

Grant Proposal Writing

U.S. Embassy Accra



Agenda

- ▶ Getting Started
- ▶ Basics of Grant Writing
- ▶ Proposal Format
- ▶ Review Process
- ▶ Questions?



Getting Started

- ▶ Identify the challenge.
- ▶ This is your opportunity! What do you care about? What challenges do you see in Ghana that speak to you and allow you to use your expertise? How can you help others?
- ▶ Develop an idea to address and meet a specific need.
- ▶ Don't focus on the budget first.
- ▶ Complete a project proposal.



You don't have to do this alone!

- ▶ Who else cares about that challenge?
- ▶ Build a team to work with you!
- ▶ Apply as a small group
- ▶ Young and experienced alumni together
- ▶ Consider regional projects with alumni from other countries or areas within Ghana



How does the process work?

- ▶ Proposals are accepted on a rolling basis, however the priority deadline is May 8, 2020.
- ▶ Proposals must focus on key project area.
- ▶ Submit proposals to PASAccraGrant@state.gov
- ▶ Proposals are reviewed by a committee.
- ▶ Selected grantees will be notified that they have been provisionally approved to move forward.



What Makes a Good Proposal?

- ▶ Do your homework. What has been done before? Find best practices – don't assume your solution is the best option.
- ▶ Clear goal.
- ▶ Exchange of experience and expertise.
- ▶ Consider senior alumni as mentors.
- ▶ Capacity building.
- ▶ You are the focal point.



Things to Avoid

- ▶ No stipends/salaries for alumni.
- ▶ No ongoing or continuation of earlier project.
- ▶ Equipment only proposals.
- ▶ Hiring a trainer to do the project.
- ▶ Large refreshment costs.
- ▶ No indirect costs or overhead/admin fees.



How Do I Apply?

Information and application is available
on the U.S. Embassy website:
gh.usembassy.gov/education-culture/public-affairs-small-grants/



Other Funding Opportunities

- ▶ Check www.grants.gov regularly to find all NOFOs (Notice of Funding Opportunity) as they become available.
- ▶ Note the application deadline, and prepare to submit well in advance.
- ▶ Register to receive updates about NOFOs that interest you, so you are alerted to changes.



The committee really really likes...

- ▶ Clear problem statement and goal.
- ▶ Research.
- ▶ Your solution.
- ▶ In depth description of project activities.
- ▶ Detailed budget.
- ▶ Cost sharing.



Grant Writing

- ▶ Grants serve a public purpose and are designed to fund projects that help people.
- ▶ The U.S. Department of State is just one of 50+ U.S. government agencies and 1,250 federal programs that award grants.
 - Not all of these departments give internationally.
 - All grant programs must be authorized and appropriated funds by Congress.



Basics of Grant Writing

- ▶ Proposal should be clear, concise and avoid colloquial writing.
 - Should include all relevant information.
- ▶ Avoid unsupported assumptions.
 - Always cite data sources.
- ▶ Spell check and have someone else read your proposal before submitting.
- ▶ Complete all of the required forms.



Proposal Format

- Organization Description
- Executive Summary
- Project Justification
- Target Audience
- Project Goal and Objectives
- Project Activities
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Key Personnel
- Project partners
- Sustainability
- Communication Plan
- Budget



Organization Description

- ▶ Describes the applicant's qualifications or credibility.
- ▶ Establishes who is applying for funds.
- ▶ Describes applicant's goals, objectives and clients.
- ▶ Provides evidence of accomplishments.
- ▶ Keep it brief and interesting.



Executive Summary

- ▶ Brief summary of the justification, activities and goals of your program. (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?)
- ▶ Highlights of your entire application.
- ▶ If the grant committee reads nothing else – would they understand your proposal?



Project Justification

- ▶ Also known as the Problem Statement or Needs Assessment.
- ▶ Documents the need to be met or problems to be solved by the proposal.
- ▶ Relates to the purpose and goals of applicant and the funder.
 - Why is it in the interest of the U.S. government to fund your program? What's in it for us?
- ▶ Stated in terms of participants or beneficiaries.



Target Audience

- ▶ Defines the population served.
- ▶ Who are you trying to reach and why?
- ▶ There can be more than one target audience.
 - Example: The project may target youth during the grant period, but in the long term the target is aiming to reach their community, parents, etc.



Project Goal and Objectives

- ▶ Establishes the benefit of funding in measurable terms.
- ▶ Describes the problem-related outcomes of the project.
- ▶ These objectives are what you should address during monitoring and evaluation. How will you meet these objectives?



Project Activities

- ▶ Describes the activities to be implemented.
- ▶ Describes the sequence of activities, staffing, participants and their selection.
- ▶ States times when objectives will be met.
- ▶ Presents a reasonable scope of activities that can be accomplished in project time and with the resources allocated.



Monitoring and Evaluation

- ▶ Define specific indicators that would measure the success of the project.
- ▶ Lay out a strategy for collecting this data from program participants and stakeholders, reporting it, and analyzing the outcomes and results of your project.
- ▶ Could come from surveys, notes, photos, interviews, focus groups, or feedback.



Key Personnel

- ▶ Who are the key people that will be implementing the project?
- ▶ What are their qualifications (experience, education) to implement this project?
- ▶ If the position is new, provide a job description or list of duties.



Project Partners

- ▶ If you partner with organizations to implement your project, provide the name and a brief description of that organization.
- ▶ Is it clear which part of the project they will be involved in? What their responsibilities will be? Who will be responsible for monitoring their work?



Sustainability

- ▶ Describes plan for continuation beyond the grant period or the availability of other resources to implement the project. What happens when the grant ends?
- ▶ Sustainability is not the same donor providing more funding.
- ▶ If this project will not continue beyond the grant period, what is the multiplier effect in the long-term?



Communication Plan

- ▶ How will you publicize your project?
- ▶ Will you use traditional or social media to amplify your message?



Budget

- ▶ Personnel/Fringe Benefits *(not funded by Dar PD small grants)*
- ▶ Travel
 - Airfare, taxi, per diem for hotel, meals
- ▶ Equipment
- ▶ Supplies
 - Materials, banners, small equipment
- ▶ Contractual
 - Program partner/implementer, vendors, rentals
- ▶ Other Direct Costs
 - Honorarium, printing
- ▶ Indirect Costs *(not funded by Dar PD small grants)*
 - 10% maximum, to cover overhead costs that are not directly attributable to one single program
- ▶ Contributions/Cost share



Budget

- ▶ Provide as much detail as possible
 - Examples:
 - Personnel
 - Trainer (100%) x \$500/mo. x 12 months = \$6,000
 - Travel
 - Per diem: \$10/day x 2 days x 3 people = \$60 total
- ▶ Make sure all costs relate to the goals and activities of the project
 - Example: Healthcare costs for youth participants of an education program
- ▶ Three Requirements of Every Line Item:
Reasonable, Allowable, Allocable



Embassy Areas of Interest

- ▶ Promoting democratic governance.
- ▶ Promoting broad-based economic growth.
- ▶ Improving health and education, especially among women and youth.
- ▶ Advancing regional and domestic security.



Review Process

- ▶ Technical Eligibility.
- ▶ Grant Committee Score.
- ▶ Public Affairs Leadership Decision.
- ▶ Grants Officer Representative Negotiation.



Good Advice

- ▶ Does your project actually cost exactly \$25,000?
That's amazing! (And not credible...)
- ▶ Don't focus on the details up front. In your executive summary, make it clear what's the point/outcome/goal, why that goal matters, and briefly what your project is.
- ▶ Have a clear target audience, and achievable/reasonable goals.
- ▶ Have a measurement and evaluation plan. Pre- and post-survey? Numerical metrics? How will you measure success?

