

Grant Proposal Outline

Once you've completed your brainstorming worksheet, it is time to start crafting your proposal responses. Follow the prompts in this worksheet to prepare the answers you will need when it comes time to write your final proposal.

1. Need Statement

The need statement provides the reason for your proposed project and provides adequate rationale for what you are proposing. This is where your identification of the existing problem will be defined for your audience. This section should focus on the specific "needs" of your targeted population. Both the needs and your proposed solution should be linked to the goals of your team, school, or district.

a. Description of the specific problem

Clearly define the problem you are looking to address. Please note this section should not include the "lack" of a specific tool or service – that should instead be included when you define your solution. The problem statement should be clearly linked to the targeted population.

b. Supporting data/information that verifies the need

Provide concrete data that indicates the scope of the problem you are looking to solve. This is where you can also indicate if other schools, or districts, are experiencing a similar problem.

c. Approach and expected outcome

Clearly state the approach that you are going to take to address this problem, and specify what outcomes you are looking to achieve during the funding period. Also, make sure to state how the success of this project will relate to the organization that is seeking the funding.

Grant Proposal Outline

2. Measures of Accountability

It is important that you define what will need to happen in order to solve the problem you've identified above. To make this process more manageable, it is best to outline the goals, objectives, and activities that you will take to succeed. By breaking the "big picture" into smaller pieces, you are able to articulate how you will be held accountable for your project.

a. Goals

Draft a broad, general statement of what you are looking to achieve, including the long-term benefits you are hoping to attain. Make sure to state what will be different about the identified need.

b. Objectives

These are specific and measurable statements that define the intermediate steps that must be taken in order to achieve a goal. The objectives include the who, what, and when of these steps. With competition for dollars so great, well-articulated objectives are increasingly critical to a proposal's success.

c. Activities

Describe the methods and specific actions you are going to take in order to meet each above objective. Include two activities for each objective. However, the same activities may be used for several objectives.

In your description of your project activities, make sure to explain why these activities were chosen and indicate the appropriate sequence of activities.

Grant Proposal Outline

d. Timelines

Think through the timeframe within which the above-described activities will take place. You can include timeframes for objectives and/or activities. Make sure to indicate to the funding group that you have clearly thought through what you will need to do in order to achieve your goal(s).

e. Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan will define how you will measure the extent to which your plan achieves its stated goals and objectives, as well as the extent to which the attainment of your stated goals can be directly related to the implementation of your program. The evaluation plan will also measure whether the project was conducted in a manner consistent with your proposed plan.

Grant Proposal Outline

3. Plan of Action

This section will be the “heart” of your proposal and will contain your proposed solution to the existing problem, the outline of your project, and the action(s) you are planning to take in order to achieve your expected outcome. This is also your opportunity to give your project a meaningful name, which can help your proposal stick out during review.

a. Project design

Give a broad picture of what you are proposing to do and what you are expecting to accomplish. Make sure to clearly state your solution to the previously identified problem.

b. Project structure

Provide a systematic plan of action – making sure to address the components you’ve defined above: goals, objectives, activities, and timelines.

Grant Proposal Outline

c. Management Plan

Present the qualifications of the proposed project staff, identifying the responsibilities for each staff member – including those that will need to be hired, if any. Include a narrative of relevant experience, education, and training of all staff members involved to help demonstrate that all members of your project team have the skills and qualifications necessary to complete the proposed plan of action. Providing an organizational chart here is also very common.

You will also need to state the expected time commitment that will be required of each person over the course of the project. Make sure to match the time commitments to each of the individual project activities you've outlined above.

d. Budget and Narrative

Every proposal must include a specified budget, along with a narrative that explains the rationale for each budget line item.