

Funding the Work: Successful Grant Seeking and Writing

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Agenda

Principals of Effective Funding

Capture Planning: Matching Your Capacities to Funding Sources

Proposal Writing: Offering Clear Solutions

The Funding Landscape: Alcohol Prevention

- Reduced federal and state funding mechanisms
- Refocused interest:
 - Family and environmental setting
 - Other substance use/co-use
 - Community and state-wide collaborations
 - Intersection of substance abuse and mental health
 - Integration of prevention into primary care
 - Treatment

Funding Sources

- Federal
 - SAMHSA
 - CDC
 - NIAAA
 - NIDA
 - OJJDP
 - NIH
 - National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
 - US Department of Education

- Foundations/Associations

Capture Planning

- Making an Informed Pursuit Decision
 - Monitoring funders/mining trends
 - Understanding current opportunities
 - Strategic and monetary value of an opportunity
 - Realistic probabilities of competitiveness/capacity

Keys to Capture Planning

Understanding What Matters Most to the Funder

Understanding the Capacity of the Competition

Identifying Strengths and Building Capacity

Exploring Partnerships

Exercise:
Identifying Our
Strengths & Vision
of Work

6/10/2016

Key Principals of Effective Grant Seeking: Knowing Me, Knowing You

- **Have a Strategic Plan**

- Who are we and what is our mission?
- What is our philosophy and vision of the work?
- What kind of work are in best positioned to do?

- **Look for a Good Match**

- What is their mission, and how does it align to ours?
- What are their philosophies and vision of the work?
- What level of funding do they provide?

Exercise: Matching

- What do they want?
- Where do you align?
- What questions would you have?
- How would you answer them?

Substance Abuse

Our Definition

The Tower Foundation has adopted the National Cancer Institute's definition of substance abuse:

The use of illegal drugs or the use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs or alcohol for purposes other than those for which they are meant to be used, or in excessive amounts. Substance abuse may lead to social, physical, emotional, and job-related problems.

Our Funding Goals

For our Substance Abuse category, we have identified four key goals:

1. Community members understand the prevalence and harmful effects of alcohol and drugs, and work to address them.
2. Resources for substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery are readily available.
3. Families provide safe environments that support healthy and informed choices about alcohol and drugs.
4. Young people make healthy and informed choices about alcohol and drugs.

Strategies of Interest

While open to creative approaches, some preferred strategies for supporting our goals include:

- Evidence-based prevention programming
- Screening and assessment
- Person-centered supportive services for individuals in recovery
- Transitional support/service navigation
- Family education
- Family peer support
- Professional development for professionals across the sectors including health, education, youth, and substance abuse treatment

Writing Effective Proposals: Five Key Principals

1. Plan ahead!
2. Follow the directions exactly!
3. Focus on the details: HOW, WHY
4. Never assume reviewer knowledge
5. Integrate capacity into response

Winning Proposals

- **Clearly defined needs and describe how those needs were identified.**
- **Winning proposals describe what people will do.**
- **Winning proposals present the material in a logical manner.**
- **Winning proposals are written in positive terms.**
- **Winning proposals do not overuse jargon.**
- **Winning proposals present detailed budgets that match the proposed program.**
- **Winning proposals give something back.**
- **Winning proposals follow all the guidelines specified in the Request for Proposal**

Example

- The proposed project will offer a multi-modal and comprehensive approach to reduce suspensions and expulsions from schools in the Syracuse City School District. The program will provide staff development using a "whole school" strategy and a range of supportive and empowering services based on an "intensive services" approach. The program is based upon recommendations made by the Alternative Schools Committee that was appointed this year by Superintendent Stephen Jones as one of his first acts as the new district superintendent. The program will be located in the Carnegie School Building that houses the district's two alternative programs, the William R. Beard Alternative School and the VINTA program. The program is proposed at an opportune time, not only in light of the new Superintendent's support but because the two alternative programs are about to be co-located in a recently renovated building in downtown Syracuse, a more welcome and safer location that was previously available to these programs. The program will bring together all staff - teachers, administrators, hall monitors, school police, teacher aids and staff from community based organizations to develop an environment and culture that values students, believes in their success and promotes mutual respect and nonviolence. The staff will work closely with students and their parents to value them as a critical part of creating this environment. Services to be provided include clinical social work and psychological services, mentoring, transitional planning, support groups for parents and students, and after school programming. An especially innovative program element is the training and employment of students and parents as peer leaders and peer educators. The program will be evaluated formally with the evaluation staff working to make the information accessible and available to the "whole school community" so that the program can be revised and improved as needed. The Center for Community Alternatives (CCA) will be the program's lead agency in collaboration with the Syracuse City School District. A third collaborating organization is a grassroots "youth led" arts program, Power Unit Motivating Youth (PUMY). The Partnership Agreement is attached as Appendix A. The program will employ an enriched and unique staff to effectively meet the need for gender-specific and culturally competent programs for the target population. The alternative schools enroll about 200 students a year. The chief goals are to reduce suspension and expulsion, promote continued educational achievements among the students, increase parent participation and increase successful transitions of students back to a mainstream school.

Exercise: Matching Review Criteria

Scored Review Criteria

Reviewers will consider each of the review criteria below in the determination of scientific merit, and give a separate score for each. An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact. For example, a project that by its nature is not innovative may be essential to advance a field.

Significance

Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?

Investigator(s)

Are the PD(s)/PI(s), collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project? If Early Stage Investigators or New Investigators, or in the early stages of independent careers, do they have appropriate experience and training? If established, have they demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)? If the project is collaborative or multi-PD/PI, do the investigators have complementary and integrated expertise; are their leadership approach, governance and organizational structure appropriate for the project?

Innovation

Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed?

Approach

Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? If the project is in the early stages of development, will the strategy establish feasibility and will particularly risky aspects be managed?

If the project involves human subjects and/or NIH-defined clinical research, are the plans to address 1) the protection of human subjects from research risks, and 2) inclusion (or exclusion) of individuals on the basis of sex/gender, race, and ethnicity, as well as the inclusion or exclusion of children, justified in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy proposed?

Environment

Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?

Resources

www.grants.gov

<https://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/>

Library of Winning Grant Proposals – SAMHSA

<https://www.tgcigrantproposals.com/search/samhsa.asp>