

BEST PRACTICES IN GRANT WRITING



A PRESENTATION BY SEAN J. LEWIS

AT THE OFFICE OF URBAN OPPORTUNITY
PERFORMANCE IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

NOVEMBER 15, 2006
ORLANDO CONVENTION CENTER

DOING THE DO'S



- KNOW WHAT IT IS YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE
- IDENTIFY YOUR AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND PARTNERS
- RESEARCH WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO YOUR COMMUNITY
- IDENTIFY WHAT GRANT OPPORTUNITIES/GRANTORS MOST CLOSELY MATCH YOUR IDEALS, GOALS AND BUSINESS PRACTICES
- READ THE GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM COVER-TO-COVER BEFORE PUTTING DOWN THE FIRST WORD

2

DOING THE DO'S (cont'd)

- DETERMINE IF YOU WOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE FUNDS
- KNOW AND KEEP DEADLINES FOR DELIVERABLES
- CONTACT THE GRANTOR WITH ANY QUESTIONS
- GATHER INFORMATION THAT IS REQUESTED IN THE APPLICATION
- ORGANIZE THE MATERIALS AND ATTACHMENTS IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY ARE REQUESTED IN THE APPLICATION



3

DOING THE DO'S (cont'd)



- ANSWER EVERY QUESTION ASKED, INCLUDING EXPLANATIONS FOR THINGS WHICH THE REVIEWER MIGHT NOT BE FAMILIAR
- CLEARLY AND CONCISELY DELINEATE WHO WILL DO WHAT, AND PROVIDE CONTACT INFORMATION AND CREDENTIALS FOR EACH
- FOLLOW ADMINISTRATIVE FUNDING CAPS IN THE APPLICATION
- PROVIDE CLEAR AND CONCISE EXPLANATIONS OF YOUR PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND HOW YOU PLAN TO CAPTURE/PRESENT THE RESULTS

4

DOING THE DO'S (cont'd)

- INCLUDE A COVER LETTER WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND A PROJECT OR PROGRAM OVERVIEW
- INCLUDE SIGNED, DATED AND PROJECT-SPECIFIC LETTERS OF SUPPORT/FINANCIAL COMMITMENT LETTERS
- FOLLOW UP YOUR APPLICATION WITH A COURTESY CALL TO SHOW THAT YOU ARE DILIGENT AND ENGAGED IN THE PROCESS AND WITH YOUR PROSPECTIVE GRANTOR



5

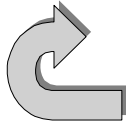
AVOIDING THE DON'TS



- "THE LAZY'S"
 - "See attached"
 - Poor spelling, grammar, mathematical calculations
 - Missing information because:
 - "I didn't understand the question."
 - "I didn't think the question applied to me."
 - Inconsistencies in what you present or say that you are going to do

6

AVOIDING THE DON'TS (cont'd)



- "THE LAZY'S"
 - Cookie-cutter cut and paste jobs presented as a legitimate application
 - Poor presentation of application package
 - Non-responsiveness to grantor communications

7

WORDS FROM THE BANK THAT YOU CAN TAKE TO THE BANK

"I often send grant applications to the big circular file on the floor in my office. You know the one. The maintenance crew dumps it out every night."
-major NE Florida grantor

"It saddens me that there are a number of good ideas that will never see the light of day, simply because applicants didn't follow directions."
-major faith-based grantor

8

THE BOTTOM LINE



"To be considered a viable competitor for funds, whether public or private, you must realize that there are others running the race beside you. If they are better trained, better prepared or more willing to go the extra mile than you are, you know what you will see?"

You will arrive at the end of the race just in time to see them holding up the prize during photo ops."
-Sean J. Lewis

9

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