

Introduction to Federal Funding for Nonprofits

Tuesday • March 9 • 2010
9:15 a.m. - 12 noon

Regional Foundation Center at the Free Library of Philadelphia

Presenters

- > Principal, Polito & Associates
- > Former Director of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, US Dept of HHS
- > Created the Compassion Capital Fund
- > Founder & past President of FaithWorks International (NYC), and FaithWorks Milwaukee
- > Created and led Bowery Mission Transitional Center in NYC
- > Grantwriting and Project Development Consultant
- > Former Development Director for Spruce Hill Christian School
- > Former Director of Project Development and Planning, Esperanza USA
- > Former President of Center for Urban Resources
- > Former Asst Director Youth Ministry, Union Rescue Mission, LA

Bobby Polito

Del Wesley

Schedule

- ▶ 9:20 – 10:20
- ▶ Federal Funding
 - The Politics
 - The Process
 - The Positives
 - The Pitfalls
- ▶ 10:20 – 10:40
- ▶ Break
- ▶ 10:40 – 11:40
- ▶ Federal Funding: from “solicitation” to “send” and everything...
 - Before
 - Between
 - Beyond
- ▶ 11:40 – 12 noon
- ▶ Questions & Answers



Federal Funding

- ▶ **The Politics:** *Is it really about who you know?*
- ▶ **The Process:** *How does it really work?*
- ▶ **The Positives:** *Is it really possible?*
- ▶ **The Pitfalls:** *Is it really worth it?*

The Politics

▶ Different Types of Funding

- Discretionary grants
- Mandatory grants
- Cooperative agreements
- Earmark grants
- Continuation grants
- Contracts
- Sole source providers

The Politics

▶ Elected Officials

- Role and influence in regards to funding
- Lobbyists and funding consultants in Washington - what is the difference?
- Influence of Republican congressmen/women in a Democratic administration
- The Obama administration and the politics of federal funding - What is different? What is the same?

The Process

- ▶ How it works on “the other side”
- ▶ What makes an organization “fundable” from the federal government’s perspective?
- ▶ Volume of proposals received – How are they reduced to a manageable number?
- ▶ Grant review panels and scores – To what extent are funding decisions made at this level?
- ▶ A perfect score ... loses??
- ▶ Apply to become a Federal Grant Reviewer; applications are on most Department web-sites

The Process

- ▶ **Factors considered when funding decisions are made:**
 - Geography
 - Culture
 - Existing services
 - Service gaps
 - And more...
- ▶ **Translation of terms:**
 - “extra credit”
 - “experienced organization”

The Positives

- ▶ The federal government is the largest funder in the country.
- ▶ Federal grants tend to be large as government cannot possibly manage millions of smaller grants.
- ▶ Federal grants build institutional capacity.
- ▶ Federal grants expand and improve capacity to serve the community.

The Positives

- ▶ Indirect costs improve financial capacity.
- ▶ How do I get an approved indirect rate?
- ▶ Are indirect rate letters applicable across all departments?
- ▶ Winning federal grants lends credibility to your organization.

The Pitfalls

- ▶ A federal grant can make you or break you: careful management, implementation, compliance, reporting, and ultimately success are required.
- ▶ For faith-based groups, separating the secular from the spiritual for the funded services is essential.

Federal Funding: from “Solicitation” to “Send” and everything...

- ▶ **Before:** *things you need to know, get ready*
- ▶ **Between:** *the solicitation, helpful tools, project design, putting it together, my 2 cents about the budget, finally - hit “send.”*
- ▶ **Beyond:** *must have, must do, must know*

Things You Need to Know

- Federal grant competitions are writing competitions.
- What the federal government is interested in funding
- Good ideas + good programs + weak organization = no money, honey
- “It’s not about you.”

Get Ready – Forecasts

- Preparation begins long before the solicitation comes out.
- Study agency forecasts that most align with your organization and prepare accordingly.
 - Department of Education – <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html>
 - Department of Justice – <http://www.ojp.gov/ProgramPlan/toc.htm>

Get Ready – Registration

- **Register your organization**
 - The registration process can take 3–5 business days but you should allow 4 weeks for completion of all steps.
 - Registration is a one-time process, which is required before grant applications can be submitted through Grants.gov, and must be verified annually.
 - Passwords must be updated every 60 days.
 - Registration Checklist – http://grants.gov/assets/Organization_Steps_Complete_Registration.pdf

Get Ready – Registration

Registration Steps:

- DUNS (Data Universal Number System) number – <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>
- CCR (Central Contractor Registration) – 1-888-227-2423 or <http://www.ccr.gov>
- Grants.gov username & password – <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/OrcRegister>
- AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) authorization
- Track AOR status
- Complete designated web-site registration if required

Get Ready – Tool Kit

- **Create a Tool Kit of proposal documents.**
 - Gather, review, and revise essential proposal package pieces
 - Organize them in a binder or file
 - Organize them in electronic files
 - Your binder should include...

Get Ready – Tool Kit Pieces

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▶ Demographics, statistics of community needs and assets | ▶ Operating budget |
| ▶ History, vision, mission | ▶ Audited financial statements |
| ▶ Description of current programs | ▶ Board list |
| ▶ Organizational structure, capabilities, and competencies | ▶ Summary of staff positions and credentials |
| ▶ Experience with federal funding | ▶ Sample MOUs or Letters of Agreement |
| ▶ Evaluations or research documenting your success | ▶ Sample Letters of Support |
| | ▶ Testimonials, stories of impact |
| | ▶ Resumes or bios of key staff |
| | ▶ Full job descriptions of key positions |
| | ▶ Organizational chart |
| | ▶ Strategic plan |
| | ▶ IRS designation letter |
| | ▶ Annual Report |
| | ▶ Logic Model |

Narrative Sections

Attachments

Get Ready – Planning

▶ **Connect with your community:**

- Know your community
- Work with others
- Document what works

▶ **Begin crafting a general program design:**

- Personnel
- Partners
- Participants
- Process

The Solicitation

▶ **Different departments have different names for this:**

- Solicitation
- Program Announcement
- Notice of Funding Availability,
- RFP (Request for Proposals)
- RFQ (Request for Quote)

The Solicitation

- ▶ Think of it as a government dating service – read the solicitation and determine if you are a match.
 - Do we meet the criteria?
 - Is the suggested award amount a reasonable percentage of our operating budget?
 - Is it consistent with our mission?
 - Do we have experience and expertise in the proposed program area?
 - Do we meet any extra credit criteria?
 - Do we have a realistic chance of winning?
 - Who else in our community may be applying for it?
 - Should we work as partners instead of competitors?

The Solicitation

- ▶ Calculate your risk – is it worth the time, money, stress, and possibly sleep deprivation?!
 - How many awards will be given?
 - How much is the average award?
 - In the context of the entire country, does my organization meet a service gap?
 - What other groups from my area are applying?
 - Is there an overlap of services?

The Solicitation

- ▶ **Make a decision.**
- ▶ *Study* the solicitation.
- ▶ **Participate in Department–hosted Technical Assistance calls, if offered, or get the transcript when it is posted on the web–site.**
- ▶ **Look for “redundancy” in the solicitation – this tells you areas of priority.**

Helpful Tools

- ▶ **A template vs. an outline – Sample 1**
- ▶ **Request for Information form with deadlines – Sample 2**
- ▶ **Budget Detail Worksheet – Sample 3**
- ▶ **Managing the grant development process vs. “writing a grant”**
- ▶ **Define the team, determine roles:** proposal development, research, budget development, technical, and evaluation
- ▶ **Create a proposal development Action Plan and Timeline – Sample 4**
- ▶ **Plan to submit the proposal package 5 days prior to the deadline, but no later than 2 days before.**

Project Design

- ▶ Update or create a Logic Model; it is often required.
- ▶ Map out the project design.
- ▶ Write the 1–page abstract.
- ▶ Create a draft budget – Does the project design inform the budget or does the budget drive the project?

Putting it Together

- ▶ Comply with formatting requirements.
- ▶ Coordinate number of pages with points allotted per section.
- ▶ Write the narrative according to the precise criteria in the solicitation.
- ▶ Create the budget and budget narrative.
- ▶ Assemble the proposal and all supporting documents.
- ▶ Review the proposal package and cross–reference it with the solicitation.
- ▶ Arrange or an external review of the proposal package by someone with federal grant experience.
- ▶ Conduct a final edit of the proposal package.

My 2 Cents About the Budget

- ▶ Don't isolate the budget process from the proposal development process.
- ▶ Use the Budget Detail Worksheet. – Sample 3
- ▶ Budget narrative – provide a concise explanation of costs
- ▶ REVIEW the budget, budget narrative, and proposal narrative to ensure consistency throughout.
- ▶ Non-federal match: cash only, cash and/or In Kind, or In Kind only
- ▶ Instructions for filling out Form 424A – Sample 5

Finally, Hit “Send.”

- ▶ The GAP (Grant Application Package)
- ▶ Follow directions if the grantor department requires that proposals be submitted on a separate site, like DOJ and their GMS (Grants Management System).
- ▶ Run a test with your GAP to confirm that you have all required forms and information.
- ▶ Assemble/upload all pieces of the GAP and carefully review them against your checklist.
- ▶ Inhale, hit “send,” exhale.
- ▶ Return to the site to confirm successful submission.

Must Have, Must Do, Must Know

- ▶ Make a research project out of Grants.gov - refer to "Applicant Resources" page
<http://www.grants.gov/applicants/resources.jsp>
- ▶ Become familiar with the glossary of terms -
<http://www.grants.gov/help/glossary.jsp>
- ▶ Understand the various Forms and Assurances listed with almost every solicitation.
- ▶ Review "Other Requirements" - A sample from the Office of Justice Programs -
http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm
- ▶ For Technical Support for Grant Submission process: *Mary Linda Schwarzbart*,
marylinda@comcast.net - see Sample 6
- ▶ For accounting assistance, contact Community Accountants at
www.communityaccountants.org, or Volunteer Accountants for Nonprofits at
volunteeraccountants@yahoo.com.
- ▶ Stay informed - quarterly "Succeed" E-newsletter, Grants.gov email alerts, and
Department newsletters. Continue to learn...