

Grant Writing Terms You Should Know



GRANTWRITING TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

- ❖ **Agency** – A branch of federal, state, local or Tribal government.

Agencies often further their mission and programs by sponsoring programmatic or research projects.

- ❖ **Allowable Costs** – An expenditure approved for the funded project as determined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), or the sponsor's requirements. Only allowable funds may be requested in grant budgets and charged to the grant account.

- ❖ **Amendment** – Any change(s) made to an existing project agreement.



- ❖ **Annual Report** – Many sponsoring agencies require grant recipients to provide an annual report documenting the progress of their award at meeting the goals and objectives detailed in the grant application.

- ❖ **Application Notice** - A notice published in the Federal Register soliciting applications for one or more discretionary grant or cooperative agreement competition. Application Notices give basic program and fiscal information such as total funding available for the program, maximum amount applicants are allowed to request and anticipated average award. Application Notices also provide application guidelines and submission deadline information.

- ❖ **Application Package** - A packet, either electronic or paper, containing the application notice, information and all forms required



for applying for a grant competition.

- ❖ **Applicant** - The legal applicant for grant applications. Only designated representatives from the individual/agency applying for the grand funding are authorized to sign-off and submit applications.

- ❖ **Application** - The electronic or paper document representing a project proposal and funding request to a sponsoring agency. The application may be a letter proposal, a response to an application notice or request for proposals, or a formal application to a federal or state granting agency or foundation.



- ❖ **Award** - A legally binding document that notifies the recipient and others that a grant or cooperative agreement has been made. The award contains or references all terms of the award and documents the obligation of federal funds.

- ❖ **Budget** - An estimate of the expenditures expected to be incurred in the performance of a proposed statement of work or the financial plan or cost assessment for a grant proposal or contract. The budget represents all costs associated with the implementation of a grant project or contracted agreement.

- ❖ **Budget Narrative** - A document included with the application package which, in narrative form, describes the budgeted



expenditures and activities in greater detail. For example, a line item for travel may include \$1,500. The budget narrative will include a breakdown of those costs (i.e. \$500 for Administration, \$1,000 for Consultant/Instructor).

❖ **Budget period/Fiscal year** – The interval of time by which a grant program defines its funding cycle. For example, a large percentage of federal grants begin on the first day of the federal fiscal year...October 1. The budget period for grants awarded on October 1 will end on September 30 of the following year. Depending on the grant, the funding cycle can be more than one year, perhaps for multiple years.



❖ **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number** - A unique identifying number for a federal assistance program which includes a unique two-digit prefix to identify the federal agency, followed by a period and a unique three-digit code for each authorized program. Alpha-designations may be added to some programs to distinguish among competitions when multiple competitions are based on the same program.

❖ **Certifications (Assurances)** - A written statement signed by a designated authorized representative of entity applying that certifies that the entity is in compliance with federal or state regulations.



❖ **Close Out** - The act of completing all internal procedures and sponsor requirements to terminate or complete a grant funded project or contract agreement.

❖ **Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)** - The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) annual edition is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the departments and agencies of the Federal Government. It is divided into 50 titles that represent broad areas subject to Federal regulation. The 50 subject matter titles contain one or more individual volumes, which are updated once each calendar year, on a staggered basis.



❖ **Conflict of Interest** - Circumstances in which an individual's legal or moral obligations to an employer or other party conflict with or are negatively affect by his/her personal interests, financial or otherwise.

❖ **Consortium** - A consortium is two or more entities working on the same project. Either each entity is funded directly by the supporting agency or one entity serves as the primary recipient and issues sub-awards to the other members of the consortium.

❖ **Consultant** - A person paid to work on an externally funded project who is not an employee of the applying entity. A consultant is an expert in the field participating in a short-term, limited and



specifically defined role to deliver services consistent with the goals and objectives of the grant or contract. A consultant is not paid as an employee but as an independent contractor.

❖ **Contract** - An oral, written or otherwise manifest agreement between two or more parties in which an offer is made and accepted and each party benefits.

❖ **Cooperative Agreement** - An application for funding which, if awarded, will require the substantial involvement of personnel from the grant-funding agency. This type of award is commonly used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



❖ **Cost Reimbursement** - A sponsored project agreement that requires the funding recipient to invoice the sponsor after-the-fact for reimbursement of allowable costs incurred in the performance of a project.

❖ **Cost Sharing** - The applying entity's support of a project through cash or in-kind services. Cost-sharing requirements vary, but they generally represent a percentage of the total project costs. Some grants have specific requirements for cost sharing on grant projects, others do not. When cost sharing is included in a grant proposal or funding agreement, those costs must be documented and tracked for auditing purposes. Acceptable cost sharing must include the following:



- **Must be allowable, allocable, reasonable and necessary for proper and efficient achievement of project-specific objectives**
- **Must not be used for cost sharing on other federally funded project, except where authorized by federal statute**
- **Must not be included as contributions for any other project**
- **Must be directly identifiable with the sponsored project as outlined in the proposal budget and/or budget narrative and therefore incorporated in the award notice**

❖ **Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) - A unique identification**

number provided by the commercial company Dun & Bradstreet.

Federal and state sponsoring agencies require the DUNS number on application forms.



❖ **Deadline** - The published date and/or time that a grant application is to be either postmarked or received by the sponsoring agency.

❖ **Direct Costs** - Direct costs charged to the sponsored project must be allowable, allocable and reasonable. Direct costs can be identified specifically with the activities and services of a specific sponsored project with a high degree of accuracy. Direct costs to not include overhead or other indirect costs. Examples of direct costs include:

- Salaries, wages and/or fringe benefits for employees performing work for the project
- Costs of materials and supplies used in the performance of work



- Other items of expense incurred for the project provided the costs are consistently treated in like circumstances

❖ **Disallowed Costs (Unallowable Costs)** - Charges to an award that the awarding agency determines to be unallowable in accordance with the applicable federal cost principles or other terms and conditions contained in the award.

❖ **Effective Date** - The date specified in an award document signifying the official start of an award.

❖ **Employer Identification Number (EIN)/Tax ID Number** – EIN

Number/Tax ID Number is a unique nine-digit number assigned by



the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to business entities operating in the United States for the purposes of identification.

❖ **Equipment** - Articles of non-expendable, tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year, is trackable (i.e. with an individual serial #, etc). Equipment does not consist of a replacement part or component that returns a piece of equipment to its original condition.

❖ **Federal Register** - The official government daily journal that reports all legislative actions of Congress, including the appropriation of funds to special programs and the guidelines and regulations used to award those funds to award recipients. Program guidelines and



requests for comments on proposed guidelines and regulations are also published in the Federal Register.

❖ **Financial Report** - A report generated by the entity receiving grant funding which is sent to the funding agency to report the actual expenditures on a grant or contract annually and at the end of the project.

❖ **Final Report** - The final technical or financial report required by the sponsor at the end of a project.

❖ **Fiscal Year** - any 12-month accounting period. Many entity's fiscal year begins on July 1st and ends on June 30th. The Federal



Government fiscal year begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th. The first day of the calendar year is often the beginning of the fiscal year for corporations and foundations. Most external grants are awarded based on the fiscal year of the sponsoring agency.

❖ **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)** - A federal statute that requires full or partial public disclosure of information and documents controlled by the U.S. government. FOIA applies to federal agencies and does not create a right of access to records held by Congress, the courts or by state and local government. Under FOIA, a prospective applicant to a grant opportunity can request a copy of a



successfully awarded proposal from the program office.

❖ **Funding Criteria** - The review criteria associated with the evaluation of a proposal for funding. For federally sponsored programs, the criteria are printed in the program guidelines or the Federal Register and often follow a specific point system.

❖ **Grant** - A grant represents a mutual joining of interests on the part of the grantor (sponsoring agency) and grantee entity in the pursuit of common objectives. The relationship of trust imposes upon the grantee institution the responsibility to ensure that the grant funds are used for the purpose for which they were awarded. A grant is distinguished from a contract in that a grant does not constitute the



procurement of goods or services by the grantor.

❖ **Grant Closeout** - The final stage in the lifecycle of a grant or cooperative agreement. During this phase, the funding agency ensures that all applicable administrative actions and required work of a discretionary grant or cooperative agreement have been completed by the grantee. The funding agency also reconciles and makes any final fiscal adjustments to a grantee's account.

❖ **Grantee** - A grantee is the legal recipient of a grant. When an entity accepts a grant award on behalf of individual(s) who submitted it, it becomes the grantee who is legally responsible for following the terms and conditions of the award including all reporting and fiscal



requirements.

❖ **Grantor** - The funding agency or source that has agreed to provide financial support to a grantee in the form of a grant or cooperative agreement.

❖ **Guidelines** - The document that outlines program goals to be addressed in a proposal and provides specific instructions on what content to include in a proposal, the format it should take and the funding criteria.

❖ **Indirect Costs** - (See Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs).



❖ **In-Kind Contribution** - A non-cash commitment (i.e. time and effort, use of facilities, etc.) to share the cost of a sponsored project. This type of contribution may require written documentation and be subject to audit.

❖ **Letter of Intent** - A letter of intent notifies a funding agency that an application will be submitted in response to their solicitation. The letter may contain general program information, unofficial cost estimates and a request for application guidelines, instructions and forms.

❖ **Letter of Support or Commitment** - A letter from a collaborator or other interested party which states their support of the project or



lists specific and tangible commitments (i.e. use of facilities, donation of time and effort, supplies, etc.) they are willing to contribute to the project.

❖ **Lobbying Certification** - (See Certifications).

❖ **Matching Funds** - A cash commitment to share the costs of a sponsored project (also see Cost Sharing). Matching funds must be supplied by the grantee as cash or in-kind contributions depending on the grantor's requirements. The grantor may require a specific percent match.



❖ **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** - A written agreement

between two or more parties which delineates the tasks, jurisdiction, standard operating procedures or other matters which the agency or units are duly authorized and directed to conduct.

❖ **Notice of Award (NOA)** - (See Award).

❖ **Office of Management and Budget (OMB)** - A branch of the Executive

Office of the President. OMB helps the president formulate spending plans, evaluates the effectiveness of agency programs, policies and procedures, assesses competing funding demands among agencies and sets funding priorities. OMB ensures agency reports, rules, testimony and proposed legislation are consistent with the



president's budget and with administrative policies.

❖ **Overhead** - (See Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs).

❖ **Participant** - Project participants are the recipients of service or training provided at a workshop, conference, seminar, symposium or other short-term instructional or information-sharing activity funded by a grant funded project. Participant can also be the training beneficiaries of the grant funded project. Participants are not involved in providing any deliverable to the university or a third party or would not be terminated or replaced for failure to perform.



- ❖ **Peer Review** - A process used by many federal and some private funding agencies where committees of experienced researchers or professionals in the same topical area review, score and recommend grant applications for funding to the agency.

- ❖ **Primary Contact** - The person approved to coordinate with the Resource Development Specialist on the development, writing and submission of a grant proposal. The Primary Contact serves as the official point of contact (POC) on the grant application forms and bears responsibility for implementing the project when funded.

- ❖ **Private Foundation** - A nongovernmental, nonprofit organization with funds and program managed by its own trustees or directors. Private



foundations are established to maintain or aid social, educational, religious or other charitable activities serving the common welfare, primarily through the making of grants.

❖ **Program or Project** - An organized set of services designed to achieve specific outcomes for a specified population that will continue beyond the grant period.

❖ **Program Announcement** - A generic funding opportunity accompanied by agency approved merit review.

❖ **Program Income** - The gross income earned by a grant project from the activities part or all of which are borne as a direct cost by the



grant. Examples are fees for services performed under the grant, rental or usage fees charged for use of equipment purchased with grant funds, funds generated from the sale of event tickets for performances or exhibits organized and paid for by the grant.

❖ **Program Officer** - An employee of the grantee agency who oversees applications, funded projects and sometimes evaluates or determines funding for proposals. In federal agencies program officers have research and academic backgrounds similar to those of the applicants.

❖ **Progress Report** - Periodic, scheduled reports required by the sponsor summarizing research or project progress to date.



❖ **Project Director** - In some cases the Primary Contact will serve as the Project Director when a proposal is funded. In other cases, the sponsoring agency may require a 100% full-time Project Director requiring creation of a new position and recruitment. In this case, the newly hired Project Director will assume responsibilities for the grant from the Primary Contact becoming the official point of contact and assuming responsibility for implementing the project.

❖ **Proposal** - A written statement/document establishing project need, objectives, methodology, qualifications of key personnel, budget, budget narrative, institutional commitment and program evaluation for a funded project.



- ❖ **Renewal** - A competitively reviewed proposal requesting assistance directly from an awarding agency to carry out a project or program.

- ❖ **Request for Applications (RFA)/Request for Proposals (RFP)** - An RFA/RFP contains instructions and information required to complete and submit a grant application.

- ❖ **Scope of Work** - The description of the work to be performed and completed on a grant project. A Scope of Work is required but not submitted with the application for all subawards associated with a grant application.



- ❖ **Seed Money** - A grant used to start a new project which may cover salaries and other operating expenses for the project.

- ❖ **Site Visit** - A visit by funding agency staff to determine adequacy of staff and facilities to determine initial funding to assess progress on a continuing project.

- ❖ **Sub-award** - A mechanism used to provide funding to an entity subrecipient collaborating with the lead entity (prime awardee/recipient) in the performance of a funded project. The sub-award is formalized with a sub-award agreement.



- ❖ **Subcontract** - A contract between a prime contractor and a subcontractor to furnish supplies or services for the performance of a prime contract.

- ❖ **Subcontractor** - A party that enters into and performs a subcontract.

- ❖ **Submission Window** - Designated periods of time during which proposals will be accepted for review.

- ❖ **Sub-recipient** - The legal entity to which a sub-award is made and which is accountable to the prime awardee for the use of the funds provided.



❖ **Terms of Award** - All legal requirements imposed on a grant by the federal government through statutes, regulations or terms in the grant award document. Each Notice of Award may include standard and special provisions considered necessary to attain the objectives of the grant, facilitate post-award administration of the grant, conserve grant funds, or otherwise protect the federal government's interests.

❖ **Timeline** - A schematic or description of the goals, objectives, benchmarks and activities within a specified time set for reaching completion. Timelines may also include persons responsible and measurable outcomes or products.



- ❖ **Training Grant** - Grant funded programs which provide instructional activities for participants.

- ❖ **Transmittal** - Formal legal mailing or electronic submission of the proposal to the funding agency.

- ❖ **Unallowable Costs** - Specific categories of costs that cannot be charged directly or indirectly to federally funded sponsored projects in accordance with federal regulations.

