Grant Writing Tips

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with assistance from

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Sue Isermann
Getting Started

• Got an idea?
  • Something you want to do, but you need money and time?
  • Equipment?

• Is your idea original?  
  Or an original spin on an old idea?
Getting Started

• Does your idea address a need?

• Solve a problem?
Getting Started

Research your competition

• Is anyone else doing something similar?

• Are those projects grant-funded?

• Is your idea better?

• Can you turn your competition into partners?
Getting Started

Is IVCC the right place for your project?

Are IVCC district students, teachers, parents the right target audiences for your project?
Getting Started

Is your project a one-person show or do you need a team?

• What expertise do you need?

• Is that expertise available in IVCC staff?
Getting Started

Does your project idea fit with IVCC’s plans?

Talk with your supervisors at IVCC

• Your Dean

• Sue Isermann, if career-program related

• Rick Pearce

• Others to be directly impacted
Who’s got money?

- Check your professional organizations
- Contact institutions with funding in similar areas
- Search online grant databases
  
  For ex.: www.grants.gov for federal grants

See Grant Source handout
Read Request For Proposal (RFP)

- Does your idea match RFP?

- Do you meet grant requirements?
Read Request For Proposal (RFP)

When you find a potential grant source:

FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS

If possible, read successful proposals
Follow Instructions

• Provide information requested

• Stay within length requirements

• Meet document requirements – font, margins, graphics

• Meet deadlines
  • For mail-in, confirm delivery time
  • For online, start entering early
Follow Instructions: Read RFP

Do you understand all of RFP instructions?
All of their phrasing?

IF NOT, CALL THEM
or
EMAIL THEM

(depending on what they suggest)
Formatting Tips

- Use sub-headings
- Write short paragraphs
- Present numbers graphically
Writing Tips

• Write for the grant readers
  Spell out acronyms

• Utilize the language/wording in grant announcement

• Write in persuasive tone
Typical Grant Proposal Sections

• Proposal Summary
• Introduction to the Institution (IVCC)
• Problem / Need
• Project Goals / Objectives
• Project Methods / Activities
• Outcomes / Deliverables
• Evaluation / Assessment
• Project Sustainability
• Project Staff
• Budget
Proposal Summary

• Very important section
• Hit key points
• Make objectives clear
• Address granting organization’s interests
Introduction to the Institution

Prove IVCC is the right place – uniquely suited

• has a need

• can accomplish objectives (staffing, courses, programs, services, etc.)

May need to include grant staff credentials
Problem - Need

What problem or need will your project address?

Write a simple statement

Support with documented evidence

Facts  Trends

Statistics  Expert opinions

Connect your problem/need to a bigger issue
Project Goals / Objectives

GOAL: What you plan to accomplish, impact or outcome project will have

OBJECTIVES: Measurable steps to accomplish goal.

Simply stated
Bulleted list
Methods / Activities

What will you do to accomplish the goals and objectives?

• List methods / activities (numbered/bulleted)
• Show relationship to objectives
• Clarify rationale for specific methods / activities
• Identify target audiences
• Include timeline

TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Planning session for key staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>Workshop for H.S. faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>Develop TEC course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>Offer first TEC course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>Research promotional materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>Develop additional promotional materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes - Deliverables

What will be the end result(s)?

Will some useable product(s) be developed?

If so, how will you disseminate them?
Evaluation - Assessment

How will you know if you were successful?

• Explain methods you will use to gather evaluative data
• Explain how evaluative data will be used
• Identify who will conduct evaluations

Do you need an outside evaluator?
Project Sustainability

Explain how project will continue when grant expires

• Sustainability inexpensive since curriculum materials / equipment will be in place?
• Fees will be charged?
• Materials / products developed will be sold?
• IVCC (or other schools) will assume costs?
Project Grant Staff

Prove your key personnel are qualified for their project roles

• Develop a “management plan” clarifying roles / responsibilities of major staff

• Be prepared to provide background information or resumes of key staff
Budget

• What expenses are allowable?
• Try to anticipate all possible costs
  - Salary increases for multiple-year grants
  - Fringe benefits
  - Indirect costs
  - Evaluation including outside evaluator
• Make budget easy to read / understand
  - Reader-friendly table
  - Well organized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
<td>1 month – 1/9 salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Fry</td>
<td>½ month – 1/18$ salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant 1</td>
<td>3 days @$400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant 2</td>
<td>2 days @$300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Sections

References Cited

Sources cited in your proposal

Illustrate you know the research

Support Letters

Documenting what they will PROVIDE

Human Subject Research – Institutional Research Board approval

May need approval from IVCC’s Institutional Research Board (through Institutional Research Office)
Assistance from IVCC

• Institutional Research Office
• Records Office
• Library
Assistance from Institutional Research: proposal & assessments

- Demographics on district / region / state
  - Census, ICCB
  - Economic modeling information – occupational data

- Comparative / survey data
  - CCSSE, Noel Levitz, etc.

- Retention / success & graduates by program

- Contact IR as soon as grant considered
Assistance from Records Office

• Contacts with area high schools and help contacting grade schools
• IVCC historic documents – trends
• Who to contact for IVCC information

Assistance from Library

• Researching problem / need / other grants
• Local / area history
After Grant Rejection

Don’t be discouraged – don’t quit

• Revise considering grant institution’s recommendations
  Ask for recommendations if they don’t provide them

• Find another potential grant institution
Additional Advice

Sue Isermann – Working with North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG) grants

Dorene Perez – A grant reviewer’s perspective

Sue Caley Opsal – A grant writer’s perspective