Sara's process for grant writing

1 Review all Info

Review the Call for Proposals, do a happy dance when you fit the criteria. Read the application guide and any accompanying materials. Sign up for information sessions.

2 Brainstorm/Talk/Think/Plan

Sometimes you know what are doing, other times, not so much! Talk to your colleagues, board, potential partners, stakeholders, etc. It is okay if it takes some time for a clear picture to form. This is a critical step – don't rush it!

3 Write an Outline

A project outline should clearly communicate what you plan to do. It is helpful to share with your funder for feedback and potential partners, especially if you don't have a strong relationship with them yet. Ask them for letter of support now at this point.

4 Write the darn thing

I rarely (never) write proposals in an office. Get comfortable in a distraction-free environment, enlist your proposal writing buddy (it can be virtually – google docs are amazing for proposal writing) and get going.

5 Edit, Get Feedback & Send

I don't seek a lot of feedback but leave time for your management and/or board to review if necessary. Make sure you have someone edit. Send it before the deadline (it won't get reviewed if late). Celebrate! You did it!

Proposal Speak

Goal:
high level statement(s) that provide overall context for what the **project** is trying to achieve, and should align to your mandate. For example, the goal of Trade HERizons is to increase the number of women in trades & industrial technology occupations on PEI. Generally one goal per project

Objectives:
lower level statements that describe the specific, tangible products and deliverables that the project will deliver. For example, 20 women will participate in a career exploration & college prep programming offered by Women's Network PEI. Generally one – two objectives per project.

Outcomes/Outputs:
outcomes should reflect what is the expected resulted at the end of your proposal's project period. Outputs tend to represent deliverables (report, workshop, etc). For example: 80% of participants will get a job or attend training in the trades or industrial technology sectors on PEI. You can have multiple outcomes and/or outputs on a project, depending upon the size and scope.

A Funder's Perspective:

I asked a few funders I know what makes a good proposal. I love this comprehensive response.

A good proposal makes me curious first and excited second. It makes me wish I was involved in the project or the organization. The first thing I look for is that all questions and criteria have been addressed clearly and thoughtfully. I want to see an achievable plan and ideas that are developed with specifics and evidence.

At the same time, plans are not so rigid that a variation in the funding provided will tank the project. The work proposed is just ambitious enough for the level of funding available, promising deliverables that can be delivered. - I'd be lying if I said good writing and attention to detail didn't matter to me.