

# Grant Writing 101

## *Tips for Writing a Winning Proposal*

Lyndi Petty, MPH, Senior Program Coordinator  
Washington County HHS – Public Health

Recorded on 2/10/2023



Department of  
Health and Human Services

# Workshop Outline

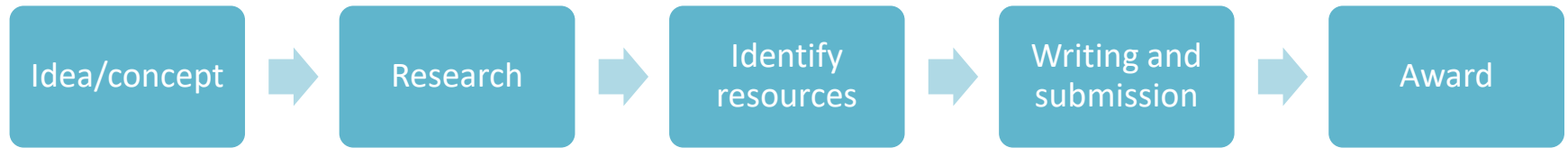
- What is a grant?
- Phases of a grant
- Primary elements of a grant
- Using data to demonstrate need
- Scoring and review
- Tips and tricks
- Contracting with Washington County – What to expect if awarded
- Other resources

# What is a grant?

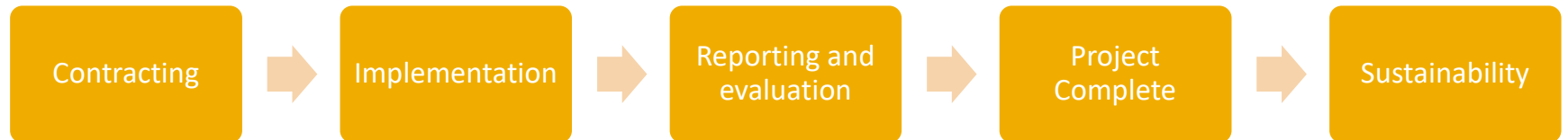
- **At its most basic level, a grant is simply funds that are given to an organization or a cause by another entity to carry out a particular project or activity.**
  - The most common form of grants are made from foundations although they are also made by government agencies (at the federal, state and local level) and even from private businesses.
- **Grant vs Procurement** – A fundamental characteristic that distinguishes a grant from a public contract is that Washington County has less involvement in the program or activity that the grant authorizes. The County's primary involvement is to monitor compliance with the grant conditions to ensure the grant funds are spent as stipulated in the grant.

# Phases of a grant

## Phase 1: Pre-Award



## Phase 2: Post-Award



# Primary elements of a grant

- RFP/NOFO/NOFA – *not part of application you submit*
- Introduction (and/or Cover Letter)
- Abstract/Summary
- Needs Statement/Problem Statement
- Goals and Objectives
- Workplan/Activities
- Evaluation
- Budget/Budget Narrative
- Qualifications – *likely found in Washington County grant scoring criteria*
- Reporting – *not part of grant, occurs after project has been implemented*
- Sustainability – *not included in all proposals*

# Reviewing the NOFO/A or RFP/RFI

In order to help you write the grant - and gain the necessary approval of your principal, club advisor, Board, etc. - you should be able to answer the following questions:

- What is the project/program (exactly) that is to be funded? If approved, how are funds going to be spent?
- Who is eligible to apply? What are the criteria and how do/how will you meet them? When is the application due?
- What regulations or organizational policies/guidelines (if any) apply to this program?
- How are the applications going to be evaluated? Do certain elements (questions) carry more weight than others?
- What is the payment schedule once the grant is awarded? Are funds paid out all at the beginning? In installments over time? Only if certain milestones are reached? On a reimbursement basis?
- Do you have the support of all the necessary persons in your organization and/or community to carry out this program? (Is it worth it to go for it anyway, even if you don't at this point in the process?)
- What are the reporting requirements? How often do you need to file a report? Do you have the processes in place to get you that information (i.e. people, tracking systems, etc.)?

# Goals and objectives

SMART Goals/Objectives – you will hear this term a lot - what does this mean? It means that each of your goals must include the following elements:

- **Specific** - can't be too general, need to target a specific area or target population for improvement; “Help people” is a very vague goal whereas, “Assist low-income 9<sup>th</sup> grade students” is more specific.
- **Measurable** - need to be able to determine at the end of the grant period whether the goal is reached/whether the project is successful or not; use language like “Improve “X” by “Y%” or “Decrease “Q” by “Z#”
- **Achievable** – must be feasible and easy to put into action given the available resources and current economic and political environment.
- **Relevant** – fits the purpose of the grant, fits the culture and structure of the community, and it addresses the vision of the project
- **Time-Bound** - needs to have time markers or milestones by which the goal will be achieved; they want you to put in an actual date here ....

# Example of a SMART Goal/Objective

- Project: Reduce youth suicide
- SMART Goal #1: By June 30, 2025, increase the percent of community-based organizations in Washington County that are trained in evidence-based suicide prevention from 50% to 65%.
  - Is it achievable? Yes
  - It is relevant? Yes



## Scoring and review – *Tips to maximize points*

- For most grants, specific criteria used to evaluate and score applications. You will find these in the NOFO/RFP.
- It is important that you fully address the elements that are being scored.
- Review each area of scoring criteria carefully.
- Consider making a check list of each element of scoring criteria.
- If you are repurposing language from another grant, make sure it clearly aligns and addresses the prompt.
- Familiarize yourself with review process.
- Request information about review process from funders (scoring rubric/matrix).

# Using data to demonstrate need

- Data and research are often used in grant writing to help tell the “story” about your community and why your project is needed
- There are many publicly available sources of quantitative data in the public health and behavioral health space.
  - [Oregon Student Health Survey \(OSHS\)](#)
  - [Adult Behavioral Risk Survey \(BRFSS\)](#)
  - [Oregon Injury Data](#)
  - [American Community Survey \(ACS\)](#)
  - [Oregon Health Authority \(Public Health Division\) Data and Statistics](#)
- Other types of data that your organization may have and be useful for grant writing: focus groups, interviews, community reports or assessments, surveys, evaluation findings

# Using data to demonstrate need cont.

**Example:** Excessive drinking remains the 3<sup>rd</sup> preventable cause of death in Oregon, after tobacco use and obesity. Excessive drinking includes binge drinking, heavy drinking, and drinking by pregnant women or people younger than the age of 21. 1 in 5 people in Oregon drink excessively.

It is well documented that excessive alcohol use is associated with greater risk for injury, violence, alcohol poisoning, risky sexual behaviors, miscarriage and stillbirth, heart disease, liver disease, cancer, alcohol dependence, mental health problems, and a whole host of other health and social problems. This provides support for implementing evidence-based strategies, such as alcohol pricing, to prevent ongoing alcohol-related harms and protect the health and safety of Oregonians.

# Other tips and tricks

- Have the “score sheet” with you as you write
- Pay attention to language and definitions used in the NOFO/RFP, use the language of the funder even if you call it something else
- Most proposals for one funding source can be used for another
- Read other grants and take notes
- Clear, specific, concise responses – assume funder doesn’t know everything about your program but keep it high level and use plain language
- Have at least one other person review and edit your grant proposal
- Pay attention to word count limits

# Contracting with Washington County

## *What to expect if awarded*

- Scope of Work (Attachment A)
- W-9 (if newly contracting with County)
- Unique Entity ID for federal funds (formerly DUNS)
- Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID) OR culturally responsive memo
- Certificate of insurance and additional insured endorsement
- Other forms as required by funding source

# Other helpful resources

- [Grant Writing Basics, 11 Things You Need to Know | Instrumentl](#)
- [Grants.gov – Community Blog](#)
- [Grant Writing 101 – City and County of Denver](#)
- [Writing SMART Objectives – CDC](#)
- [Objectives and goals: writing meaningful goals and SMART objectives](#)
- [Nonprofit Learning Lab – Free Nonprofit Resources](#)
- [2023 Guide to Doing Business with Washington County Health and Human Services](#)