

AFOA Saskatchewan Proposal Writing Workshop

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Moving your community forward

- » Funding is required for important programs in your community.
- » Successful programs/initiatives help move your community - towards its vision.
- » Unsuccessful programs remove funds that could be used to move other communities closer to their vision.
- » Secure the funding and succeed in the program implementation.
- » Create a virtuous cycle.

Overview

- » Introduction
- » Understanding the competitive landscape
- » Understanding the need.
- » Understanding the solution.
- » Matching your initiative with funders.
- » Communicating effectively.



Overview

- » Case studies
- » What is the need.
- » What is the solution.
- » What is the benefit.
- » Are you communicating with the right people.
- » Activities are funded – not ideas.
- » Connect with your mission and goals.
- » Effective communication is critical to funding.
- » Pre-proposal



Overview

- » Grants are for specific purposes and policy goals; funds are provided to address a need.
- » Understanding the need is essential to getting funding and as importantly successfully implementing the program or initiative.

Proposal Landscape

- » Matching grants and grant seekers is like a competitive market.
- » There are many kinds of grants; government grants and funding agreements, foundation grants and private donors.
- » This is a multi-billion dollar sector.
- » Limited funds must be distributed to a limited number of grantees.
- » It is highly competitive.

Proposal Landscape

- » There is competition for all types of grants and contributions, including federal grants and provincial grants.
- » Organizations and communities compete for various types of funding – this is a result of demand for funds exceeding the supply of funds.

Proposal Landscape

- » In order to be successful the proposal must **stand out**.
- » New approaches can be attractive to funders, if other practices have not shown success.
- » Best practices can be attractive to funders, if they have not been utilized in your community.
- » Best practices can draw from bodies of research to support your proposal.



Proposal Landscape

- » Demonstrating you know what works and what doesn't is attractive to funders.
- » This is a result of careful research or thoughtful analysis.
- » Understanding the need and the solution fully improve the chances of funding.

Proposal Landscape

- » Qualifications of those presenting the proposal increases or decreases the chance of success.
- » This would include the qualifications of those who are part of the team to advance the proposal.
- » Prior success also helps to advance the proposal.

Proposal Landscape

- » Limited funds are available, so funders want to minimize risk and focus on those proposals that are most likely to succeed.
- » Funders will try to minimize their risk.
- » Own source funding can be viewed as favorably as it shows commitment and goal congruence.

Proposal Landscape

- » Key to a successful proposal is to understand the **funder's point of view**.
- » The proposal must stand out.
- » Revisit in Understanding Policy and Program Goals.

Proposal Landscape

- » **Pre-proposal** or **pre-qualification** can be very useful for a number of reasons; indication of support, direction as to the requirements of the program, advice on details of the proposal, development of a relationship.
- » Funders may “hold” funds pending your proposal
- » A key is understanding the need.
- » You can also pre-qualify the proposal, so that the investment in the development of the proposal is worthwhile.

Understanding the need

- » What is the nature of the problem?
- » Consider tools that help create understanding across many dimension.
- » **STEEPLE** – society, technology, economy, environmental, political and ethical.
- » Medicine wheel; emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual.
- » Fully consider the context, scope, breadth and depth of the need.

Understanding the need

- » Is there a crisis or critical situation you are addressing.
- » What is the nature of the crisis – natural, man-made?
- » What is the trend? Worse or better?
- » Is the rate of change increasing?



Understanding the need

- » Who is impacted by the opportunity or need?
- » Who are the beneficiaries?
- » How will they benefit?
- » Consider this broadly – individuals, family, community? Government?



Understanding the need

- » Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis
- » SWOT Analysis (Qualitative Analysis)
- » Numeric data to support the need.

Understanding the need

» SWOT



Understanding the need

- » Focus on an opportunity or threat.
- » Take advantage of an opportunity for social or economic improvement.
- » Address a threat to reduce its impact – anticipate the results and try to reduce the threat posed.
- » Can develop an approach using maximizing your community's strengths or addressing its weakness.



Understanding the need

- » How can you address this need?
- » Are you able to offer a solution that is superior to **other** solutions: better, faster, more economical, more relevant?
- » Consider how it is linked to the Nation's strategic plan – your proposal can be linked to the overall strategic plan to realize the Nation's vision.
- » Future orientation.



Understanding the solution – Logic Models

- » Logic models are tools that help us connect resources and actions into social or economic outcomes of impacts.
- » Logic models rely on logical, reasonable connections between the activities and the results.
- » Logic models create a visual – so we can see the program logic or program theory.

Understanding the solution – Logic Models

- » Logic models use five constructs.
- » **Inputs** – all of the necessary resources to realize the program.
- » **Activities** – all of the things that are done; made, presented, created and so-on to achieve the program goals.
- » **Outputs** – the results from our activities – what are the tangible, concrete results from our activities.



Understanding the solution – Logic Models

- » **Outcomes** are the social or economic results (usually an **increase** or **decrease** in a social or economic factor). For example, it could be an increase in cultural pride, or an increase in self-esteem, increase in community members creating their own businesses.
- » It can be a reduction – reduction in rate of diabetes, or reduction in gang activities, reduction in harmful behaviors.
- » Outcomes can be short, medium or long term, (1 year, 2-3 years, more than 3 years).



Understanding the solution – Logic Models

- » **Impacts** are the **long term beneficial impacts** on the community of the program.
- » These may include more First Nation businesses and improved economic opportunities.
- » Might include more employment.
- » Greater cultural retention and learning.
- » Healthier community, socially, spiritually, physically, and emotionally.



Understanding the solution – Logic Models

- » Another important consideration are the **assumptions** made about the model.
- » The assumptions should be noted on the model.
- » The results may hinge on the assumptions we make. (*“I assumed the gas tank was full!”*).

Understanding the solution – Logic Models

» The model is usually depicted;

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Money Program Providers Equipment Technology Facilities Knowledge Mission statement	To provide... To give... To do... To make...	Work done Program activities completed Often countable.	Intended by the design of the program. Outcomes relative to the program objectives.	Long term social benefits
Assumptions				

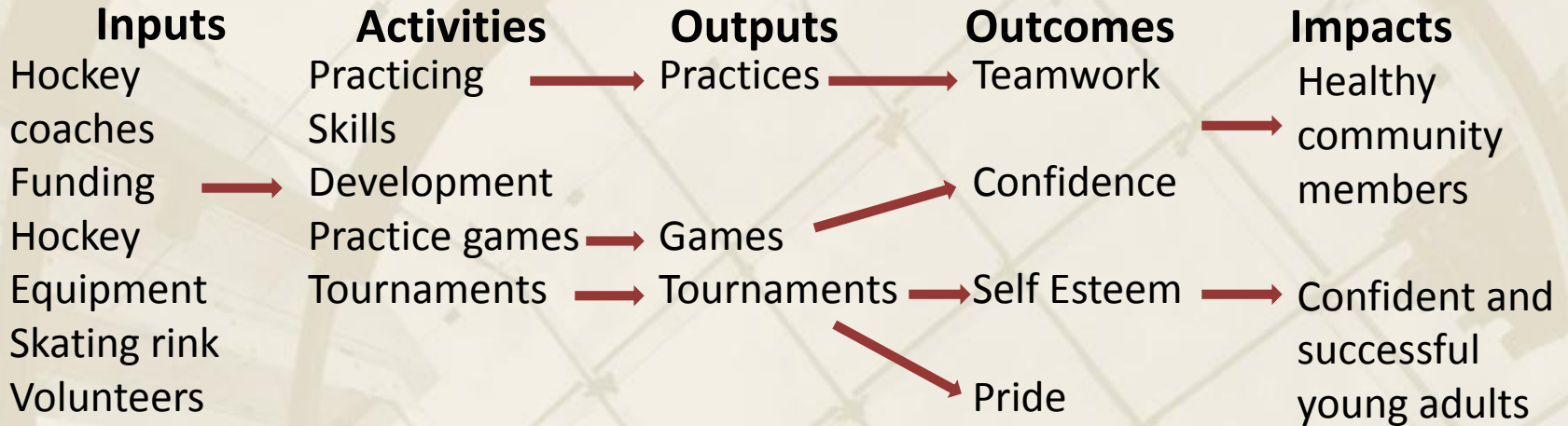
Adapted from: A Framework for Modeling Program Logics – Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement, McDavid, Huse, Hawthorn

Understanding the solution – Logic Models

- » Logic models present our program visually.
- » Logic models do three things;
 1. Categorize work around the objectives we are trying to achieve.
 2. Describe expected **cause** and **effect** connections.
 3. Distinguish what is inside (the program) and what is outside (the environment).

Adapted from: Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement, McDavid, Huse, Hawthorn

Understanding the solution – Logic Models



Hockey Program – Logic Model

Assumptions:

Measurement

Very Easy

Easy

Difficult

Very Difficult



Workplans

- » Workplans break down the key tasks and resources for the program.
- » The workplan will outline the key tasks, key responsibilities and schedule for the program.
- » The workplan may also include budgets – but these are usually included as part of the overall proposal.
- » Workplans will include the goals and objectives and demonstrate a progression to achieving those goals.

Workplans – Record the goals and objectives

- » Write down the goals for the program.
- » Use SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound.
- » Include your planned completion date.

Workplans – Define necessary tasks

- » Organize the main work tasks in chronological order.
- » Break each main work task into smaller sub-tasks.
- » Schedule the main tasks and sub tasks.
Carefully review the scheduled time to ensure that they overall program dates are achievable.
- » Also known as a work breakdown structure.



Workplans – Assign people to the tasks

- » Assign people to the various tasks and sub-tasks.
- » Use a responsibility assignment matrix to clarify roles and expectations.
- » This can be used to assist in the development of a budget and cash flow analysis.

Workplans – Responsibility Matrix - RASCI

- » **Responsible** (responsible for completing the program)
- » **Accountable** (accountable for the program, usually assigns the person responsible)
- » **Support** (assigned to support the responsible person)
- » **Consulted** (got input or opinions, subject matter experts – 2-way communication)
- » **Informed** (were informed about the project, usually 1-way)



Workplan Example

- » Develop a Long-term Infrastructure Plan - Goals and Objectives:
- » Develop a comprehensive infrastructure plan for the community that reflects the needs of members, by March 31, 2018. Comprehensive includes; budgets, workplans, human resources; community members included adults, elders and youth.

Workplan Example

» See handout for workplan example.



Budgeting Basics

- » The first part of budgeting is **planning**.
- » The second part of budgeting – is **budgeting** based on the plan.
- » The final part of budgeting is **managing**.

Budgeting Basics

- » Budgets will typically show the anticipated revenues and expenses.
- » Budgets are typically presented in categories and sub-categories.
- » **Revenues (funds)**
- » **Expenses (costs)**
- » **Surplus or Deficit (Revenue minus Expenses)**

Budgeting Basics

- » Expenses can include **direct costs** that relate specifically to the program – you will get an invoice for the product or service.
- » **Indirect cost** are often necessary, such as costs for electricity, heating, telephone and so-on – cost that you cannot directly connect with the program.
- » Indirect costs are necessary for the program.
- » Indirect costs are often calculated as **Admin Expenses** and can range between 5% to 15% or more – policies will vary about the acceptable admin costs.



Budgeting Basics

- » Typically the total expenses will equal your revenue request (unless own source funds are contributed).
- » Your detailed expenses rationalize the funder request.
- » As a result you would be expected, at the completion of the program to have a zero balance (or a **balanced budget** – the revenues balance with the expenses).

Budgeting Basics - Expenses

- » Your budgeted expenses should be **accurate**, based on quotes where applicable and should be sufficient to complete the program.
- » Details of the budgets should be kept – these can be **Notes to the Budget** or **Budget Narratives** (typically kept as an appendix to your proposal).
- » Record historical costs, quotes, formulas, any key assumptions in your Budget Narrative.
- » Be mindful of potential cost over-runs.



Budgeting Basics - Expenses

- » Budgets are predictions of the future.
- » You have to do your best to try to anticipate future costs – in the future context.
- » Contingencies allow some change in future costs – which are absorbed by the contingency fund.
- » Check with the funder if **contingencies** are allowed – this is a category for costs that exceed the expected amounts.

Budgeting Basics - Period

- » Your budget will be for a period.
- » Typically the budgeting will relate to the reporting requirements.

Budgeting Basics - Example

Pro Forma Budget	2017-2018
<u>Community Plan Proposal</u>	
Revenue	
INAC Funding	\$108,000
Own Source	\$20,000
Total Revenue	\$128,000
Expenses	
Salary	\$50,000
Wages	\$38,000
Professional Fees	\$12,000
Community Meetings	\$8,000
Rent	\$8,000
Equipment Rental	\$2,500
Graphic Designer	\$5,000
Printing	\$4,500
Total Expenses	\$128,000
Surplus/Defecit	\$0

Budgeting Basics - Example

Pro Forma Budget

2017-2018

Community Plan Proposal

Notes to the Budget

Revenue

INAC Funding	\$108,000
Own Source	\$20,000
Total Revenue	\$128,000

**Fund is up to \$125,000, based on qualifying expenses
Based on funds from Nation, approved by BCR**

Expenses

Salary	\$50,000
Wages	\$38,000
Professional Fees	\$12,000
Community Meetings	\$8,000
Rent	\$8,000
Equipment Rental	\$2,500
Graphic Designer	\$5,000
Printing	\$4,500
Total Expenses	\$128,000

**6 months of full time equivalent, PM 4 level
12 months of wages at Admin 3 level
12 days @ \$1,000 per day, based on quote from RFP, July
8 community meetings, \$1,000 per meeting at town hotel.
Office rent; office in town - no space suitable in community
Equipment for office: copier, computers and printers
Design based on quotes: 50 page document with design
Average of three quotes; includes printing and shipping**

Surplus/Deficit

\$0

Budgeting Basics - Cashflow

- » Cash is different than revenue.
- » You can spend – you can't spend revenue – you need cash to pay expenses.
- » Revenue **promised** is not cash **received**.
- » You must carefully manage your cash – this should be budgeted for as the timing of **cash inflows** and **cash outflows** can seriously impact your program.
- » People have to be paid – even if the funder's revenue is not yet received.

Budgeting Basics - Cashflow

- » Cash flow statements or budgets show the cash receipts (inflows) and cash disbursements (outflows) on a schedule – i.e. monthly, quarterly.

Budgeting Basics - Cashflow

April May June July August September

Cash Balance, Beginning

Add Cash Receipts

Total Cash before Financing

Minus Disbursements

Total Cash Disbursements

Total Cash Needed

Cash Surplus or Deficit

Financing

Borrowing (at beginning)

Repayment (at end)

Total Financing

Cash balance, Ending



Budgeting Basics – Cashflow – Scenario 1

Cash Flow Statement

Community Plan Proposal

	April	May	June
Cash Balance, Beginning	0	12000	3000
Add Cash Receipts	20000	0	0
Total Cash before Financing	20000	12000	3000
Minus Disbursements	8000	9000	9000
Total Cash Disbursements	8000	9000	9000
Total Cash Needed	8000	9000	9000
Cash Surplus or Deficit	12000	3000	-6000
Financing			
Borrowing (at beginning)	0	0	6000
Repayment (at end)	0	0	0
Total Financing	0	0	0
Cash balance, Ending	12000	3000	-6000

Staff walk off the job and go to Chief and Council to complain! APTN shows up and says the program has run out of money. You go and live off the land!

Budgeting Basics – Cashflow – Scenario 2

Cash Flow Statement

Community Plan Proposal

	April	May	June
Cash Balance, Beginning	0	12000	3000
Add Cash Receipts	20000	0	54000
Total Cash before Financing	20000	12000	57000
Minus Disbursements	8000	9000	9000
Total Cash Disbursements	8000	9000	9000
Total Cash Needed	8000	9000	9000
Cash Surplus or Deficit	12000	3000	48000
Financing			
Borrowing (at beginning)	0	0	0
Repayment (at end)	0	0	0
Total Financing	0	0	0
Cash balance, Ending	12000	3000	48000

You told your funder you needed cash in June, based on your cashflow statement – 50% was advanced early.

Staff throw you a big birthday party! Project is on track and Chief and Council thank you for your fine work!



Cash Flow Budget

- » Remember to do a cash flow budget for the proposal.
- » This is an important part of both demonstrating knowledge of your program, instilling confidence in your ability to manage the program and helping to ensure that the program effectively achieves the program goals.
- » Workplans will help you prepare your cashflow budget.

Budgeting – Record Keeping

- » Understand the funder's reporting requirements.
- » Some may require separate bank accounts.
- » In most cases the funds will have to be carefully accounted for – with very clear record keeping to associate expenses with the project.
- » Be disciplined about this.



Funders Programs and Policies

- » Programs for funding come with specific sets of criteria and goals.
- » You must understand the **criteria** for the program.
- » There may be many criteria to evaluate the proposal.
- » Your objective's must be aligned with the program goals.
- » Carefully review the stated policies, with extra attention to any stated priorities or special guidelines.

Funders Programs and Policies

- » Review the details of the program.
- » Note the eligibility requirements.
- » Review the permitted types of activities and funded expenses.
- » Review the program for any maximum funded amounts.
- » Carefully review the application deadlines and the information required with the deadline.
- » Proposals are often received that are incomplete (estimated at least 1 in 4).



Funders Programs and Policies

- » Determine the nature of the funding agreement; is it a grant, a contract, or is one of the various types of funding agreements used by the government.
- » How are surpluses treated?
- » Determine if adjustments are required: what is the process for making changes?

Funders Programs and Policies

- » Create a checklist of the criteria and eligibility.
- » Review the checklist against your proposal.
- » Make sure the proposal is complete.

Funders Programs and Policies

- » Consider sustainability of your program – this may be a very important element of the proposal.
- » Funders will look for an ability of the organization to sustain the positive changes over time.
- » Are there future revenue streams.
- » Does the program build capacity – which speaks to sustainability.

Funder Relationship

- » The relationship is valuable with the funder.
- » Try to understand who is on the other side – what is the purpose of the program- what is the program trying to achieve.
- » Know your funding officer or representative.
- » They may be able to offer advice, resources, or feedback on your proposal.



Funder Relationship

- » Understand that the funder has a role; and the funder representative has a job.
- » Important elements in the relationship are trust, confidence, reliability.
- » If you are able to create a track record of these things, you will improve your access to funding.
- » You will help the funders realize their goals and objectives.



Funder Relationship

- » Those reviewing the proposals will try to select those that are apt to be the most successful.
- » Each funded dollar to an organization is a dollar taken from another.
- » Understand what your funding officer or representative is trying to achieve – they don't want to fund a number of unsuccessful programs.



Funder Relationship

- » Develop an excellent relationship – so the funder becomes your partner in realizing shared goals.



Risk

- » Risk is associated with undesirable outcomes.
- » Risk is inherent in all activities to greater or less degrees.
- » Understanding risk in the proposal is valuable – it demonstrates an understanding of potential challenges and how you can manage them.



Risk

- » There are four main ways to manage risk:
- » Accept the risk.
- » Avoid the risk.
- » Transfer the risk.
- » Mitigate the risk.
- » Consider the options in our proposal and, where applicable include a risk strategy.
- » How will you manage the risk in your proposal?



Writing the proposal

- » Like any writing, the majority of the work is the research and preparation.
- » You have to consider who your audience is – do an analysis of who the proposal is being written for – accountants, government workers, foundation reviewers?

Writing the proposal

- » The structure of the proposal is often prescribed by the funder.
- » If not, there are a number of formats that are well suited to a proposal.

Writing the proposal – Quality of writing

- » The written proposal will help you stand-out – for better or worse!
- » Ensure it is grammatically correct.
- » Make sure it is free of errors.
- » Double check your budget figures (audience analysis)
- » Make it attractive and professional.
- » Consider an editing service.
- » The document should encourage the funders to invest in you.

Writing the proposal – Executive Summary

- » Problem identification.
- » Proposed solution.
- » Funding request.
- » Organization details.



Writing the proposal – Statement of Need

Statement of Need

- » Nature of the problem.
- » Data supporting the project.
- » Positive orientation.
- » Is there a critical element to the need?
- » Can you do it differently or better or faster?
- » Beneficiaries – who are they and how will they benefit?

Writing the proposal – Project Description

Goals- Desired Outcome

- » Objectives – Measurable – SMART

Methods

- » Specific actions, how, when and why?
- » Convince the reader it will work - it is achievable?
- » Connection to the program theory or logic model.

Writing the proposal – Project Description

Staffing/Administration

- » Discuss the staff requirements (volunteers)
- » Task to be undertaken
- » Fulltime and part-time
- » Consultants
- » Qualifications
- » Administration

Writing the proposal – Project Description

Performance Management and Evaluation

- » Evaluation plan of how things will be evaluated?
- » How performance will be measured and managed?
- » Could be measured based on program model – including outputs, outcomes and impact.
- » Qualitative and Quantitative.

Writing the proposal – Project Description

Sustainability

- » How will the project demonstrate long term viability?
- » Is it finite – start stop dates?
- » Capacity building – enduring future value?
- » Specific about current and future revenue streams?

Writing the proposal – Budget

- » Expense Budget
- » Direct and Indirect Costs
- » Revenue Budget
- » Own source revenues
- » Funding request
- » Budget Narrative – Notes to the budget, Footnotes
- » Explanatory Notes

Writing the proposal – Schedule

- » Key dates and milestones
- » Responsibility matrix.



Writing the proposal – Organization details

- » Outline of your organization
- » Board members
- » Mission
- » Organizational Structure
- » Expertise relating to the program

Writing the proposal – Conclusion

- » Focus on Future
- » Next steps
- » Final appeal
- » Reiterate the need



Writing the proposal – Another example

- » Executive Summary (1 page)
- » Background/Overview (2 Pages)
- » Goals/Objectives (1 Page)
- » Principles and Assumptions (2 pages)
- » Program Description (1 Page)
- » Methods and Activities (1-3 pages)
- » Schedule (1-2 Pages)
- » Human Capital (1 Page)
- » Evaluation Plan (1 Page)
- » Budget (1-2 Pages)
- » Sustainability
- » Evaluation Plan
- » Organization Information (1/2 – 1 Page)
- » Conclusion (1/2 Page)
- » Appendices (Supporting Documents, details, analysis)
- » Cover Letter (1 Page)

Thank you!

