

GRANT WRITING TIPS AND FUNDING SOURCES

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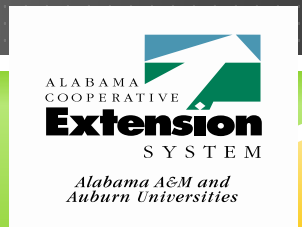
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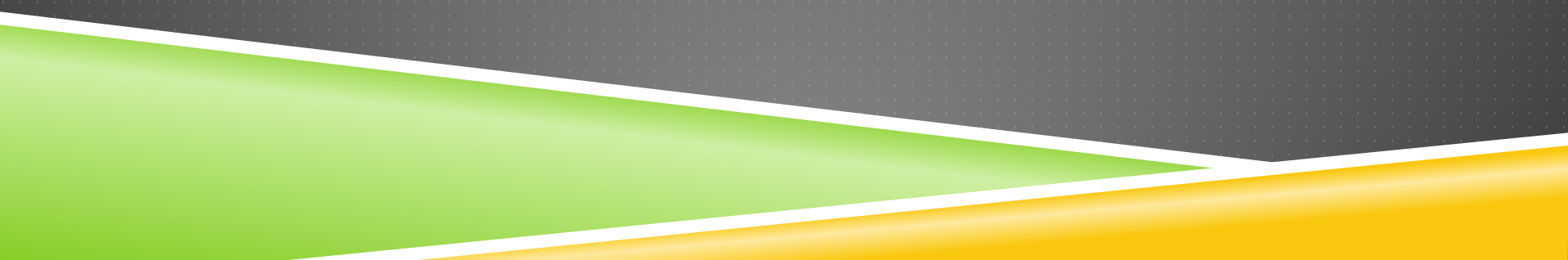


The recording of this webinar can be found [online](#).

This slide was added after the webinar.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Learn about the grant development process
 - ◆ Learn about how grants should fit within your organization/community
 - ◆ Preparing to write your proposal
 - ◆ Grant sources
 - ◆ Writing a competitive proposal
 - ◆ Resources for assistance
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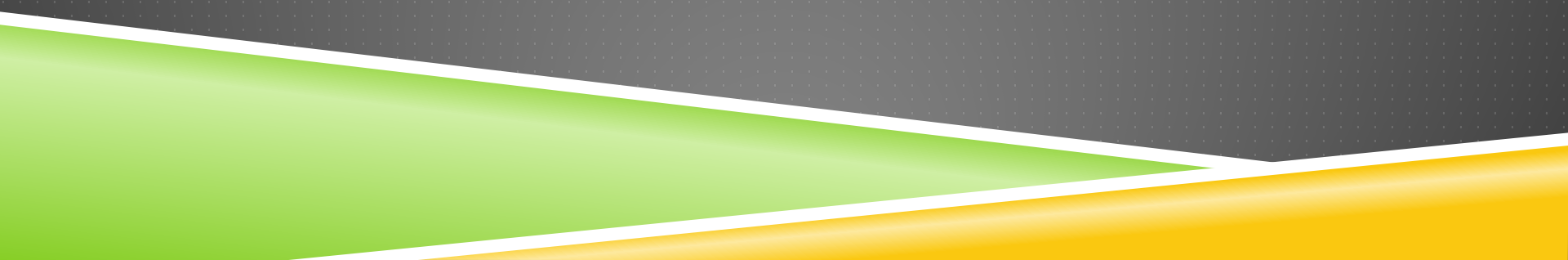
OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

- ❑ Grant writing is something you can do successfully
- ❑ It is a multi-step process, not a single activity (writing)
- ❑ Although there are no pat answers to grant writing success, there are some useful tips that can help

BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING ...

- ❑ Recognize the level of organizational and personal commitment required to prepare a top quality (competitive) proposal
- ❑ Involve key stakeholders early in planning effort
- ❑ Be sure grant effort fits within your agency's or community's goals and plans
- ❑ Keep an old saying in mind: “Be careful what you ask for. You just might get it.”

HOW TO IDENTIFY YOUR PROJECT

- ❑ Utilize any available plans, studies, reports, etc., that are current and applicable
 - ❑ Brainstorm with key individuals about project features, issues and costs; be creative/innovative (but within the guidelines)
 - ❑ Think in terms of identifying definable, measurable community or agency issues or problems that could be addressed with grant support
 - ❑ Draft a brief project overview or concept summary (two or three paragraphs)
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MATCH YOUR PROJECT TO A FUNDING SOURCE

Public sector (federal & state government) sources:

- ❑ “Grants.Gov” (<http://www.grants.gov/>)
- ❑ Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance <http://www.cfda.gov/>)
- ❑ Federal Register (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>)
- ❑ U.S. Federal Government Agencies <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/fedgov.html>)
- ❑ Sen. Jeff Sessions “Weekly Grants Advisory” (mailto:Clay_Hand@sessions.senate.gov)
- ❑ FundsNet (www.fundsnetervices.com); free- grant sources sorted by category (public and private)
- ❑ State grants (<http://www.alabama.gov/portal/secondary.jsp?id=branchesGovernment>)
- ❑ Southern Rural Development Center (Miss. State), “Grant Connections” <http://srdc.msstate.edu/funding/grantconnections/> ; click on “grants & awards”

PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

- ❑ Private (non-governmental) sources: Include private and corporate foundations in Alabama and the U.S.
- ❑ Over 32,000 such organizations in U.S.; award more than \$4 billion each year (compared to about 26 federal sources)
- ❑ Foundation Center (access points @ B' ham. PL, Huntsville PL, Mobile PL, AUM Library) <http://www.foundationcenter.org/>
- ❑ Alabama Foundation Guide (2006), APLS, <http://www.apls.state.al.us/webpages/pubs/FoundationsandGrants2006.pdf>
- ❑ Guide to Alabama Grantmakers (2009), Alabama Giving (state foundation association); \$75/CD; (www.alabamagiving.org)

CONTACT KEY PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS

- ❑ Know your funder: Contact funding organization as soon as possible; get copy of application package/instructions (RFP- Request for Proposals or NOFA- Notification of Funding Availability) and talk with grant program officer at the funding organization
- ❑ Read RFP or NOFA carefully and read it again
- ❑ Don' t hesitate to call or e-mail grant source for information/questions- What kind of projects do they fund? What is their mission? How are proposals reviewed (staff, field readers, board members, etc.)?
- ❑ Share RFP/NOFA with your project partners; discuss partner responsibilities re completing the proposal
- ❑ Contact a successful grantee and discuss their project and grant preparation process

WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL

- ❑ The most important writing tip: “Follow the application instructions!”
- ❑ Well-written proposal is: Complete, Readable and Convincing/Persuasive
- ❑ Public sector proposals have similar requirements: cover letter, title page, abstract, introduction, statement of need or problem description, project objectives, methods, evaluation, dissemination, biographical sketch, budget and attachments (if allowed)

WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL (CONTD.)

- ❑ Private foundations typically utilize a proposal letter (letter of interest) as a first step, followed by a more complete application package if there is interest in the project. Application package often mirrors public sector requirements
- ❑ Cover letter should create a favorable first impression and address any requested information (contact point, authorizations to apply, etc.)
- ❑ Title page should be well laid out; title should describe project/intrigue the reviewer

WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL (CONTD.)

- ❑ Abstract is usually written last and read first; important section since some reviewers only look at abstract and budget. Should provide a clear, concise summary of the entire project.
- ❑ Introduction should establish who you are, your goals, your credibility and set the stage for your problem statement, profile your organization; don't assume the granting agency knows your agency's capabilities, staff expertise, or the projects you've successfully completed.
- ❑ Problem statement (justification or needs statement) describes the reason(s) behind your proposal; spells out conditions you plan to change, needs that should be addressed. Use accurate, recent and reliable data and make the problem real to the reader. Use tables, charts to summarize information- "one picture is worth a thousand words."

WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL (CONTD.)

- ❑ Objectives are the outcomes or results of your project- the end products that will exist after you've completed the project (not the process steps in reaching these end products). Connect objectives to problems.
- ❑ Methods (approach or plan of action) describe your project activities in detail, indicating how you will accomplish your objectives, who will do what, time frames and how success will be measured. A flow chart with key events or milestones can be useful. Highlight innovative or creative features of your approach.
- ❑ Evaluation deals with how you plan to determine if your project has been successful. Two primary evaluation perspectives: process and product (or outcome). May involve third party experts.

WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL (CONTD.)

- ❑ Dissemination describes how you will let others know about your project- its purpose, objectives, methods and accomplishments
- ❑ Biographical sketch for key project personnel
- ❑ Budget is more than a statement of proposed expenditures, it is another way of describing the objectives of your project. Work on early in the process, particularly if you have partners. Will have forms (line item format) and budget narrative (how costs were determined). Match is usually required. Be frugal, but not cheap.
- ❑ Future funding asks for discussion of how project activities might be continued following end of grant support.

WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL (CONTD.)

- ❑ Attachments may include required assurances or supporting materials (maps, drawings, brochures, letters of support, IRS documents, etc.)
- ❑ Writing style: Write clearly, simply. Avoid jargon, acronyms or “agency language” . Assume no pre-existing knowledge for reviewers. Make your story real to the reader (personal accounts, newspaper article quotes, etc.); use recent, reliable data to support your story. Document your data sources. Be creative, but stay within the RFP/NOFA guidelines. There should be one primary author or overall editor.

WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL (CONTD.)

- ❑ Once draft is completed, do computer spelling/grammar check for entire text; ask 1-2 people you trust to read draft and make comments (content as well as spelling/grammar)
- ❑ Use the sponsor check list (or make your own) to do final check re all required items
- ❑ Remember, what you say (in your writing) and how you say it are the only ways grant reviewers can judge your proposal

FOLLOW-UP

- ❑ If you are selected for funding, celebrate! Follow-up will involve negotiating a grant agreement (contract), implementing your project, making required progress reports (project tasks and financial) to the granting organization and closing out your project when completed
- ❑ If unsuccessful, contact granting organization for reviewer comments (in writing if possible); discuss specific areas that need improvement with program officer; address problem areas and resubmit
- ❑ Whether successful or not, consider volunteering to be a grant reviewer in the future- great learning opportunity

GRANT WRITING RESOURCES

- ❑ Internet- Hundreds of web sites devoted to grant writing tips and funding sources for both public and private grants
- ❑ Training courses- colleges/universities, regional planning commissions, local cooperative extension system office, state/national associations
- ❑ Colleagues that have written successful proposals
- ❑ Grant making organizations
- ❑ Alabama regional planning and development councils
(www.alarc.org)

INTERNET SITES OF GENERAL INTEREST

- ❑ “Basic Elements of Grant Writing”
<http://www.cpb.org/grants/grantwriting.html>, Corporation for Public Broadcasting
- ❑ “The Art of Grantsmanship”
<http://www.hfsp.org.how/Artofgrants.htm>
- ❑ “The Craft of Grant Writing Workbook”
<http://opd.rutgers.edu/pdf/The-Craft-of-Grant-Writing.pdf>
- ❑ “Grant Writing Tips and Links- Lone Eagle Consulting”
<http://lone-eagles.com/granthelp.html>
- ❑ “Grant Writing Tips” You Tube

INTERNET SITES OF GENERAL INTEREST

- ❑ “Grant Resources”
<http://www.proposalwriter.com/grants.html>
- ❑ “Tips and Hints”
<http://www.polarisgrantscentral.net/tips.html>
- ❑ “Proposal Writing: Selected Web Sites”
<http://www.pitt.edu/~offres/proposal/propwriting/websites.html>, University of Pittsburgh
- ❑ “Grant Writing Tips” <http://fdcenter.org>, Foundation Center

FAITH-BASED SITES OF INTEREST

- ❑ Tools and Resources: Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/resources/index.html>, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
- ❑ White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ofbnp/resources>
- ❑ Alabama Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives <http://www.servealabama.gov/2010/default.aspx>

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC DATA SITES

- ❑ Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER)
<http://cber.cba.ua.edu>)
- ❑ Center for Demographic Research, Auburn University at Montgomery <http://www.demographics.aum.edu/home.cfm>
- ❑ America's Fact Finder
http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en)
- ❑ Atlas of Rural and Small Town America
(<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/ruralatlas/>)
- ❑ Stats America- Economic Development Admin.
(<http://www.statsamerica.org/innovation/>)

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC DATA SITES (CONTD.)

Labor market information:

- ❑ Staffing patterns by industry
<http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrci.htm>
- ❑ Industry codes and definitions
<http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naicstab.htm>
- ❑ Occupation codes and definitions
http://www.bls.gov/soc/soc_majo.htm
- ❑ Alabama labor market information
<http://dir.alabama.gov/lmi>

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC DATA SITES (CONTD.)

- ❑ Database of worker attributes and job characteristics (O*Net) <http://online.onetcenter.org/>
- ❑ Local employment dynamics (LED) (<http://lehd.dsd.census.gov>)
- ❑ Employment pattern mapping <http://lehd.excensonline.com>
- ❑ County commuting patterns (2010) <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC DATA SITES (CONTD.)

Education data:

- ❑ National Center for Education Statistics
(<http://www.nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/>)
- ❑ Alabama Department of Education
<http://www.alsde.edu/html/home.asp>
- ❑ The Nation's Report Card by State
(<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/profile.asp>)

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC DATA SITES (CONTD.)

- ❑ City specific data- HUD State of the Cities database (<http://socds.huduser.org/>)

State and County Health Data:

- ❑ Alabama Department of Public Health (<http://www.adph.org/>)

Single Site for Demographic/Economic Links:

- ❑ EconData.Net <http://www.econdata.net>

SUMMARY

- ❑ Pursue grants for the right reasons- should fit within your plans and organizational goals
- ❑ Recognize the up-front costs associated with preparing a top-quality grant proposal
- ❑ Build a relationship with the grant making organization as soon as possible
- ❑ Don't forget about private foundations
- ❑ Unlikely to be successful the first time- don't get discouraged!