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

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

Here’s the agenda
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
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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application component</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Persons Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMLS Library --- Discretionary Program Information Form</td>
<td>form</td>
<td>bdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Profile (one-page)</strong></td>
<td>Programinfo.pdf</td>
<td>bdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Libraries description: statement of purpose, noting the source, approving body, and date of the official document in which it appears</td>
<td>Organizationalprofile.pdf</td>
<td>bdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Governance structure if located within a parent organization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Service area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• carrying out the work Brief history, focusing on organizational unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrative</strong></td>
<td>10 pages; 0.5 inch margins; at least 11 pt font; header on each page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Justification</strong></td>
<td>Narrative.pdf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which program goal and associated objectives of the NLG will your project address? [https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/fy21-ols-nlg-nofo.pdf](https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/fy21-ols-nlg-nofo.pdf)

What current, broadly significant need, problem, or challenge does your...
THE CONCEPT OF LOOSE TIES
Asset-based Proposal Development Strategies
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
• Learn about review process
• Scores
• Reviewer comments
• Influence of PO
• Method to access feedback

You never know how it's going to go
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
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
Grammatical issues that stump reviewers

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

• 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
• “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

American
Library
Association
Discount code: CFGP21

Bess de Farber
askbess@gmail.com
bessdefarber.com