

# WRITING A WINNING PROPOSAL



# The Basic Proposal Outline

- ✦ We will go through a generic proposal outline draw insight



- ✦ Attempting to "Spell Out " what is expected, section by section, in a good proposal.

- ✦ Formats will vary by agency, it is " critical " to always use the specific RFP, and to follow the agency format

# The Basic Proposal Outline

1. Title
2. Application Cover Page with Signatures
3. Table of Contents
4. Project Summary
5. Abstract
6. Project Description
7. Budget
8. Budget Narrative
9. Current and Pending Support
10. Resume / Vitae (For PI, Key Personnel)
11. Appendix



# How Important is the Title ?

- ✦ The title sets the tone for the proposed work.
- ✦ The title must be descriptive, specific and appropriate, and should reflect the importance of the proposal
- ✦ One way to achieve an effective title is to have a two part title, the first general and the second more specific.



# How Important is the Title ?

- ◆ Bridging the Urban – Rural Divide:  
Marketing Local Foods in the Mid  
Atlantic

- ◆ Partnerships for Sustainable  
Communities

- ◆ Mentoring in Alabama

# The Cover Page with Signatures

- ◆ Each copy of each grant proposal must contain a "Proposal Cover Page"
- ◆ Form SF-429 if in response to a USDA RFP
- ◆ Names of Institutional and/or organizational officials
- ◆ Includes relevant phone numbers, fax numbers and email addresses of the PI/PD
- ◆ Include required signatures

# Table of Contents

- ✦ Detailed Table of Contents just after the cover page.
- ✦ For consistency and ease in locating information.
- ✦ Should contain page numbers for each component of the proposal.

# The Project Summary

- ◆ Summary is very important (Typically 250 words or less)
- ◆ Immediately after the Table of Contents
- ◆ Make your summary brief, clear, and interesting to read.
- ◆ Your challenge is to draw in “HOOK” the reviewer



# Keys to the Summary Statement

✦ What is Known ?

✦ What is not known ?

✦ Why is it essential to find out ?



# The Abstract

- Should be briefly and clearly stated and accurate description when separated from the proposal
- Must be able to stand on it's own
- Take it seriously, write this component last



# Project Description

- ◆ Introduction
- ◆ Objectives (Hypothesis)
- ◆ Rationale and Significance
- ◆ Materials and Methods
- ◆ Timetable
- ◆ Facilities and Equipment
- ◆ Literature Review
- ◆ Appendix



# Project Description

- ✦ Provides the background and understanding of the project

- ✦ State clearly who is applying

- ✦ Indicates you have an understanding of the topic

# Project Description

- ◆ Refer to the funding agencies purpose and goals, and likely results and benefits for the stakeholders.
- ◆ Provide evidence of your accomplishments and demonstrate why you should be funded.
- ◆ Be brief and free of jargon.

# Objectives

- ✦ What you intend to accomplish with as few words as possible
- ✦ Enumerate your objectives
- ✦ When stating your objectives, state them such that you are attempting to:

*" Increase ...., "*

*" To Decrease ...., " or*

*" To Reduce ....., " something.*

# Rationale and Significance

- ✦ Connects your proposal to the purposes of the competitive grants program

- ✦ Also, try to relate the proposal to the purpose of your organization

- ✦ States the need for the proposed project in terms of the end users



# Materials and Methods (Procedures)

- ◆ This section should flow from the stated problems to be addressed and the associated objectives
- ◆ Present the scope of your proposed activities in the context of the resources available and needed ...
- ◆ Setting the stage for the proposed budget



# Materials and Methods (Procedures)

✦ Sequence of activities that is reasonable to lead into the next section ..... timetable

✦ Try to provide a balance of enough information to be convincing



# Timetable

- ◆ This section should be organized in a logical sequence and include target dates for task completion.
  - ◆ Brief statements, with no unnecessary detail.
  - ◆ Timetable should indicate the times at which you expect to notify the granting agency the component has been completed.
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# Facilities and Equipment

- ◆ Services that are available to you at no cost to your project (even if a match is not required).
- ◆ If you are located at a university, you have a lot of resources to draw on
- ◆ Land Grant and Research University faculty have a large advantage



# Literature Review

- ✦ You must demonstrate that you know the literature
- ✦ Know of the activities of others working in your area
- ✦ Quite likely, panel members will know of this and other work



# Budget

- ◆ Use the correct budget form if provided by the granting agency
- ◆ Your grant proposal's budget totals should be itemized and not simple totals
- ◆ Salaries for support personnel
- ◆ Remember to add fringe benefits
- ◆ Remember to add clerical



# Budget



- Includes funds for travel
- Include small amounts for photocopying, telephone, postage, and supplies and materials
- Equipment request must be handled thoughtfully and carefully. Small equipment request are not risky, if you adequately justify
- Indirect cost rate, is somewhat flexible depending upon on the source to which the funding request is directed

# Budget Narrative

- ✦ Details the reasons for all the items you have requested.
- ✦ Give some examples of supplies and needs for equipment
- ✦ Specify planned trips and/or local travel
- ✦ Show cost sharing if you think you need it

# Budgetary Detail

## PERSONNEL SERVICES

Position or Name

% Time / effort on project

Length of time expected to work

What will they be doing?

\* Secretarial / clerical must be exceptional in nature and justified as it relates to the project.

## FRINGE BENEFITS

Total allowable fringe benefits

Provide calculation %.

# Budgetary Detail

## TRAVEL

Purpose of trip

Destination (if known).

Number of travelers

Estimated Cost per trip / person

\* International Travel is NOT ALLOWED

## MATERIALS & SUPPLIES

Normal operating supplies: office supplies, educational supplies, field supplies, fertilizers, and other supplies necessary for fulfilling the objectives of the project.

# Budgetary Detail

## ✦ OUTREACH

Field Days, Workshops, Educational Brochures, Fact Sheets and other outreach activities.

**Field Days & Workshops** – includes costs of holding a field day or workshop. (e.g. Rental of facilities, cost of refreshments, equipment or supplies needed for the field day or workshop, and any other expenses associated with the preparation and execution of educational field days or workshops.)

**Provide full details** in the budget narrative.

# Budgetary Detail

## ✦ OUTREACH

**Printing of Brochures** – includes costs associated with printing and distribution of educational fact sheets or brochures relating to the project and sustainable agriculture.

## ✦ MISCELLANEOUS ALL OTHER DIRECT COSTS

Direct project charges not included in other categories. Description and cost must be included in budget narrative for each item.

Other / Miscellaneous all must be detailed and identified.

## Examples of direct charges include:

### Examples of direct charges include:

**Honorariums** — Provide recipient information, and fee associated with the honorarium.

**Subcontracts** – Include a plan of work, budget, and detailed budget narrative. Use these same required budgetary detail guidelines.

**Consultants** — Provide the name & organization of the consultant, a statement of work, a breakdown of funds being charged to the project.

### MATCHING FUNDS / COST SHARE

May or may not be required by the funding agency

# Current and Pending Support

To insure that one agency is not funding project that some other agency is already funding

So a word to the wise, don't even try to double dip !

Criminal penalties are severe

# Resume / Vitae

- ◆ Include PI and Key Personnel
- ◆ Keep this section short and to the point
- ◆ Briefly state or list your educational and work background
- ◆ Focus on the last five years

# Appendix

- ◆ Are useful to supply valuable information, but to often are overdone.
- ◆ Avoid pictures unless absolutely necessary
- ◆ Word to the wise ---- if any information in the appendix is critical in advancing the understanding of the proposal, you need to find a way to include in the body of the proposal

**THANK YOU !**

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