Tips for RFP Applicants

Be sure your proposal is appropriate and responsive to the RFP.

1. Read the Directives and Instructions thoroughly.
2. Organize your proposal as required in the application.
3. Use a highlighter to mark mandatory requirements (i.e. "must," "shall," "is required to") in the grant application. Failure to include mandatory requirements can result in the elimination of a good program proposal.
4. Consider compliance with suggestions, such as "is strongly encouraged to," "should," "may."
5. Clearly explain how your proposed program is responsive to the RFP.
6. Define or explain unusual terms, abbreviations, and acronyms upon first use.
7. Make sure your proposal is not distorted by errors in grammar or spelling.
8. Read instructions for budget and budget narrative carefully.
9. Check and double-check math on budget pages.
10. Be sure you have all mandatory attachments, i.e. letters of agreements, proof of for profit or non-profit status, Board of Directors' list.
11. When your application is complete, go back to any check-lists to make sure you have included everything.
12. Have another person read your completed application, preferably someone knowledgeable in grant writing, before it is submitted.

Websites and helpful references
(Note this is for reference only. We do not endorse any of these sites or the training that may be provided)

Find and apply for federal government grants
www.grants.gov

Grant Training
http://thegranttrainingcenter.us

Administration of Children and Families http://www.acf.hhs.gov/

Foundation Center- Philanthropy News Digest-organizations can subscribe to the RFP email alerts. Training is also provided for grant writing and research.
http://foundationcenter.org/pnd/

Evaluation Logic Model Bibliography.
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicbiblio.html

Evidence-Based and Evidence-Informed Programs and Practices Checklist available at: http://www.friendsnrc.org/download/part/2006guidelines/attachc.pdf

Program Evaluation Standards and Logic Models.
http://www.cdc.gov/eval/resources.htm

Non-profit Grant Writing Tools. http://www.npguides.org/guide/rfp1.htm

Federal Grants. http://www.nonprofitexpert.com/federal_grants.htm

Grant Writing- Measuring Objectives.
http://nonprofitfundraising.suite101.com/article.cfm/grant_proposal_strategy_measurable_objectives

Guidelines for using the Standards for Prevention Programs Checklist available at http://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/commissions/njtfcan/StandardsPrevention.pdf

Licensing Information http://www.nj.gov/dcf/divisions/licensing/laws.html

Hilton Foundation http://www.hiltonfoundation.org/

The Center for the Study of Prevention of Violence, University of Colorado at Bolder, "Blueprints for Violence Prevention – www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), US Department of health and Human Services, National Registry of Effective Programs, NREPP-SAMHSA - www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov

Communities that Care, Developmental Research and Programs, SAMHSA – www.preventionplatform.samhsa.gov

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, US Dept of Justice – www.dsgonline.com

Language found helpful in RFP's and language that is not as strong:

More Useful: The agency provides various programs that focus on _____ and _____ to the community. These programs are provided through agreements with local _____ and contracts with _____State Agency. The agency is accredited by _____. The agency also has a relationship with _____ utilizing them as a referral resource and also refers services to _____.

Less Useful: Today, the agency helps more than ___ people and offers an array of professional services. The agency has a strong record of working in collaboration with ___, State Agency.

More Useful: The proposed projects activities include the following specific strategies to facilitate families' access to services such as the assignment of a family resource mentor and/or family resource manager to help to ensure the success of each family and the referral of their individual needs.

Less Useful: The resource center will provide access to service delivery including case managers, family advocates and referrals.

Budget Pointers for RFP submission

Foot and cross foot budget
- Add all columns down, and then add bottom total line of all the components across, to see if it adds up to the bottom line total of the first column.
- Start with the cover (summary) page, then do each subcategory and verify that totals for each sub-category are correctly carried forward to the front summary page.

Make sure budget is realistic and includes line items that are appropriate and required for the program.
- Personnel
  - fringe benefits included?
  - Required staff are reflected in budget?
- Space
  - telephone, utilities, rent/use allowance, insurance, repairs and maintenance?
- If program requires a vehicle
  - insurance, gasoline, repairs and maintenance?
- Equipment
  - get 3 bids, this will be required if your agency is awarded the funding
- Other
  - Give details for any material amounts

Have your Fiscal office prepare your proposed budget with your Program staff, making sure that the program proposal and the RFP requirements are on hand to refer to in order to assure that your budget will support the requirements of the program.

Cost Principles Applicable to Grants for Federal Funds

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars

There are three sets of cost principles depending on the type of organization receiving grant funds.

OMB Circular A-21 is for use by educational institutions
OMB Circular A-87 is for use by state and local governments
OMB Circular A-122 is for use by non-profit organizations

Step By Step- How to Find the Annex A and B on our website

1. Go to our website: http://www.nj.gov/dcf
2. On the right side click on Contract and RFP Information
3. Again on the right side of the page click on Contract Forms
4. See the links to the Annex A and Annex B- these may take time to download depending upon the speed of your processor and the memory in your computer.