EASTERN SUFFOLK BOCES

Grant Seeking Handout

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Hines Admin Bldg.

Presented by
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Table of Contents

EASTERN SUFFOLK BOCES

Nia Solutions Grant Seeking Session

I. Agenda

1. Workshop Contract

2. What you need to do to Prepare to search for a grant

3. The Grant Development Process

4. Grant Search
   Using the Internet to conduct a Grant Search
   Sample Sites

II. Preparing to Search for a Grant or Funding Source

It is important to begin the process with a specific program or project in mind. Too often the opposite is true: You hear about a grant and try to find a project to fit it, or worse to force into it – what we call "chasing money". Funding agencies, no matter their origins, make funds available for specific reasons that are consistent with their mission, mandate, or priorities.

Funders tend to have specific applicant types in mind so you should take time to consider all the categories ESBOCES may fit into as an applicant. ESBOCES has been characterized as: a Local Educational Agency, a unit of local government, a post-secondary educational agency, a supervisory district, and according to NCES, a "regional education services agency".

To search for funding successfully, you need a clear written explanation of your project or program, including: background, goals and objectives, timelines, evaluation, requirements (personnel, materials, supplies, equipment) and costs. This will enable you to craft a proposal that is focused and relevant to the funder. Ill-defined projects make searching difficult because you will not know if an opportunity is appropriate until after much more effort. This can be disheartening to partners and colleagues whose support you must rely upon to apply. A further detail of the written preparation for a search follows below:

Need Statement
What is the mission of your agency and what need do you have which is consistent with your mission? You will have to present data to support this need.
Who is your target population? What is your relationship to them?

Goal
Broad statement which describes what you hope to attain – a bright future, a long life or sustained health, happiness, opportunities, etc.

Objectives
Develop objectives that are specific statements which are measurable. You need to have baseline data to express the improvement you wish to achieve.

Activities
What activities are needed to accomplish your objectives?
Express activities as they relate to each objective.

Management
How will the activities be implemented?
Who is the staff?
What is their expertise? (Résumés needed for backup)
What are their roles and responsibilities in implementing the activities?
What partners will you need and what is there role in implementing the activities?

Budget
What is the cost for your staff?
What will it cost to implement each of the activities you present?
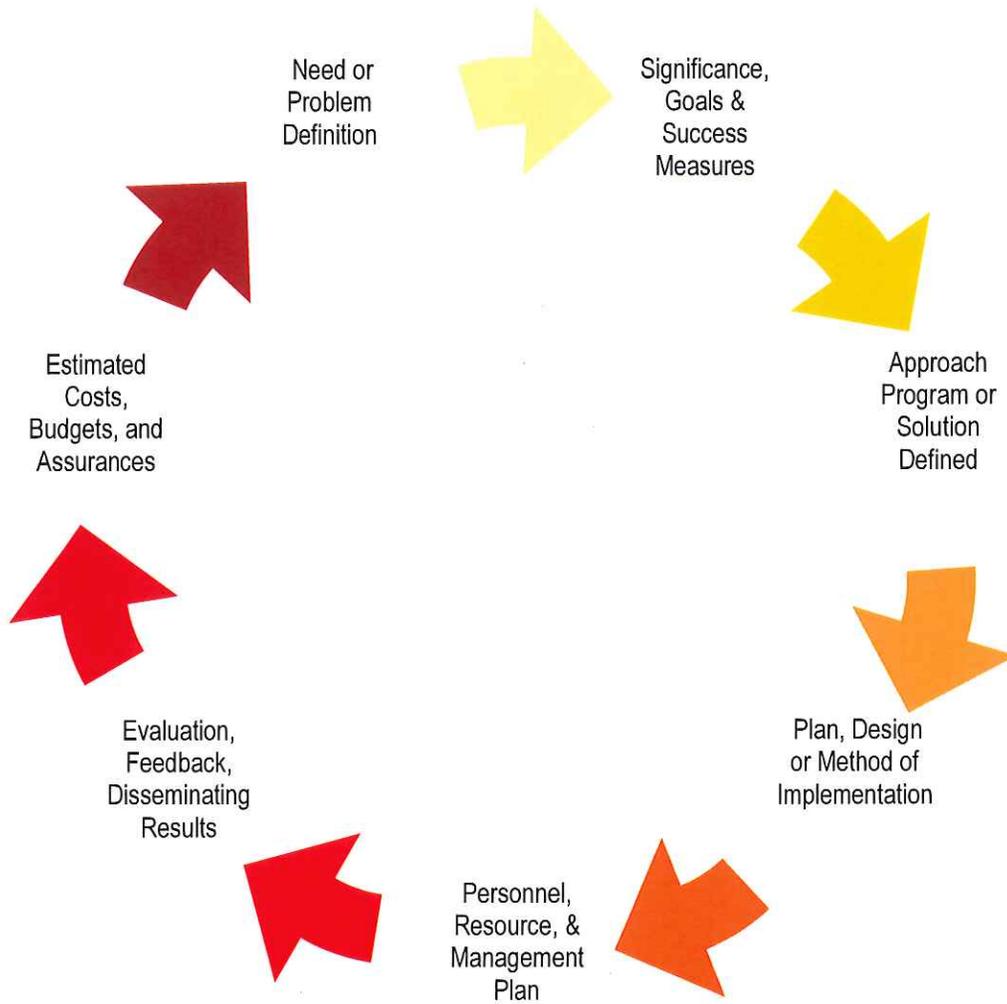Costs must relate directly to staff or activities and justified as such?

Evaluation
How will you measure the success of your program?
How will data show the objectives were reached or obtained?
Your evaluation is based upon reaching the objectives presented.

III. Grant Development Chart

Need or
Problem
Definition

Significance,
Goals &
Success
Measures

Estimated
Costs,
Budgets, and
Assurances

Approach
Program or
Solution
Defined

Evaluation,
Feedback,
Disseminating
Results

Plan, Design
or Method of
Implementation

Personnel,
Resource, &
Management
Plan

IV. The Nia Grant Development Process:

Remember:
- Everybody "needs" money.
- Everybody "needs" more technology, etc.
- Your grant must be grounded in some sort of problem or condition which can be documented to the reader.

Step 1: Your Need Statement

What is your problem? Develop a picture (in visual terms) of the condition that you want to correct or improve or change. This is an historical analysis. What are the Significant Issues and who are the significant players? Is this problem/need unique? Is it comparatively more severe? Is it a local priority? Does it relate to your organization's mission? What evidence exists for this problem? Documentation (Observations assessments tests surveys, school records, interviews, focus groups, reports)
What has been done about this problem before?

Step 2: Your Significance, Goals, Objectives and Success Measures

What are the observable/measurable changes that will be seen if the problem is impacted or resolved? Describe the changes in the evidence provided for the problem/need.

Revisit your picture of need. Describe what that picture would look like if the problem is resolved. Include changes in significant issues and what the evidence would be that this change has occurred. The evidence needs to be observable and measurable.

Step 3: Naming and Justifying Your Program Approach or Solution

What are the solutions that you can have for this problem?

Include:
Name of program, major components and cite research (Educational Theory)

Examples of solutions: Specific technology, professional development, model programs, collaborations, parental/community engagement, supplies and materials inc. curriculum, equipment, construction or facilities enhancements, additional personnel or expert consultation.

Think about:

- Second Order Change – the people who want the change to occur must change THEIR behavior in order for the system to change.
- Innovative – something you haven't tried before.

What is likely to impact the conditions you have described? This may be a "gut" feeling. It may also be what makes sense or feels good to you in response to the problem. However, your solution cannot be to continue doing what you have always done (supplanting). You can generally assume that any idea you have about "what works" has been explored by someone in the research literature. Most grants call for you to select only those approaches which are supportable in the literature. You MUST find the scientific or research base which supports or suggests the approach you select. You may choose to produce a review of all the literature related to your problem/need prior to selecting a solution.

Step 4: Your Plan/Design for Implementation

What are the tasks, strategies, steps, or activities required to implement the solution?

Use Backwards Planning and the PERT Chart Tools

If you choose a model program, that program's documentation may provide you with part or much the requisite implementation design.

Step 5: Your Resource, Personnel and Management Plans.

Think about what is needed or required to meet the obligations of the approach you have chosen. Do these requirements exceed your current staff or resources? What procedures and personnel will ensure that the grant is implemented as described?

Step 6: Your Plan or Design for Evaluation

Consider engaging an external evaluator. Revisit your statements of needs and objectives. By what means will you determine that the objectives have been achieved or that the desired changes are being produced? By what means will you collect, analyze, and disseminate data? How will the data be used to improve the program implementation?

Step 7: Your Budget, Estimated Costs, and Assurances

Consult with your business office of chief fiscal officer. Demonstrate the reasonable basis by which costs are determined or estimated. Itemize your budget under the applicable categories. Make sure you understand and complete and sign all the required assurances.

V. Grant Development Triangle

The Mechanics

The Aesthetics

The Content
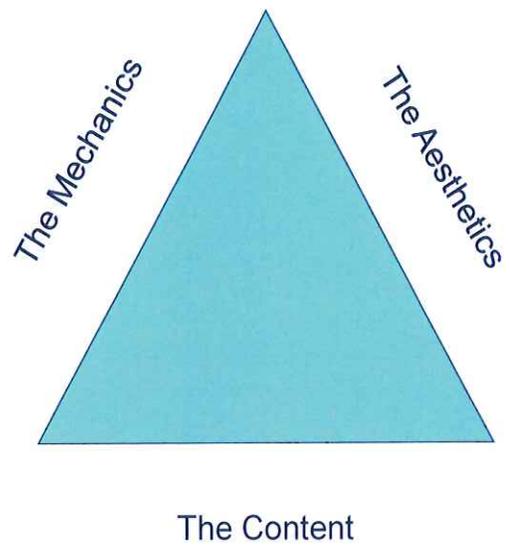
VI. Grant Development Knowledge Base

There is no shortage of guides, books, tip sheets, help programs, and websites devoted to successful grant writing. In addition, virtually every funding agency presents potential applicants with a laundry list of expectations for a fund-able proposal as well as the grounds for rejecting a proposal or reviewing it less favorably.

With' decades of practical experience rooted in federal and state grants management, grant writing, application review, and grants technical assistance, Nia Solutions has summarized three categories of impediments to successful grants in a client brochure titled, "Why Grants Fail" (1998):

> ***Failure to complete*** - e.g., the application does not include all required forms and fields, the application contents (narrative, abstract, budget, work plan, evaluation plan, etc.) are not in evidence, required assurances are not provided, or appropriate signatures are not provided.

> ***Failure to format*** - e.g., specifications for application document production are ignored (font size, line spacing, text color, paper size, page numbering, etc.), the application exceeds an expressed page limitation, the components of the application are not sequenced as required, the table of contents is not followed or provided, the required number of copies are not provided, the application is improperly addressed, or the application does not arrive timely.

> ***Failure to be responsive*** – e.g., the applicant is defined as ineligible, the proposal exceeds spending limits or seeks to fund exclusions, the proposal does not address funding priorities, the application does not address the selection criteria, the proposal does not acknowledge or address the authorizing legislation, the proposal contains obvious misinformation or misrepresentations, the proposed activities defy funding agency regulations.

This is by no means a finite list, but it does accurately represent the significant challenges that many grants fail to overcome. Many of these items, by rule or statute, can preclude a proposal from even being reviewed. These may be conceived as "risk factors" in the development process. There are also "protective factors" which are exemplified through: contact with the funding agency; a detailed inventory of the application contents and a proposal outline; the provision of all background and supporting information referenced by the funding agency; a delineation of necessary data and formats; ongoing technical assistance; and document management support. These are best achieved within the context of a support team managed by a qualified grant development specialist.

VII. Finding and Applying for Grants

1. Choose the Right Type of Grant:

Federal Grants – Toughest to get, national competition, direct grants, most $$
    Grants.gov and Federal Register

State Grants – Easier to get, less $$ than large Federal grants,
    NYS Grants Gateway

Local Grants – Usually easiest to get, but least $$
    Local Govt. Reps, "Critter" Clubs

Foundation and Corporate Grants – highly variable $$, multiple sites
    Foundation Center, GuideStar, Individual Corporation and
    foundation application sites

Other Considerations:
- Transmittal Instructions, deadlines, Letters of intent
- Eligibility
    LEAs, Local Govts. School Districts, Community Organizations
- Matching Funds
    Direct and In-Kind
- Priorities – Invitational and Absolute
    Program Elements
    Required Collaborations
- Required Assurances and Commitments

2. Where to Find Grant Information:

The Foundation Center – research Foundation and Corporate giving
http://fdncenter.org/
Guidestar Non-Profit Information
http://www.guidestar.org/Home.aspx
Federal Grants – Across all Federal Agencies and Programs
http://www.grants.gov/
Federal Register Online
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/frcont05.html
US Department of Education – Forecast of Funding Opportunities
http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html
NYS Grants Gateway
https://grantsreform.ny.gov/
NYS Department of Education,
Funding Opportunities for LEAs Administered by NYS Education Department
http://www.p12.nysed.gov/funding/currentapps.html

3. Sites With *Links to Grants* For Specific Grade Levels Or Subject Areas

- http://www.grantsalert.com/grants
- https://www.aft.org/funding-database
- https://www.edutopia.org/grants-and-resources

4. Sites With Grants For Specific Grade Levels Or Subject Areas

- https://www.nctm.org/Grants/
  K-12 Mathematics Research
- https://www.literacyworldwide.org/about-us/awards-grants
  Literacy and Reading Instruction
- https://www.toshiba.com/taf/k5.jsp
  K-5 Mathematics and Science Programs
- https://www.toshiba.com/taf/612.jsp
  o 6-12 Mathematics and Science Programs
- http://www.nea.org/grants/grantsawardsandmore.html
  Professional Development public school educators
- https://www.vernier.com/grants/
  Classroom Technology

VIII. NOTES: