Overview of Workshop

Purpose of webinar:
- Steps for successful grant writing
- Grant opportunities
- Application process
- Questions and answers

Step One: Identify & Communicate the Need

- Establish a clear vision of what is needed
  - Assessing the Need
  - Define the Need
  - Develop a convincing Need Statement
Step Two: Success takes a Team Effort

- Develop a successful grant writing team
  - Identify one person to serve as coordinator
  - Select members from different backgrounds
  - Remove roadblocks to success by getting administrative and board support
  - Reward and recognize success

Step Three: Identifying Funding Sources

- Private sources-corporate funders and foundations
- Government sources-federal, state, local
- AWF Grant Links
  - http://www.alabamawildlife.org/outdoor-classroom-grants/
- Internet search
- Other

Private Sources

- Donate via Corporate Giving Programs and Company Sponsored Foundations (General Electric, Alabama Power, Walmart, Lowe’s, Home Depot and many others)
- Donate cash, products, and/or manpower (Walmart, Lowe’s, Home Depot and others)
- Corporations are usually interested in
  - creating public awareness
  - promoting their products
  - assisting employees (and their families)
  - training the future workforce
Step Four: Understanding the Application Process

- Read the RFP (Request for Proposal) carefully for details.
- Know the Scoring Criteria
- Understand How They want the Application Completed

* Use the AWF Grant Guidelines as an example.

http://www.alabamawildlife.org/uploadedFiles/File/AWF_OC_Grant_Guidelines_Application_201516_PDF.pdf

Review Scoring Criteria

- Use scoring criteria as a guideline when writing grant (It is not always known.)
- Match effort to grant components and percent of possible score
- Be sure to use exact headings as listed in scoring criteria

Preparing an Application

- Use correct forms
- Cover sheet
- Budget form
- Program Abstract
- Table of Contents
- Program Narrative
- Budget Narrative
- Compliance Forms, Assurances and Certifications
- Appendices
Other Possible Grants

- Alabama Power Foundation – Stewards to Students and Good Roots Grants
- Legacy Environmental Partners -
  [http://legacyenved.org/legacy-grants/](http://legacyenved.org/legacy-grants/)
  Available summer 2015 & due by Sept. 25.
- Alabama Association of RC&D Councils
  [http://www.aarcd.net/](http://www.aarcd.net/)

Step Five: Developing the Project

- What is the "NEED"?
- What are your assumptions?
- What are the objectives and intended outcomes?
- What activities will help reach those outcomes?
- What are your objectives and outputs?
- What resources are needed to accomplish this project?

There are some Learning Station Project Plans available at

- Considering your approach—research what is already out there.
- Develop a project model by creating a list of all potential program components then considering the who, what, why, when, where, how, and other relevant questions.
- Create an outline of project components in chronological order.
- Continue to review and evaluate program/project.
Writing a Successful Program Narrative

- Write as though telling readers/reviewers a story—compel them to continue reading
- Seven secrets:
  1) Begin with goals (The purpose is….)
  2) Provide a program overview (create visual image of what you’ll do)
  3) Include an advisory committee
  4) Describe target population
  5) Cite the literature/research if possible
  6) Ensure activities relate to project and needs.
  7) Justify the chosen strategies (offer rationale)

Step Six: Defining Your Goals & Objectives

- Program Goals
  - clarify your mission
  - identify what you plan to accomplish
  - proposals should identify 1-4 program goals
  - help to meet a learning outcome/need

Example: To provide our students with a hands-on, inquiry-based outdoor laboratory where they will be able to study plant growth over a period of time and in a natural setting.

Program Objectives

- State specific things you want accomplished
- Define minimum measures of success
- Reflect major program components

- Hint—Always under-promise and over-deliver!
Two Types of Objectives

- Process Objectives:
  - measure accomplishments (things you count)
  - are considered short-term
  - are more common in smaller projects
- Outcome Objectives:
  - reflect qualitative changes
  - considered long-term objectives
  - harder to measure and define
  - address changes in behavior, attitude, actions

Step Seven: Designing the Evaluation

- Two Purposes of Program Evaluation:
  1) Did we succeed?
     - Provides both grantee and funding source with measures of success
  2) How are we doing? What needs to be fixed?

Evaluation Tips

- All grant proposals need an evaluation component, even if RFP (Request for proposal) does not require one
- Evaluation plans are tied to proposal’s objectives, management plan, program activities, and budget
- Objectives should include multiple but achievable ways to assess success
- Use qualitative and quantitative measures
Step Eight: Describing the Management Plan

- Successful Management Plans
  - Describe all grant oversight activities
  - Include planning, implementation, oversight, and follow-up activities
  - Present activities in chronological order
  - Reflect appropriate time allocations
  - Are strengthened by inclusion of time line

Time Lines

- Present specific details about required activities
- Target tasks chronologically by months
- Are connected to the RFP’s fiscal year (but make sure you meet deadlines)
- Include both administrative and program activities
- Add a third column to time line labeled “person responsible” and you have a management plan!

Step Nine: Strengthening Your Proposal

- Build in plans to disseminate information about your project—tell others what worked and what did not
- Program Sustainability
  - Plan for continued funding/support
  - Develop a resource development strategy
  - Look for ways to involve other partners for the long-term.
Step Ten: Building the Budget

- Program activities drive the budget
- Cost estimates should be credible and realistic
- Never use the word miscellaneous
- Factors influencing budgets include:
  - projects
  - activities
  - needed resources

Factors influencing budgets include:

- projects
- activities
- needed resources

Budget Categories

- Direct Costs (personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, other)
- In-Kind or Local Contributions (percentage of staff person’s time, volunteer time, use of building, accounting services, etc.)
  
  (Federal Allowable Volunteer Rate: $22.53)
- Indirect Costs (administrative costs—usually a fixed rate at universities but some grants won’t allow)

Budget Appearance

- Presenting the Budget
  - Start budget on new page (Use budget form if provided.)
  - Use aligned columns (table layout)
  - Column headings include Budget Category, Requested Funds, Local Contributions, and Project Total
- Budget Line Entries
  - Name categories-designate main categories with a Roman numeral, all caps, and bold
  - Fully justify text and right-justify dollar figures
  - Budget detail should allow budget to stand alone
Budget Tips

- Use $ on numbers at top and bottom of each column and page and on the total line, but not in the table
- Round figures to nearest dollar
- Include a 4-5% annual increase for each line item if a multi-year proposal

Step Eleven: Aiming for Perfection

- Writing Styles for Grant writers
  - Write on ninth or tenth grade reading level
  - Use layman’s terms, avoid jargon and technical language
  - Avoid using contractions and abbreviations
  - Avoid using slang

Visual Appeal

- Use section headings and subheadings
- Margins should be 1 inch on all sides and allow fingers to hold the document without covering text
- Spacing should be consistent
- Fully justify text—it saves space and looks better
- Use an easy to read font like Times New Roman and 12 point font
- Label each proposal page with an abbreviated title and Page ___ of ___
- Remember—Reviewers read many proposals…Do all you can do to make your proposal stand out in a positive way!
Proofreading

- Proofread for:
  - Content and organization
  - Consistency
  - Alignment with RFP and Completeness—Is anything missing?
  - Clarity, Flow, Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation Errors

Grant Writing Tools

- Use good equipment for producing your proposal (computers, printers, copiers, fax)
- Use thicker paper such as 24-pound bond
- Use brighter white paper (90 to 92 brightness)
- Send all originals of the program narrative and budgets if possible
- Mark one copy original

Step Twelve: Finishing Touches

- You may want to include a Table of Contents even if RFP does not require one (check to see what is allowed)
- Program Summary must be clear, concise, set the stage for the project
- Appendices expand the narrative and provide additional information such as resumes, job descriptions, data collection instruments, letters of commitment and letters of support
E-Grant Applications

- Formatting issues can be a problem
- Create it in a word document and then cut and paste into the correct parts.
- If possible, print out a copy
- Save your work
- Do not wait until the last minute to submit
- Check to see if pre-registration is required
- Pay attention to hours of operation (Eastern vs. Central)

Step Thirteen: What Happens after it is Submitted

- Upon receipt grant applications are
  - Logged in
  - Sorted by competition
  - Subjected to initial exam
    Cover page filled in and signed?
    Bound properly?
    Extra items?
    Forms complete?
    Original included?
    Copies counted?

Responding to Inquiries

- A funding inquiry does not mean the grant has been approved
- Avoid giving quick answers over the phone
- Check with the planning committee and think through a proper response
- Avoid accepting cuts in the budget without trying to defend them
- Avoid arguing with funding officials
Final Tips

- Allow lots of time— it always takes longer than you expect
- Contact anyone who is writing a letter of support early—lack of letters can hold you up
- Double check for consistency and accuracy throughout the entire proposal AND supporting materials
- You may need to add a week to your timeline to get all needed signatures

Questions?

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