



# **SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES FOR PREPARING FUNDABLE GRANT APPLICATIONS**

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**February 23, 2022**  
**UF Grad School**

# WORKSHOP GOALS

1. Learn about strategic steps to avoid wasting time
2. Increase understanding of reviewers' points of view and their
3. Walk away with knowledge of asset-based proposal development approaches
4. Understand why the reviewers and the program officer are always your primary customers

WHO IS YOUR PRIMARY CLIENT?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM?

**WHY DOES THIS MATTER?**

# **CATEGORIES**

Here's the  
agenda

- NOFO (AKA Guidelines)
- Applicant
- Conversations with Program Officers
- Proposal Titles
- Letters
- Resumes
- Appendices
- Narrative
- Timeline
- Budget
- Reviewers
- Review Process

**NOFO**  
(NOTICE OF FUNDING  
OPPORTUNITY)

Know the NOFO!

- Read it
- Locate eligibility and intent, examples of past fundable project types
- Find description of required content
- Find CRITERIA
- Determine quality of guidelines

# **APPLICANT**

I) Type of applicant

II) Choosing the applicant

- Qualified
- Experience to execute project successfully
- Strong partners
- Past similar applicants have failed
- Previously successful applicant to this sponsor
- Has a record of completing funded projects
- Sponsor requires 501c3 vs. state or local government
- Assess whether the project is feasible

## **YOUR OWN CHECKLIST**

IMHO:

NOFO checklists are  
inadequate

- List required sections
- List required content in each section
- List all required criteria in appropriate sections
- Convert statements into questions
- Determine responsible parties

# Checklist for Completing IMLS NLG Full Proposal Due to DSP March 25

<https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/fy21-ols-nlgl-nofo.pdf>

Application component	Notes	Persons Responsible	
IMLS Library Discretionary Program Information Form	form Programinfo.pdf	bdf	
<b>Organizational Profile (one page)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Libraries description: statement of purpose, noting the source, approving body, and date of the official document in which it appears</li> <li>→ Governance structure if located within a parent organization</li> <li>→ Service area</li> <li>→ carrying out the work Brief history, focusing on organizational unit</li> </ul>	Organizational profile.pdf	bdf	
<b>Narrative</b>	10 pages; 0.5 inch margins; at least 11 pt font; header on each page Narrative.pdf		
<b>Project Justification</b> Which program goal and associated objectives of the NLG will your project address? <a href="https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/fy22-ols-nlgl-nofo.pdf">https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/fy22-ols-nlgl-nofo.pdf</a> What current, broadly significant need, problem, or challenge does your			





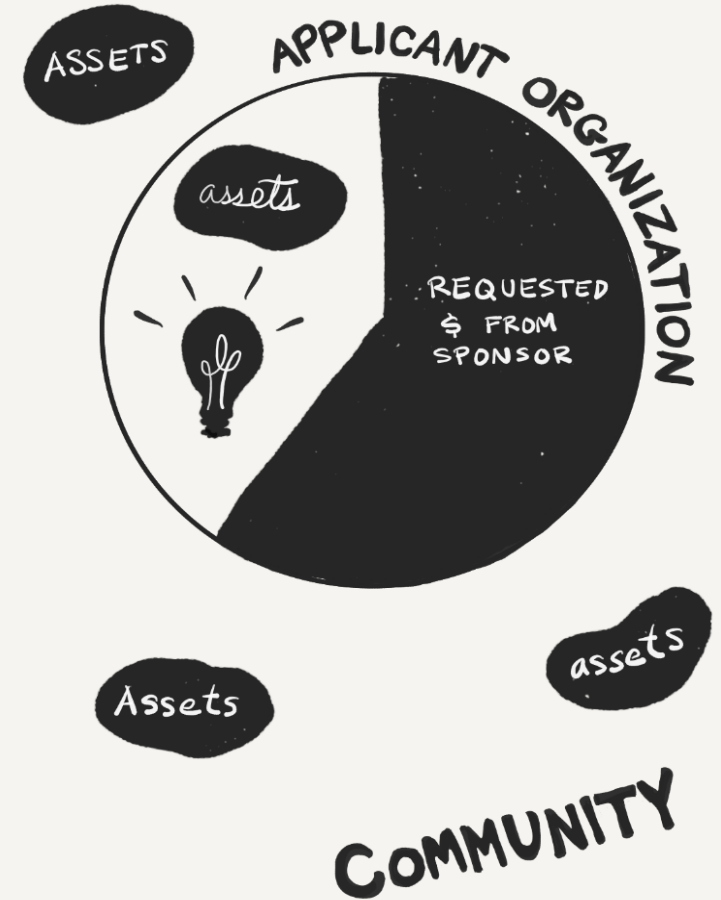
# **THE CONCEPT OF LOOSE TIES**

# Asset-based Proposal Development Strategies

## ASSET-BASED PLANNING FOR GRANT PROJECTS



## NEEDS-BASED PLANNING FOR GRANT PROJECTS



## **CONVERSATIONS WITH PROGRAM OFFICERS (PO)**

This can make or break  
your opportunity to  
create a fundable  
proposal

- Communication requesting a conversation is timed correctly
- Possible but don't happen
- Make the PO comfortable being honest
- Prospective applicant asks about the weaknesses of the idea
- Provide budget request amount and ideas for types of expenses
- PO offers to review a draft

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

You never know  
how its going to go

- Learn about review process
- Scores
- Reviewer comments
- Influence of PO
- Method to access feedback

# REVIEWERS

You never know  
who they are

- Staff review vs. volunteers
- New reviewers to program or new to reviewing/reading grants
- May not be familiar with budgets
- May not be able to reach each proposal thoroughly
- Priorities/biases
- Some may believe doesn't "need" funding
- Use need as a criteria vs. quality of proposal/proposed project
- Lack diversity

## **PROJECT TITLE**

Every proposal  
needs a high quality  
title!

- Specific
- Memorable
- Demonstrates time spent
- Reviewers can recall the project from the title
- Not too long or short
- Creates mental image

## **TIMELINE**

The glue that holds  
the proposal together

- Timeframe is specific
- Activities are specific
- Indicates accountability
- Paints a mental image
- Indicates team has a credible and reasonable plan

## **BUDGET**

The glue that holds  
the proposal together

- Request is appropriate
- Request is desirable
- Request is reasonable
- Includes cost share appropriately
- IDC rate reasonable for request
- Quality justification



# LETTERS

I) Commitment

II) Support

- Requested in a timely fashion
- Requests are specific to the type of letter required
- Requests made to authors with instructions as to when/how/to whom to submit
- Provide sufficient description of the project
- Allowable letters
- Commitment to project sustainability

# **RESUMES**

The “wow” factor

- Labeled
- Uniform
- Shows strengths
- Follow guidelines
- Include PDs for proposed new positions

## **APPENDICES**

Must support the  
proposal explicitly

- Labeled
- Relevant
- Reasonable amount of information
- Analysis of data
- Allowable
- Adds value or “wow” factor

## **NARRATIVE**

Grammatical issues  
that stump  
reviewers

- Spellcheck
- Superlatives
- Adjectives
- Pronouns
- Tenses
- Jargon and acronyms

## **NARRATIVE**

### Content

- Describe project appropriately
- Tie to budget request
- Match with sponsor intent
- Seek evidence of need
- Describe assets in hand
- Answer the required questions address criteria
- Take credit for past accomplishments that align
- Ensure strategy to sustain project
- Easily comprehensible
- Educate the reviewer

## **NARRATIVE**

### Formatting

- “see appendix #”
- Number of pages
- Balance use of text and images
- Margins and font size
- Use of space
- Pages not numbered
- Use section titles as seen in NOFO

# DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS

**Smathers Libraries Grants and Fellowships**

**Funding Opportunities Guide**

<https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/funding>



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**CREATING  
FUNDABLE GRANT  
PROPOSALS**

*Profiles of Innovative Partnerships*