

MEET THE FUNDERS: Funding and Proposal Writing Workshop

March 18, 2011, St. John's, NL

TIPS for successful proposal writing

(This document is summary of tips and recommendations provided by the March 18 workshop presenters. It builds upon Environment Canada's Key's to Success presentation and information collected by the Nova Scotia Environment Network).

CALL the funder to discuss your project ideas (this is listed as #1 for a reason... it's the first step you should take)

- ✓ Send a draft application/ pre-proposal/ letter of interest if applicable. Funders can give valuable feedback on your proposed project and can help improve the application

DESCRIBE the need for the project in your area

- ✓ How will your project make a difference in your community?
- ✓ Why is this environmental action important to **your** community?
- ✓ Important to keep Clear (understandable), Concise (to the point- bullet form can work) & Coherent (logical - makes sense - keep PLAIN LANGUAGE IN MIND).
- ✓ Make sure you sell your passion and enthusiasm. Be bold!
- ✓ Identify a NEED (based in literature, data, needs assessment, consultation reports, community meetings) and an intervention (based on best/promising practices, builds on existing strengths within the community).
- ✓ Tell the funders about the urgency.

SEEK partnerships

- ✓ Provide letters of support. Make sure the letters are as passionate about the project as you are. Letters of support may also show the partnerships for the project and the monetary value (actual and in-kind) of their contribution.
- ✓ Strong letters of support outline how a partnering group will both contribute to and benefit from the proposed project.
- ✓ Check out the EC Green Source for more partners:
<http://www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction/default.asp?lang=En&n=910BBE65-1>

[Pitfall: The role of partnerships not identified. A simple list of partners is not sufficient.]

IDENTIFY SMART objectives

- ✓ What is your project goal?
- ✓ How will you achieve this goal?
 - ✓ Develop SMART objectives:
 - ✓ **S**pecific
 - ✓ **M**easurable
 - ✓ **A**chievable
 - ✓ **R**ealistic
 - ✓ **T**ime-bound

DETAIL your workplan by month or season

- ✓ Help us understand exactly **what** you plan to do and **when** you plan to do it
- ✓ Ensure your workplan includes all of your proposed project and communication activities
- ✓ Check that all proposed project activities are eligible

LINK with criteria:

- ✓ Make sure the application and project activities are catered to the funder
- ✓ Use the funders' application format, and complete all required sections!

BUDGET

- ✓ Use the funders' template
- ✓ Include in-kind and cash contributions. Use market-value hourly rates for volunteer hours and in-kind contributions to projects (i.e.: \$12/hour for volunteer work, \$20/hour for expertise-specific volunteer work, \$30 or an appropriate amount for professional volunteer work (such as lawyer, accountant, etc.))

ENHANCE your application with maps, diagrams/ photographs

- ✓ A picture is worth a thousand words and can demonstrate your passion
- ✓ Visual aids can help your application stand out – and be more easily understood

EVALUATION PLAN for your completed project

- ✓ It is increasingly common that funders require an evaluation plan (stronger emphasis on accountability and transparency).
- ✓ Evaluation plan describes how you plan to measure and evaluate the success of your proposed project (e.g. who will oversee evaluation, tools and methods used).

- ✓ *For the applying organisation, this helps differentiate between “what we do and results” (i.e. outputs vs. outcomes)*