Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z: Successful Strategies

Presented as part of First Nations Development Institute’s Catalyzing Community Giving program with the generous support of

Presenters:
Marian Quinlan, CFRE, Grantwriting Consultant
Alice Botkin, Development Officer
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Table of Contents

- Finding Federal grants
- Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates
- Where to Start ??? – Gathering your thoughts, attachments, logic model, narrative
- Budget Development
- Completing/Submitting an Application
- After the Decision (Feedback if declined, Review grant requirements, Reporting, tracking financials)
- Other Resources
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z: Introductions

Alice Botkin
Development Officer, First Nations Development Institute

Marian Quinlan, CFRE
Fundraising Consultant, Quinlan and Associates
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Finding Federal Grants

About Federal Grants

- NOFAs (notice of funding availability)
- RFPs (request for proposals)
- NOFOs (notice of funding opportunity)
- Cooperative agreements vs. Grants
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Finding Federal Grants

• Researching Federal Grants

Grants.gov
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Grants.gov
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates

First Time

- Confirm that your organization is eligible – Employer Identification Number (EIN) is required
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates

First Time

- Confirm that your organization is eligible – EIN is required
- Determine whether your organization has a DUNS number. If not, obtain a DUNS number at [https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform](https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform) or by calling 1-866-705-5711
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates

First Time

- Confirm that your organization is eligible – EIN is required
- Confirm/Obtain the organization’s DUNS number
- Register with System for Award Management (SAM) at https://www.sam.gov/. The person identified as the EBiz Point of Contact will be responsible for authorizing users registering with Grants.gov for the organization.
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates

First Time

- Register as an Organization Applicant
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates

First Time

- Register as an Organization Applicant
- Create Grants.gov username and password
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates

First Time

- Register as an Organization Applicant
- Create Grants.gov username and password
- EBiz Point of Contact (identified in SAM) authorizes Grants.gov Role
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates

After You Have Registered
DUNS

- Passwords expire after 90 days
- Registration must be updated annually or when data changes
- If address changes, DUNS registration must be updated first – this flows through to SAM and Grants.gov
- Use DUNS Government iUpdate system for changes (https://iupdate.dnb.com)
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates

Ongoing Updates

SAM

- Passwords expire after 180 days
- Accounts become inactive after 395 days
- Registration must be updated annually or when data changes
- If address changes, update DUNS registration first
Grants.gov: First-time and Ongoing Updates

Ongoing Updates

Grants.gov

- Passwords expire every 60 days
- Accounts that are inactive (no login for over 1 year) are deactivated
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Finding Federal Grants

Researching Federal Grants

Grants.gov

- Subscribe to Email Notifications (Manage Subscriptions)
  OR

- Browse categories, agencies, eligibility
  OR

- Proactive research: Drill into specific agencies’ grants to see previous grantees and to find out who funded specific known programs.
START EARLY !!!!!
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Starting an Application

- Confirm Adobe Acrobat is installed and compatible
- Confirm that your browser is compatible
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Preparing for an Application

- Select the funding opportunity in Grants.gov
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Preparing for an Application

- Select the funding opportunity in Grants.gov
- Check the “Related Documents” tab and “Additional Information section” for information posted by the funding agency
Preparing for an Application

- Select the funding opportunity in Grants.gov
- Check the “Related Documents” tab for information posted by the funding agency
- Select the Package tab and click Apply. Enter your email to receive notification of changes to the package and click “Submit”.
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Preparing for an Application

- Instructions may be within the Funding Opportunity document or in one or more separate documents.
- Take advantage of any applicant webinars or conference calls
- Identify all forms and documents to be included – prepare a checklist
- Note the deadline TIME as well as the date
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Preparing for an Application

CAREFULLY

Read the Funding Opportunity
And
ALL instructions and related documents
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z: 

Starting an Application

- Select Option 1 – Apply now using workspace
- Make note of the Workspace ID

NOTE: To continue an application started earlier go to the Applicants section and select: Manage Workspaces for Organization then click on Manage Workspace for the proper workspace.
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Starting an Application

CAREFULLY

Read the Funding Opportunity

And

ALL instructions and related documents

(Yes, again)
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Taking the Proposal from 0 to 60

Where to Start

- Why is the project needed?
- What needs to be done?
- What/Who does the project affect?
- What resources are needed?
- Do you need to partner with another organization?
- What is the timetable?
- How will you measure effectiveness?
- How does this project fit within the NOFA’s priorities?
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Taking the Proposal from 0 to 60

Where to Start

- Costs: start thinking about the budget
- Start writing the Logic model, Work plan or Objective
  Work Plan
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Taking the Proposal from 0 to 60

Where to Start

Attachments

a) Letters of Support
b) Board resolution
c) Tribal resolution
d) MOUs
e) Consultant scopes of work
f) Financial questionnaire
g) Matching funds verification
h) Nonprofit status letter
i) Organization operating budget
j) Staff resumes
k) Staff job descriptions
l) Institutional funder list
Definition:

A logic model is a graphic (typically one page) that describes a program or organization in evaluation terms.

It shows how day-to-day activities connect to the results or outcomes the program is trying to achieve.

Similar to a flowchart, it lays out program activities and outcomes using boxes, and, using arrows to connect the boxes, shows how the activities and outcomes connect with one another.
Test the quality of your logic model:

- Does the logic flow from left to right? If it reads as a disconnected series of activities and outcomes, take another pass.
- Are there outputs for each activity?
- Do the outputs contribute to the outcomes?
- Are the outcomes achievable by this program? (the short term outcomes should be achieved by the end of the program grant period—longer term outcomes can extend beyond the period of the grant)
- Is it clear how progress and outcomes will be demonstrated?
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Taking the Proposal from 0 to 60

Logic Model

Logic Model Resources (see handout for links):

- USDA-NIFA FAQs
- Innovation Network Logic Model Workbook
- Harvard Family Research Project – Learning from Logic Models
Before you start on the narrative...

- Remember: it’s all about the points!
- More energy → sections worth more points
- Note and use buzzwords from the NOFA.
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

Narrative

Other parts of the proposal narrative...

1. Needs statement
   - Need facts & figures
   - Don’t assume any knowledge from the proposal reviewers.
   - Good sources of info:
     - U.S. Census Factfinder (can drill down to by-reservation data)
     - Department of the Interior’s American Indian Population and Labor Force Report
     - USDA Census of Agriculture
     - Tribal departments
     - Your own community-based survey
Completing the Application

Narrative

Other parts of the proposal narrative...

2. Goal

Example:
The goal of this 24-month Standard Grant project is to provide training and Technical Assistance (TA) as well as networking opportunities to three groups of beginning farmers and ranchers (BFRs) in Arizona to build their business capacity to expand and improve the management of their ranching operations.
3. SMART Objectives

- **Specific**: The objective describes well-defined actions, and the outcome is specific to: “what we must do to achieve the project goal and resolve the identified problem.”
- **Measurable**: The outcome of the objective is observable and defined in measurable terms.
- **Achievable**: Assigned project staff and/or partners can achieve the objective at satisfactory levels of performance.
- **Relevant**: The objective is clearly related to the problem statement, project goal, and the community to be served.
- **Time-bound**: The objective is completed in a time frame that is presented in the project work plan with clearly stated start and stop dates.
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

Narrative

Other parts of the proposal narrative...

Sample SMART Objective

During the 36 month project, our community will train 90 unemployed community members (30 each year) in four areas of high employment demand: Commercial food preparation; Landscaping and grounds maintenance; Commercial vehicle operation, and; Home health care with a minimum of 60 (20 each year) achieving certification in one of the four identified areas and employed by local area businesses.
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

Narrative

Other parts of the proposal narrative...

4. Activities: What will you do, who will be responsible, timeline?
5. Description of partners: Who and how?
6. Outputs: Quantitative results
7. Outcomes: Benefits
9. Organization and Staff qualifications
10. Summary of previous federal funding/ ability to manage federal funds
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z: Completing the Application

Budget

- Review the SF-424A form for budget categories
- Involve program and finance staff
- Identify costs for all Project activities
  - Personnel and Fringe Benefits
  - Travel
  - Supplies
  - Contractual (includes Consultants)
  - Other – Meeting costs, subgrants, printing, etc.
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

Budget

- Are Matching Funds required?
  - Identify the amount needed
  - Identify the source
  - Confirm that the timing of the matching funds and the new grant coincide
  - Proof of Matching Funds required
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z: Completing the Application

Budget

- Indirect Costs
- Do you have a NICRA (Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement)?
  - No – Review the announcement to determine if a default rate is allowed
  - Yes – Verify that it is current
- Plan for requesting one for future applications
Completing the Application

Budget

- Prepare the budget using Excel or other similar software
- Show federal and matching funds separately
- Summarize by the SF-424A Categories
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

Budget Narrative

- Level of detail required varies greatly by agency
- Review the announcement for required information
- Budget Narrative must match the budget figures
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

- Open the application Workspace
- Review the application forms listed
- Select any optional forms that apply
- Complete the SF-424 form. Information on other forms will be pre-filled from the SF-424
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

SF-424

- DUNS number
- Address on application must match address associated with the DUNS number
- Congressional Districts (applicant and project)
- Estimated funding – must match Budget form
- E.O.12372 Review
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

SF-424A

- Non-construction Budget Form
- Usually a required form
- Develop your budget before completing the SF-424A
- Some fields may be pre-filled
- Required fields are highlighted
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

Other Typical Forms

- SF-424B (Assurances – Non-Construction Programs)
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)
- SF-LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities)
- AD-3030 (Representations Regarding Felony Conviction And Tax Delinquent Status For Corporate Applicants)
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

Attachments

- Confirm all attachments are ready
- Confirm attachments are in an acceptable format (PDF, Excel, etc.)
- Name attachments as required by the instructions. Keep names under 50 characters.
- Upload attachments. There may be multiple places in the application – see the instructions.
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Completing the Application

- Log in to Grants.gov to confirm your password
- Check for Errors
- Sign and Submit the application - BE PATIENT
- The confirmation is accessed by clicking on the Adobe icon. Open and save/print it
- Verify that a Submission Receipt email is received
- Verify that a Validation or Rejection with Errors email is received
- Receipt email will be sent when agency retrieves the application
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

What’s Next?

If you are not funded

- Ask to see the reviewers’ comments. They may help guide you in revising and resubmitting the proposal to the targeted funder or another.

- Check out the grantees and the programs that were funded. You’ll get a sense of the funder’s priorities.

- Try again! Almost no one is funded on their first try. Or maybe even the second or third.
If you are funded

- CELEBRATE!!

- Be prepared for the agency to request budget revisions and/or alterations to some documents.

- Be sure to note required report deadlines, special conditions, grantee orientation and grantee conferences.
Federal grants will require reporting at least annually and as often as quarterly (especially financial reporting).

Be familiar with the reporting that will be required and develop baseline data and evaluation processes against which you can report.

Collect data/information for the reports as you go – don’t wait until the report is coming due!

Be sure that whoever is responsible for financial reporting in your organization is familiar with federal grant financial reporting and allowed expenses.

Be sure that your grant-related expenses are being tracked in synch with the budget categories.
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Additional Funding Sources

- Foundations
- Corporations
- Government (tribal, local, state, federal)
- Churches/religious groups
- Nonprofit organizations
- United Way
- Civic/volunteer organizations
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Online Resources*

- Foundation Center
  - Foundation Directory Online
  - Philanthropy News Digest
  - Grantspace and The Foundation Center’s Funding Information Network (part of Grantspace)
- Foundation Center Research Studies
  - GrantCraft
  - Issuelab
- Nonprofit Information
- The Grantsmanship Center
- About.com
- Grant Professionals Association
- Guidestar
- The Chronicle of Philanthropy
- Grant Station

* Links available in accompanying handout
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Staying Up-to-Date with Email Lists*

- Grants.gov
- National Science Foundation
- The Foundation Center’s Philanthropy News Digest
- DC Mayor's Office of Partnerships and Grant Services' Funding Alert
- GrantStation Insider
- U.S. Dept. of Education
- U.S. DHHS/Office Of Minority Health
- U.S. DHHS/Administration for Native Americans

* Links available in accompanying handout
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z:

Other Relevant First Nations Knowledge Webinars

Webinars are located at www.firstnations.org/fnk

- Grantwriting For Success – March 5, 2015
- Program Evaluation - August 22, 2013
- Creating a Program Budget - July 25, 2013
Federal Government Grantwriting from A to Z: Successful Strategies

Presented as part of First Nations Development Institute’s Catalyzing Community Giving program with the generous support of

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians