



**NIM**  
**CCS**  
New Mexico  
Coalition for  
Charter Schools



# Preparing for a grant

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**Rising Up!**

**Taking Charters to New Heights**

**2017 Annual Conference**

# Preparing for a grant application

## Basics

- What you need to know
- How to design a grant response
- How to address your community's needs
- How to develop a group effort

## Guideposts

- Critical Idea
- Read the Instructions
- Narrative – Storytelling
- Examples of Other's Work
- Literature Review
- Mouse Trap
- Details of the Plan
- Specific Aims
- Outcomes

# Competitive Grants for Charter Schools

NMCCS – 2017 Annual Conference  
9 December 2017

# Why a Grantmaking presentation?

- Grant funds are becoming tighter to come by
- Community health needs continue to increase
- Identifying community health needs is more important than ever
- An opportunity to develop strategies to identify and acquire grant funds

# The Grantmaking Process

- What you need to know
- How to design a grant response
- How to address your community's needs
- How to develop a group effort

So, What's First?

A Critical idea is first

# A Critical Idea

- The hallmark of a good researcher is the possession of a good, critical idea.
- There is no substitute for a critical idea.
- However, in a poor presentation a critical idea can be disguised in a thousand ways.
- The result is an un-funded application.

# The Second Step in Preparing a Competitive Grant Application

- read the instructions
- Read the Instructions
- READ THE INSTRUCTIONS
- Read the correct instructions, i.e., those that pertain to the grant for which you are applying
- Read all of the instructions and the most current instructions



# The Written Presentation

- Information is interpreted more easily if it is placed where most readers expect to find it.
- For clarity, use simple declarative sentences.
- Avoid complicated words, unusual abbreviations, and poor syntax.
- The application should be easy to read and comprehensible.

# Conceptual Structure of a Grant Application

- IDEA
- SUPPORTING IDEAS
- DETAILS OF THE PLAN
- APPENDICES

# Typical Sequence for Proposal Development

- The problem or need
- Significance
- Specific aims
- Research plan
- Progress report
- Budget
- Biographical sketch - Resume
- Abstract

# Typical Proposal Sequence for Reading

- Title page and abstract
- Introduction and the problem (need)
- Specific aims or objectives
- Significance (literature review and background)
- Progress report
- Research plans (research plans and methodology)
- Budget
- Biographic sketch

# Requirements for a Good Specific Aims Section

- Brief introduction including the long range goal of the project
- The goal or objective of this particular application
- The central hypothesis to be examined
- Rationale for the project
- Specific aims
- Anticipated results

# Brief Introduction

- Underscores the importance of the proposed studies.
- Should convey the most important findings in the field of study.
- Should highlight the problem that the proposed studies will address.

# Long-range Goal

- It is the goal of the overall program of which the current application is a part.
- It is not the goal of the current application.

# Central Hypothesis

- The proposed research should be hypothesis driven!
- The hypothesis must be testable and should select an experimental outcome from among various possibilities.
- The hypothesis should not present a predetermined conclusion.



# Rationale

- This is the underlying reason for the studies you propose.
- The rationale must be relevant to the problem that has been presented in the introduction.

# Specific Aims

- They should be brief, focused, and limited in scope.
- Each aim should flow logically into the next aim.
- Each aim should be briefly expanded upon.
- Be realistic: do not overestimate your abilities or capabilities for completing the work proposed in your application in the time requested.

# Background

## THE PURPOSE OF THE BACKGROUND:

- To establish a solid foundation on which to build your proposal.
- Is not to impress reviewers with your comprehensive knowledge of the field.

# Problem or Needs Statement cont'd.

The problem or needs statement is the *disparity between what is and what should be, that created the GAP which your proposed project will attempt to close or make smaller*

# Biographical Sketch or Resume

- Document your credentials accurately.
- Provide aspects of your training and expertise that are relevant to the application.
- Give full citations in the bibliography, *but do not “inflate” the bibliography.*
- Include citations that are relevant to the subject of your proposal.
- Do not include unimportant or non-relevant entries.

# Preliminary efforts

- Describe published studies in limited detail and include the most important figures and/or tables.
- Describe unpublished studies in more complete detail, including newer data.
- Do not duplicate the preliminary studies with the proposed studies.

# Preliminary work

- *Include* the results of your recent work that have direct relevance to the studies proposed in your grant application.
- *Exclude* any studies in which the relationship to your proposed study is not relevant.

# THE proposal DESIGN

This is the “heart and soul” of the application.

In this section state precisely:

- What you propose to do.
- How you plan to do it.
- What the result will mean in terms of the overall project.
- What pitfalls you might encounter.
- Alternative approaches to cope with anticipated problems.



# Proposal Design: Organizational Structure

Restate Each Specific Aim, Provide:

1. Introduction
2. Methods of approach
3. Anticipated findings or results
4. Potential pitfalls/alternative approaches

# Proposal Design

## Specific Aims, cont'd.

### INTRODUCTION

Each section of the proposal should restate the hypothesis to be tested, the rationale for the study, the overall approaches to be taken, and the anticipated results to be achieved

# Proposal Design

## Specific Aims, cont'd.

### METHODS OF APPROACH

- Separate sections based on the specific aim should be used to develop each of the planned set of studies
- This section is not intended to be a materials and methods manual; therefore avoid emphasis on routine methods
- Use detailed methods only for unfamiliar technology

# Proposal Design

## Specific Aims, cont'd.

### **ANTICIPATED RESULTS**

- Summarize your results
- Emphasize only the most important results
- Do not over inflate or over interpret the results
- If limitations exist, they should not be ignored, but should be discussed in a positive manner

# Proposal Design

## Specific Aims, cont'd.

### **POTENTIAL PROBLEMS**

- Anticipate potential problems, and discuss them but do not overemphasize them
- Offer alternative strategies
- Reconcile the results of differing approaches

# The Budget

- The budget should never drive the proposal.
- Justify all personnel with respect to effort and expertise.
- The equipment request must be congruent with the resource statement and stem from the proposed methodology.
- Don't ask for a Mercedes when a Saturn will do.
- Justify strongly all equipment requested.
- The supply request should match your research design, and be strongly justified.

# Most Common Reasons for Failure

- Lack of a good original idea.
- Unimportant or unresponsive problem.
- Unacceptable rationale.
- Lack of expertise, experience, or resources.
- Superficial or unfocused approach.
- Unrealistic amount of work proposed.
- Uncertain outcomes and/or lack of future directions.

# Tips for Writing Proposals

- Write with the reader in mind because readers do not simply read, they interpret.
- Remember that the reader may make his/her most interpretative decisions about the substance or prose based on the clues they receive from the structure of the presentation.
- Remember that information is interpreted more easily and uniformly if it is placed where most readers expect to find it.



# THE ABSTRACT: Content

- It should be written last after the project has been completed because the writer will have a clear idea of exactly what information is to be distilled and summarized.
- It should be succinct and motivating because it is one of the most often read sections of a grant application.
- It is a summary of the proposal; it does not list objectives, it summarizes them.

# THE ABSTRACT cont'd.

## A GOOD ABSTRACT:

- States the problem or needs to be addressed.
- Outlines specific objectives to be pursued.
- Outlines the activities to meet those objectives.
- Outlines the results.
- States the project's contribution.

# The Proposal Plan: General Considerations

- Read and follow instructions carefully.
- Specific aims are statements of end results. They are measurable statements, not means to an end.
- Make the logic very clear and write a focused research plan.
- Don't ramble--give sufficient background to make the significance of the proposed research very clear.
- Frame questions in terms of testable hypotheses.

# The Proposal Plan:

## General Considerations cont'd.

- Clearly delineate the problem and the purpose of the effort.
- Emphasize the specific advantages of doing the effort as you propose.
- Consider alternative strategies--there is concern when only a single approach is given or a single uncertain result serves as the basis for the project.
- Include preliminary data if possible.
- Don't over interpret or misinterpret data.

# The Proposal Plan:

## General Considerations, cont'd.

- Don't detail routine methods, but include comments that can convey your expertise to the reader.
- List relevant intellectual and physical resources available to you.
- Consider and discuss all variables that will impact the outcome. That is, which ones need to be controlled, which ones don't, and how this will affect the outcome.

# The Proposal Plan:

## General Considerations, cont'd.

- Discuss the limitations of your conclusions, if any.
- Prioritize the tasks proposed and provide time estimates.
- Use shorter words rather than longer ones unless they are technical.
- Use short sentences and avoid jargon.
- Make sure the proposal follows logically from section to section, i.e. methods proposed = logical extension of the specific aims.

# Proposal Preparation

- Letters of Support
- Memoranda of Agreement or Understanding
- Appropriate dates
- Signatures of organization's officials and administrators

# Post presentation Project

Short-Term Goals for your community

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# Post presentation Project

Long-Term Goals for your community

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# Post presentation Project

Identify 3 Community Needs

1.

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2.

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3.

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# Contact Information

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