project. For example, if the proposed project describes a training program, the funds requested in the budget should be to cover costs related to training, not a bus. If a bus is what is needed, explain in your program narrative that a bus is needed to support the proposed project activity and why you have to have a bus.

Include Detail, Documentation and Measurable Outcomes

1. Don't just tell the funder about the extent of the problem you intend to solve; prove it with statistics, case studies, testimonials, and any other measurable data you can muster.
2. The key to a strong proposal is proving the likelihood that it will achieve its goals. Result areas should be clearly determined, and measurement indicators should be outlined. It may not be easy to do, but the value of having clear performance standards can't be overemphasized.
3. Goals should be statements of what the organization hopes to accomplish through the program. Objectives are the steps that if completed properly, will lead to completion of the stated goals. Both should be measurable.
4. Evaluation methods should explain definitively how the organization would determine if the goals have been met and if the project was successful.
5. Methods should explain the specific actions that will be completed in order to do the objectives that will lead to meeting the goals.
6. If you plan to partner with other organizations, include letters from those other organization and/or Memoranda of Understanding. Be sure to explain the relationship and the partners' role in the proposed project.
7. The budget section should clearly identify how much money is being requested and for what purpose. The budget should be provided in table format with supporting narrative detail. Check the math, and be sure that the columns and rows all add up. Make sure the figures in your budget are correct and accurately reflect your needs. Keep a record of how you calculated your costs.
8. If "other funds" are being utilized for the project, identify in the budget narrative specifically who is providing the other funds (i.e. the church, United Way), and in the appendix, include a letter or contract documenting the commitment.
9. The schedule should provide specific dates and activities that will be undertaken. It should be detailed enough that it could be used as a checklist during the implementation of the project to ensure that everything is completed and on time. A good schedule provides enough detail that someone looking at only it could determine what the organization is doing with the program.
10. The personnel section should provide roles, responsibilities and qualifications of all those participating in the proposed project. This section should provide enough information that the reviewer would not need to read the resume to know why that person is included on the project team.

Demonstrate Good Writing Skills

1. **CLARITY:** Remember the value of simplicity. Don't waste words. Funders are looking for a proposal that will succeed, so keep things clear, factual, supportable, and professional. State clearly and concisely the organization's needs and objectives. Avoid filling your proposal with jargon. Begin each section with a strong clear sentence.
2. **CORRECT GRAMMAR:** Write well using proper grammar and correct spelling. Be sure that every sentence expresses a complete thought clearly and succinctly, and use your computer's spelling and grammar check. Remember, minor mistakes and typographical errors detract from the message.
3. **EDITING:** Have someone unfamiliar with the project proofread and edit the proposal prior to submission.
4. **TIME MANAGEMENT:** Don't give in to pressure to rush. A hurried proposal rarely wins. Always work to a timetable. Make sure you have the time to complete your application and meet the funder's deadline. If you don't have time to do it properly, don't compete for the grant. Keep a file with standard information regularly updated, like staff resumes and company statistical data, so you can concentrate on the specific information needed when it's time to apply.
5. **FORMATTING:** Reviewers have many requests to read; therefore, anything the writer does to make it easier to find the requested information quickly strengthens the proposal. Include page numbers. Check with the funder to see if there's a preferred format, typestyle, etc.
6. **STYLE:** Don't go overboard, but do try to make your proposal interesting to read. Prepare an interesting, unique proposal that reflects planning, research and vision.

Follow Directions and Meet All Requirements

1. When dealing with any funder, but especially federal agencies, remember to read the instructions before applying. It sounds simple, but federal competitions live by two rules; 1) The agency is always right. 2) When in doubt, refer to rule 1.
2. Follow the instructions implicitly. Always follow exactly the grantmaker's specifications in the applications, Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and guidelines. Present the proposal in the appropriate and complete format. Limit responses according to the page specifications, and always include all the information requested.
3. Include all required attachments, but be judicious in the inclusion of attachments and include only what is necessary.
4. When re-creating forms that are required for submission, duplicate them exactly – same spacing, same wording, same order, all the same questions and statements.
5. Be sure to include all required signatures by someone authorized to commit the organization.
6. Submit on time. Proposals submitted after stated deadlines are rarely considered for funding.

Conduct Follow-up

1. Contact the grantmaker about the status, evaluation and outcome of your proposal after it is submitted. Request feedback about your proposal's strengths and weaknesses.
2. If your proposal doesn't win support, keep calm. Never berate funding officials or grant reviewers. Get more information, ask whether it would be worth submitting a future application, and go over your proposal with care to see if you can find places it might have been stronger.

Useful Web Sites

The sites listed on the following pages as well as additional resources and an electronic version of this manual can also be found on the *CTC* Faith-based and Community Initiative's project web site at: www.e-ctc.com/community.

Working with the Government Links

- ↳ Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives: www.dol.gov/cfbci
- ↳ Career One-Stop System: www.careeronestop.org
- ↳ South Carolina State Agencies: www.state.sc.us/stateage.html
- ↳ FirstGov's Grant Information and Resources: www.firstgov.gov/business/nonprofit.shtml
- ↳ Federal Funding Notifications: www.access.gpo.gov
- ↳ Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance: www.cfda.gov
- ↳ NonProfit Gateway: www.nonprofit.gov
- ↳ Federal Guidance Document: www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/guidance/index.html

Federal Faith-Based and Community Initiative Sites

- ↳ White House Office of Faith-Based & Community Initiatives: www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci
- ↳ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: www.hud.gov/offices/fbci
- ↳ U.S. Department of Justice: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fbci
- ↳ U.S. Department of Labor: www.dol.gov/cfbci
- ↳ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: www.hhs.gov/fbci
- ↳ U.S. Department of Education: www.ed.gov/about/inits/list/fbci
- ↳ U.S. Department of Agriculture: www.usda.gov/fbci

Fundraising Links

- ↳ Federal Funding Notifications: www.access.gpo.gov
- ↳ Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance: www.cfda.gov
- ↳ The Foundation Center: www.fdncenter.org
- ↳ SC Grant Information: www.state.sc.us/scsl/grants.html
- ↳ Download the SC Foundation Directory: www.state.sc.us/scsl/pubs/founddir/
- ↳ Capital Development Services: www.capdev.com
- ↳ Grant Fundraising Portal: www.fundsnetsservices.com
- ↳ Guide to Finding Funding: www.cardi.cornell.edu/cd_toolbox_2/tools/grantwriting.cfm
- ↳ Federal Funds Catalogue: www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/catalogue.pdf
- ↳ Grants.gov web site: www.grants.gov
- ↳ The Grantsmanship Center: www.tgci.com

Research Links

- ↳ FedStats: www.fedstats.gov
- ↳ MySCGov: www.myscgov.com/SCSGPortal/static/home_tem1.html
- ↳ U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.gov
- ↳ Rural Information Center: www.nal.usda.gov/ric/index.html

- ↳ SC Budget Control Board Office of Research and Statistics: www.ors.state.sc.us
- ↳ National Center for Charitable Statistics: nccs.urban.org/index.htm
- ↳ Faith In Communities (Hudson Institute): www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org
- ↳ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: www.hhs.gov/reference/index.shtml
- ↳ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: www.huduser.org
- ↳ Report on Housing and Homeownership Strategies: www.brookings.edu/es/urban/housingreview.htm
- ↳ South Carolina Statistics Page: www.sciway.net/statistics
- ↳ Census State Statistical Abstracts: www.census.gov/pub/profiles.shtml
- ↳ South Carolina Statistical Abstract: www.ors2.state.sc.us/abstract/index.html

Free/Subsidized Resources

- ↳ Volunteer Matching Service: www.volunteermatch.org
- ↳ Free "Money Start" adult training curriculum (extensive resource): www.financeproject.org
- ↳ Free "recycled" computers: www.microweb.com/pepsite/Recycle/recycle_index.html
- ↳ In-kind Donation of Products from Major American Companies Like Microsoft, Home Depot and Office Depot: www.giftsinkind.org
- ↳ Donated and Discounted Technology Products for web design, database management, accounting, and more: www.techsoup.org/DiscounTech/
- ↳ Free Donation Management Software Download: www.freedonationsoftware.org/index.html
- ↳ Free E-mail Accounts (Requires Internet Access): www.hotmail.com, www.juno.com and www.yahoo.com
- ↳ Free Internet Access: www.juno.com and www.netzero.com
- ↳ Free Web Hosting: www.freehomepages.com and www.angelfire.lycos.com
- ↳ Free Slogans: www.sloganman.com
- ↳ Free Curriculum for over 500 academic courses from MIT: <http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/index.htm>

Capacity Building Information and Resources

- ↳ U.S. Department of Education's NonProfit Organizations Web Page: www.ed.gov/NPAdvisor/
- ↳ Center for Community Change: www.communitychange.org
- ↳ Faith In Communities: www.hudsonfaithincommunities.org
- ↳ SC Association for Non-Profit Organizations: www.scanpo.org
- ↳ Rural Transportation Toolbox: 199.79.179.78/ruraltransport/toolbox/
- ↳ NonProfit Gateway: www.nonprofit.gov
- ↳ The Chronicle of Philanthropy - The Newspaper of the Nonprofit World: www.philanthropy.com
- ↳ NeighborWorks: www.nw.org/network/home.asp
- ↳ Child Care: www.childcarebychoice.org
- ↳ The Finance Project: www.financeproject.org
- ↳ U.S. Department of Education - No Child Left Behind: www.ed.gov/nclb
- ↳ Clemson University: sclc.clemson.edu
- ↳ HUD Neighborhood Network: www.hud.gov/nnw
- ↳ BBB Wise Giving Alliance: www.give.org
- ↳ IRS Information for Nonprofits: www.irs.gov/charities
- ↳ Network For Good: www.networkforgood.org/npo
- ↳ Idealist.org: www.idealist.org
- ↳ Genie.org: www.genie.org
- ↳ Internet Nonprofit Center: www.nonprofit-info.org/npofaq

- ↳ Independent Sector: www.independentsector.org
- ↳ The Aspen Institute: www.aspeninst.org
- ↳ Guide Star: www.guidestar.org/npo
- ↳ Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh: www.clpgh.org/locations/foundationcenter/nonprofit.html
- ↳ Guide to Non-Profit Financial Management: www.mapnp.org/library/finance/np_fnce/np_fnce.htm
- ↳ Nonprofit Organizational Assessment Tool: www.uwex.edu/li/learner/assessment.htm
- ↳ Sample By-Laws: www.boarddevelopment.org/display_document.cfm?document_id=69
- ↳ Board Orientation: www.boarddevelopment.org/display_document.cfm?document_id=30
- ↳ The Alliance for Nonprofit Governance: www.angonline.org/resources-governance-questions.asp
- ↳ United Way - Outcome Measurement Resource Network: <http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/library/ndpaper.cfm> and <http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/library/nvfocus.cfm>
- ↳ Strategic Planning Manual: www.uwex.edu/li/learner/spmanual.pdf
- ↳ Establishing a Nonprofit Organization: <http://fdncenter.org/learn/classroom/establish/index.html>
- ↳ Sample Articles of Incorporation: www.mapnp.org/library/legal/articles.htm
- ↳ Where to Start When Creating a Nonprofit: www.nonprofit-info.org/npofaq/02/
- ↳ HUD Training Webcasts: www.hud.gov/webcasts/archives/index.cfm

Foundation Center Cooperating Collections

Cooperating Collections are libraries, community foundations and other nonprofit agencies that provide a core collection of Foundation Center publications and a variety of supplementary materials and services in areas useful to grant seekers. The core collection consists of the following.

- ↳ Foundation Center's Guide to Proposal Writing
- ↳ Foundation Grants Index
- ↳ Foundation Giving
- ↳ Foundation Directory 1 and 2, and Supplement
- ↳ Foundation Grants Index Quarterly
- ↳ Literature of the Nonprofit Sector
- ↳ Foundation Grants to Individuals
- ↳ National Directory of Corporate Giving
- ↳ Foundation 1000
- ↳ Foundation Fundamentals
- ↳ Guide to U.S. Foundations, Their Trustees, Officers and Donors
- ↳ Selected Grant Guides
- ↳ User-Friendly Guide

Cooperating Collections agree to provide free public access to a basic collection of Foundation Center publications during regularly schedule of hours, offering free funding research guidance to all visitors. Many also provide a variety of special service for local nonprofit organizations, using staff or volunteers to prepare special materials, organize workshops or conduct orientations.

Those Cooperating Collections marketed with a star (*) have sets of private foundation information returns (IRS Form 990-PF) for their state or region. Because the collections vary in their hours, materials and services, it is recommended that you call each collection in advance. To check on new locations or current information, call toll-free 1-800-424-9836 or visit <http://fdncenter.org/collections/>.

Georgia

Atlanta-Fulton Public Library *
Foundation Collection-Ivan Allen Department
1 Margaret Mitchell Square
Atlanta, GA 30303-1089
(404) 730-1900

Dalton Regional Library
310 Cappes St.
Dalton, GA 30720
(706) 278-4507