# WRITING SMALL GRANTS TO FUND SPECIAL PROJECTS

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# Workshop Objectives

- Provide a basic overview of fundraising and the grant-writing process
- Build connections between after school educators to provide mutual assistance
- Increase your confidence
- Get some great ideas funded!

# Topics for today

- PLANNING
- RESEARCH: Identifying funding sources
- WRITING: Proposal elements
- CALCULATING: Budgeting
- REVIEW PROCESS: After You Send It In
- RESOURCES

# PLANNING

# You Have a Great Idea…Now What?

- Identify your problem
- Identify possible activities, programs or materials needed to solve the problem
- Ask around: co-workers, community, parents, Network staff
- See if others have knowledge, contacts, materials, experience

# Talk It Up

- Learn from others, but don't let someone else's pessimism bring you down
- Getting permission: for the idea, for the fund raising
- Timing is important
- Is it feasible, if you had the money?
- What are the biggest barriers to implementing your idea?

# Beef It Up

- Estimate the Costs
  - Can it be done with existing staff or volunteers?
  - Is any special training needed?
  - What materials are required? What would be "nice to have"?
  - Other costs?
- Details not needed yet, but scope of the project leads to the strategy

# Plan your Funding Strategy

- When would you start? How much time do you have to raise the $$$?

- List all possible TYPES of sources for cash or in-kind support: parents, community, schools, volunteers, businesses, foundations

- How much time and effort are you willing to commit?

# Plan A . . . Plan B . . . Plan C

- Low-hanging fruit?
- Who can help you raise money?
- Can the children and youth help? Parents?
- What do you like to do? What are you unwilling to do?
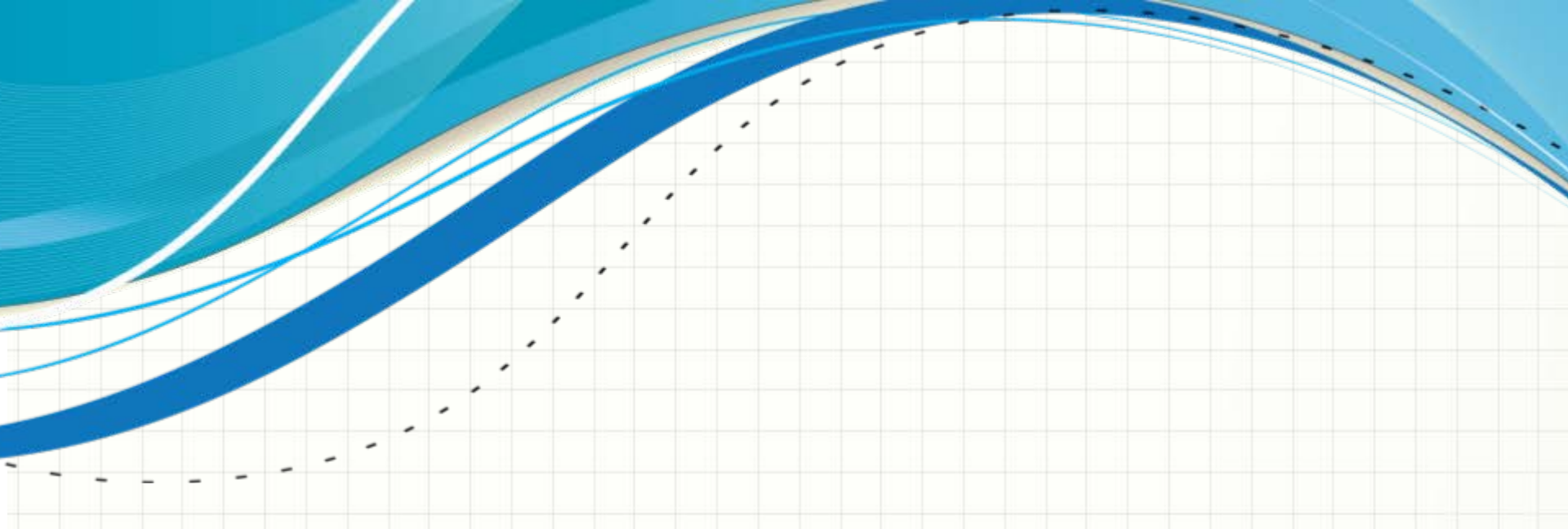- What is your backup plan?

# Your Job?

▸ To convince a group of strangers (sight-unseen) to give you their money to carry out a program that you believe is important!

# MISSION: Possible

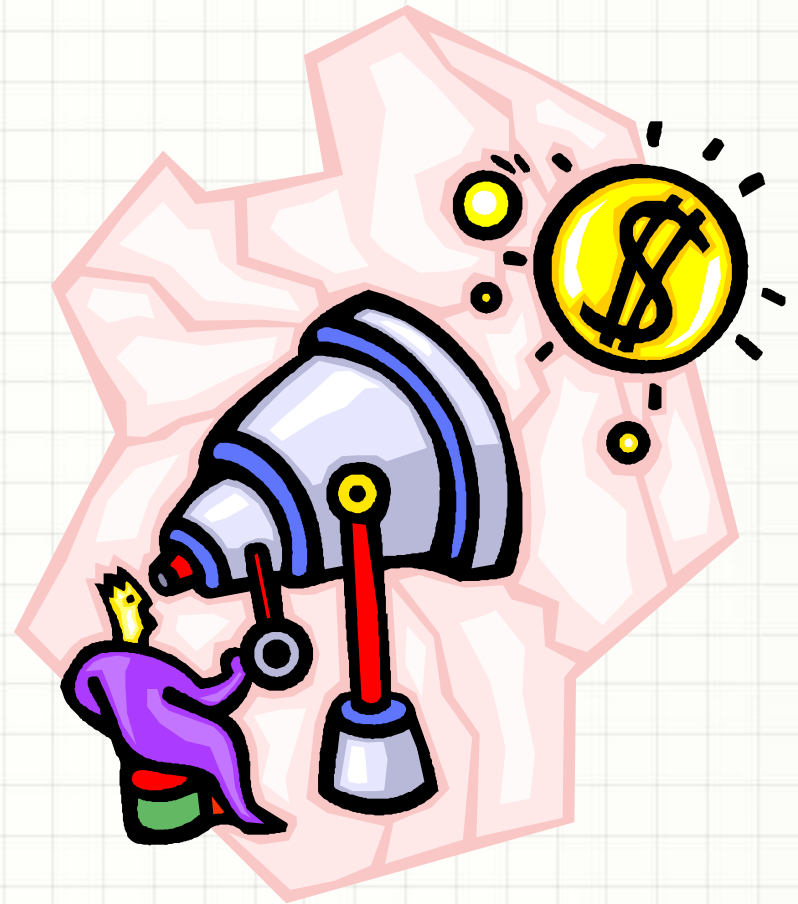- No harder than telling a story

- What's the worst that could happen?

# RESEARCH

# How to Find Funding

- Start in your Backyard:
  - Community Resources
    - Service Groups
    - Businesses
    - Families
  - Geographical: Local, Region, State

# Best Approach: Internet!

- Funding agency websites
- Compendia of funding opportunities
- Automatic e-mail notifications services
- Database services
- Google is your best friend

# Types of Foundations

- General purpose: Ford, Mellon, Rockefeller
- Special-purpose: single purpose determined by establisher
- Company-sponsored: within for-profit company
- Public charities: local operations
- Community: apply only in their city/region
- Family: usually administered by family attorney

# Things to look for

- Who is eligible to apply?
- Geographical area
- What are their funding priorities? Types of programs funded
- Budgets
  - Is there a requirement for matching funds?
  - Guidelines for size of budget
  - Previous grantees and amounts
- Find out their review criteria and process
  - Submission deadlines, award timing

# Types of Proposals

- Verbal proposals and oral presentations
- Short proposals
  - Letters of inquiry (LOI)
  - Letter proposals
  - Pre-proposals
- Full proposals
- On-line proposals

# Short Proposals

- Letters of Inquiry
  - Would you fund this?
- Letter Proposals
  - All the elements boiled down to 2-3 pages
  - Sometimes followed by full proposal
- Pre-proposals (rare for small grants)
  - Part of 2 or 3 step structured process
  - Easier for sponsor and grant seeker
  - Full proposal is last step

# Letters of Inquiry

- Alternative to a call or visit
- Do homework before the letter for previous funding history, types of projects, amounts
- Provide information about your organization
- Provide information about your proposed project

# Letters of Inquiry

- 1-2 pages! On letterhead
- Par 1 – Who are you? Mission, organization, you are seeking funds
- Par 2 – Why this agency? You understand their priorities
- Par 3 – What is the need? Clear and brief
- Par 4 – What's the plan? Bullet goals/objectives
- Par 5 – Why fund you? Uniqueness, qualifications
- Par 6 – How much? Broad categories
- Par 7 – Closing – thank you, contact information, whether you will follow up with a phone call

# WRITING

# The Ideal Flow

- State the need
  - "This group knows what they are talking about."
- Identify the solution you offer
  - "Gee, that could really make a difference."
- Present your plan
  - "OK, I see what we need to do"
- Back up with details
  - "That makes me confident they can really do it"

# Mindset – Think Like the Funder, Not Like Your Organization

- What does the funder want? – not – what does your organization want to deliver?

- What language does the funder understand and appreciate? – not – are these the terms and acronyms we are accustomed to using?

# Typical Proposal Elements

- Summary or abstract
- Problem statement/needs assessment
- Proposed solution/goals and objectives
- Project description/methodology
- Organization description/qualifications/ resources
- Timeline
- Evaluation
- Budget and budget justification/narrative

# Abstract
(the short version of my story)

- May be called the *executive summary*
- A short, concise summary of your proposal, usually near the front
- THIS IS THE "HOOK-UM" part
- This should be the last thing you write

# State the Need

- What problem in the <u>community</u> does your organization/ project address? – not – what problem does your <u>organization</u> have?
  - Identify the target population.
  - Use local statistics for local projects.
  - Documentation: charts, graphs, survey results, anecdotal information
  - Tell a story about a person.
  -  Who else is working on this problem, and where are the gaps?
- Give the reader hope

# Identify Your Solution - Project Goal

- How will you approach the need?
- What is your goal?
  - General statement regarding how target population will change as result of your project
- What difference will you make as a result of this work?
- Don't promise more than you can deliver

# Effective Goals/Objectives

- Goals: Broad statements reflecting ultimate results of accomplishment.

  – *Increase students' excitement about science*

- Objectives: What you will do to accomplish goal.

  – *Hold 25 math tutoring sessions for 20 fifth graders between Sept. and May*

- Activities - Specific Tasks or Strategies

  – *Design and develop 25 unit tutoring model using model rocketry examples*

- Outcomes – Measure change as a result of project.

  – *85% of students participating report greater excitement about science*

# Objectives are "SMART"

- Specific – What precisely are you going to achieve?

- Measurable – Can you quantify your objectives? How much change is desired?

- Achievable – Are you attempting too much?

- Realistic – Can you make it happen?

- Time-bound – how long will it take?

Pop Quiz!

To establish a re-cycling program at our school for aluminum cans

or

To reduce the number of cans on the school campus by 90% by the end of the year

**Pop Quiz!**

To raise the achievement scores of identified students by 1 percentile

or

To provide an after-school reading program

# Present Your Plan - Project Activities and Timeline

- What are you going to do? What activities are included?
- Directly tied to the stated goals and objectives
- Be as concrete as possible
- Include numbers whenever possible:
  - When? For how long?
  - How many students will benefit? How will they benefit? How will you know it's successful?
  - How many teachers/volunteers?

# Project Description/ Methodology

- Describe activities to be undertaken and why
- Flows naturally from problem and proposed solution
- Describe activities, staff needed, and other resources
- Provide evidence of planning and preparation
- Reasonable scope

# Timeline

- Describe sequence of activities or major steps of your project
- Lets reviewers know you have done significant planning
- Some sponsors require written statement
- Others may expect it in methodology
- Or, use time and task chart (visual)

# Organization Description/Qualifications

- Demonstrate to the reviewer that you are capable of doing what you propose
- Describe your qualifications & expertise
- Describe organization, its purpose, goals & programs, & project administration
- Other available resources, including collaborators or other key personnel, & technical resources
- Offer supporting evidence or endorsements

# CALCULATING

# Budget

Regardless of the amount of funding requested, you need a detailed budget and sometimes a budget narrative.
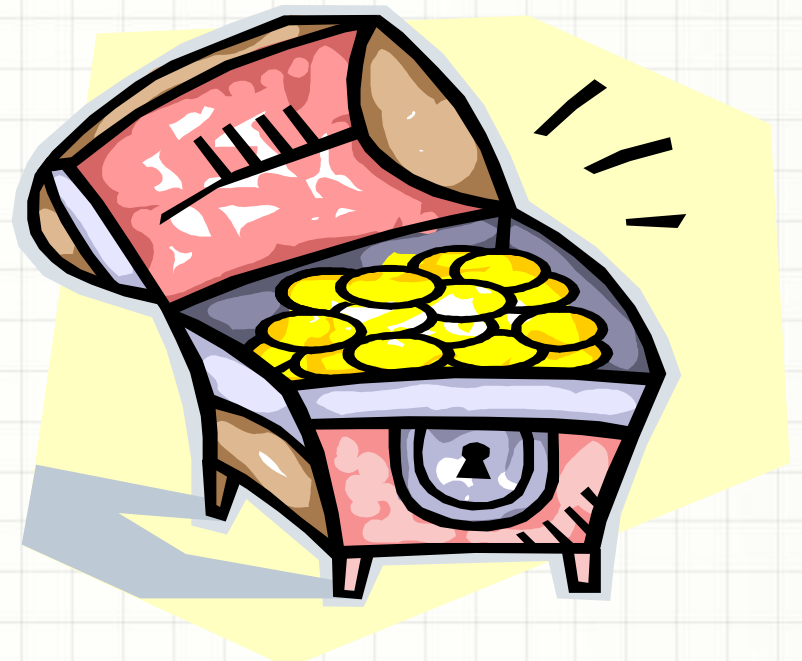
# Present Your Plan - Staffing, Partners, Budget

- What resources do you need to fulfill your plan?
  - Staff/volunteers
  - Partner organizations
  - Materials
  - Training
  - In-kind donations
  - Cash

# Present Your Plan – Budget

- Income
  - ALWAYS balance with expenses
  - This proposal "under consideration"
  - Other grants (under consideration, committed, to be submitted)
  - Other sources (general operating funds, individual donations, fees for service)
  - Include in-kind contributions

# In-Kind Matching Funds

- Read funder's definition carefully.
  - Can the match be an in-kind contribution (i.e., goods, facilities or services)?
    - Personnel
    - Fringe benefits
    - Travel
    - Equipment
    - Supplies
    - Contractual
    - Construction
    - Miscellaneous
    - Indirect Charges

# Budget Principles

1. 0 mistakes! (at least 3 proofers)
2. Consistent format – numbers, dollar signs, decimals, commas
3. Ask for enough, but *just* enough.
4. Clearly justify your figures with real estimates, real travel locations, real mileage, real salaries (no estimates).
5. Tell your story. If someone cannot understand your project from reading your budget, start over.
6. Include ALL project costs, ALL internal contributions, ALL partner contributions, and plans for sustaining the project.

# Sample Budget Justification

Project Leader, Ms. Mary Smith –

The budget request is for 156 hours (26 weeks x 6 hours per week) for the project leader @ $16 per hour to oversee the project . Total cost of $2,496.

Rocketry Supplies –

The budget request is for 10 Model Rocket Starter Sets (1 for every 2 students) @ $38 each and 3 demonstration rockets @ $52 each. Total cost of $536.

# Evaluation and Expected Outcomes

- What outcomes – changes in the target population – will result?

- How will you know if these outcomes were achieved - what measurement tools will you use?

- <u>This becomes your outline for reports if the grant is funded</u>

- Donors give to the future, not the past

# Evaluation Plan

- Process (formative) Provide feedback along the way so changes can be made; usually qualitative.

- Product (summative) At the end; Were objectives met?  Was new knowledge gained? Was it cost effective? Usually quantitative.

# Good Luck!

# REVIEW PROCESS

# The Review Process

- Process varies by sponsor

- Remember - reviewers may not have expertise in your field, may not share your interest and enthusiasm for the project, may be overworked and underpaid

- Key point:  Make your proposal easy for the reviewer to read

# Reviewers look for:

- A "doable" project (resources, approach)
- A project worth doing
- An easily-read, accessible proposal
- Clear: easy to follow, logical ideas
- Complete: includes all required items
- Consistent:
  - Internal: parts consistent with each other
  - External: recognize accepted ideas of the field

You will find "Proposal Writing without Failure" under fiction.

Source: Dr. Glenn H. Crumb, Presentation "Grants: Puzzled About Finding Them?", Western Kentucky University

# Preparing for the next time

- If not funded, don't give up!

- Ask sponsor for reviewer's written comments, if available

- Ask if it would be worth submitting another proposal in the future

- When revising, be responsive to reviewer comments

# QUESTIONS?

# Summary

- Project planning is key
- Project should fit overall goals or plan
- Choose potential funders with a good fit
- Write with reviewers in mind
- Budget should fit your project plan
- Don't despair if proposal is unfunded

# Finally…Be confident

# For more information:

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