Tips for Grant Writing Success

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Objectives

- Provide tips for the grant sections that states find most challenging as well as grant writing success factors.

- Promote reflection on how programs can use health agency and community resources to enhance their grant writing process.

SOHP Key Frustrations

- Needs/ projects don't match funder priorities
- Understanding/following FOA guidance
- Short submission deadlines
- Limited SOHP staffing and grantwriting expertise
- How/when to best involve stakeholders
- Lack of data to support needs
- Aligning objectives, activities, evaluation and budget
- Identifying non-federal match
- Navigating online application/tracking process
- Rejection/approval notices with no feedback

Some SOHP Keys to Success

- Highlighting/following FOA guidance
- Good partnership support; ability to leverage other resources
- Good data to support needs/gaps
- Supervisor/state leadership support
- Appropriate grantwriting expertise/support
- Ability to tell our story
- Good evaluation plan

Key Sections of a Grant

- Abstract or summary
- Organizational description
- Identification of needs (needs assessment)
- Project description
- Service area/populations served
- Project goals and objectives

- Work plan
- Staffing
- Partnerships
- Budget/Justification
- Project accountability
- Evaluation plan
- Project outcomes/impact
- How you will share project information

Why Grants?

1) You receive funds because
you <u>meet</u> needs,
not because you <u>have</u> needs.
2) Grants <u>may not </u>be the best way
to meet the needs
3) A <u>partner</u> may be the best applicant for
your project

Grant Reviews

- In person vs conference calls
- One subject area (oral health) vs many (public health)
- Funder staff vs outside reviewers
- Stakeholders vs content experts
- Researchers vs program/PH expertise
- Professional and personal biases
- Other factors: geographical balance, special populations, rural vs urban, etc.

Potential Funding Sources for Oral Health

- Federal agencies
- National organizations
- Foundations
- State Appropriations
- Special Funds
- Not-for-Profit Groups
- Service Clubs
- Private Corporations
- Businesses
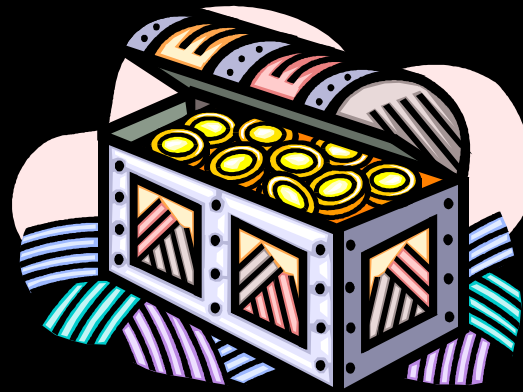
Where to Look For Funding Sources

- Print directories
- On-line databases
- Libraries
- Constituents
- Elected officials
- Similar agencies
- Prior funders

Conduct a Funder Analysis

- "About Us," Mission, Giving history, Annual reports

- Products and services/types of grants

- Funding cycles– FOA vs continual

- Matching funds requirement

- Eligibility preferences/restrictions

- Investor relation/corporate information

- Fit for department and program priorities, alignment, framework and strategic plan

Grant Skills

- Create business/funding plan

- Build/use partnerships

- Assess/reflect community needs

- Develop/follow workplans and evaluation plans

- Writing, integrating comments and edits, proofing

- Data analysis and presentation

- Negotiation, diplomacy, collaboration

Grant Writing/Management

- Use partnerships; build on the strength of collective impact

- Build on lessons learned; review past successful and unsuccessful grants (yours or others)

- Ask for critical review from mentors or others

- Make sure you have the right expertise at the table as well as a good writer

Using an Outside Grantwriter

- They don't know your program, you do! They are not mindreaders or magicians.

- Grantwriters' skills and styles may be very different; you need to find the right match.

- Grantwriters are best at helping you get organized, reviewing and "cleaning up" what you've written, and making sure you are ready to submit.

- What you really need on the team is a stellar writer who can adapt for different audiences!

Getting Organized

- One person cannot do it alone!

- Develop funding plan, prioritize , match to potential funders

- Get community/partner input on needs/priorities and resources to leverage, including matching $

- Write and get feedback on standard paragraphs for organizational description, needs assessment, service areas/populations served, staffing , and potential projects, plus collect CVs/bios in a file

Mobilize Partnerships

- Partner to conceptualize, write, implement, evaluate the grant
  - Staff - epi, evaluator, program managers
  - Supervisor support
  - State leadership support
  - Chronic disease, MCH, other state programs
  - Medicaid/CHIP
  - Oral Health Coalition
  - FQHCs/CHCs
  - Foundation coordination
  - Universities
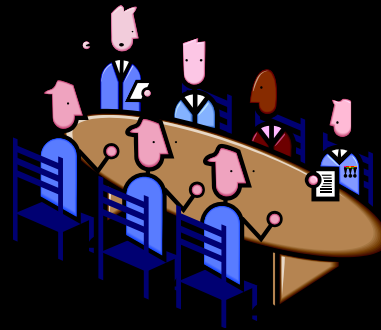
Describe Partnerships

- Identify key partnerships and other resources

- Describe their commitment to the project

- Identify gaps in partnerships and how you will fill them

- Identify new partnerships you are building

- Make sure letters of support state specific commitments or type of support

FOA Team Effort

- Read it, Read it and Reread it!

- Determine if you are an eligible applicant

- Highlight or underline key dates, requirements and questions to answer

- Make a checklist of all items that need to be included in the submission and how to submit them

- Note any areas of confusion; clarify with funder

- Check off the items in the checklist when you submit the application

- Track via email notifications or other means

Foibles of FOAs

- Boilerplate language can be confusing, vague, and not match subject specific definitions

- Some instructions in the guidance may be contradictory or not supported by the online submission framework (e.g., forms that aren't fillable, no place to attach a file)

- Grants.gov and other systems make minor changes, e.g., password requirements, or are incompatible with browsers

Timelines

- Set a timeline for completing each section of the application and the forms/assurances
- If multiple writers, assign the sections and set deadlines, then have <u>one</u> person edit into one style
- Allow adequate time for accounting/budget review
- Allow adequate time for review and edits by supervisors/agency officials
- Have <u>one</u> person proof the final document
- Submit 1-2 days before the deadline to allow for unanticipated glitches

Organizing the Narrative

- Use the Section Headings from the FOA guidance so it is easy for reviewers to find the information

- Integrate strong reliable data from various sources to support the need and identify data gaps

- Write a compelling story so non-dental reviewers will understand what the needs are, why they are important and how you propose to address them

Where Do I Get the Data?
Use local data if possible; Use comparisons

- State Plan
- BRFSS
- YRBS
- PRAMS
- Cancer Registry
- ASTDD State Synopsis
- NOHSS
- State Medicaid/CHIP

- State epidemiologist
- Dental insurers
- CHC Clinical Data
- PCA infrastructure and clinical data
- Universities, policy institutes
- State and local surveys
- Other grants

Creating Your Work Plan

- Use their forms if required
- Use a well-organized form/table format (build the ladder)
  - Goals
  - Objectives
  - Activities and Strategies
  - Time frame
  - Party responsible
  - Evaluation

Work Plan Template

WORK PLAN

Applicant Name:

Goal 1:				
Objective 1:				
(Baseline:)				
Activity/Strategy	**Responsible Party**	**Target Date**	**Evaluation Measure**	**Progress**
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5				
6.				
Objective 2:				
(Baseline:)				
Activity/Strategy	**Responsible Party**	**Target Date**	**Evaluation Measure**	**Progress**
1.				
2.				

Develop Quantifiable Objectives to Facilitate Evaluation

- SMART objectives are measurable
  - **S**pecific
  - **M**easurable
  - **A**chievable
  - **R**ealistic
  - **T**ime bound
- By June 30, 2014 increase to 50 the percentage of pregnant women in state X who received preventive oral health care in the last 12 months. (Baseline: 45% in 2011, PRAMS)

Use Quantifiable Measures for Activities

- Assess oral health policies in all schools in County X
  - Evaluation Measure:
    - # of schools with comprehensive policy
    - # of schools with policy that is not comprehensive
    - # of schools with no policy

    (the total of these three measures should equal the total number of schools in the county)

Build the Ladder

- Goal: Improve access to dental care for underserved children.

- Objective: By July 2014, increase to 40 the percentage of Medicaid enrolled children age 0-21who have had a preventive dental visit in the last 12 months. (Baseline: 35% in 2012, CMS 416)

- Strategy: Implement dental sealant programs in schools.

- Activity: Implement dental sealant programs in all (10) elementary schools in Laurel County with >50% of their children enrolled in free/reduced fee school

  lunch programs.

Matching Exercise

- Evaluation/performance measures are matched to objectives and activities

- Items in the work plan that require funding are included in the budget (if not included, indicate if there is another funding source)

- Staffing level of effort can accomplish and evaluate activities
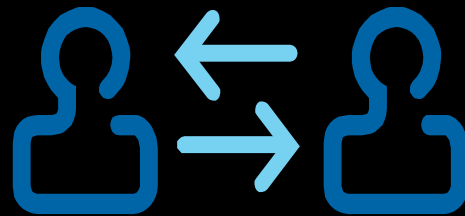
Measuring Success/Evaluation

Process Examples

- # of communities served
- # of children reached
- # of children receiving dental sealants
- Workshops conducted and evaluated
- State plan developed

Examples of Outcomes

- Increase in the % of children with dental sealants
- Decrease in the % of children with untreated caries
- Clinics use best practices to improve their no-show rates

Assuring Progress and Accountability

- Are we meeting timelines for completion of activities and strategies?
    - If not, what hindered performance?
- Did we do what we said we were going to do?
    - If not, what hindered performance?
- Did partnerships result in more coordinated efforts and leveraged resources?
- What lessons were learned and what successes should we celebrate and share?
- Are we on track with spending?

Sharing Results

Decide on target audiences and plan specific communications

- Newsletters

- Annual reports

- E-mail blasts

- Websites and social networking sites--Twitter, Facebook

- Press releases

- Presentations

"Funders entice other funders"

"Communication maintains your visibility and acknowledges the contribution of partners"