General Grantwriting Workshop:
How to Write Effective Proposals
June 5, 2015

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Workshop Description & Objectives

▸ Designed for writing effective proposals to foundations

▸ Open to all (beginner to advanced level)

▸ Topics:
  ▸ general proposal writing guidelines
  ▸ best practices and do's & don'ts
  ▸ strategies to increase your opportunities for funding

▸ Info <u>not</u> specific to Con Alma Health Foundation

For more info on Con Alma funding, visit:
  ▸ Pre-proposal information
http://conalma.org/2015-grant-cycle-pre-proposal-webinar-resources

  ▸ On-line application process
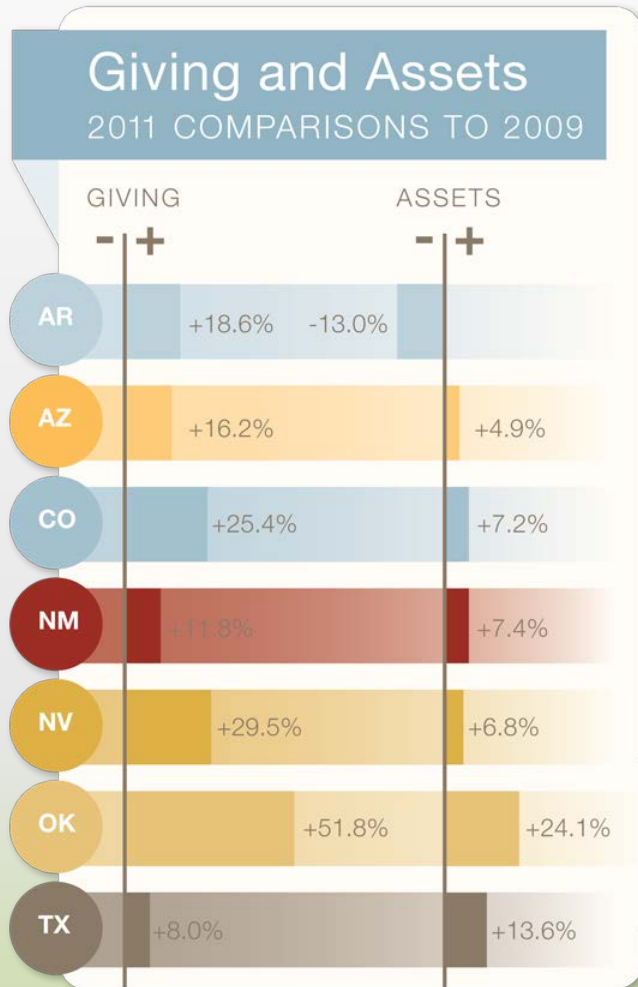http://conalma.org/faqs

Context: Sources of Revenue for Nonprofits

- Other (e.g. investment income, corporate donations)
- Bequests
- Foundation grants (9 – 13% of nonprofits revenue)
- Governmental contracts
- Fees for service
- Individual donors

Giving and Assets

Giving and Assets
2011 COMPARISONS TO 2009

	GIVING	ASSETS
AR	+18.6%	−13.0%
AZ	+16.2%	+4.9%
CO	+25.4%	+7.2%
NM	+11.8%	+7.4%
NV	+29.5%	+6.8%
OK	+51.8%	+24.1%
TX	+8.0%	+13.6%

New Mexico:

Giving +11.8%
Assets +7.4%

In NM, 181 foundations granted more than $64.6 million, representing 11.8% increase in dollars granted from the last study two years ago, and a 7.4% increase in the assets of foundations across the state.

Source: Philanthropy Southwest 2014 Giving Study
https://www.philanthropysouthwest.org

Proposal Writing

- Types of Funding: 1) Foundations; 2) Governmental; and 3) Corporate/Business

- One-step or Two-step Process
  - Letter of Inquiry (LOI)
  - Invite to submit full proposal

- Basic Elements of a Proposal
  Answer: Who, What, When, Where, Why & How Much
    - Introduction/Organizational Information/Contact info
    - Project/Program Description, Goals & Objectives, Activities
    - Budget & Evaluation
    - Attachments

  Note: Do NOT include a cover letter unless requested.

Basic Elements of a Proposal

Source: The Foundation Center,
http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/shortcourse/components.html

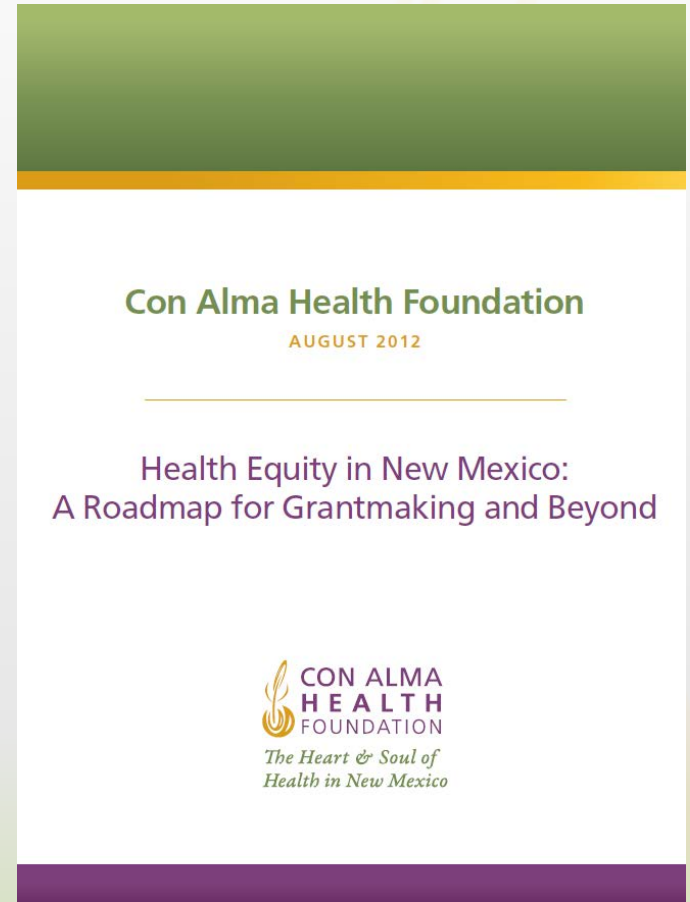|		
Executive Summary:	Umbrella statement of your case and summary of the entire proposal	1 page
Statement of Need:	Why this project is necessary is necessary	2 pages
Project Description:	Nuts and bolts of how the project will be implemented and evaluated	3 pages
Budget:	Financial description of the project plus notes	1 page
Organization Information:	History and governing structure of the nonprofit; its primary activities, audiences, and services	1 page
Conclusion:	Summary of the proposal's main points	2 paragraphs

General Proposal Writing Guidelines

1. Do your homework
2. Follow instructions
3. Stay within your mission
4. Be specific
5. Statement of Need
6. Avoid circular reasoning
7. Use data appropriately
8. Budgets
9. Avoid "*proposalese*"
10. Maintain integrity

General Proposal Writing Guidelines

1. Do your homework:

Make sure that your proposal fits the guidelines (e.g., grant amount, geographic area of service, funding priority, etc.)

Research funder (e.g. review website for current & former grantees; review 990s, etc.)

Con Alma Health Foundation

AUGUST 2012

Health Equity in New Mexico:
A Roadmap for Grantmaking and Beyond

CON ALMA
H E A L T H
FOUNDATION

*The Heart & Soul of
Health in New Mexico*

General Proposal Writing Guidelines

2. Follow instructions:

-review & respond to all questions

-pay attention to special requests, font size, margins, number of copies

-include all attachments as instructed

General Proposal Writing Guidelines

3. Stay within your mission:

> Avoid mission drift. Be clear on how the funding will be used to fulfill project objectives and how the request fits with the funder's mission.

Funders are interested in the needs of your target population and in fulfilling your (and their) respective missions, but…

there has to be a good fit.

General Proposal Writing Guidelines

4. Be specific: Provide specific info re: target pop, partners, etc. that your program will address.

- **S**pecific
  - (Clear, Concise, tangible)

- **M**easurable or **M**otivational
  - (Dollars, volume, time, experiences)

- **A**ctionable or **A**ttainable
  - (You can do something to actually make this happen)

- **R**eachable or **R**ealistic
  - (Partial is fine!)

- **T**imely
  - (Deadlines are announced and committed too)

General Proposal Writing Guidelines

**5. Statement of Need**: Don't assume that the funder understands your need/problem.

Nonprofits are passionate about their mission and sometimes assume that everyone understands (and agrees) why a project is worthy of funding.
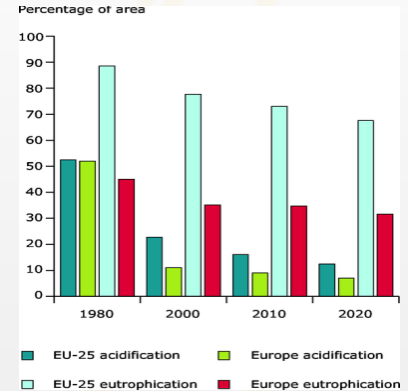
Problem + Action = Solution

General Proposal Writing Guidelines

6. Avoid circular reasoning:
This is when your solution is the
same as the problem, e.g., "The
problem is that there is no health clinic; therefore,
establishing a health clinic will solve the problem."
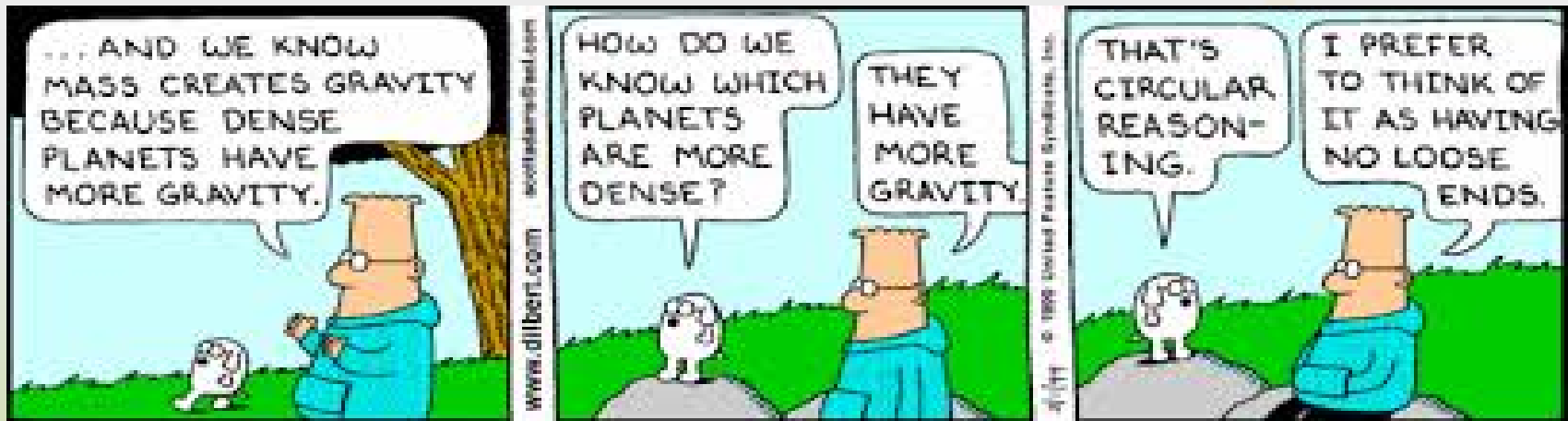
General Proposal Writing Guidelines

7. Using data: Don't use national data to describe a local need/problem. National data is helpful to include as part of the framework, but you need to support local needs with local data.

8. Budgets: Check your math. Match budget with program request. Ask for what you need (within funder's guidelines) and substantiate it with sound figures. Don't ask for 100% of the project funding, unless justified (project/request ratio).

General Proposal Writing Guidelines

9. Avoid *proposalese*:
-Write clearly & concisely,
 make every word count
-Avoid jargon
-Define important terms & concepts

10. Integrity: Maintain a high level of integrity.

-Don't pad your budget

-Don't promise what you can't deliver

-Follow through if funded and keep funder informed of any changes

Levels of Change

Systems

Community

Groups & Organizations

Individuals & Families
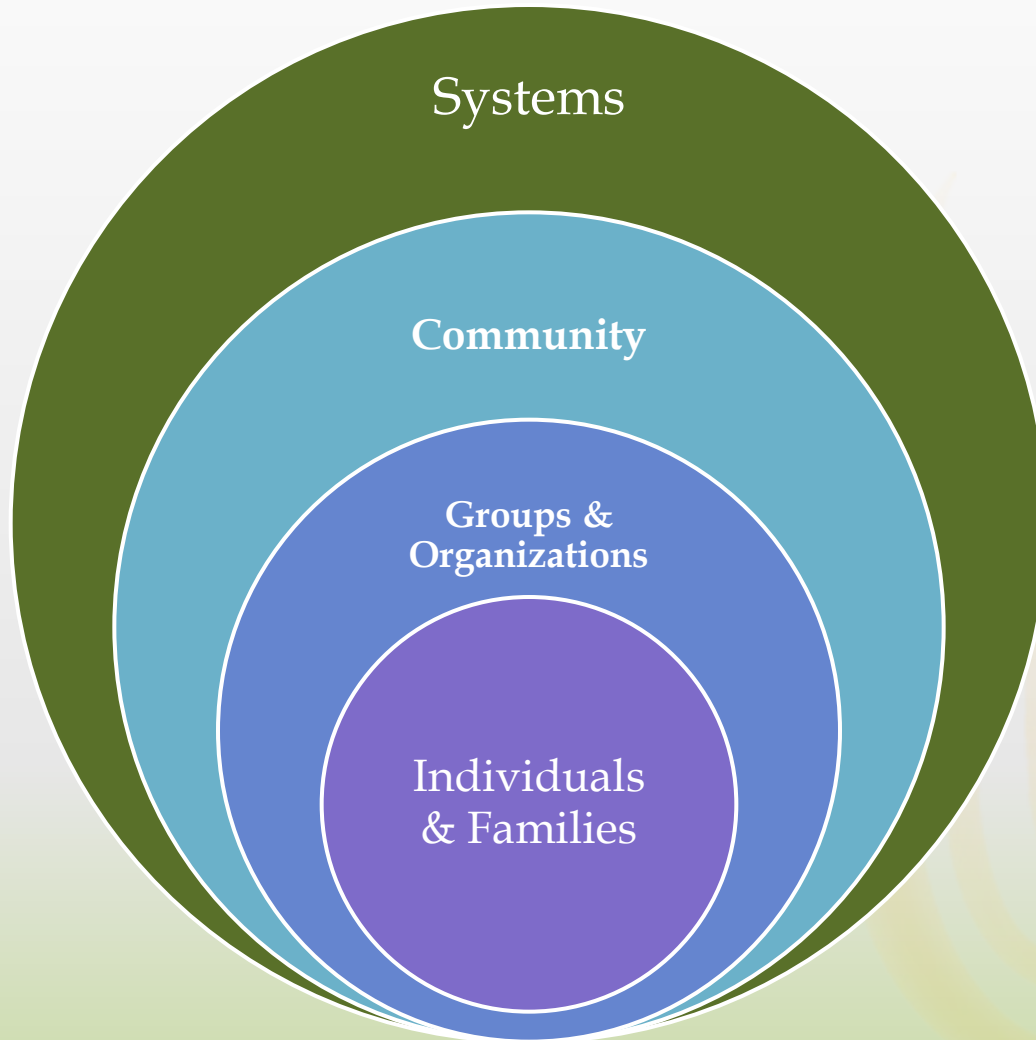
Definitions (levels of change):

▸ Direct services focus on individuals, families or small groups

▸ Systems change moves beyond individuals, individual organizations, single problems and single solutions

▸ It involves thinking about systems (e.g. health care system, economic system, educational system, environmental system) in order to impact a larger group, community or society

Sample Grant Review Process

Application/proposal submitted

Initial review (Meet guidelines? Address priorities? Compelling? Greatest impact?)

Site visit and committee review

Funding recommendations

Board approval/action
(award & decline letters)

Sample 2015 Grant Cycle Timeline

RFP
(May 2015)

→

Proposal Deadline
(June 2015)

→

Grant Review Process
(July – Oct.)

↓

Award & Decline Notices
(Nov.)

←

Grant Period:
1/1/16 – 12/31/16

←

Final Report Due (Jan. 2017

Research Funding Restrictions:

EXAMPLE: CAHF grants will *not* Fund

‣ Direct Services

‣ Lobbying

‣ Scholarships/Fellowships

‣ Fundraising Campaigns

‣ Event Sponsorships

‣ Clinical Research

‣ Capital Expenses, including
  ‣ Construction, renovation
  ‣ Property
  ‣ Equipment costing more than $5,000 per item

The Right Ingredients

Recipe for success: Mix 2 cups of <u>good fit</u> with equal amount of <u>good ideas</u>, add in 1 cup each of <u>organizational capacity</u> and <u>positive approach</u>. Mix well and season to taste. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 min. Serve with <u>integrity</u>.

- A good fit (between your funding needs and funder's priorities; and a good fit with type of funding you are seeking e.g., governmental, foundation, corporate, etc.)

- Organizational capacity (governance, leadership, operations, etc.)

- A positive approach

- A good idea

Glossary

Grant: An award (generally funding) awarded by a funder/foundation to a nonprofit applicant.

Proposal: An application for funding.

Fiscal Sponsor: A nonprofit, tax-exempt 501c3 that a non-tax exempt organization uses to receive foundation grants.

Donor Advised Funds: A philanthropic vehicle at a public charity (e.g. community foundation), which allows donors to make a charitable contribution.

Indirect Cost: Those costs for activities/services that benefit more than one project and/or are unable to be traced directly to a project (e.g., utilities, audit).

For a full Glossary of Terms, visit the Foundation Center:
https://fconline.foundationcenter.org

Resources

www.conalma.org – Con Alma Health Foundation

www.centerfornonprofitexcellence.org – Center for Nonprofit Excellence, NM Grantmakers Directory, resources/instructions for grant researches, etc.

www.nmag.org – Visit the New Mexico Association of Grantmakers (NMAG) website for information on philanthropy in NM, and NM Grantmakers Directory

http://foundationcenter.org - Foundation Center - maintains comprehensive database grantmakers and their grants; proposal writing info, glossary, etc.

Questions?

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