

BASICS OF PROPOSAL WRITING

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What is a proposal?

➤ **Proposal: a statement of a problem and the work to be done to address the problem if funding is provided**

Proposal Development

- **Research before you start writing your proposal**
- **It is essential that you have a very clear idea**
- **Be persuasive, the key to using persuasive techniques is to be brief and selective.**
- **Consider the many questions which every funding agency wants answered.**
- **Many funders have application forms that ask the questions they want answered.**

Content

Cover Letter
Title Page
Executive Summary
Introduction
Project Description
Goals & Objectives
Methodology
Evaluation
Staffing & Administration
Sustainability
Organization Information
Budget
Appendices

Cover Letter

**Brief summary of the main
points discussed in the proposal
and why your organization is a
good candidate for funding.**

Apprx. 1 page

Title Page

**Focus of the proposal
required contact information
signatures and date.**

Apprx. 1 page

Executive Summary

**Umbrella statement of your case and
a summary of the entire proposal.**

Apprx. 1 page

- **Problem**
- **Solution**
- **Funding Requirements**
- **Sustainability Expectations**
- **Organization & Expertise**

Introduction

- **Why this project is necessary and why you are qualified to do it. Apprx. 2 pages**
- **Explain why this problem should be of special interest**
- **Highlight your (e.g. geographic location, language, expertise, partnerships etc.)**
- **Link the project with your organizational goals.**

Project Description

**Nuts and bolts of how the project
will be carried out and
evaluated.**

Which Include these components

Goals and Objectives
Methodology
Staffing and Administration
Evaluation
Sustainability

Goals & Objectives

- **Your goals and objectives help funders decide whether your project is properly aligned with their mandate**
- **Goals and objectives should be clearly linked.**
- **Goals are the large statements of what you hope to ultimately accomplish**
- **Objectives are how you will achieve your goals.**

Methodology

A complete methodology section should cover four main points: how, who, when and why. It should help the funder clearly visualize the complete implementation of the project. (e.g. work plan...)

Work Plan

- **Work plan is a guide of your activities**
- **Some funders are flexible with how the work plan is carried out when approved so be creative but realistic**

SAMPLE Work Plan: Trap Line Development

#	Phase	Task	Completion Date
1	Preparation	Community Meeting	May 15, 2009
2		Hire Coordinator & Youth	May 30, 2009
3		Order Construction Materials	June 15, 2009
4	Construction	Build 2 cabins	August 30, 2009
5		Map trap line routes with GPS	August 30, 2009
6	Reporting	Draft Report	September 30, 2009
7		Community Meeting	October 15, 2009
8		Post maps & report on comm. website	October 31, 2009
9	Follow-up	Evaluation	November 30, 2009
10		Submit Final Report	December 15, 2009

Evaluation

**A good evaluation will help you
determine whether you have been
successful.**

It should show:

- **Overall purpose**
 - **How**
 - **Why**

Staffing & Administration

- **clearly outlining who will be responsible for each task**
- **staff names, their unique qualifications, and the specific assignments and overall time they will devote to the project**
- **funders offer flexibility on who will do the work (e.g. new positions)**

Sustainability

Demonstrate that your project fits into one of the following three categories:

- **The project meets a definite need that will be met within the clear start and end dates of the grant.**
- **The project builds capacity, such that your organization, or others, will be able to continue the work without outside funding.**
- **The project will increase the likelihood that other funders will provide support.**

Organization Information

History and governing structure of your organization, and its primary activities, audiences and services.

Apprx. 1 page

- **Create a community profile that you can use in any proposal.**

Partnerships

- **Find a partner who will help you with the work**

- **Can provide you with a support letter (training, shelter, counseling service, etc.)**

Budget

Financial description of the project.

A project budget is a reflection of how thoroughly you have thought through your project.

- **Ask for quotes**
- **This will indicate what is and is not a valid expense**
- **Over estimate costs a little**

SAMPLE BUDGET: Trap Line Development

	Expenses	Description	Total
	Staff		
	Materials		
	Office & Administration		

Appendices

Add Appendices to help share your community's story, provide examples of successful projects and evidence of need

- **Past community studies**
- **Photos**
- **Map of community location**
- **News articles**

Why Proposals Fail

- **Not fully compliant**
- **Unclear**
- **Unrealistic scope for budget**
- **Not relevant to agency's mission/mandate**
- **Style requirements are not met (e.g., font size)**
- **Required sections are missing (e.g., broader impact in summary, title page)**

Tips

Due date & submission format

some funders want the application mailed to them by the due date – make sure you have enough time

Funder contact

always call the contact, they are helpful in making your idea fit. The contact will often be the one presenting your idea to the approval board. Convince the contact and you will have a better chance of them presenting your proposal in a favourable manner.

Follow up

- Contact the funder to make sure the application was received
- The funder may ask for more info or revisions
- When approved, project updates and communication with the funder will help if you need flexibility

Discussion Questions

1. What kinds of proposals have you completed (health, education, ecdev, recreation)? What tips do you have for everyone?
2. What makes a proposal successful? What are your biggest challenges with accessing \$\$\$?
3. Which funders you would like to have a proposal workshop with (NADF, FedNor, Trillium, OMNR, NOHFC)?
4. What other workshops would you like to participate in?

Next workshop May 8 Work Plans and Budgeting

Contact



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