Grant Writing and Stewardship
– It’s Not Just About the Check!

Presented by
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Writing a grant

is the act of transforming a concept or idea into an organized, compelling and detailed plan that will persuade the reader to provide financial support of your concept or idea.
PART 1

Writing the Grant
Why write grants?

A successful track record in obtaining grants increases your value as a member of the Cheyney family.
Why write grants?

Securing grant support helps you to fund an institutional need – curricular (new collection of instructional DVDs), research (new software for data analysis by students), and/or capital (new mixing board for the radio station).

Securing grant funding enhances the reputation of your department or unit and of Cheyney.
Why write grants?

We all have a stake in a vibrant future for Cheyney. The extent of grant activity generated by an institution is a very important factor in the formation of that institution’s reputation.
Grants = Success

A strong reputation attracts quality students, faculty and staff and financial support from government, corporations, foundations and individuals (including alumni).
Before you write the grant

- Develop a brief concept outline about what you wish to do.
- Share it with your Department Chair, Dean, Supervisor or Advisor.
- Get their approval to proceed in writing.
Grant writing can be intimidating.

It shouldn’t be.
Ingredients of a Grant

1 part Sales Pitch

1 part Newspaper Article

1 part Contract
Sales Pitch

When you begin to write a grant, you must adopt the mindset of the funder you are approaching.

The first step is to clearly understand the funder – what their interests and needs are, who they tend to fund, their geographic area of interest and how much they tend to give.
Institutional Advancement Resources

Please consult with Institutional Advancement at the beginning.

The Director of Sponsored Programs and Prospect Researcher can help you understand the funder and help you formulate the best approach to take in seeking funds.
Funders are deluged with requests every day.

They care about your needs only in terms of how your needs relate to their interests.
Foundation A, located in Philadelphia, is interested in elevating the quality and quantity of persons of color in the area’s scientific workforce.
Ineffective Approach – Focuses on the Needs of the Requestor

“Our budget dictates that we raise $100,000 to enhance our science curriculum.”
Effective Approach –
Focuses on the Interests of the Funder

“Over 85% of Cheyney’s students are from Pennsylvania, most of them being from Greater Philadelphia. Cheyney students tend to stay in the area after graduation. By supporting our efforts to enhance our science curriculum with a grant of $100,000, Foundation A will ultimately increase the number and quality of students of color entering Greater Philadelphia’s scientific workforce.”
President Kennedy said it best:

“Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country.”
Newspaper Article

Think of writing a proposal as you would an article for a newspaper.
Newspaper Articles
Address the 5 Ws:

Who?
What?
Where?
When?
Why?
Who?

Who are the faculty that will be involved? What are their relevant expertise, experience and prior successes?

Who are the students that will be involved? That is, what is their general profile?

Who are the recipients of the activities? How will they be helped?

Are we collaborating with another institution? If so, who are they and what is their relevant expertise, experience and prior successes?
What, Where and When

Your proposal must take the reader through each and every step of the process in a clear and logical fashion.
Whenever possible, demonstrate concretely how your proposal is unique. Even if you are addressing a commonplace issue, find some element of your project that is innovative so you stand out from the rest.
While the University of Pennsylvania also has an aquaculture program, Cheyney’s is the only one in Greater Philadelphia that focuses on urban aquaculture – i.e., fish farming in a closed urban environment. This is done in order to maximize our outreach so that urban students from disadvantaged neighborhoods are exposed to the sciences in a unique and engaging way.
What, Where and When

Be sure to give specific examples of your intended activities. Cite specific activities and participants. Be concrete and detailed so the reader understands everything you intend to do – and how the activities will be of value to the funder.
The Fine Arts Department will hold special exhibition viewings on campus for Chester School District high school students in grades 11 and 12 in November, February and May. Each viewing will be held on the third Thursday from 3:30 -5:00. Up to 20 students will attend each viewing where they will meet the artist. The students will present their experiences to their high schools at the end of the year in a special program, thereby enhancing the outreach that is a priority of Foundation X.
Why?

This is perhaps the most critical part of the entire proposal.
Why?

Why are we embarking on this activity? How did the idea come about?

What is the need and how has it been documented?

Link it to departmental and/or university strategic plan.
Why?

How will you, your department or unit, the participants, collaborators and Cheyney be different when it is done?

What are the consequences of not doing the proposed activities?
A word about definition of terms and assumptions:

Not every government grant, and very few corporate or foundation grants, will be peer-reviewed.

DO NOT ASSUME that the reader will understand industry acronyms and/or technical discussions.
Sustainability

It is standard for funders to want to know how you will sustain the program after their funding is used up. They are not interested in funding an activity that has no shelf life after they are done.

How will you keep the program going? What is the long-range plan for the program?
You need to be able to talk about other potential funders and/or others who have supported past projects who might be interested in helping you once again.

The Director of Sponsored Programs and Prospect Researcher will help you with this part.
Program Evaluation

This is an increasingly important component of a grant proposal.

As government agencies, corporations and foundations become more sophisticated, they are increasingly reflective and analytical as regards their own grantmaking.
Program Evaluation

Funders are increasingly called upon to justify their budgets.

Government budgets are continuously scrutinized.

Corporate and foundation managers must justify the money they give out.
Program Evaluation

Funders seek maximum “bang for their buck.”

You must be seen as a good ROI (return on investment)
Program Evaluation

Concrete evaluation and measurable outcomes are essential components of a successful grant proposal.
Elements of Evaluation

Formal survey instruments for all participants and collaborators that measure efficacy, appropriateness, and indicators of success. These should yield results that can be described, summarized and quantified.
Examples

Faculty and students complete a questionnaire at the completion of the project which addresses the success in meeting the goals of the project, obstacles to success, lessons learned and degree of satisfaction with the results of the project.
Elements of Evaluation

Create mechanisms such as quarterly meetings that enable the project managers to make necessary adjustments during the process in order to maximize results.
Example

The Chester students coming to the art exhibits originally were going to give presentations to their own class about their experience. You subsequently find out during a planning meeting for the grant that all the schools have decided to get together for a year-end program celebrating all of their accomplishments. You decide it will be more effective to have all the participating students present to all the students of all the schools at this year-end program in order to maximize outreach, which is important to the funder.
Budget

Budgets are at the heart of a grant’s credibility.
Budget

- Budgets must be detailed.
- You must have a narrative that justifies how you arrive at your numbers.
- *This is not the time for guesstimates.*
Budget

If someone asks you why $1,000 is needed for supplies, you should be able to specify exactly what will be purchased in terms of product(s) and quantity.
Budget

If you indicate person hours devoted to the activities, then quantify them as regards **appropriate hourly rate** for faculty, staff or student workers.
Be sure to pay close attention to budgetary guidelines in terms of what will NOT be funded and be sure you do not exceed the request amount that has been determined as reasonable.
EXAMPLE

If you are seeking support for students to do outreach off campus and the Foundation to which you are applying does not fund transportation, do not include that component of the budget in the amount you request.

If their average grant award is determined to be $10,000 do not ask for $20,000.
Budget

Pay close attention to allowable indirect costs. Capturing them is critical to Cheyney’s budget.
Budget

Cheyney’s Indirect Cost Rate:

- 42% for all on-campus activities
- 26% for all off-campus activities
Budget

Allowable Indirect Costs:
- Salaries, wages and fringe benefits
- Materials and supplies
- Services
- Travel
- Subgrants or subcontracts
  (up to $25,000)
Budget

Excluded from Indirect Cost:
- Equipment
- Capital expenditures
- Rental costs of off-site facilities
- Tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships.
Budget

Watch out for matching requirements!

Any grant requiring a cash match from the university or outside source requires prior approval from the VPs for Institutional Advancement and Finance & Administration.
Budget

Some matching requirements can be satisfied through in-kind costs.

A dollar value can be placed on hours donated by the university to the project. The same is true of office supplies or equipment.
Budget

Faculty Release Time requires approval from the VP of Academic and Student Affairs.
Budgeting is a balancing act – you want to fund growth but at the same time your numbers must be realistic and justifiable and should help fund ongoing costs.
Example

You are running a pilot project in the Education Department. If you devote 10% of an Administrative Assistant’s time to the project, you can then cover some of your existing costs while funding a new project at the same time.
Once you have finished writing the narrative and developing the budget, take a second look at everything you have said you would do and what it will cost.

If your proposal is funded, it becomes a binding contract.

Do not obligate yourself or Cheyney to anything that cannot be provided or implemented if you are funded.
Be Careful What You Wish For

Your Wish May Come True!
Contract

Failing to follow through with grant activities with the funding provided earns you and Cheyney a bad reputation.

That funder is not likely to support you again.

Funders talk to each other. They share their success – and their horror stories.

You want to be one of their successes!
Executive Summary

Funders typically request an Executive Summary. This is best written after you have completed writing your proposal.

This should be one paragraph that clearly states what you want to accomplish, what it will cost and how it meets the funder’s needs.
The Elevator Exercise

You get in an elevator and find yourself standing next to a foundation program officer to whom you are ready to send an application. The program officer asks if you are going to be submitting a proposal. You answer affirmatively. The program officer asks you to give a brief summary before he reaches his floor and has to leave. You have one minute to leave him with an impression of what you want to do, its importance, and what it will cost.
The Elevator Exercise

If you can do this, then you have just written your Executive Summary.
The Cover Letter

- A cover letter is an effective introduction of you and your request to the funder.

- The Cover Letter enables you to review the salient points of the proposal via the Executive Summary.

- The Cover Letter provides the opportunity to thank the funder for prior support and to link that prior support to the new request.

- The Cover Letter provides the opportunity to reinforce the value to the funder of supporting your proposal.
Once you have completed your proposal and budget, you will need to place them in the format required by the funder.

Formats for corporations, foundation and government proposals vary.

Most foundations accept proposals using the Common Grant Application format.
Common Grant Application Format

- Organizational Background (Institutional Advancement has text ready for you to use)
- Needs & Capabilities
- Goals & Scope of Proposed Activities
- Impact of Activities
- Budget
- Required Attachments
e-grants

Government agencies are increasingly requiring electronic grant submission through such portals as e-grants.gov and grants.gov.
e-grants

Important Tips:

Contact Director of Sponsored Programs immediately and set up an appointment to review the process.
e-grants

Important Tips:

To access the electronic application process, you may need to have a user account established for you. See the Director of Sponsored Programs.
Important Tips:

You may be asked for various university identifier numbers and other data – see the Director of Sponsored Programs.
Important Tips:

The process of entering information for the application varies from site to site – some you type in fields, some you cut and paste, some you upload. Beware of field space limitations and web functionality – see the Director of Sponsored Programs.
e-grants

Important Tips:

Read through the application process to make sure you download any necessary software needed to view your online application.
Important Tips:

In most instances you will be unable to submit the grant yourself electronically.

Schedule an appointment with the Director of Sponsored Programs to submit no later than one day before it is due.
Before you submit the grant, try to have three different kinds of people review it:

- A person who can proofread for grammatical, typographical errors and sentence structure issues.
- A colleague who can review for content.
- A person unfamiliar with your work who can read for clarity and understandability.
Internal Deadline

Corporate and foundation proposals must be submitted to the Director of Sponsored Programs three weeks in advance of the deadline.

Government grants with a 4-week turnaround time must be submitted to the Director of Sponsored Programs two weeks in advance of the deadline.
Sequence of Review and Sign-Offs

- Director of Sponsored Programs
- Department Chair, Academic Dean or Unit Supervisor
- Comptroller
- VP for Finance and Administration
- VP for Academic & Student Affairs
- VP for Institutional Advancement
- President
If Your Proposal is Declined

If the grant is not approved, the Director of Sponsored Programs will contact the Program Officer in order to receive feedback which will be shared with the faculty member in order to discuss and then make revisions for subsequent submissions.
Your Proposal is Funded!

Think you’re done?

Think again . . .
TEAM WORK = SUCCESS

Thank you for your time and interest!

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