Grant-Writing 101 tips

1. Tightly defined purpose with goals (what is the issue and why is it important to the grant program and to others?)

2. Clear strategy with steps to accomplish measurable objectives (don't oversell or overpromise; more is not better in grant proposals)

3. Realistic timeline (better to give yourself enough time than not enough!)

4. Ability to complete the grant (people/money/time/other resources)

5. Basis for evaluating

6. Means of communicating results

7. Supporting coalitions/partnerships/collaborations

8. Match "in-kind" or cash (not all grants require match)

Questions to Consider in Developing a Proposal

- What is the <u>problem</u> you seek to address?

- What grant <u>programs align</u> with your project idea? Which programs have purposes and resources most suitable to your project? What is the grant program's stated mission and objectives?

- How does your <u>main argument</u> or <u>central points</u> address the program's key goals? Make sure the case you make is precise and accurate.

- Have you <u>read the RFP three times</u>?

- What types of projects has this program <u>funded in the past</u>?

- Is this a new problem or one that has been <u>addressed by others</u>? If so, how does your effort relate to these other efforts and build on them? If your project addresses an issue that is already known to have a solution - why is your issue/problem different enough that it merits receiving money to address/answer it? A different scale/location/etc.?

- Who else might be concerned about your issues? Should they be involved in your project? <u>What will these partners do/contribute</u>?

- What is your <u>principal strategy</u> to resolve that problem? Why is this strategy better than other approaches you might consider?

- What's a <u>realistic timeline</u>, for action?

- What resources do you need to implement your project? What resources might the applicant and stakeholders offer as <u>match</u>?

- Would others profit from knowing about your initiative? If so, who are they; are they local, regional, national? What's the best way to <u>get the word out</u> to that audience?

- How will you measure and <u>evaluate</u> your project's outcomes? Keep in mind how to assess your work impartially against both your project's goals and its measurable objectives.

- What are eligibility requirements, financial match requirements, and restrictions on a program's use? Is funding available up-front or (more typically) only on a reimbursement basis?

- Are a program's application deadlines and funding timeframes appropriate to your project's timeline? Does the program fund multi-year projects?

Some other things to consider:

- Be sure your <u>budget is accurate, clear,</u> and accompanied by a <u>budget narrative</u> to clarify any points you think could be misunderstood by reviewers.

- <u>Call the program staff</u> if you have questions. Don't guess; ask.

- <u>Make sure you understand the review process.</u> Is it based on only a few people, or is it comprehensive? If the contact person makes funding decisions, get to know their preferences. Be pleasant and non-combative in discussing your project.