PART VII

WRITING THE PROPOSAL

Now that you have defined the project *[see Part III]*, determined the best corporate and foundation matches *[Part IV],* and collected and organized the components of your proposal *[Part VI],* you are ready to begin writing.

If you have developed a document outline, you should feel confident and able to make a strong case for support to a funding source. If, however, you still have issues to resolve, your lack of confidence will reflect itself in the proposal you are about to write. Oftentimes, a proposal deadline is driving the production of the proposal, whether you are ready or not. If your organization is not ready to submit a proposal, your shortcomings will become apparent, both to you and to the funder.

YOUR UNIQUE VOICE

After you are confident in your plan, you need to determine how to approach your writing. This is often referred to as *finding your voice.*

You can approach a proposal various ways. To determine the tone and structure of your writing, you must take into account the characteristics of your own organization and the funding source. The vocabulary, sentence structure, and degree of formality are all elements of your voice.

Clues from Your Organization

Your organization's size and type provide clues about the appropriate voice.

Size of Organization

If you are in a small agency, finding your voice is fairly easy. You are very likely familiar with the proposed project and can speak with passion and enthusiasm about its benefits and outcomes. In smaller organizations, a program director or other administrator (even the executive director) may have responsibility for writing the proposal. Being deeply entrenched in and passionate about a program can sometimes produce a narrow perspective that has the potential to alienate corporate and foundation representatives. While it is noble to be invested in your program, balance that perspective with a broader view of the issue. This perspective shows itself in the voice of your proposal.

If, however, you are in a larger organization and are the fundraising professional responsible for requesting support, you need the respect and cooperation of the experts in your organization when writing the proposal. The experts may not be used to describing their work in terms that a corporation or foundation can easily understand.

Not only will you have to present a clear and compelling case to your primary contact at the funding source, you must also take into account that your contact may need to present it to others in the corporation or foundation. Thus, you may also have to appeal to a diverse group of staff or board members. These people may or may not have expertise in the particular area you do. As the writer, it is your responsibility to maintain the essence of the expert's voice while at the same time adapting it for clarity.

Type of Organization

Proposals should reflect your organization's personality. For example, an arts organization might exercise more creativity in its proposal than a credit counseling agency. A new grassroots agency will have a far different approach than a 100-year-old bureaucratic educational institution. Be proud of your organization's unique strengths and let them shine in your writing while being mindful of the funder's requirements.

The Funder's Perspective

Put yourself in the funder's shoes as you begin to write. It's your job to get in tune with the funder. Maintain your organization's voice while adapting its style to suit the funding source. People who solicit individuals for donations know this well. Would you make the same approach to a local foundation that you know well as you would to a less well-known national foundation?

Before you begin to write, you should have a good feel for the funder. Go to the funding agency's web site, read the president's statement in the annual report, and review foundation publications and press releases. This gives you a sense of their preferred style of communication. Note whether their style is formal, scientific/technical, or community oriented. You can also learn more about their style through personal interactions (visits and phone calls) with the foundation staff.

Local funders such as community foundations probably know your organization well, so you can use a more familiar tone. If you have a long history with the funder, you want to present your organization as a trusted friend. National funders merit a more formal approach, yet try to avoid sounding arrogant. Funders want competent partners, not prima donnas.

An important element in finding your voice is knowing how you will be evaluated by the funder. Government grants clearly lay this out in the RFP. In corporate and foundation grantmaking, things aren't always as straightforward. However, most corporate and foundation funders would agree they look for the following:

- A capable partner who can help them achieve their goals.
  Voice: Show confidence and competence.
- A clear rationale for support.
  Voice: Be straightforward and to the point.
- The relationship of the request to the funder's program focus.
  Voice: Use words that convey a feeling of shared values and partnership.

Keep a positive tone throughout the proposal, avoiding the following:

- Having a tone or making statements that are condescending to other organizations grappling with the same issues.
- Speaking poorly of any individuals or groups. You never know what organizations members of the board are involved with.
- Dismissing the opinions of your constituents or beneficiaries in the project planning process.
- Assuming that your organization is the only one that can address this problem and that you can do it alone. Acting in isolation is counter to today's thinking.
- Dropping names, unless you have been given permission to do so. Sometimes this can do more damage than good.
- Apologizing about asking for money. Funders want confidence!

A Corporate Voice

Corporations prefer a very concise and businesslike approach. They are adept at conveying clear and short marketing messages and expect the same from others. Draw the reader in with a compelling summary and introduction and then provide the details to back up those things. In order for a corporation to want to invest in your organization, the corporation must benefit in some way. Many corporations integrate their giving into an overall marketing plan to increase market share. For example, computer companies donate their products to local schools, gaining greater exposure in the education market. Even community infrastructure (for example, literacy) or social improvement (teen pregnancy) projects may link to their interests. A strong community with a sound labor pool benefits society, yet it also helps businesses remain viable. Companies are very strategic in the way they choose which issues to support.

The proposal must clearly state these benefits to the corporation; the tone is more akin to a sales approach or a transaction rather than an appeal for the general betterment of mankind, for example. The proposal should be brief, directly addressing the rationale for support.

When crafting a proposal to a corporate foundation (versus a corporate giving program that operates directly through the business), be aware of the gray areas that exist between the two. A corporate foundation must be careful not to fund things that are too closely related to their interests due to certain legal restrictions. (A corporate giving program has more flexibility.) To determine the correct tone and voice, pay close attention to the foundation's published materials and guidelines and follow that tone as you write the proposal. Make sure you understand the funder's perspective and philanthropic goals. If possible, it is a good idea to have the corporate foundation review a draft before final submission to make sure you are using the right tone.

More and more corporations are reverting to online proposal submissions with little space provided to make a case for support. This trend continues as the number of proposals from nonprofits increases and corporate contributions staff decrease. Finding your voice within this format can be a challenge. Do your best to keep the proposal concise yet reflective of your style.

A Foundation Voice

Foundations are interested in finding partners to help them achieve their goals. Again, the foundation's particular expertise is often a good clue as to the voice you should use. Since foundations generally choose partners based on their competence and credibility, you must establish that you are an authority in the field early on. Demonstrate your knowledge of the problem and confidence that you are the best organization to help them solve it.

- Know a foundation's politics. For example, if you approach a very conservative foundation for support for a liberal initiative, you will likely create embarrassment for your organization. Your voice will clearly not fit with the funder's interests. However, don't automatically assume a funder's ideology. Many are open to considering multiple points of view; your job is to make a case for why it is advantageous for them to consider your project.
- Speak to them in their own language. Gear the language to the reader. Is this a very scientific foundation? If so (and you aren't knowledgeable in this area), bring in experts. However, be careful not to use language that is overused and banal. You want to let the funder know that your project is unique and leading edge.
- Remember that your proposal may be read by members of the board and staff who have little understanding of your project area.
- Write for a broad audience, do a good job linking your project with the foundation's objectives and mission, and strive for clarity.

Finding your voice is easier when you believe in your program's value and understand the funder's perspective. A good way to test the effectiveness of your voice is to have someone who has no background in your field read the proposal and provide feedback.

Length, Style, and Flow

Construct the proposal so that it makes sense and conveys the information logically and persuasively while retaining your unique voice. You want to be complete yet concise, engaging the reader in your story. You do that through your proposal's length, style, and flow.

Length

In the early days of proposal writing, it was not unusual for the proposal to be twenty or thirty pages long. However, the increase in the number of proposals submitted (reflective of the number of nonprofits as well as advances in technology and communication) and funder staff have caused funders to request shorter proposals. Some even speculate that the proposal will be a thing of the past, with letters of inquiry sufficing.

Many foundations provide guidelines on length. Others simply lay out the proposal components with no length requirements. In general, it is best to limit the proposal to no more than ten pages. In fact, it is desirable to finish the body in less.

Keep these length guidelines in mind:

- Technical proposals require more-detailed descriptions of the project and of principal investigator(s) and their qualifications.
- Local funders may not need a thorough description of the organization.
- Capital projects or challenge grants require lengthier proposals because they include building or fundraising plans.
- Joint proposals are longer because you need to discuss all organizational partners and their qualifications.

Style

While individual funders may have particular preferences when it comes to the proposal itself, it is wise to follow some general guidelines:

- The proposal should be tight, without unnecessary or flowery words or jargon.
- The proposal pages should be clean and neat. Coffee spills don't convey a good image.

- Check spelling! Read for meaning and typos that evade a spellchecker.
- The proposal should be easy to read, with plenty of subheadings and white space to break up the text.
- The proposal should follow the funders' instructions with regard to number of pages, margins, fonts, and so on. Even if the funder allows 10-point type, resist the urge! It's very hard to read and exhausts the eyes. A confusing document conveys a confusing concept. Use 12-point (or 11-point) type.
- Data and statistics are good but make sure you sprinkle in some quotes or qualitative or narrative evidence. (Make sure you respect the confidentiality of your clients in this process.) Use examples where appropriate. This keeps the reader's interest.

Remember: It's important to follow the instructions of the funder.

Flow

The flow of a proposal is extremely important. Ideas must logically connect, and the proposal should guide you through a story, with each part contributing ultimately to the conclusion.

It is obvious to the funder when you cut and paste a proposal or take a scattershot approach by sending the same proposal to multiple funders. The case for support falters, and ideas become disjointed. It is perfectly acceptable to use *boilerplate* material (or pieces of another proposal) in constructing a proposal—or to send out more than one proposal at a time. Just be sure that the ideas connect logically and are customized to each funder's interests.

In order for your proposal to flow properly, keep the following tips in mind:

- Outline your document to help sequence and organize your ideas.
- Use transitional phrases such as "An additional component is . . ." or "Furthermore, . . ." to link thoughts and paragraphs.
- Vary sentence structure and paragraph length to interest the reader.
- Summary statements can be used at the end of paragraphs or sections to complete a series of ideas.
- End the proposal with a summary statement, not with the budget.

If you are "translating" an expert's wording to make it more understandable, make sure the proposal's style is unified. Inserting technical paragraphs into a basic document results in choppiness. Maintain the same degree of formality throughout the proposal. In other words, use the same voice.

THE FUNDER'S REQUIREMENTS

The most important thing a grant writer can do is listen to the funder throughout the proposal process. Corporations and foundations often have specific requirements that give them a basis on which to compare proposals and projects. Each funder has its own culture and preferences, and you must respect that process if you are going to be successful.

When you really listen to the funder, you gain lots of valuable information that will help make your proposal a success. You also know early on whether your project is a good fit with the funder's interest.

Be attuned to the funder's

- Philosophy and purpose
- Challenges
- Proposal requirements
- Questions and comments about your proposal

At every stage in the process, develop a strong case for support. While you outline in detail your statement of needs, goals, and objectives *[see the "Proposal Components" section in this part],* the case for support provides you with a framework for those components. Everything you include in the proposal itself should relate back to the case for support.

Contact the funding organization to obtain a copy of its RFA (request for application) or RFP (request for proposal), which includes either an *application* or *proposal guidelines.* Try to get a copy of the RFP as soon as possible so you have plenty of time to complete the proposal. Most funders are unsympathetic to late submissions. *[See Part VI, Organize the Proposal for timing guides.]*

APPLICATION FORM

An application lists the exact questions to which you must respond and provides space for your answers. You should not exceed length limitations. However, read the application carefully to determine if they allow you to attach additional sheets. (Do not take advantage of this privilege by grossly exceeding the allotted space. A funder who uses an application form is clearly interested in brevity.)

It can be a challenge to explain your program succinctly. Some foundations provide as little as three lines to describe your project. You will likely need to write several drafts before you get it right. If you are unsure whether you have done a good job describing your project, have someone unfamiliar with your program provide feedback.

Using Your Connections

Develop a relationship with the grantmaker, and you can feel confident that you have met the funder's requirements and expectations. If you have used your connections to get the attention of a funder, how should you approach this in a proposal? And should you? Due in part to Sarbanes-Oxley legislation regarding corporate governance and disclosure, corporations are being more closely scrutinized than ever before. (The Sarbanes-Oxley Act tightened regulation of accounting rules and auditing requirements in the for-profit world.)

Use your connection to open the door and craft a compelling proposal that can stand on its own if need be. Even if you have a high-ranking connection at a corporation, they may be hesitant to advance your idea unless they can back it up with a clear rationale. Not only does your project have to pass muster with the CEO, it must often be approved by a board.

Many independent foundations allow *discretionary grants* for their program officers or board. These generally lower-level grants require the approval of a smaller number of people. While you may feel less need to make a strong case for support (because you have developed a good relationship with the foundation representative), make sure your rationale for funding is solid and concise. Who knows? Perhaps the foundation will consider your program for a larger grant next year!

Knowing your audience and clearly defining your project allows you to make a strong case for support. *[To get some idea of the motivations of these potential partners, see Part I, Understanding Corporate and Foundation Fundraising.]* The importance of these motivations cannot be understated. If you are going to be able to align your project well with the interests of foundations, you must not only know *what* they are trying to achieve but *how* they expect to achieve it. The "what" relates to their mission, the "how" to entities and components they will fund (for example, conferences or dissemination of research findings). A strong case for support is dependent on a sound project rationale and a knowledge of your audience.

Make copies of the original application form and use these for practice before completing the final version. Type your final responses. If you do not have a typewriter and prefer to use a computer, you may copy questions into a word-processing program. Be sure to answer only what is asked on the application form. If space is unavailable for information you want to include, contact the grantmaker for guidance.

Proposal Guidelines

While applications provide specific questions, proposal guidelines are slightly more open-ended, providing instructions on what to include (statement of need, goals and objectives, organizational biography, and so on) and often dictating each response's order and length.

If the funder does not provide instructions or guidelines, you've no reason to worry. In fact, many grant seekers welcome an open-ended process that allows them to be creative and customize their responses.

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

You now have an idea of your voice and are ready to compile the various proposal components. In general, grantmakers require the same basic information. It is a good idea to contact the funding organization to inquire about their preferences, yet you can feel comfortable about your proposal if you include the following components:

- Cover letter (one page)
- Cover page (one page, optional)
- Table of contents (optional)
- Introduction (one page or less)
- Organizational credentials (one to two pages)
- Statement of need (one to two pages)
- Project methods (three to five pages; includes goals/objectives, project description, timeline, and evaluation)
- Budget (one to two pages)
- Conclusion (one-half page)
- Attachments

One way to determine whether your proposal meets the funder's guidelines is to obtain a copy of a past grant-winning proposal. (However, this assumes that the guidelines haven't changed and that the proposal is representative of the majority of their winning grants.) You may do this one of two ways:

- Contact the funder directly. Government grantmakers are required to share this information upon request (except when the information is classified or proprietary in nature).
- Contact grant-winning organizations and request a copy of their proposal. The Foundation Center (www.fdncenter.org) offers a grant search option, which allows members to search for organizations that have received grants from particular funding organizations. Guidestar (www.guidestar.org) also lists grant recipients. You may want to directly talk with the organizations' development officer to find out what things are essential to success.

The order of the proposal components may vary depending on the funding organization and the type of grant you seek. For example, government funders may request that your organization's biography be placed closer to the beginning of the proposal, while foundations and corporate givers may prefer it toward the end. Length requirements also vary, ranging anywhere from three to fifteen pages or more. A very technical or

An Unsolicited Proposal

Rarely do corporations or foundations fund *cold* proposals; in fact, many do not entertain unsolicited requests. It is to your advantage to establish a relationship with the funder before official submission. *[See Part V, Approaching Funders for more on developing relationships.]*

Because most funders want to partner with and fund those organizations or people who are most competent in their fields, they often work within established networks and rely on subject matter experts (SMEs) to guide them in choosing partners. These potential partners are generally approached directly by the funding source. A savvy fundraiser works hard to position his organization as a desirable partner by increasing its visibility in funding circles.

research-oriented proposal may be even longer. *[See the "Length, Style, and Flow" section earlier in this part.]*

Regardless of length and order, proposal basics are the same, and the information included in each section is integral to any successful funding request. The length suggestions provided in this section are based on a standard ten-page proposal. For funders who restrict the page count, you may need to reduce the length of each section proportionally.

If a funder provides you with categories to address in the proposal, you may want to use the wording of those categories as the headings of your proposal sections.

Sample proposal components for the funding of a gang-prevention program are used throughout this part. Examples are not necessarily consistent; a variety of proposal writing techniques are illustrated. Please note that these proposal components have been created for the purpose of this book and do not accurately describe a real city in the United States. A full sample proposal is provided in Appendix A.

Cover Letter

The cover letter is the first piece in your proposal package and your first opportunity to impress readers. It serves as your proposal's formal introduction and demonstrates that the highest levels of the organization have given the proposed project their blessing.

If your organization has a history with the funder, the cover letter is the place to emphasize the success of any past projects you've worked on together. You may also use this space to reference anyone in the funding organization with whom you've communicated, especially if that person has encouraged you to apply. This indicates to the reader whether she should read further.

The cover letter should be less than one page, typed on your organization's letterhead, and should include the following:

- Your organization's name
- Title and synopsis of your proposed project
- Brief statement indicating how your project links to the funder's priorities
- Type of grant you are requesting (capital, program development, challenge, or the like)
- Amount of grant request
- Follow-up statement or request
- Name, email address, and phone number of the proposal's contact person
- Signature (typically of board chair or CEO)

Please note that the individual signing your cover letter does not have to be the same as the proposal's contact person. You should make the distinction clear in the letter.

The individual who signs the cover letter commits the organization to carrying out the project as defined in the proposal. For this reason, funders often wish to see the signature of your board president or executive director. The funding agency may specify who should sign the cover letter, but if it does not, your best bet is to have it signed by the officer highest in your organization's hierarchy.

It is important that the cover letter be addressed to a specific individual at the corporation or foundation. Generally, this name is listed on the RFP, printed information, or the funder's web site. As with letters of inquiry, if the contact person listed is not the individual making the decision, send the decision maker a copy of your proposal. At large foundations, grant administrators are hired to weed out proposals before they reach the program officers with the real expertise. Never address a letter to "To Whom It May Concern." Be sure to correctly spell the person's name; if you are unsure, call the foundation for confirmation.

Reference anyone in your organization who has rapport with the funder. If a corporation employs one of your board members, the board member's name should be included on the letterhead or as part of the cover letter body, if appropriate. However, do not reference someone who may be viewed negatively by the funder and thus may hurt your chances of being successful. Simply because a person professes to have a connection with the funder does not mean they are viewed positively by those contacts. Double-check any connections you reference.

Some foundations want to know that your proposed project is the organization's highest priority for funding. In this case, the cover letter should include such a statement and should be signed by the person making decisions on priorities.

The cover letter can also indicate how and when you plan to follow up on the request for funding. For example, "I welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you . . ." or "I will be in Chicago in early June and will call to schedule a time to meet with you. . . ."

The cover letter duplicates much of what is included in your cover page and introduction. For this reason, you should spare the reader excess detail.

Sample Cover Letter

YouthOne, Inc.

(date)

Ms. Mary Grantmaker
XYZ Foundation
1 Grants Lane
Grantsville, NY 55555

Dear Ms. Grantmaker:

YouthOne, Inc., a youth-serving nonprofit agency in Ourcity, New York, is pleased to submit the enclosed proposal for the Targeted Outreach Gang Prevention Initiative (TOGPI) for your consideration.

We share the XYZ Foundation's concern about youth violence and gang involvement in cities across the United States. The proposed TOGPI is a localized, collaborative effort to curb youth-gang involvement and gang-related crime in Ourcity. It is our hope that the TOGPI pilot will provide new models for effective gang prevention. We are requesting $81,868 to help seed the twelve-month initiative.

YouthOne developed TOGPI in response to Ourcity's 75 percent increase in youth gangs and 200 percent increase in gang-related crime over the past five years. In both a prevention and intervention approach, the program targets thirteen- to nineteen-year-old gang members and gang-prone youth who have been identified by the school district, police department, and department of probation. Following recruitment, teens work with counselors and participate in six months of programs to address their specific needs. YouthOne monitors youth for an additional three months.

With a current membership base of 3,000 youth, YouthOne has been serving Ourcity's most disadvantaged five- to 19-year-olds for ninety-one years with a mission to "help youth of Ourcity lead safe, healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives" by providing programs in five basic areas: (1) education and college readiness, (2) recreation and health, (3) leadership, (4) the arts, and (5) career development programs.

YouthOne thanks the XYZ Foundation for its interest in TOGPI and looks forward to talking with you further about this project. For more information, contact Sara Smith at (555) 555-5555 or SaraSmith@YouthOne.org.

Sincerely,

John Smith

CEO, YouthOne, Inc.

Cover Page (Optional)

The cover page is optional and is a stand-alone document, providing review committees with the essential information about your proposed project in an easy-to-read format. While this may be one of the last pieces you create, it is one of the first review committees consider and is therefore one of the most important. Many foundations and corporate givers provide cover-page templates or inclusion checklists. Even without guidelines, the cover page is simple to create. The basic cover page provides a snapshot of your proposal and includes the following:

- Name of grant-seeking organization
- Mission of grant-seeking organization
- Nonprofit status
- Name of funding organization
- Title of proposed project
- One-sentence description of proposed project
- Project budget information, amount requested, and budget period
- Organization's budget and budget period
- Name of organization's executive director
- Contact information for grant-seeking organization, including name, address, phone number, and email address
- Date of submission

If you are submitting a grant in response to a government RFP, indicate on the cover page the request to which you are responding.

Sample Cover Page

Grant Request from YouthOne, Inc. to XYZ Foundation

Project Name: Targeted Outreach Gang Prevention Initiative (TOGPI)

Project Methods: TOGPI is a collaborative community effort to decrease youth gang involvement—and the crime that results—by targeting current gang members and gang-prone youth and placing them into programs that will teach them skills for living productive and responsible lives off the streets.

Budget Information: *Total Organization Budget:* $2.5 million

Total Program Budget: $136,883

Budget Period: January 1, 2005–December 31, 2005

Amount Requested from XYZ: $81,868

YouthOne's Mission: To help youth of Ourcity lead safe, healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives.

Nonprofit Status: 501(c)(3)

Proposal Contact:	Sara Smith
Address:	1 Youth Blvd.
	Ourcity, NY 00555
Phone Number:	(555) 555-5555
Email:	SaraSmith@YouthOne.org
Executive Director:	John Smith

Date: ________________

ANALYSIS: Create a cover-page template for yourself and save it on your computer. Much of the information remains the same, and you will save yourself time formatting the document.

Table of Contents (Optional)

If your proposal is quite lengthy and includes a significant number of attachments, it may be helpful to include a table of contents so the proposal review committee can easily navigate your proposal and attachments. This is optional and rarely required. You may also want to consider the use of dividers and tabs to separate sections in a lengthy proposal. *[See "Submission Tips" later in this part.]*

Introduction

The introduction section supplements the cover page and provides a brief overview of what to expect within your proposal package. The purpose is to pique the funder's interest in the project.

Depending on the length of your proposal and the grantseeker's preferences—if any are specified—your introductory piece may be only a few sentences (for shorter proposals), a 300-word abstract, or a one-page executive summary. The introductory piece may be called an *introduction, proposal summary, abstract,* or *executive summary*. It is best to write the introduction after you have completed the full proposal so it accurately summarizes the key points.

Executive Summary

The executive summary is one page or less and comprises a synopsis of each major proposal component. When using an executive summary, you should briefly address each of the following questions:

- How does this project fit within the grantmaker's priorities?
- What significant need does this project fill?
- What will the project's outcome(s) be and how will its success(es) be measured?
- What is the project budget and how much are you requesting from the grantmaker?
- What type of grant do you seek?
- How is your organization qualified to carry out this initiative?

The most distinguishing aspect of an executive summary is that it stands alone. Think of it as something you could hand out to brief people on your program in such a way that these individuals could then turn around and talk about it intelligently.

A simple way to create an executive summary is to print out your proposal's draft and highlight the most important parts of each main section. Piece these highlighted sentences together so they flow logically from one section to the next, and you have an executive summary! This is a great way to ensure that you've included all relevant parts.

To answer the preceding questions, follow this simple format:

- **Link the funder's priorities to your project.** In two to three sentences, establish that your project's goals align with the goals of the funding organization.
- **Provide a brief summary of your organization and its credentials.** In one or two paragraphs, indicate the organization's mission and history while focusing on aspects that demonstrate its capacity to successfully implement the proposed project.
- **Briefly describe the need your project will address.** In fewer than two paragraphs, include compelling evidence that indicates why this project is necessary.
- **Lay out the nuts and bolts of the project or program you propose.** State in fewer than two paragraphs how your project will meet the need you just described in terms of basic goals and objectives, who will benefit from the project, who is responsible for implementing the project, when the project will start and end, and how the project's success will be evaluated.
- **Indicate the project budget and amount of request.** In one paragraph, state the proposed project budget, the amount requested from the funder, and how the funder's money will be used (for example, what type of grant you are requesting). Let the grantmaker know whether other organizations will contribute to funding this project and how the project will be sustained in future funding cycles.

You may find yourself wanting to include more information than necessary. Save the details for later. While the executive summary should convince readers that this proposal is worthy of their attention, it is really just a road map of what's to follow.

Sample Executive Summary

For a decade, the XYZ Foundation has led national efforts to reduce youth violence and gang activity in America. In an effort to build on the considerable momentum of these efforts, YouthOne, Inc. announces the Targeted Outreach Gang Prevention Initiative, a comprehensive program designed to alleviate the gang problem in Ourcity, New York. YouthOne (TOGPI), founded in 1913, provides 3,000 youth per year with education and college readiness, recreation and health, leadership, arts, and career development programs. In two years, YouthOne expanded membership by 100 percent, increasing female membership by 15 percent. Each year, 180 members begin volunteering, and 200 teens are accepted to college or into the workforce as a result of YouthOne programs.

In the past five years, Ourcity's gangs have expanded in number from twenty to thirty-five—and that growth (according to a recent study) may be 90 percent responsible for the 180 percent increase in overall crime. With the problem encroaching into schools, 60 percent of Ourcity's students regularly feel threatened by gang members. Gang expert John Johnson, who has implemented successful gang programs in the past (two funded by the XYZ Foundation), has identified youth idleness (in terms of extracurricular activities and employment) and more typical factors (poor family life, poverty, and poor performance in school) as factors contributing to youth gang involvement.

A recent audit conducted by Ourcity's Community Foundation shows several agencies exist with capacity to address factors contributing to gang involvement. However, none actively recruits gang members or youth with gang potential. And teens involved in such programs are not those with a high propensity for gang involvement.

With this in mind, Ourcity and gang expert John Johnson have created a comprehensive gang prevention and intervention program based on strategies put forth in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's *Comprehensive Gang Model*. The model calls for collaboration among various local agencies—the school district, department of probation, police department, other nonprofits, and local businesses—for direct outreach to and recruitment of current gang members and youth with characteristics of gang members (including poor school attendance and poor performance in schools). TOGPI also relies on outreach workers who walk the streets talking to and targeting youth—an approach that has been used in successful past models. Once recruited, youth are placed into programs that include one-on-one counseling, mentoring, and tutoring; job training; and volunteer activities.

YouthOne's goal in implementing TOGPI is to reduce gang involvement in thirteen- to nineteen-year-olds by decreasing youth idleness and helping youth secure after-school jobs and volunteer experiences. Programs, training, and counseling last six months, and in the following three months, YouthOne tracks youth to ensure that they continue working and volunteering.

Progress toward TOGPI's goals and objectives will be tracked through attendance records, monitoring of youth participation in the workforce and other activities, and police department records.

The total budget for the project is $31,416 for one year (January 1, 2005, to December 31, 2005); YouthOne is requesting the full amount from the XYZ Foundation to implement this pilot project. During year one, we plan to aggressively initiate fundraising efforts with local corporations to sustain the program for the following two years. YouthOne's operating budget totals $2.5 million.

Abstract

The grantmaker may indicate a preference for an abstract, which is similar to the short introduction, rather than an executive summary. The placement of the abstract is the same: after the cover page and before the body. You may find it more difficult to write an abstract because you are trying to convince the reader of the project's importance in much less space.

Trying not to repeat what is already stated on the cover page, you should include the following in your abstract:

- One sentence about how your project's goals fall within the funder's priorities
- Two sentences describing the need your project will address
- Two to three sentences describing how your project meets those needs
- Two sentences on how you will evaluate the project's success
- One sentence on how the project will be sustained in future funding cycles
- Two sentences describing why your organization is qualified to carry out the proposed project

When writing the abstract, think of how you would phrase a one-minute, verbal sales pitch so that your listener could then turn around and sell someone else on your plan. Keep the abstract succinct, persuasive, and memorable. Your reader should feel engaged.

Sample Abstract

Building on the XYZ Foundation's success in ameliorating gang problems in cities across the U.S., YouthOne, Inc. requests that the foundation join other supporters by granting YouthOne $10,000 to help seed the **T**argeted **O**utreach **G**ang **P**revention **I**nitiative (TOGPI). In the past five years, the number of gangs in Ourcity increased from twenty to thirty-five with a resulting 180 percent increase in overall crime. Factors contributing to the community's problem include youth idleness resulting from few extracurricular options and low youth employment rates, in addition to poverty, poor performance in schools, and poor family life. Currently, Ourcity has no gang prevention programs, and agencies addressing social needs of gang-prone youth do not specifically target these teens. In response, TOGPI is a collaborative effort relying on a myriad of community agencies identifying, recruiting, and reaching out to youth gang members and gang-prone teens and is based on strategies outlined by a division of the U.S. Dept. of Justice. Fifty teens, thirteen to nineteen years of age, will be placed into ten hours per week of programs specifically designed to meet their needs, including tutoring, job training, college preparation, and more. The goal of the project is to reduce gang involvement in the city through reduction of youth idleness and crime, improvement in school performance and attendance, and more. The school district and police department have agreed to supply information on targeted youth for measurement purposes. YouthOne's administrative assistant will analyze data. YouthOne is a ninety-one-year-old nonprofit agency that operates with a $2.5 million budget and serves 3,000 five- to nineteen-year-olds each year—helping them excel academically, personally, and socially.

Helping Funders Do Their Jobs

Corporations and foundations value a well-thought-out introduction/summary/abstract. You save the funder from having to extract your proposal's key points. In turn, this assists the funder in making a quick assessment on the appropriateness of your project for funding. In addition, many program officers are tasked with providing short summaries of potentially worthy projects for board review, and you will have saved them time and effort. Make it as easy as possible for funders to say yes to your request!

Short Introduction

In a proposal that is only three to five pages, it is probably not necessary for you to include a one-page executive summary but rather a few simple sentences in the very beginning of the body. Include the following information:

- Organization and project title
- Brief description of project's main goal or purpose
- Amount of request
- Type of grant requested

Sample Short Introduction

Building on the XYZ Foundation's efforts to reduce gang problems in cities across the U.S., YouthOne, Inc. requests $81,868 to help seed the **T**argeted **O**utreach **G**ang **P**revention **I**nitiative (TOGPI). TOGPI is a collaborative community effort to recruit a minimum of fifty thirteen- to nineteen-year-olds who are current gang members or have the propensity for gang involvement and provide them with social programs that specifically address factors contributing to gang involvement.

However you structure your introduction, make sure it is brief and clear. If you have done a good job defining the project *[see Part III, Define the Project],* this will be evident in your introduction.

Organizational Information and Credentials

No rule dictates the placement of your organization's biography. Some feel it's best to sell your project and the need for your project before discussing why your organization is qualified to carry out the plan you've described. Others recognize the importance of the organization's stability and credentials to the project at hand. Determining how to make your case decides where you place this description. Regardless of where you place this organizational résumé, its structure and components should be the same as described later in this section.

Within this section, do not inundate your reader with everything there is to know about your agency. In many cases, the funder specifies exactly what it wants to know. This section should not be more than two pages. Most of the time, a funder explicitly asks for the mission, history, and demographic description of your organization's clientele. Funders may also ask for qualifications of key staff members and how staff and board members are recruited and hired. Rarely, a funder asks for individual biographies of key staff members and employee salaries; while you should keep this type of information on file, your best bet is to reserve that information for the appendix.

In general, you should discuss the following:

- **Organizational history and mission:** How long has the agency existed? Why was the organization founded and what major community needs does your agency fill? What significant changes, expansions, and improvements have taken place over the years?
- **Clientele:** What are the demographics (age, sex, economic background) of the individuals your organization serves? How many people do you serve each day, each year? How do you recruit these individuals? Is there a membership fee?
- **Staff:** What is your organization's staff structure, from the top down? How do your staff meet the needs your agency sets out to address? What are the basic qualifications your staff members are required to have?
- **Board of directors:** How many members sit on your board? Is your board voluntary? How do board members affect the decision making within your organization? What essential functions do board members serve (fundraising, consultation)?
- **Major accomplishments in recent years and future goals:** What has your organization done in the past two to three years that is especially impressive? For example, did you push yourself to meet challenging strategic plan goals? Have you successfully expanded your organization's scope? How will you continuously improve over the next few years?
- **Organization's capacity to carry out proposed project:** How are your staff members and organization as a whole trained to carry out this type of initiative? Have you been successful carrying out similar projects in the past?

Because of the type of information you must include in this section, you can see the importance of good record keeping. The best way to demonstrate your organization's capacity to implement a new project is to discuss successful past projects.

Although the capacity topic is its own separate piece of the organization's biography, you should not hesitate to mention the current project in each section, if relevant. For example, when discussing basic staff qualifications, you may briefly mention specific staff training that is especially relevant to the current project. If you have board members who are experts in your project's subject area, mention it.

If your organization has a document, such as a flier or brochure, that provides an overview of your organization, you should reference this in the body of the proposal and include the document as an attachment.

Sample Organizational Information

History and Mission

For ninety-one years, YouthOne has been serving the young people of Ourcity. The organization began as a recreational facility with an open-door policy, serving primarily males. In response to declining social conditions, the organization has grown from its initial youth membership of about 500 to more than 3,000 youth annually with an average of 300 site visits per day. YouthOne's purpose has expanded from merely providing boys with a gymnasium to providing boys and girls, ages five to nineteen, with a myriad of services in the following five areas: education and college readiness, recreation and health, leadership, the arts, and career development. YouthOne's mission is to help all youth of Ourcity lead safe, healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives.

As noted previously, the city suffers in terms of poor educational quality, violence, poverty, and crime. The more than twenty-five programs that operate at YouthOne help to fill the needs of youths living in these circumstances. All programs are broken down into age-appropriate categories: 5 to 8, 9 to 12, 13 to 15, and 16 to 19.

Clientele

All youth in Ourcity are welcome to join YouthOne; however, most come from the city's poorest neighborhoods. The following indicate the demographics of youth served:

- 40% female and 60% male
- 70% black, 20% white, 5% Hispanic, and 5% mixed or nonidentified
- 70% from families living in poverty
- 85% from single-parent households
- 60% performing below average in school

YouthOne actively recruits through the guidance counselors at each of the three city high schools and two middle schools, yet most members join through word of mouth. There is a $6 per year membership fee for all youth enrolled to cover costs of a membership card and enrollment paperwork.

Staff Structure

One program director oversees directors of all youth programs. There is a project director for each core program area. Individual project directors—five of whom are registered social workers—operate with a three- to five-person staff and dozens of volunteers. Consultants are also hired when necessary. The program director manages the gang prevention program in collaboration with noted gang expert John Johnson. YouthOne's five social workers will serve as counselors. Two outreach workers will be hired for the purpose of this project and have both worked as outreach workers for Johnson's programs in the past.

The program director reports to the executive director, who also oversees a development and grants administrator, finance director, public relations and marketing specialist, and administrative assistant.

> The fifteen-person board of directors, comprised of the executive director and community representatives and leaders, is broken down into three subcommittees. Collectively, the board contributes more than $30,000 in personal contributions and serves major fundraising and consultative functions.
>
> *Accomplishments and Capacity for Success*
>
> Two years ago, YouthOne set forth fifteen strategic goals, all of which have been met. Most impressive are the following: the increase in membership from 1,500 to 3,000 and the increase of female participation from 25 to 40 percent. Future goals include expanding the agency to a membership base of 4,000, with females comprising half of all members.
>
> In addition to having a track record of setting ambitious goals and meeting them, YouthOne has successfully carried out programs that are similar to those being implemented in TOGPI. Last year, thirty out of forty-five unemployed sixteen- to eighteen-year-olds were employed for a span of one year following a job-training program at the center. YouthOne places about fifteen volunteers per month in various community agencies and helps approximately 200 youth per year enter college or secure post–high school jobs. All of these components are part of TOGPI.

Statement of Need

Now that the funder has read your introduction and is interested in your organization and its project, you must clearly and succinctly describe the problem your project aims to ameliorate. However, indicating that there is a problem is not enough. You must demonstrate that you've done your homework and understand:

- Who is affected by the problem
- What factors contribute to the existence of the problem
- What can be done to ameliorate the problem based on known factors
- What your organization and other agencies are doing currently to address the problem and what remains to be done

Your proposal's "statement of need" is developed through a careful *needs assessment*. You may think that this type of needs assessment lends itself to detrimental social ills or life-threatening conditions. This is not the case. The need you describe must simply correspond to the type of funding you seek, whether it's capital funds for building renovation, program funds for a crime-prevention initiative, or start-up funds for a community theater group. And the "problem" you identify may range from mild (lack of theater opportunities) to severe (high rate of teen gang involvement). The key is to identify funders who are interested in the problems you aim to address and who fund the type of project you propose, ranging from program development to capital renovations *[see Part IV for ways to determine the best matches for your project]*. Just because the project is worthy from your perspective, do not assume all funders will share your passion. The need must fit closely with the funder's interests and inclination. *[Suggestions for adapting your statement of need for various types of proposals are included at the end of this discussion.]*

Regardless of the type of grant you seek, your statement of need should lead your reader down the same logical path you followed while arriving at your plan of action. To help your proposal's readers come to your solution naturally, your statement of need should follow these steps:

1. Prove the problem exists.
2. Discuss the factors that contribute to the problem and measures that could be taken to ameliorate the problem.
3. Assess what measures are already being taken to address the problem and what remains to be done.

While writing your statement of need, avoid *circular logic*. Never say something like: "We need to build a children's hospital in the community because there is no children's hospital in the community." The hospital is the solution to a problem, not the problem. The problem, which follows the *because,* should describe something that negatively impacts a certain group of people. The key is the effect on individuals!

Do not let your project idea become the problem. In the preceding example, building the hospital should be the solution to a problem, but, instead, it poses itself as both the solution and the problem. Following the steps outlined in this section, you should be able to avoid this potential error.

Prove That the Problem Exists

To demonstrate the existence of a problem, you may begin with data from reliable sources:

- The Census Bureau
- Government documents
- Scholarly books and journals
- Newspapers (local and national)
- Experts (local and national)

One of the greatest resources is your local newspaper. Not only does the paper point to major issues plaguing your local community, but it also quotes a myriad of experts whom you can call on when writing your proposal. These experts can help you articulate the problem or point you to sources that strengthen your statement of need.

In general, statistics alone do not prove that you have a problem. You must explain how each piece of data you include is indicative of the problem you are trying to portray. For example, it is not enough to say that there are thirty-two gangs in Syracuse, New York, if the reader does not know the average number of gangs for medium-size cities in America. You must follow all statistics with an explanation of why they represent a problem. You may accomplish this in one of the following ways:

- **Putting the data in context:** Compare your data to that from other cities. You may wish to include pies charts, bar graphs, or other graphic indicators of need. Pure text gets old on the eyes, and graphic displays not only break up the text and provide variety but also are able to say more in less space.
- **Citing experts:** Quote an expert describing the problem you wish to demonstrate. Remember that the funders you approach will be interested in the type of issues you describe.
- **Showing past attention to the problem:** If efforts have been made to address what you define as a problem, mention it. Chances are, it's really a problem.

Furthermore, you must also show how the problem impacts your target population or others in the community. Are people losing jobs, getting sick, or dying because of the problem you've described? Let the reader know! One of the best ways to put your proposal in context is to include personal stories or anecdotes. Humanize the need and make it interesting to read. Statistics can get monotonous.

Individuals reviewing your proposal will often be familiar with your topic and can easily detect false or outdated information. Always make sure the information you provide is up-to-date and cite it. A simple footnote will do.

Identify the Causes and Possible Solutions

Most problems are not unique to your community, and chances are ideas exist about how these problems should be addressed. Your organization probably read expert opinions and studied programs in other communities when designing the current project or solution. Here, you should discuss the following:

- Causes of the problem
- Methods for addressing these causal factors

If gang involvement is a problem in your community, cite studies that indicate what factors lead to gang involvement. Factors may be poor family structure, lack of constructive extracurricular activities, trouble in school, and lack of employment opportunities for youth. Indicate whether these factors exist in your community and follow this with a discussion of how other communities have been successful in reducing the magnitude of this type of problem.

In a sense, you'll provide grantmakers the information they would need to develop a program of their own.

Assess How Other Groups Are Addressing the Problem and What Remains to Be Done

Now that you've established the reasons your problem exists and what can be done to address these issues, discuss what other organizations, groups, or individuals in your community are actually doing.

Many funders—especially local funders—are familiar with the work agencies are doing to address the problem you've described and may even fund some of these agencies' initiatives. For these reasons, you should be sure that the statements you make are 100 percent accurate and that you avoid using a critical or negative tone when discussing other organizations. The factors not being addressed demonstrate a clear need, which, if you've written the statement of need successfully, is what your proposed project addresses.

Funders, who want the biggest bang for their buck, might ask why you are not collaborating with like-minded organizations. If you do mention other organizations with similar missions, you may want to include a rationale behind your decision not to collaborate. You should probably indicate in your project methods how your program will complement—not duplicate—the services already being provided.

This section provides a perfect segue into your program methods. You have already identified what can be done to address the problem and what your organization and others are already doing. Now you must clearly state the unfulfilled needs that your program will address. *[Details about how your project addresses these needs are discussed in the "Project Methods" section later in this part.]*

Customize Your Statement of Need

Your statement of need follows the same basic format regardless of what type of project you wish to implement and what type of funding you seek. The method for articulating needs is ideal for new projects and programs. These can be referred to as *seed grants* (grants to "seed" a new program) or *pilot/demonstration projects* (to demonstrate the effectiveness of a particular method of alleviating a problem).

Some tips follow for customizing this needs statement for different proposal types, including those for capital grants, operating support, program continuation or development, research, or endowment.

Capital Grants

You would apply for capital funding if you wished to renovate or construct a building, purchase land, or make large equipment purchases. Capital adds value to your organization and benefits your organization beyond the length of a typical program period.

The statement of need is useful when describing problems faced by smaller target populations with specific needs that can be addressed (at least partially) with specific, often time-limited, projects. When writing a statement of need for a capital grant, you must focus more in terms of your organization as a whole. Your analysis differs depending on the type of capital grant you seek. Before writing, ask yourself these questions:

- Does the capital benefit a subset of the organization's clientele?
- Does this capital benefit the entire organization and all of its clientele?

If the grant benefits only a subset or your organization's clientele, your statement of need will be similar to the one described earlier. Let the funder know the following:

- The problems faced by this target population in your community
- What you do to serve this target population, how you are successful in meeting its needs, and the number of individuals you serve
- The (capital) need your organization faces in terms of better or more efficiently serving this clientele subset
- The exact purpose of the capital

Perhaps your organization meets a specific need in your community, but you are limited to the number of individuals you are able to serve due to space constraints. If you have people who are knocking on your door but can't be let in, let the funder know. You might estimate the number of additional individuals you could serve if your building were expanded. The key is to show the funder that you are effective with the capital you have currently but (a) that you would be either more effective with this funding or (b) that the consequences without additional funding would be so great that you would be unable to continue serving the target population as you do now.

If this capital funding would benefit your entire organization's clientele, your focus would be broader, and your statement of need should include the following:

- The basic community needs your organization meets
- The population you serve (the number of individuals and their demographics)
- The (capital) need your organization faces as it relates to the individuals you serve

A new heater is an example of a capital need. While this heater is not necessary to run a particular program or serve a specific group, it is important if you want people to come at all. The key here is demonstrating that you are a reputable organization and that failure to meet the need you describe will result in either poorer service to those you serve or no service at all. If your organization's strengths are represented well in the Organizational Credentials section of the proposal, you can keep the statement of need somewhat brief. The grantmaker will be assessing your organization more than a specific problem.

It is easy to use circular reasoning here. Remember to always relate the problem statement and statement of need back to the people you serve.

Operating Support

Operating support is difficult to obtain and comprises only a small percentage of corporate and foundation giving. Overall, the need for operating support comes down to the need for your organization in the community. You may demonstrate this as you would a proposal for a capital grant. Tell the grantmaker these things:

- The basic problems and needs faced by your community as they relate to the programs you offer
- How your organization meets those particular needs in ways that other agencies do not

When applying for operating support, your entire proposal essentially serves as a needs statement. The section on your organization focuses on what your organization does and who you serve, while your operating budget demonstrates your funding gaps. For these reasons, the needs statement should focus more closely on the problems and needs faced by your community as they relate to what your organization does.

Be absolutely certain the funders you approach have an interest in your type of organization and will provide general operating support.

Program Continuation or Development

Some agencies apply for grants to continue a worthy project that lacks future funding. Because funders are increasingly shying away from multiyear funding (it limits their future grantmaking and flexibility), some funders agree to one solid year of funding and leave the door open for a resubmission the next year. To resubmit the following year, you need to demonstrate continued need. Most foundations like to have their name associated with new projects. Rarely does a funder pick up where another left off.

Funders recognize that most successful projects take longer than a year to get up and running. Your statement of need should reiterate the existence of the problem, suggested improvement measures, and potential gaps. Because you convinced the funder of your worthiness when you secured the first year's grant, the statement of need should focus on making sure the current investment will achieve its intended purpose. For example, if a foundation funded the first year of planning and start-up activities (a *planning grant*) and is pleased with your progress, they should be amenable to funding a pilot project that would lead to implementation of what you've learned.

A *bridge grant* is a bit different. These grants are often used when an agency is in an emergency situation or needs temporary help to keep its doors open. Funders are often sympathetic when this is a new agency getting on its feet or when an unexpected funding shortfall occurs. They are less sympathetic when the agency has mismanaged its funds or has planned poorly. Funders close to the agency are most likely to provide bridge grants.

Research

The statement of need for a research proposal follows the same steps as other types of grants. When establishing need, you must still identify a problem, or opportunity, to be addressed. The idea of circular logic applies here: Your need for research should not be based on the desire to know something but on the desire to know something that will solve a problem or improve a situation for a group of individuals. (An exception is when you are requesting funding for *basic research,* fundamental research that advances knowledge of a particular field.)

Components of the needs statement include the following:

- A problem that needs to be solved
- Research that has already been conducted
- The knowledge gap that remains to be filled

Because your statement of need is based on the research of others, be sure to include a bibliography in your appendix.

You then link your statement of need to your proposed research (methods section) with a hypothesis, indicating what you intend to test and the results you predict will come of the research.

Endowment

While many corporations and foundations do not consider requests for endowment, these funds are vital to the long-term stability of an organization. *Endowments* are permanent funds invested by the organization that produce an income to be used for annual needs or other purposes. Endowments can be general (for example, unrestricted) or dedicated (restricted) to a certain purpose (for example, equipment maintenance).

A statement of need for an endowment typically outlines the need for long-term stability. An endowment provides a benefit in perpetuity. Funders interested in building your organization's future capacity and ensuring ongoing financial support for your mission and programs will likely be interested in endowment.

Corporations generally do not support endowments, and few foundations allow this category of support. This is largely due to the more significant costs associated with endowment (versus an outright grant), the funder's feeling that they are better investors of their funds than grantees, and the instability of the corporate world. Endowments are also, in general, restricted funds; their use is restricted to a certain purpose. Many corporations and foundations want more flexibility in their giving so they can respond to needs as they arise.

Adapt the Statement of Need for Local or Broader Projects

The needs statement can be adapted to fit either local projects or those with a broader focus (regional/national/international). Be sure that your funding source funds a project with your proposed geographic focus and potential impact.

Local Projects

When working on a local project, follow these guidelines:

- Focus on a specific group of individuals in a particular locale.
- Provide a more localized benefit.
- Appeal only to those funders who care about benefiting this locale.

A statement of need for local projects often references national statistics and trends but should use these broader facts only as a context for or as a link to a local rationale. You need to provide clear evidence that a local need exists. It's not enough to say a problem is proven to exist in the United States, for example, without also proving its relevance to your community.

Broader Projects

When working on a broader project, follow these guidelines:

- Use local data as an example of a need that exists more broadly.
- Provide a regional, national, or international benefit.
- Appeal to a greater number of funding sources.

Needs statements for broader projects are more difficult to construct because you must provide more statistics to make your case. In addition, most national project funders want to know how you will share what you have learned for broader impact.

Break up your statement of need so it's easy to follow and concise. You can use secondary subject heads to let the reader know exactly what you're trying to convey.

Sample Statement of Need

Ourcity, New York, is plagued by a growing number of gangs and gang-related crime, ranging from misdemeanors to assault with weapons and homicide, and the effects of these problems are reaching into the city's neighborhoods and schools. Fortunately, factors contributing to the problem can be addressed with strategic programs.

Evidence of the Problem

According to Ourcity's chief of police, Rob Roberts, the number of gangs in Ourcity has increased from twenty to thirty-five in the past five years—a growth that contradicts the national trend of steadily decreasing gang presence. According to a 1998 study by the Department of Justice, the average number of gangs for a city of Ourcity's size is tweny-one, which is fourteen fewer than the current number in Ourcity.

Consequences of gang involvement have also been detrimental. According to the police department, there has been a 200 percent increase in homicide—resulting in a record high of thirty-six homicides last year—and a 180 percent increase in overall crime during the five-year period. Based on a three-year study conducted by an Ivy League University doctoral candidate, 90 percent of the increase in crime is attributable to the increase in youth gangs (see appendix for summary of report). The university estimates a twofold growth in the next two years if nothing is done to prevent the problem.

The effects of youth gang membership have also matriculated into the school system. Findings from a recent survey conducted by Ivy League University in Ourcity's three high schools and two middle schools indicate that 76 percent of students in the high school and 53 percent of students in the middle school know a gang member personally, and 60 percent of students regularly feel threatened by such individuals at school. Such data, in combination with police records, reveal that most gang members in Ourcity are between the ages of fifteen and nineteen, with the onset of gang involvement beginning between the ages of eleven and thirteen. An estimated 70 percent of gang members are black, 20 percent are Hispanic, and 10 percent are white. Eighty-five to 90 percent are males.

Factors Contributing to the Problem

Gang expert John Johnson, quoted in Ourcity's local newspaper, attributes the increase of gang involvement to teen idleness, resulting from the lack of participation in after-school programs and low-skill jobs available to youth in the city, in addition to other common factors associated with gang involvement, including poor family life, poor performance in schools, low self-esteem, and poverty.

The school district estimates that only 15 percent of the student body participates in after-school activities, including sports and student government, compared to the 30 percent participation rate three years ago. And most of the students who participate are middle-class white students—not individuals at high risk for gang involvement.

Another indicator of youth idleness is youth unemployment. Twenty-eight percent of sixteen- to nineteen-year-olds in the city are unemployed, according to the state's Department of Labor, compared to the national average of 16 percent (National Bureau of Labor Statistics, Feb. 2002). This trend seems to matriculate into adulthood, as 7 percent of individuals over sixteen are unemployed, compared to the state average of 4.3 percent, according to the 2000 Census.

Other factors contributing to gang involvement are also present in Ourcity. In terms of education, Ourcity's youth are far below the state averages for English and math, and the number of students passing the Regent's exam is one-half the state average, according to the Department of Education. Furthermore, the city's dropout rate is 5.8, compared to the national dropout rate of 4.5 in 2001, according to Congressional Information Services.

In Ourcity, 26 percent of families live in poverty (Census 2000) compared to the national average of 11.8 percent, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. Furthermore, as many as 44 percent of the city's children live in single-parent homes, compared to the national average of 26 percent in 2001, according to the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics.

What's Being Done and Remaining Needs to Be Filled

Interviewing hundreds of youth gang members, expert John Johnson has found that many turn to gangs for family structure, recreation, and economic opportunity—the very needs not being filled by local social service agencies.

Just recently, Ourcity's Community Foundation brought several youth agencies to the table to discuss the issue. Currently, there are no specific gang prevention initiatives being conducted at these agencies. The police department and probation officers, who make house visits to youth on probation, conduct the only gang-specific activities in Ourcity. Some court-appointed counselors recommend social programs to such teens, but there is no established process for placing youth into needed social programs.

Overall, there are ten youth-serving agencies in the city serving an estimated 10,000 youth, 3,000 of whom are members of YouthOne. However, because all agencies serve individuals who join voluntarily, most gang-prone youth are not participating in such programs. Many youth agencies offer programs that would benefit gang-oriented youth. For example, the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) places hundreds of youth per year into part-time jobs and helps them prepare résumés, but most of the youth served by YEI are middle class and white.

Overall, Ourcity offers comprehensive programs that would meet the needs of potential youth-gang members. However, the youth most in need of this programming are not participating, and there are currently no initiatives in place to actively recruit these individuals. Appropriate programs for "at-risk" youth, according to gang experts and indicated by statistics, would be those providing extracurricular options, job-skills training, mentoring, and tutoring to help teens become productive and self-sufficient so they do not need to turn to gangs for support. It is through TOGPI that YouthOne hopes to provide these very services to youth between the ages of thirteen and nineteen.

ANALYSIS: A well-written statement of need should elicit feeling in the reader. However, it is wise not to overdue the emotional aspect of this part of your proposal. The funder may feel manipulated rather than convinced.

Sharing the Project Results

As funding sources struggle to do more with less, projects that can be replicated or can help increase broader understanding of a particular problem are very attractive. *Demonstration or pilot projects* allow a funder to test various solutions on a manageable scale. Usually funders expect that the project results will be disseminated more broadly so the larger community can learn from its successes and failures. Be certain that your organization has both the desire and capacity to help advance a larger agenda. *[See "Project Methods" later in this part for more information on disseminating results.]*

Project Methods

This section is the meat and potatoes of your proposal and is often subjected to the greatest amount of scrutiny. If your reader has made it this far, he is likely convinced your project has merit; now you must clearly articulate a project that effectively meets the need you've discussed. The project methods section should include the following:

- **Goals and Objectives:** Provides a clear link between the statement of need and your proposed project.
- **Project Description:** Describes how you will meet your goals and objectives, including activities.
- **Timeline:** Demonstrates a concrete plan for implementing each part of the project.
- **Evaluation:** Describes how you will evaluate whether you've met your outcome objectives; demonstrates that you created the project with the end in mind.

Goals and Objectives

Your *goals* and *objectives* link your statement of need to the project activities and answer the following question: What will be the effect of our program on the problem(s) just described?

Those who evaluate the project should help write the goals and objectives.

Goals

Some grant seekers have difficulty differentiating between a *goal* and an *objective*. The goal describes the general impact you hope to have on the problem you have defined, without necessarily indicating the magnitude. If a small youth agency identifies a high rate of teen gang involvement within its community, this agency's goal may be to reduce the number of teenagers involved in street gangs within its city's limits.

Notice, the goal does not specify the magnitude of this reduction, the time frame for achieving the goal, or the age range of the teenagers targeted. This is okay because the goal indicates a general direction of impact.

Despite the vague nature of the preceding goal, notice that it is a realistic goal for a community agency. An unrealistic goal for a small nonprofit would be to reduce the number of teenagers involved in gangs in the United States. This type of goal must be reserved for national organizations with a broad range of impact, such as the U.S. Department of Justice. In other words, make sure that your goal is within your organization's general scope of influence.

Objectives

Unlike goals, objectives are measurable steps toward your ultimate goal. They are specific and should include the following information:

- Who is affected
- How much that group is affected in measurable terms
- During what time period this effect or change will occur

Your objectives may be written in terms of factors that contribute to the problem you've described. Considering the gang involvement example, you would not expect to reduce gang involvement without addressing factors that contribute to that problem, such as youth idleness. For example, an objective may deal with reducing youth idleness, in turn reducing the number of youth in gangs.

Make sure that all of your objectives relate back to your problem statement. The reader should not have to question why you've written your objectives as you have.

Your objectives also differ depending on whether you have measurements on which to base future benchmarks. For example, if the project you seek to fund is ongoing, you may discuss past outcomes and indicate the degree to which you hope to improve upon these outcomes.

If this is a new program and you have accurate baseline data demonstrating the problem in your target group, you should base your outcome objectives on this information. For example, if you have data on school attendance for each teenager in your gang prevention program, you may base program objectives on desired future attendance. If average attendance is three days per school week before the program's onset, your objective may be to increase the average daily attendance to four days per week by the end of the program.

If you do not have such measurements, you may collect this information or conduct a test before writing the proposal so that you do have benchmarks against which to base future objectives. However, if you are without the resources to do so, you may base your objectives on what you already know about the problem. For example, if your target population is selected based on characteristics such as unemployment, a good indicator of program success is having those individuals leave the program with a job. The number leaving with a job should be higher than the assumed number of individuals that came with a job.

The most challenging part of writing an objective is determining the appropriate or feasible magnitude of effect. The Grantsmanship Center suggests researching similar programs that have been successful and basing benchmarks on them. If no similar programs exist, the center suggests setting objectives based on statistical significance—the minimum degree of change that could not have happened by chance.

Objective Type	Description	Example	Comments
Awareness	A percentage of your target population will become aware or have an increased awareness of an issue, idea, or trend. What will the target group learn?	80% of 13- to 19-year-olds (the target population) involved in the program will convey a clear understanding of alternatives to street life by the end of the six-month program period as demonstrated by surveys.	Remember, lack of extracurricular activities was cited in your statement of need as one of the factors contributing to gang involvement. It is perfectly acceptable for your outcome objectives to involve a change in these factors. In fact, they should!
Attitude	A percentage of your target population will have a certain attitude or hold certain beliefs.	90% of targeted youth will demonstrate a clear confidence in their abilities to succeed following the six-month program.	Lack of self-confidence also correlated with gang involvement.
Behavior	A specific action or behavior will occur.	75% of the 100 targeted youth will be engaged in alternative activities and in a safe environment for at least three months following the completion of the six-month program.	This objective, like others, is based on the idea that a lack of extracurricular activities contributes to youth-gang involvement.
Product	Something is produced as a result of the project.	Each member of the target population will create a log of their program experiences by the end of the six-month program.	This objective provides tangible measurements.

Objective Type	Description	Example	Comments
Performance	The target population will obtain a level of proficiency or accomplish something as a result of project.	75% of 100 at-risk youth recruited into gang prevention program will improve their grades in school and will be employed or involved in community service following program completion and continuing for at least three months.	These objectives are aimed at addressing factors that may contribute to gang involvement (lack of employment opportunities and low grades in school).
Program quality	Focuses on the program's success or usefulness from the perspective of a member of the target population or third-party source.	75% of recruited teens enjoy the program.	You must carefully assess how these objectives will be measured, as they are largely subjective. Try to find effective ways to quantify these types of objectives.

If you have no idea what would indicate success, run your objectives by an expert or even someone at the funding agency. Chances are they've seen many proposals on similar topics.

Types of Objectives

Now that you understand how to frame your objectives, it's important to understand the different types. Objectives must relate to what they are intended to measure. Types of objectives include, but are not limited to, the following.

Outcome and Implementation Objectives

The examples given in the preceding table are *outcome objectives,* which deal with program impact. On the other hand, *implementation objectives,* often referred to as *process objectives,* are those that discuss what you plan to do—discussions that should be reserved for your section on project activities. Your outcome objectives are the "ends," while your project activities are simply a vehicle to reach those ends.

Because objectives indicate an effect's magnitude, begin your objective statements with verbs that show the direction of change you hope to achieve (for example, "To increase" or "To reduce").

Like in other parts of the proposal, explain your objectives and remind readers how they relate to the problem, if it's not obvious. You can make your objectives more understandable if you arrange them in a hierarchy. Your overall goal is to reduce gang involvement, so state that first. This is followed by a series of objectives, which you should arrange in a logical and understandable order, including explanations for each, if necessary.

Using a hierarchy, goals and objectives flow naturally. Consider the following:

> *Based on the city's youth-gang problem, our long-term goal is to reduce the number of youth-gang members in our community. Understanding that idle time is a major factor contributing to youth involvement in gangs, we will achieve our goal by maintaining an average of 80 of the 100 at-risk teens we've recruited off the streets each day for the full program period of six months. With a lack of jobs being a major factor contributing to youth idleness, we will help 80 percent of the 100 teens secure after-school jobs by the end of the six-month period. They will maintain those jobs for three months beyond program completion.*

You may also include your objectives in bulleted form, as shown in the sample goals and objectives. Never list objectives without some explanation!

Grantmakers evaluate the success of your program based on whether you have met these outcome objectives, and you are responsible for evaluating your success *[discussed in the "Evaluation" section later in this part].*

You may also include how the objective will be measured by saying something like, "as indicated by a proficiency test." However, evaluative measures are discussed in the "Evaluation" section and don't need to be included within the objective. It is only important for the reader to know that your objectives are, in fact, measurable.

Sample Goals and Objectives

In the long-term, it is YouthOne's goal that TOGPI will reduce youth-gang involvement and gang-related crimes in Ourcity. Immediate outcomes of TOGPI will help YouthOne achieve this goal if the program is sustained over a series of years. Specific outcome objectives for the pilot run of this project are intended to address the very factors that contribute to gang involvement and include the following:

- To maintain an average 80% attendance rate in targeted youth for all program-related activities for the duration of the program, which is six months.
- To decrease idleness in targeted youth as indicated by
  - 90% of targeted youth securing jobs, volunteering, or joining an extracurricular activity before the end of the program period
  - an increase in average school attendance from the estimated three days per week (estimated average for at-risk youth in Ourcity) to five days per week in targeted youth
- To maintain lower levels of youth idleness for three months following the program's completion, as indicated by 80% of targeted youth sustaining involvement in extracurricular activities.
- To increase youths' potential to lead productive lives off the street, as indicated by
  - 90% of youth writing and submitting a résumé and cover letter for a job or volunteer position
  - 80% of targeted youth improving their GPA
- To eradicate criminal activity in recruited youth during program period and the following three months as indicated by police reports.

ANALYSIS: This sample includes both behavioral objectives and product objectives.

Project Description

This part of the proposal is where you describe how you are going to meet your goals and objectives. In this section, detail is the key. You want to let the funder know you've thought everything through to date. Your plan must address several parts, but these pieces do not need to be discussed in the order provided. As long as you touch on the following topics within your project description, you are on the right track:

- Process for project development
- Target population
- Project activities
- Required equipment, supplies, and materials
- Project staff
- Project supervision and management
- Support and collaboration
- Project's ability to be replicated

Project Development

Let the funder know how you moved from goals and objectives to your actual project, just as you let the funder know how you moved from the needs statement to your goals and objectives. You do not need to go into much detail regarding development; however, you should discuss how you came up with the idea so the funder understands why the project will work. If your organization designed the program, let the funder know these things:

- If it's based on other successful programs
- Whether you relied on expert opinions
- What type of feedback you received on your plan

If your project duplicates a project implemented by another organization, discuss why you chose to copy the idea. This should include a discussion of the other agency's successes. If you have a good relationship with that organization, let the funder know—especially if individuals from that agency are willing to help you through the pilot run. The funder may also want to know why you chose not to partner with that organization.

Also be explicit about whether this is the first time the project will be implemented at your site; this should already be clear at this point. If the project is a continuation, reiterate some of your past successes—which you should have discussed under goals and objectives—as reasons for continuing with the project.

Most funders want to know that the program's potential beneficiaries have been involved in its development. The success of the program likely depends on participant buy-in; their involvement in the planning process increases their investment. Describe the ways you consulted with these beneficiaries: discussions, focus groups, or meetings with group leaders.

Target Population

Under the project plan, you must discuss who will benefit from this project. Your target population should be the same group, or a subset of that group, described in your statement of need. Describe the following:

- Your target population's demographics
- Your method for recruiting individuals into your program, if applicable (Are they already a member or do you need to recruit individuals from other agencies or the community?)
- The target population's incentive for following through with the program, if applicable
- How the target population will benefit from the project

If your project will result in a certification for those involved or open the door to additional opportunities, even within your organization, let the funder know. Even with a well-defined project, a clear target population, and a seemingly effective program, you need to communicate how you plan to keep members engaged. You may discuss this further when you describe your project activities.

Funders know from experience that recruitment efforts can make or break a project. If your recruitment plans rely significantly on other organizations, assure the funder that the organization will be successful. You can do this in the Organizational Credentials, Target Population, or Project Activities section.

Project Activities

Now that the funder knows you have designed your project with successful outcomes and a clear target population in mind, you must tell the funder what you will actually do. You should include a sequence of detailed activities. Don't just list them. Discuss the following:

- Who is responsible for implementing each activity
- Who benefits from each activity, only if you are working with a more diverse target population (a wide age range or both sexes, for examples)
- Where, when, and for how long each activity will occur
- How you will keep members engaged, if relevant (incentives)
- The sequence of events
- How each component helps you meet the goals and objectives described previously or how each activity relates to the problems and needs your program aims to address

If you are collaborating with other agencies, be especially clear which agency will implement each activity and who will be responsible for supervising.

Never include a bulleted list of activities without an explanation. It may not be clear to the funder how each part of your project helps you meet your goals and objectives.

Purchases

Let the funder know what you need to purchase for your project: equipment, supplies, materials, or capital. Think of *equipment* as items that retain their value beyond the duration of the project and that do not *depreciate* (decline in value) after each use. Think of office equipment such as tables, chairs, bookshelves, and printers, all of which are considered equipment, not only because they maintain their value over time but also because of their costs. Many organizations set a cost threshold over which a good would be considered equipment rather than supplies. Consider a costly computer program; in most cases, this is included in the equipment category.

Equipment belongs to a category called capital. *Capital* is generally considered a long-term or fixed asset that is durable and whose life extends beyond one year. Capital assets include land, buildings, and equipment—items that add to your organization's overall value. Funders may be reluctant to contribute money to this type of purchase; therefore, you must be sure to carefully research grantmakers before asking for funds that cover such purchases.

Supplies, on the other hand, are less expensive and have a shorter life span. These things will probably last only through the duration of your project or not far beyond. Examples of supplies include pens, paper, pencils, and paint. *Materials,* like supplies, are lower in price than equipment; unlike supplies, they last much longer. Materials include paintbrushes, CD/Rs, floppy disks, and binder clips. Distinctions among these categories are not as important here as in the budget. *[For this reason, the topic is reconsidered further in the "Budget" section of this part.]*

Within this section of your proposal, be clear on how each purchased item or good will be used. And, if you are required to purchase a particularly pricey item, be sure to indicate why this item is integral to your project and whether you shopped around to get the lowest price. Some funders have purchasing policies you must follow. *[You have another chance to justify expenses within your budget narrative, which is discussed in the "Budget Narrative" section.]*

Staff

Your discussion of those implementing and managing the project should be thorough, as these individuals will be responsible for the project's success or failure. Indicate whether you will rely on your own full- or part-time staff, hire consultants, or recruit volunteers. Discuss what your organization expects from these individuals in terms of qualifications, skills, and time commitment.

If your own staff will implement the project, discuss their relevant experience, education, and/or training. You may direct the funder to a full résumé or more detailed biography, which should be included in your proposal's appendix.

If you have not yet recruited staff or have not hired a consultant, discuss the criteria you'll use when hiring them. What is the minimal level of experience, education, or training you will require? If relevant, what qualities will you look for in volunteers? Will you screen them; will there be an interview and training process? If training and screening are involved, who will be responsible for carrying out these tasks? Let the funder know.

Project Management

Here you discuss how you will ensure that the project runs according to timeline and budget and dictate who will guarantee that evaluative components are implemented throughout the project's course. Indicate who will oversee the entire project and the staff-management hierarchy that will exist throughout.

It is especially important to discuss project management if several agencies are collaborating on a single project. Most likely, the project manager will come from the grant-seeking organization. Just make clear who is responsible and ensure the agencies you collaborate with are fiscally and programmatically sound. Their success and failure will quickly become a reflection on your organization.

Support and Collaboration

Project support comes in many forms, and many funders like to give money to projects that already have supporters on board.

Support may be in the form of collaboration. Collaborations may be as simple as resource sharing—using another organization's equipment or supplies—or as complex as involving members from multiple organizations to participate in the same program while utilizing resources from various agencies.

Money also equals support. Discuss any organizations, board members, or community members who have already agreed to fund your project. Keep this section brief because this type of support will be reiterated within the budget section.

Finally, indicate nonmonetary support from experts, government agencies, and/or your target population. If the mayor and the chief of police support your initiative, have each write a letter; reference and include the letter in the appendix. Similarly, it may be beneficial to include testimonials from individuals within your target population or community.

Replication

In a few sentences, indicate whether this will be an ongoing project or whether you plan to disseminate information about your project so it may be replicated by other organizations. Some funders require you to include a discussion on project duplication and replication. Others do not.

Sample Project Description

TOGPI is designed to achieve the outcomes just described. It is a collaborative project that relies on direct outreach and referrals to solicit gang members and gang-prone youth, who are then partnered with professional counselors to determine teens' needs as these needs relate to gang life. Youth are then placed into programs such as tutoring, job training, and mentoring, allowing them to become productive and contributing members of society.

Project Development

YouthOne developed this program in partnership with gang expert John Johnson, who has been successfully implementing gang prevention and intervention programs in cities across the country for the past decade. While focusing specifically on the needs of Ourcity, Johnson and YouthOne have based their strategies on the "Comprehensive Gang Model" developed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Institute for Intergovernmental Research. From this model, YouthOne will utilize the following strategies developed as a result of research into sixty-five gang-prone cities across America: community mobilization, provision of opportunities (development of training, education, and employment programs for youth), social intervention (outreach), and suppression (close monitoring by use of various social controls). Each strategy will be discussed where relevant.

Target Population

Based on the average age of Ourcity's gang members, the fifty youth recruited for TOGPI will be between the ages of thirteen and nineteen—either current gang members or those demonstrating specific risk factors for gang involvement.

Recruitment will be based on both referrals and outreach. Current gang members will be referred to YouthOne by the police department, school district, and the department of probation. In addition, two outreach workers familiar with the city streets and who are able to relate to youth in terms of dress style and overall appearance will talk to youth and encourage program participation. It is this "social intervention" strategy that is recommended by the OJJDP and that Johnson has successfully implemented in the past.

Project Activities

After youth are recruited, letters will be sent to teens' parents informing them of the project. A follow-up call will be made one week later.

Teens will be paired with one of five youth counselors and required to meet with these counselors for at least one hour per week. In the initial meeting, counselors will identify major needs in youth and will closely monitor their improvement over the course of the program. The counselor and youth will then develop a program schedule for youth, involving all of the following:

- Tutoring and homework help
- Mentoring with local college student
- Employment-preparedness training
- Volunteering
- Youth choice (art, recreation, and so on)

Each activity will take place for two hours per week.

For tutoring and homework help, two math teachers, two English teachers, and one science teacher have volunteered to donate Monday afternoons to teens needing homework help. A group of fifteen tutors from the local college will also be available to work one-on-one with youth, and both volunteers and teachers are available to make additional appointments throughout the week.

For mentoring, youth will meet with college mentors for two hours per week. Specific activities will be determined by the mentor and the student and may include visits to Ivy League University, the library, or even the mall. The purpose is one-on-one interaction with an adult role model.

The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) has agreed to provide job-skills training. Youth will be trained in skills that have been identified as necessary for the working world, including data analysis, teamwork, writing, typing, and more. As part of this training, youth will develop a résumé and submit it to one of the following businesses or organizations: Ourcity Groceries, Ourcity Dry Cleaning, Ourcity Gas Station, Ourcity Burger, and the Ourcity Convenience Store One. Youth who are not yet old enough to work will submit their résumés to local nonprofit organizations, including Ourcity YMCA, the local library, YEI, and others. Each business and nonprofit is familiar with the program and has agreed to hire two teens who graduate from TOGPI. Youth old enough to begin applying to college will work with YEI's college counselor to submit college applications.

Each youth will volunteer for two hours per week at one of the nonprofits listed above. Teens will also be encouraged to explore a variety of extracurricular options in the hope that they will continue to pursue these activities after completion of the program, whether they do so at YouthOne or at their own high school.

Following the completion of the six-month program is a graduation ceremony where teens will be awarded a plaque and a $200 voucher to be used toward college books or school supplies.

All activities are designed to boost self-esteem and provide youth with alternatives to street life. Following the six-month period, gang-member youth will continue to be monitored by the Police Department, probation officers, and the school, while the school district and their parents will monitor nongang youth.

Purchases

Supplies and materials needed for the project include awards/incentives for youth to participate in the program (vouchers and plaques), supplies to be used by youth during program activities (pens, pencils, and paper), and floppy disks and CD/Rs for recording and saving computer work. The cost of these purchases is outlined in more detail in the budget.

Project Staff

There are various groups of individuals working with teens in this program, including YouthOne counselors, the city's schoolteachers, the Police Department, employees from YEI, volunteers, and mentors.

Schoolteachers and police officers are certified by independent agencies and are assumed to be qualified for their positions in this program. All youth counselors have at minimum a bachelor's degree in social work and three years' experience in youth development. Volunteers and mentors are all enrolled in a community service course at Ivy League University. Because students are receiving both credits and a grade, they are expected to perform; YouthOne will report on their performance. Furthermore, each mentor and volunteer will be required to submit a résumé and application, which will be accepted only if the student has prior experience working with youth. YouthOne's program director will provide an orientation on the organization and how to address the problems of inner-city teens before the program begins.

Résumés of all individuals involved are available upon request.

Project Management

Larry Lincoln will serve as program director for TOGPI, working closely with personnel from Ivy League University, the Police Department, the school district, local business, nonprofits, and counselors to ensure that the project runs smoothly. Mr. Lincoln will be responsible for implementation of the project, including oversight of the budget and evaluation processes. He will also direct the project staff and John Johnson, consultant.

Support and Collaboration

As discussed above, this project is a community effort with collaborations involving the following: the Ourcity School District, Ourcity Police Department, Ourcity Department of Probation, local business, Ivy League University, local nonprofits, and parents.

Replication

After completion of the project and its subsequent evaluation, the results will be shared with XYZ Foundation for further dissemination to interested nonprofits. YouthOne also plans to present project findings at the annual Youth Care conference in July 20XX.

Timeline

The timeline tells the funder when your organization plans to accomplish each item you've proposed, from hiring staff and purchasing equipment to evaluating the project's success. A timeline is essentially a series of *process* or *implementation objectives:* what you intend to do and when. It attaches a date to all the activities described in the project plan:

- Hiring staff
- Purchasing equipment and supplies
- Recruiting the target population
- Implementing the project's core activities
- Evaluating the project's success

A portion of the timeline for YouthOne's gang prevention program is shown in the accompanying figure and includes dates on which various parts of the project will be implemented. A comprehensive timeline is included with the proposal located in Appendix A.

Sample Timeline

Date	Task to Be Accomplished
January 15, 2005	All program staff, including outreach workers, will be hired, and all project volunteers will be recruited.
February 15, 2005	All fifty youth will be recruited.
March 1, 2005	Programmatic activities begin, including tutoring and mentoring.
September 15, 2005	Mid-project evaluations sent to XYZ Foundation. These include outcomes for first six months of program.
December 22, 2005	Outcomes for last three months of program sent to XYZ Foundation.

Set realistic deadlines. Certain funders request mid-project progress reports. In most cases, however, you cannot report on outcomes because the project is not completed; you can, however, report on how successfully you've carried out your process objectives as set by the timeline. Have you recruited all your staff? Have you met your membership objective? Are you on track for implementing all of your project's activities? *[This is discussed more in depth in the next section.]*

Evaluation

Evaluation relates to the goals and objectives you established before project implementation. With increasingly tight budgets, funders want to know their dollars are not being wasted. This can only be proven when organizations are committed to evaluating their progress and outcomes.

In this section, you should discuss the following:

- Your evaluation and reporting timeline
- What questions you will ask
- How you will ensure that your evaluation is objective

Evaluation and Reporting Timeline

Most funders require you to report on how you've met your outcome goals and objectives. Many also expect mid-project reports in addition to outcome evaluations. Indicate the point in your project's timeline at which you will conduct each type of assessment. The timing of mid-project evaluations will partially dictate the types of questions you ask.

Evaluation Questions

Clearly, the evaluation questions you ask in the middle of a project are different than those you ask at its completion. Mid-project questions simply ask, "Are we on track?" The timeline you've included in the proposal indicates when each activity will be conducted and by what point you wish to have completed each stage. For the example gang prevention program timeline, staff is to be hired by January 15, youth are to be recruited by February 15, and tutoring programs are to begin by March 1. If you send a report in the middle of March, you would report on those activities in the timeline that were slated to occur before March 15. Based on the example, you would ask these questions:

- Did we recruit the number and quality of staff members we'd intended?
- Did we recruit all fifty youth by February 15?

- Have tutoring programs begun with recruited youth?
- If tutoring has begun, what is the youth participation rate? Have their teachers reported an increase in the number of homework assignments they turn in?

This last set of questions indicates whether your organization was on track to meet its outcome objectives. The first three questions indicate whether process objectives are being met.

When conducting evaluative research to determine whether you have met your outcome objectives, you would ask questions that reveal whether the objectives you set initially have been met.

As indicated previously, outcome objectives include both impact and quality assessments. Therefore, you should also include any self-reports:

- Whether participants liked the program
- Whether participants feel the program was effective

In the example provided, you may also want to get feedback from other credible sources such as teachers, employers, or police officers.

Evaluation Methods

Indicate how you will measure the program's success. Again, the measurement tool depends on the objective.

For process objectives, simple observation will suffice. It does not take a genius to determine whether you've recruited the correct number of youth or hired the right number of staff members.

Use different methods for each type of outcome objective. The following explains each type of objective and the evaluation methods:

- **Awareness objectives:** If your program or project was intended to teach or increase awareness, you may evaluate the degree to which you met your objectives by distributing a survey, by testing, or by interviewing your target population. Describe what types of questions you will ask, who will create the test or survey, and how the scores will be calculated. Whether your organization or an outside contractor conducts this type of assessment, it's best to have an objective party watch over the process.
- **Attitude objectives:** Attitude objectives should be assessed in a similar way.
- **Behavior objectives:** If your program is intended to change or influence behavior, you can measure success various ways, three of which are addressed:

- Individuals whose behavior you intended to change may report a change in behavior via survey or interview. *Self-reporting* (an individual "reports" or gives information about their own experience) is a legitimate method but may not be as accurate as others.
- You may monitor changes in behavior from feedback given by those close to individuals in the target population. For example, if your program intends to increase youth attendance in schools, you may need to work with the schools to obtain attendance records. If you use this form of evaluation, indicate in your proposal who will be responsible for relaying the information and how you will ensure that you receive the information in a timely manner.
- Someone in your organization may observe and report changes in behavior directly. For example, if your objective is to maintain a 75 percent attendance rate, you must observe and record attendance. Indicate the method and who will record attendance.

- **Product:** Assessing whether a good was produced, and in what amount, is simple. Just report it.
- **Performance:** Performance is similar to a behavioral objective and may be evaluated in all the same ways. In addition, because performance objectives typically involve a certification, evaluating this objective may simply involve keeping track of those who become certified. When a certification is involved, a third-party source is probably already evaluating the individual; if not, inform readers of the certification criteria and evaluation.
- **Program quality:** Surveying or interviewing individuals involved with the program is one way to evaluate program quality. However, if an interview is conducted, a third-party source must be used. Without anonymity, assessments of program quality are biased. Individuals surveyed may include members outside the target population.

Regardless of your objective, tell the funder who is in charge of the evaluation, the method you will use, and the questions you will ask.

Ensuring Objectivity

Evaluation requires both diligence and skill, and some funders require that programs be evaluated by an objective third party. However, because of the high costs associated with hiring a consultant, you may decide to stress the cost-effectiveness of evaluating your programs internally. If you opt for internal evaluation, have an objective source review your measurements to guarantee minimum bias. Furthermore, if your organization chooses to self-evaluate, mention which staff member is in charge of evaluative measures and how this individual has been trained to conduct this type of research and analysis.

Sample Evaluation

The following is a list of all objectives and an explanation of how the objective will be measured.

- **Objectives:** To maintain an average 80% attendance rate in targeted youth for all program-related activities for the duration of the six-month program. To decrease youth idleness by having 90% of targeted youth secure jobs, volunteer, or participate in extracurricular activities.
  Measurement: Each teen will sign up for a schedule of programs. Individuals in charge of programs will take attendance before activities begin. The administrative assistant will enter all data into an Excel spreadsheet for future analysis by program and project staff. Counselors will monitor youth involvement in the workforce and in other activities. Counselors will initiate regular follow-up with contacts at each organization for six months following program commencement.
- **Objective:** An increase in average school attendance from the estimated three days per week (estimated average for at-risk youth in Ourcity) to five days per week in targeted youth.
  Measurement: YouthOne's administrative assistant will work with each school's office secretary to establish records of school attendance for enrolled youth.
- **Objective:** To maintain lower levels of youth idleness for three months following the program's completion, as indicated by 80% of targeted youth sustaining involvement in extracurricular activities.
  Measurement: Counselors will monitor attendance in extracurricular activities through regular contact with youth's placement supervisors for three months following program completion.
- **Objectives:** To increase youths' potential to lead productive lives off the street, as indicated by: (a) 90% of youth writing and submitting a résumé and cover letter for a job or volunteer position and (b) 80% of targeted youth improving their GPA.
  Measurement: Counselors will make sure that employment directors at YEI track the youth who submit résumés. Guidance counselors from all schools will submit grade reports for enrolled youth at the start and completion of the academic quarter.
- **Objective:** To eradicate criminal activity in recruited youth during program period.
  Measurement: The Police Department has agreed to track arrest records of youth enrolled in the program and to provide YouthOne with monthly reports.

BUDGET

The proposal budget depicts your request in numbers and includes the sum of all expenses—for goods and services ranging from equipment and materials to overhead and administrative costs—required to implement your project. *[All such costs can be broken into direct and indirect costs, which are defined in this part's "Calculating Costs" section.]*

You may also include a *support and revenue statement,* which describes what has already been paid for, who has contributed these dollars, and from whom you intend to solicit the remaining balance. A key to depicting support and revenue is to understand *in-kind* support—noncash contributions of monetary value in the marketplace made by your agency, another grantmaker, volunteers, or other agencies.

The final component is the *budget narrative,* which explains how you arrived at your figures (if it's not obvious) and often how each line item on your budget fits into your overall project.

The most common way to present budgetary information is in the form of a *line-item budget,* which lists all expense categories next to their corresponding costs. Adjust your line-item budget depending on the amount of detail you need to convey. For example, if you are in search of challenge or matching funds, you need to clearly depict *support and revenue,* including in-kind contributions. However, like most aspects of your proposal, the level of detail in your budget depends most often on the grantmaker.

Some funders will provide detailed electronic budget templates, while others provide a blank budget sheet. If no template is provided, contact them to find out what is expected, whether it's a simple expense statement or a full budget that includes a support and revenue statement.

This section walks you through the basics of creating a budget for your proposal, including calculating costs, writing support and review statements, and organizing your budgets.

Calculating Costs

Project costs include everything of value required to run your program, from staff salary to the rent for the building in which your project runs. In general, costs fall into two basic categories: *direct costs* and *indirect costs.*

Calculating Direct Costs

Direct costs result from the purchase of goods or services needed to implement your current project. The typical line-item budget includes the following direct-cost categories:

- Personnel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Travel

Calculating Personnel Costs

Every time a person needs to run or oversee part of your program, there is a cost associated with that individual's time. This individual may be a full- or part-time staff member, an administrator, a contractor, or a volunteer.

Many funders do not cover personnel costs. Regardless, you must include this line item in your budget. Be sure to check with the funder before including personnel costs in your request.

Calculating the cost of full- or part-time employees is different depending on whether the employee is a *salaried employee* (one who earns a lump sum for the year regardless of hours worked) or a *wage employee* (one who earns an hourly rate). To determine the cost of a salaried employee who helps implement or oversee your project, you must determine the percentage of time that person will spend on the project and multiply that percentage by her salary. For example, if your executive director, who earns $80,000 per year, will spend an estimated 5 percent of her time annually overseeing this project, calculate the cost of the executive director like this:

$80,000 × 5% = $4,000

Be careful when using time spent on a program as a percentage of overall time. If the program only runs for half of the year, you must calculate the cost of a salaried employee accordingly—based on only half the yearly salary.

To determine the cost of a wageworker, multiply the number of hours per week the employee will devote to the project by the number of weeks the project will run by the worker's hourly wage. For example, if your program director earns an hourly wage of $10 an hour and will spend an estimated fifteen hours per week for fifty-two weeks on the project, his salary is calculated as follows:

15 hours per week × 52 weeks × $10 = $7,800

For your agency's staff, *fringe benefits* must also be calculated and included in the line-item budget. Depending on the organization, fringe benefits may include:

- FICA (Social Security and Medicare)
- Workers' compensation insurance
- Life insurance
- Health insurance
- Retirement
- State and/or federal unemployment insurance

Fringe benefits are typically calculated as a percentage of pay and may vary depending on an employee's full- or part-time status. Talk to your organization's finance person to get the correct percentage. Fringe benefits are not calculated for contract employees.

Contractors may help in myriad aspects of your project, from project development to project evaluation. You must simply indicate within your budget narrative *[discussed in following sections]* what function the contractor will assume. You may calculate the cost based on an estimate or based on his hourly wage. In all cases, you should justify, both in terms of skill level and cost-effectiveness, why you chose the indicated contractor.

If your project relies on volunteers, you may need to report two types of costs: recruitment costs (which should be included under the hours your staff spends recruiting and noted specifically in your budget narrative as volunteer recruitment) and the market value of volunteer time. The latter "cost" is considered an in-kind contribution and should be included in a support and revenue statement. The value of volunteers is especially relevant if you seek matching funds. *[Reporting in-kind contributions is discussed again later in this part.]*

In a multiyear project, you need to anticipate annual salary and fringe increases and build these into your budget. Talk with your finance director for guidance on the appropriate percentage increases each year.

In your line-item budget, separate personnel from nonpersonnel costs. *[Methods for organizing this budget and sample budgets are included in the section titled "Organizing the Budget."]*

Calculating Costs of Capital, Equipment, Supplies, and Materials

Capital expenses are your largest expenses, such as land purchases and building renovations. These items will become your agency's assets, retaining their value for years to come. You must spend a great deal of time within your budget narrative explaining and justifying capital costs. This often means including estimates, copies of which you should include in your appendix. Remember that some grantmakers do not fund capital projects or purchases of capital needed for programs and projects. As always, check with the funder!

Equipment is capital that you may purchase or rent. Because equipment maintains its value after the project is complete, a grantmaker may be more likely to fund equipment rentals over equipment purchases. Again, your best bet is to contact the funder. Always include this information in the budget narrative. If you opt to purchase, include how the equipment will be used after the program ends; the use should be for nonprofit purposes.

Equipment includes items that are costly and considered an asset. They may include the following:

- Boats
- Cameras
- Cars
- Chairs

- Computers
- Copying machines
- Desks
- DVD players
- Filing cabinets
- Lawn mowers
- Microscopes
- Microwaves
- Printers
- Radios
- Scanners
- Shelves
- Expensive software
- Stoves
- Tables
- Telescopes
- Televisions
- Tractors
- Trucks
- Vans
- VCRs

Supplies are the more expendable items needed daily. To calculate supply costs, estimate how many of your organization's office supplies will be used to carry out the project and what types of supplies you would need to run the project on a day-to-day basis. Supplies include the following:

- Binder clips
- Correction fluid
- Paper clips
- Pencils
- Pens
- Rubber bands

Other types of supplies depend on the nature of your project. For an art program, you may need to purchase paint, paintbrushes, paper, or clay. For scientific research, you may need to purchase slides, chemicals, or magnifying glasses.

Materials, which stand in the middle of equipment and supplies in terms of expense and life, must also be included in your budget. The following things are materials:

- Books
- CD/Rs
- DVDs

- Floppy disks
- Moderately priced software
- Videos

Calculating Travel Costs

You may need to allocate money for transporting volunteers, project participants, or staff. Travel costs include, but are not limited to, these things:

- Air travel
- Land travel (vehicle, train, bus, subway, and the like)
- Room and board accommodations

Include an explanation of high travel costs—especially for out-of-town travel, which is typically associated with staff training or project *dissemination* (sharing) at a conference. You may want to include an explanation of why you chose a particular mode of transportation in terms of cost-effectiveness. This demonstrates that you are conscientious about how the grantmaker's dollars will be spent.

Training costs (including fees or tuition and other costs) can also be included under the category of travel.

Calculating Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are those required to run your organization each day, regardless of whether or not your project is implemented. This type of cost is often difficult to fathom and calculate but generally includes overhead and administrative costs. Total indirect costs may be calculated in one of two ways:

- A percentage of total direct costs
- A percentage of total personnel costs

Standards vary from one funder to the next.

Calculating Miscellaneous Costs

Including a miscellaneous or "other" category in your budget may signal to funders that you have not thought through your expenses. Grantmakers do not like to give money—even small amounts—for unjustified purchases. Do your best not to include this type of category at all.

Note that many funders do not pay for indirect costs, even if these costs are legitimate. If submitting a proposal to one such funder, you may still include these in your line-item budget as an in-kind contribution from your own agency. This is especially helpful if applying for a matching grant. *[In-kind contributions are discussed in the following section.]*

Support and Revenue

Some funders require that grant seekers include a support and revenue statement. You can include this information within the budget document using different methods. *[Different support and revenue statement styles are included in the following section.]* It is important to understand what constitutes support and revenue.

Revenue may be any monies your organization generates. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Fundraising dollars applied to current project
- Revenue generated from ticket sales
- Membership fees and dues

Other support may include monies contributed by the following:

- Grantmakers
- Board members
- Individuals

In-kind contributions are also a form of support. This may include donated supplies or services (such as financial consulting), the source of which includes grantmakers, volunteers, or your own organization. Simply indicate the market value of that item at the time of the donation. For volunteer services, calculate the value of volunteer services by asking, “How much would we pay an employee to carry out the same activities?”

It is especially important to include in-kind support in your budget and revenue section because, as noted before, this type of “donation” is equivalent to a monetary donation when seeking matching funds. Your own agency may also make in-kind donations. For example, if seeking a challenge grant, you may decide that you will pitch in for personnel or indirect costs if the grantmaker contributes a dollar amount equaling your organization’s in-kind contribution.

Before sitting down to write the budget, make a list of all expenses and support. It makes organizing the budget much simpler.

Organizing the Budget

Your budget may convey a varying amount of information; you may decide to include only an expense budget or you may include a support and revenue statement. Some information may be included either in the budget itself or within the budget narrative. You also have a choice regarding the narrative placement, including it in the budget or making it a separate document.

Your budget will include these information categories:

- Budget header information
- Line items
- Specification of amount requested from grantmaker and for what items
- Budget narrative (not always required but wise to include)

You may also include a support and revenue statement.

Budget Header Information

Always include all relevant contact and program information at the top of your budget, the budget "header." The header puts the budget into context (total budget and amount requested, for example) and helps the reader quickly identify the appropriate contact person for questions. If the contact person for the budget is different than that for the general proposal, let the reader know. Include these things:

- Proposal contact person
- Budget contact person
- Organization name
- Project name
- Date and project period
- Total budget and amount requested from funder

Line Items

Your budget's leftmost column is reserved for line items. These project expenses are broken into personnel, nonpersonnel, and indirect costs. Include subcategories under each category heading, listing specific individuals (personnel), items, and services (nonpersonnel).

Specifications of Amount(s) Requested

Often, you will seek support from a myriad of sources. In this case, indicate the items you want the funder to pay for in one of the following ways: using a footnote or asterisk, creating a budget column solely for the grantmaker, or including the information within the budget narrative.

Budget Narrative

The budget narrative's purpose is to explain how you arrived at your expense totals. However, you may also use the narrative to indicate the line items you want the grantmaker to fund, to show current and anticipated support, or to demonstrate each item's importance to the project as a whole.

The budget narrative may be included as an entirely separate document, in the body of the proposal, as a footnote, or within a column of the actual budget. The funder's preference comes first, but you should choose the format that is easiest to read depending on the included information. Including the narrative within the budget itself and including a brief introduction to the budget above are recommended. In all, this format is easiest to follow.

Budget Formats

From the simpler expense budgets to the more complex, you have style and layout options. This section walks you through sample budgets.

Expense-Only Budgets

When requesting the full amount from a funding agency, a simple line-item budget listing only expenses is necessary. In other instances, you may be requesting partial funding from the grantmaker if your agency is contributing in-kind support or you have secured funding from other sources.

Full Request

A *full request* is when the funder is being asked to support all the expenses associated with a project. The budget in Figure 7.1 is a simple expense budget for a youth program that has no outside support.

Notice that the narrative is included within the budget itself, explaining how each cost is derived and linking the line item to the project activities. Personnel, nonpersonnel, and indirect costs are separated from one another. Fringe benefits are calculated based on the total agency personnel cost; indirect costs are based on a percentage of overall personnel costs, not direct costs. (Remember that you can calculate indirect costs as a percentage of total direct costs.) Please also note that the percentage used was approved by the grantmaker and is indicated as such in the budget narrative. The budget narrative may also be placed as a footnote or in a separate document, if you refer the reader to it. The footnote narrative looks like the one later in this part.

FIGURE 7.1
Sample of a full-request budget.

Budget for TOGPI

Submitted by: YouthOne, Inc.
Budget Contact Person: Janet Doe
Proposal Contact Person: Sara Smith
Date: September 14, 2004

Project Period: 1/1/05 to 12/31/05
Submitted to: XYZ Foundation
Grant Request: $31,416
Total Expenses: $31,416

Line Item	Total	Narrative
Personnel		
Organization's Staff		
Program director	$6,000	Program director manages entire project. The project will take approximately 20% of his time this year, costing 20% of his $30,000 yearly salary.
2 Full-time staff	$8,320	Two full-time staff members earning $10/hr will dedicate 20% of weekly time to project. One will run the program's educational component, while the other oversees job training. 8 hrs/week X $10/hr X 52 weeks X 2 employees.
1 Part-time staff	$2,080	Part-time staff member in charge of following up with youths' families, schools, and legal system to track attendance and behavior. 4 hrs/week X $10/hr X 52 weeks.
Fringe (30%)	$4,920	Based on 30% of above expenses. ($16,400 X 30%)
Consultants		
Evaluator	$1,000	Consultant hired to evaluate program's success. 50 hrs X $20/hr
TOTAL Personnel	**$22,320**	
Nonpersonnel		
Equipment	$2,000	Two computers and two printers for recruited youth to use for homework, job searches, and résumé writing. Discounted computers and printers obtained from Staples.
Supplies	$300	For pencils, pens, and paper to be used by youths when conducting program activities.
Travel	$100	Round-trip train ticket for trainer.
TOTAL Nonpersonnel	**$2,400**	
Total Direct Costs	**$24,720**	
Total Indirect Costs	**$6,696**	This is 30% of personnel costs, a percentage approved by grantmaker. ($22,320 X 30%)
TOTALS	**$31,416**	This is the full amount requested from the XYZ Foundation.

The budget narrative may also be included on a separate page. When writing the narrative as a separate document, pretend you are sitting next to the grantmaker, budget in hand, making sense of it all. A budget narrative for the expense-only budget may look like the one in this figure.

Sample Budget Footnote Narrative

Line Item	**Total**
Personnel	
Program director (a)	$6,000.00

Budget

(a) Program director manages entire project. The project will take approximately 20 percent of his time, costing 20 percent of his yearly $30,000 salary.

Sample Budget Narrative

The total cost of running Basic Youth Program is $31,416, and includes personnel costs, nonpersonnel costs, and indirect costs. The full amount is requested from the XYZ Foundation.

Three YouthOne employees and two consultants are the personnel required for the program. It is estimated that the program director, whose salary is $30,000, will spend 20% of his time next year running the program, for a total of $6,000. Two full-time staff members, each earning $10/hour, will also dedicate approximately 20% of their time (or 8 hours per week) to the project for one full year, costing a total of $8,320. One part-time staff member, also earning $10/hour, will dedicate four hours per week to the project, costing a total of $2,080. Fringe benefits were calculated as 30% of total agency personnel costs ($16,400) to arrive at $4,920. One consultant hired to evaluate the program will spend an estimated 50 hours on the project at a rate of $20/hour, totaling $1,000. Three additional local bidders estimated the project at $1,500.

Basic equipment and supplies also needed to run the program have been obtained at discounted rates. Two computers and two color inkjet printers from Ourcity Office Supplies needed for youth to do homework, search for jobs, create résumés, learn typing skills, and conduct research cost a total of $2,000. Supplies, including paper, résumé paper, pens, pencils, floppy disks, CD/Rs, rulers, and more will cost approximately $300.

The travel cost of $100 is needed to transport the trainer from his hometown to YouthOne. Train was the cheapest mode of transportation. Total nonpersonnel costs equal $2,400.

Finally, indirect costs have been calculated based on 30% of personnel costs, a percentage already approved by the XYZ Foundation.

Partial Request

Sometimes you will not ask the funder for the full amount of the expenses. Perhaps some of the funding will come from your own agency in the form of in-kind contributions (called *agency in-kind*), or perhaps you will seek additional funds from other foundations. For expense-only budgets in which you want to request only partial funding, you may format your budget like the one in Figure 7.2.

FIGURE 7.2
Sample of a partial request.

Budget for TOGPI

Submitted by: YouthOne, Inc.
Budget Contact Person: Janet Doe
Proposal Contact Person: Sara Smith
Date: September 15, 2004

Project Period: 1/1/05 to 12/31/05
Submitted to: XYZ Foundation
Grant Request: $14,060
Total Expenses: $31,416

Line Item	Requested from XYZ	Agency In-Kind	Total Line Item	Narrative
Personnel				
<u>Organization's Staff</u>				
Program director	$3,000	$3,000	$6,000	Program director manages entire project. The project will take approximately 20% of his time this year, costing 20% of his $30,000 yearly salary.
2 Full-time staff	$4,160	$4,160	$8,320	Two full-time staff members earning $10/hr will dedicate 20% of weekly time to project. One will run the program's educational component, while the other oversees job training. 8 hrs/week X 52 weeks X $10/hr X 2 employees.
1 Part-time staff	$1,040	$1,040	$2,080	Part-time staff member in charge of following up with youths' families, schools, and legal system to track attendance and behavior. 4 hrs/week X $10/hr X 52 weeks.
Fringe (30%)	$2,460	$2,460	$4,920	Based on 30% of above expenses. ($16,400 X 30%)
<u>Consultants</u>				
Evaluator	$1,000	$0	$1,000	Consultant hired to evaluate program's success. 50 hours X $20/hr.
TOTAL Personnel	**$11,660**	**$10,660**	**$22,320**	
Nonpersonnel				
Equipment	$2,000	$0	$2,000	Two computers and two printers for recruited youth to use for homework, job searches, and résumé writing. Discounted computers and printers obtained from Staples.
Supplies	$300	$0	$300	For pencils, pens, and paper to be used by youths when conducting program activities (homework help, job searching, etc.).
Travel	$100	$0	$100	Round-trip train ticket for trainer.
TOTAL Nonpersonnel	**$2,400**	**$0**	**$2,400**	
Total Direct Costs	**$14,060**	**$10,660**	**$24,720**	
Indirect Costs	**$0**	**$6,696**	**$6,696**	This is 30% of personnel costs, a percentage approved by grant-maker. ($22,320 X 30%)
TOTALS	**$14,060**	**$17,356**	**$31,416**	

This budget includes a column for the amount being requested from the XYZ Foundation, the amount that YouthOne is contributing in-kind, and the total amount for that line item.

Support and Revenue

Support and revenue can be demonstrated different ways, and the support and revenue statement itself may have varying degrees of detail.

The budget narrative is the simplest place to discuss support and revenue. In the narrative you may state, for each line item, the amount donated or anticipated from other sources. However, this is not the clearest way to demonstrate support and revenue.

Easy-to-read formats for support and revenue are listed here:

- Support and revenue as a stand-alone piece
- Support and revenue as columns in a basic expense budget

Stand-alone Support and Revenue Statement

The support and revenue statement in Figure 7.3 lists current and potential funders along the leftmost column and indicates in the columns to the right whether the funding is pending or committed. The column titled "Explanation" explains how each donation will be used. The explanation is not necessary but helps the funder better understand the document.

The total revenue should equal the total expenses. This demonstrates to funders that, even if the project is not entirely funded, your organization has a funding strategy.

Please note the demonstration of in-kind support, both from the agency and other sources. The donation amount is based on the market value of the goods and services. These costs are also included within the expense portion of the budget so that revenue equals expenses.

The example given is an abridged version of the Targeted Outreach Youth Gang Prevention Initiative. The full budget would be much longer than the one shown here, but the purpose is to demonstrate various kinds of support and revenue, including in-kind support from outside agencies (volunteers and program services) and monetary support from outside agencies.

The section on project revenue is included here. This could serve as a stand-alone document. See the example, later in this section.

The budget's expense portion (Figure 7.4), which is attached directly to the support and revenue, demonstrates how the figures were derived. In practice, these two would be directly connected. Notice how total project revenue equals total expenses.

FIGURE 7.3
Sample of stand-alone support and revenue statement.

Gang Prevention Program Budget, Including Support and Revenue
Submitted By: YouthOne, Inc.
Contact Person: Sara Smith
Date: January 1, 2005
Project Period: 1/1/05 to 12/31/05
Submitted to: XYZ Foundation
Grant Request: $94,055
Total Budget: $190,943

	Pending	Committed	Total	Explanation
Contributions				
Local Government	$0	$0	$0	
XYZ Foundation	$94,055	$0	$94,055	For percent of personnel costs associated with running the program.
A Foundation	$0	$4,440	$4,440	To pay for hired staff and consultants.
Corporate Support	$0	$520	$520	To pay for travel associated with transporting youth.
Individual Support/Board	$0			
Agency In-Kind	$0	$41,873	$41,873	For administrative costs of program.
Other In-Kind	$0	$41,080	$41,080	Value time for 45 volunteers.
Earned Revenue				
Membership Dues	$0	$8,600	$8,600	To pay for youth incentives.
Fundraisers	$0	$375	$375	To pay for materials and supplies.
Total Project Revenue	**$94,055**	**$96,888**	**$190,943**	Onset of project is pending on grant from the XYZ Foundation.

FIGURE 7.4
Sample project expense budget.

PROJECT EXPENSES				
	Requested from XYZ	**Other Donated***	**Total**	**Narrative** (if applicable)
Personnel				
Organization's Staff				
Program director	$10,500	$0	$10,500	Program director manages entire project. The project will take approximately 30% of his time this year, costing 30% of his $35,000 yearly salary.
5 Full-time staff	$56,250	$0	$56,250	Five full-time employees (certified social workers) will spend an average of 20 hours per week (5 counselors for 50 recruited youth, needing 2 hours per week of counseling) in first 6 months and 10 hours per week in remaining 6 months on project for youth follow-up. At an average of 37.5% of time that year (average of 15 hours per week) X $30,000 salary X 5 employees, total is $56,250.

FIGURE 7.4
Sample project expense budget.

PROJECT EXPENSES *(cont.)*				
	Requested from XYZ	**Other Donated***	**Total**	**Narrative** (if applicable)
Personnel				
Organization's Staff				
Administrative assistant	$5,600	$0	$5,600	Over the year, administrative assistant will spend 20% of her time on project among volunteer recruitment, youth follow-up, evaluation, etc. This will cost 20% X $28,000 (yearly salary) for $5,600.
Fringe (30%)	$21,705	$0	$21,705	Based on 30% of above expenses, which total $72,350.
Hired Staff (Consultants)				
John Johnson, expert	$0	$1,000	$1,000	John Johnson is working with project for a flat fee of $1,000.
Employment trainer	$0	$1,040	$1,040	Employment trainer from the Youth Employment Initiative will spend approximately 4 hours/ week for first 6 months with youth. Trainer's time is valued at $10/hour X 4 hours/week X 26 weeks for a total of $1,040.
2 Outreach workers	$0	$2,400	$2,400	Outreach workers will work 20 hours per week for month preceding program. At a rate of $15/hour X 20 hours/week X 4 weeks X 2 workers, this will cost $2,400.
Volunteers				
15 Tutors	$0	$12,480	$12,480	15 tutors work for an average of 4 hours per week for 6 months. Value of tutors is estimated at $8/hour, for a total value of $8/hour X 4 hours/week X 26 weeks X 15 tutors.
25 Mentors	$0	$20,800	$20,800	25 mentors work for an average of 4 hours per week for 6 months. Value of mentors is estimated at $8/hour, for a total value of $8/hour X 4 hours/week X 26 weeks X 25 tutors.
5 Teachers	$0	$7,800	$7,800	5 teachers volunteer 3 hours per week for 6 weeks. Value of teachers is estimated at $20/hour, for a total value of $20/hour X 3 hours X 5 teachers X 26 weeks.
TOTAL Personnel	**$94,055**	**$45,520**	**$139,575**	

FIGURE 7.4
Sample project expense budget.

PROJECT EXPENSES *(cont.)*				
	Requested from XYZ	**Other Donated***	**Total**	**Narrative** (if applicable)
Nonpersonnel				
Youth incentives	$0	$8,600	$8,600	For graduation ceremony, each youth will be presented with a $200 voucher and a $15 plaque. With an estimated 80% graduating, youth incentives are calculated as $200 X 40 youth plus $15 X 40 youth for a total of $8,600. If more than 40 youth graduate, YouthOne will cover additional expense.
Supplies	$0	$300	$300	For pencils, pens, and paper to be used by youths when engaged in program activities (homework help, job searching, etc.).
Materials	$0	$75	$75	For floppy disks and CD/Rs for saving work (résumés, homework, etc.).
Travel	$0	$520	$520	Transportation for youth to volunteer assignments and job interviews for 6 months. 1,730 miles @ $0.30 per mile = $520.
TOTAL Nonpersonnel	$0	$9,495	$9,495	
Direct Costs	$94,055	$55,015	$149,070	
Indirect Costs	$0	$41,873	$41,873	This is 30% of personnel costs ($139,575), including value of volunteer work, a percentage approved by grantmaker.
TOTALS	**$94,055**	**$96,888**	**$190,943**	

* From "Pending" and "Committed" in Figure 7.3.

Support and Revenue as Columns in Basic Budget

You can present support and revenue in columns rather than in a distinctive portion of the budget. This approach conveys the same information as the support and revenue statement; in this case, however, the actual sources of the current, pending, and in-kind contributions are indicated within the budget narrative.

You may choose different column headings. For example, if you have no in-kind support, you may simply remove this column. If you want to include a separate column for agency in-kind contributions, you are free to do so. Column labels are up to you, as long as they convey the committed and anticipated support, support type, and support sources and as long as the total for your pending and committed support equals the project's total expenses.

Conclusion

By the time you reach your conclusion, you have already said all you need to say. In less than half a page, your conclusion should briefly state the following:

- **Why** you feel the project is necessary.
- **What** qualifies your organization to carry out the project.
- **How** much your organization is requesting and for how long.
- **When** you hope to hear from the funder based on your project's start date.
- **Whom** the funder should contact with questions. (You may include a primary and secondary contact.)

Within this section, you do not need to recall statistics or provide qualifications. Simply summarize key points of the proposal. For example, to demonstrate what qualifies your organization to carry out the project, you may state: "Based on our organization's proven track record, and competent and caring staff, we feel our agency is among the most qualified to carry out this initiative successfully."

Attachments

Most foundations and corporations request the same standard attachments:

- Proof of 501(c)(3) or nonprofit status
- Most recent audited financial statements
- List of key officers, board members, and trustees and their business affiliations
- Copy of organization's budget
- 990 form
- Annual reports (if applicable)

Some funders may also require biographies of key staff, which you should keep on file.

Résumé, CV, or Bio?

It's important to know the difference between a CV, résumé, and "bio," as funders may request them, and each is quite different. A résumé generally outlines a person's key qualifications (including education, work experience, and skills) in one to three pages. A curriculum vitae is a form of résumé; however, it is much more exhaustive and can encompass many pages. CVs are generally used in academic settings and include degrees earned, teaching and research experience, publications, and presentations. Biographies are short, narrative summaries (versus listings) of a person's skills and background.

The appendices are also a good place for such attachments as:

- Organizational fact sheets
- Brochures
- Project and fundraising plans, pictures, and blueprints (especially relevant to capital projects)
- Media coverage

So grantmakers can easily navigate your attachments, include a brief table of contents for your appendices. This also helps you ensure that you've included all of the required pieces. If the funder asks for something your organization does not produce, like an annual report, simply let the funder know that you are aware of its guidelines but cannot provide the documentation it requests.

Your organization should keep most of these standard pieces on file. If it does not, you should compile them before seeking funds.

NONTRADITIONAL PROPOSAL FORMATS

The funder you approach may request a nontraditional proposal format:

- Letter proposal
- Online proposal or application
- Common application

Tips for each type are included in the following sections.

Letter Proposals

Letter proposals are typically two to three pages. Because the proposal itself is a letter, you do not need to include a cover letter or cover page. You may need to include attachments, but these typically are specified by the funder and may include your proof of 501(c)(3) status and operating budget. In general, though, avoid attachments unless you are sure they're allowed. You do not have a guarantee that they will be read.

If the grantmaker does not provide a list of questions to address within your letter proposal, you should include the same basic components provided in a full proposal:

- **Introduction:** A few sentences telling the reader who you are, the amount of money you request, the type of grant you request, the name of your program, and the need your program will address. Keep it brief. This simply lets the reader know in a few sentences what to expect in the letter.
- **Organizational information:** In two paragraphs, give your organization's mission, basic history, main purpose, and population served. Discuss your most impressive successes.
- **A link between project and funder's interests:** In one or two sentences, indicate why there is a good match between your project and the funder's key interests. This may be included in the introduction instead if you prefer.
- **Statement of need:** In one or two paragraphs, indicate the problem or need your project will address.
- **Goals and objectives:** Keep this discussion to one paragraph, if possible.
- **Project description:** In two or three paragraphs, describe the project basics and how they relate to the goals and objectives.
- **Evaluation:** In two paragraphs, indicate how you will assess whether you've met your goals.
- **Timeline:** In a short paragraph, indicate the basic timeline for your project. The grantmaker may allow you to attach a full timeline.
- **Budget:** Your budget may be in paragraph form or in a smaller line-item chart. The full narrative is unnecessary. In general, keep this section to two paragraphs or an equal amount of space.
- **Conclusion:** Because the letter is short, conclude with only a few sentences. Briefly restate your request and indicate to the grantmaker who in your organization should be contacted with questions.

To make the sections easier to read, cut out some of the transitional sentences and include bolded subheadings for each category.

In letter proposals, your tendency may be to decrease your margins to one-half inch and your font size to 9 points. Don't do it! Keep to the length limitations set forth by the grantmaker, using a reasonable point and margin size such as 12-point font and one-inch margins.

Online Applications

Some funders allow you to submit your full proposal via email as an attached document. In this case, you may have to submit a signed cover letter, cover page, and appendices in the mail, in addition to your electronic proposal. When submitting electronically, follow the guidelines provided in this part unless the funder specifies otherwise. There is very little difference between submitting a hard-copy and electronic proposal.

Some funders actually provide applications on their web sites. To help you prepare, they typically provide a list of questions for consideration before you begin typing answers into the application. You'll likely register, creating a username and password so you can make changes until you hit Enter.

After you enter the application site, simply respond to the questions in the given space, which often limit the number of characters you can use. If you see a Save button, press it before moving to the next page. Otherwise, your work may be lost. You may also want to print what you have done (or copy and paste it into a word-processing document) so you do not lose your work if the funder's server goes down.

Another option is to print out the blank application (or copy and paste it into a Word document) and work within a Word document. Save your work, run a spellcheck, and then copy and paste your responses into the application.

After the online portion of the application is complete, you will probably be required to submit parts of your proposal through the mail: A signature is often required to seal the deal. Take heed of all deadlines and remember that mail can take several days.

Common Application Form

Some states and regions accept a *common application form,* which is a standard application accepted by a group of funders in a particular geographic area. If you intend to use the common application form, first contact all potential recipient funders to ensure that this format is acceptable. A phone call or inquiry letter is still the best first approach.

The Foundation Center Online lists common applications for various regions at http://fdncenter.org/funders/cga/. Common applications are accepted by funders in several locations including: Massachusetts, Michigan, Connecticut, Delaware, western Pennsylvania, Minnesota, New York, New Jersey, Washington, Wisconsin, and the cities of Baltimore, Maryland, Chicago, Illinois, and Rochester, New York. *[This book includes a sample common application form from the National Network of Grantmakers (NNG) in Appendix B. The NNG web site, nng.org, includes this form, designed to facilitate funding for social justice issues.]*

SUBMISSION TIPS

Now that you have written the proposal and are satisfied with the results, package and submit the proposal to the funder. Leave plenty of time for this step; unforeseen, last-minute complications often arise. *[See Part VI, Organize the Proposal, for more tips on timing and preparation.]*

Packaging the Proposal

There is some difference of opinion about the best way to package a proposal, but a good rule is to think about the funder's perspective. Make it easy for them to do their job. The package should be complete, easily read, and properly bound.

Making Sure Your Proposal Is Easy to Read

- Print the proposal on white or off-white paper. Some funders (environmental especially) request the use of recycled paper.
- Use a font and point size that are crisp (for example, 12-point Times New Roman).
- A left-justified page is generally easier on the eyes.
- Set fairly generous margins (for example, one inch on every border).
- Include headings to guide the reader through the proposal.
- Break up text with white space (for example, include one hard return between paragraphs).
- Use graphs, charts, or tables, if appropriate.
- If your board of directors is impressive or your list of directors demonstrates significant diversity, consider including this list on your letterhead.

The funder may specify these aspects of the proposal. If so, follow its instructions.

When given page limits, one of the worst things you can do is to use a small point size, extend the margins, and cram text together. This method certainly enables you to use more words; however, you may need to reevaluate your project if you can't explain the program in the pages allotted. Long-winded proposals indicate that you either haven't thought through the project or you are overcompensating for a poor idea. A proposal of this type is also very difficult to read.

Number your pages and put the name of the proposal and organization at the bottom of each page. Use your computer's header and footer settings and make sure the font's point size is reduced. Often the page number is centered, and the name of the program/organization is placed on the left side of the page.

The Complete Package

Do these things before reproducing and binding the proposal. *[See Part IX for a full proposal checklist.]*

1. Double-check that you have the final version of the proposal.
2. Make sure the formatting is consistent (headings, subsections, font, spacing, and the like are the same from section to section, for example).
3. Check the spelling and reread it for meaning.
4. Have one or two other people read the document for meaning and formatting.
5. Obtain all signatures required.
6. Collect all the necessary components and attachments.
7. Take a break. Then come back and review all components one last time.

As stated earlier, a final test of the proposal is to read it for meaning. Step away from the process, look at your proposal with a fresh eye, and read the entire narrative aloud. This way you catch any double or incorrect words that survived the computer's spellchecker. You will also determine if your proposal flows. *[See the "Length, Style, and Flow" section earlier in this part.]* The proposal should follow a logical train of thought and naturally bring you to the conclusion.

Proper planning is the key to a successful proposal submission. If you are rushed through the final stages of the process, the chances for mistakes increase, and you produce a poor presentation. Take the time to do it right.

If you have not had the time to go through these final steps and your deadline is fast approaching, enlist the help of others who can help you complete the task. Determine those things that are most important (like making sure all the proposal components and attachments are accounted for) and do those first. This assumes that a deadline is absolute with no flexibility.

If your proposal is far from complete and it is evident it will be poorly presented in its current form, you will need to reassess whether it is worth the risk to submit it. If you have the luxury of waiting until the next grant cycle, it might be a good idea to postpone submission.

Putting It All Together

You must decide what method you will use to hold the pieces of your proposal together: paper clip, binder clip, folder, spiral binding, or perfect binding. Never staple or fold a proposal.

Funders may specify packaging preferences in the RFP. If not, call the foundation to inquire. Most foundations need to make copies of your proposal if it is being presented to the board and thus do not want you to permanently bind the document.

The disadvantage of an unbound proposal is the potential for lost pages and difficulty turning pages. If you prefer the look and feel of a bound proposal, consider this:

- Bind one proposal (spiral, velo, or other).
- Leave one proposal unbound, fastened with a paper clip or binder clip or placed in a folder.

This way, you satisfy the funder's reproduction needs while allowing the option of reading the bound version. Note that after the proposal is bound, you will often not have the opportunity to make changes. (However, some manufacturers are now making binders that can be disassembled and reassembled.)

Most major copy centers provide binding services. Again, be sure to leave ample time in the proposal process to get the binding completed. If you are a large organization that generates many proposals, you may want to consider purchasing a low-cost binding machine for this purpose.

Some corporations and foundations require multiple copies, resulting in greater duplication and mailing costs. Use copy center services or the collator on your own duplication machine to speed the process.

Here are some additional packaging tips:

- **Small proposal:** Consider placing your proposal in an attractive two-pocket folder with the name of your organization or logo on the front. Put the cover letter and proposal in the right pocket and supporting documents on the left.
- **Large proposal:** You need a sturdier binding and probably a clear front and dark back plastic cover. The cover letter may be bound with the rest of the proposal but is generally separate. When mailing the proposal, it is wise to paper-clip the cover letter to the front cover.

Getting the Proposal There

Once the proposal is completed, your job hasn't ended. You still need to make sure it gets there in a timely fashion and in a presentable form. The following sections present some common methods.

Hand Delivery

If the funder is local, it may be wise to hand-deliver the proposal. In addition to saving mailing costs (particularly for multiple copies), this method alleviates any anxiety about it reaching the funder on time. It is always a good idea to get a written confirmation of receipt from the foundation's secretary or security guard once you arrive. (Have that person write the date and time of proposal submission on the receipt.)

Mail

If you have planned well *[see Part VI, Organize the Proposal]*, you have allowed yourself plenty of time for mailing. Try to avoid last-minute or overnight mail. Visit the post office or mailing service yourself rather than drop it into a mailbox. That way you can be personally assured your package will arrive on time. Mail delivery systems like FedEx allow you to track your package along its route.

- Request guaranteed delivery and ask for confirmation of receipt.
- Include a street address (not a P.O. box) and phone number for the recipient.

Internet

If you are filling out the application online, be prepared for some glitches. Generally, you are required to insert information into an established template. While online applications and proposals have increased in popularity, the system is far from perfect. You may not know whether what you saw is what the funder receives. When in doubt, contact the funder to assure receipt of the proposal and send an additional hard copy.

Keeping a Record

It is extremely important that you track all your submissions. Make a file for each funder and store contact information, copies of letters of inquiry, and proposals. Keep proposals electronically (on a CD) and in a central hard-copy file (the finance office is a good place) so your organization can quickly retrieve the information. This is particularly helpful when a funder calls unexpectedly with questions about your project.

If you are writing proposals for multiple projects, you may want to develop a tracking system. *[See the "Developing a Proposal Tracking System" section in Part VIII, Proposal Review and Follow-Up.]*