

# PROPOSAL FORMAT AND ORDER OF PRESENTATION

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# Introduction

- Proposals in this context are uniquely written with hope of winning grants in specific competitive and often advertised funding opportunities
- Proposal for a grant is treated as a project with a defined deliverable or end result for the money/support sought
- Proposals are often solicited from or presented by qualified researchers/scholars/organisations by funding agencies, mostly in specific areas of interest
- The pattern of writing and format of presentation are not uniform and same
- Proposals vary in several respects depending on the specifications and stipulations provided by the requesting body
- Understanding and strictly abiding by the prescribed format and order of presentation as advised by the awarding body is critical

# Personal experience

- In my academic career, I am fairly lucky to have applied and secured different forms of grants of various amounts for multiple purposes from many local and international agencies (Ford Foundation, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung of Germany, NACA, UNDP, USAID, UNESCO, MacArthur Foundation, NSRP, PPFA, UNICEF, Norwegian Min of Foreign Affairs, Univ of Gothenburg, Pathfinder International (USA), DFID/British Council, Unimaid, City Univ (Norway), Oslo, UNFPA, NRF, British and Commonwealth Office (UK),etc)
- I have assessed proposals from scholars and civil society organisations for funding at different times and fora
- Projects must show possible tangible results. A potentially successful grant proposal is one that is carefully prepared, planned, and packaged as specified in the requirements of the donor

# Why Proposals

- Proposals are often written for one or more of the reasons below:
  - specific invitation from a funding agency
  - response to specific advertisements from funding agencies
  - as a solicitation for support from possible funders
- Proposals for grants or support are prepared and submitted to solicit for financial or any other form of relevant support to undertake a defined project
- Funding agencies have individual areas of interests and competencies that they support

# Proposal format

- Some funders provide templates with specified requirements and control mechanisms like number of words to guide applicants
- Many others provide general framework to guide potential applicants
- Few others leave the applicants to use their initiatives to write their proposals
- Proposals are specific based on defined themes
- Applicants should thoroughly read and search for relevant information prior to writing and submitting their proposals
- Irrespective of the nature of proposal presentation, essential sections should be addressed

# Essential sections

- Cover letter
- Executive summary
- Project overview
- Project statement of need and rationale
- Project goal(s) and objectives
- Key activities
- Methods and strategies for implementation
- Project results
- Evaluation plan
- Budget

# Essentials....

- Organisation background: short history, structure, leadership, vision, mission, etc
- Project Team: names, designations and summaries of competencies
- Next Steps: issues of sustainability

# Sample I (MacArthur Foundation)

- *Briefly describe your organizational mission, vision and core programming*
- *What do you propose to do using the requested funds?*
- *Description of Funded Activities (8000 character limit - up to two pages)*
- *What problem/opportunity does this project or do these funded activities address?*
- *What are the goals of this project or these funded activities*
- *What activities do you propose to undertake using the requested funds, to achieve the goals?*
- *Why do you believe this approach will be effective in achieving your goals?*
- *Who are the beneficiaries or target audiences of this project?*
- *How do these funded activities complement others' work in the field? And, how is it unique?*



- *What are the risks? How might you address them?*
- *What are the intended outputs?*
- *What are the intended outcomes?*
- *What are the policy implications?*
- *What is the context related to this problem or opportunity?*
- *Why is now to engage in this project or these funded activities?*
- *What challenges do you anticipate? And how will you overcome them?*
- *Who else (funders, NGOs) is working to address this problem or opportunity (as relevant to your proposed work)? And, what are they doing?*

- *Who is leading the project or these funded activities?*
- *What is his/her expertise, experience with respect to this problem or opportunity?*
- *How would you characterize the expertise and experience of your full team engaged in this project or these funded activities?*
- *Why is your organization the right organization (in terms of expertise, experience and capacity, strategic alliances, relationships, etc.) to do this work?*
- *What is the most important thing you expect to learn from this project?*
- *How will you know if your project is successful?*
- *What from this product will be shared or disseminated more broadly and how?*
- *Describe your organization's approach to fundraising and revenue generation*
- *Describe any opportunities, risks or challenges to your organization's sustainability during the grant period*
- *Organizational operating budget for current year*

# Sample II: UNESCO IPDC Guidelines for proposal

- Project justification: Justify why the proposed project is important to media development in your country. This should include the following:
- Outcomes: They can be defined as a change in state or condition that derives from a cause-and effect relationship. They represent changes in the institutional and behavioural capacities or development conditions that occur by the completion of outputs. An outcome is the “raison d’être” of the project
- Outputs: are changes in skills, abilities and capacities of individuals or institutions, or in the availability of new products, goods and services induced by the completion of activities within the project. They are within the control of the submitting institution and attributable to it and are achieved with the resources provided and within the time period specified. Hence, an output is the first effect of the project

- Activities: are the tasks to be carried out by those involved in the project. Only those tasks which can be undertaken within the framework of the project should be mentioned as activities. Activities describe actions taken or work performed through which inputs are mobilized to produce the outputs
- Budget: Inputs refer to the resources needed to implement the project. List only the inputs that will be covered by IPDC. Inputs correspond to the human, material, technological and information resources, necessary to produce project outputs (e.g. personnel such as trainers, equipment, etc). Inputs should be precise and verifiable in quality and quantity
- The breakdown should include a budget item for each input. The requested IPDC contribution should not include any recurrent costs, venue costs or costs related to regular staff or project coordination. These costs are normally expected to be borne by the submitting institution.
- The submitting institution's contribution should include all the recurrent costs, including staff costs, project coordination costs and a budget line for regular reporting on project progress.

# Finally..

- Never be intimidated by a grant proposal
- Never jump into grant writing without preparation
- Respect all the rules of good writing, neatness and seriousness
- Address every requirement as sufficiently as possible without being verbose or repetitive
- Package your proposal properly (Don't take anything for granted)
- Ensure that your proposal is on target
- Remain optimistic

THANK YOU