Special Cases in Proposal Development: Large-Scale, Multidisciplinary and/or Multi-Organizational Proposals

October 30th, 2013
1:00PM EDT
Introduction

Questions: Please use the Q&A pod located at the bottom of your screen

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Audio problems: Please email ynagashima@hanoverresearch.com or call 202-350-4681.

Recording: All webinar registrants will be emailed a link to access the recorded webinar and additional materials.
Global research and grant development firm headquartered in Washington, DC

We provide solutions to:

- Higher Education
- K-12
- Healthcare Organizations
- Hospitals
- Municipalities
- Non-profits
Our full-cycle proposal development solutions were developed to enable increased competitiveness and results for our partners. They include:

**Capacity Building and Pre-Proposal**
- RFP analysis
- Relationship building strategies
- Grants calendar for specific grant makers
- Funder overview/analysis
- Funding prospect research
- Grants capabilities assessment survey and analysis
- Grantseeking strategy memo

**Proposal Development**
- Mission critical proposal review
- LOI production
- Comprehensive proposal review/critique
- Concept paper development
- Program/research design consulting
- Proposal rewriting
- Foundation proposal production
- Federal proposal production

**Post Award**
- Foundation grant outcomes reporting
- Multiyear comparative data analysis
- Grant application renewal review
- Proposal rewriting and resubmission
- Quantitative and qualitative program evaluation
- Grant evaluation
During today’s webinar, we will cover the following topics:

- Planning considerations for combinations of groups, including multi-disciplinary and multi-organizational partnerships
- Best practices for managing the development process for complex proposals
- Strategies for successful program evaluation and sustainability planning
- Case Studies—examples of planning challenges and successes
Bryan DeBusk, PhD, GPC draws from his experience in academia and the laboratory to assist partners in pursuing federal and private funding. He works with higher ed and healthcare partners to develop evidence-based programs and refine innovative research ideas that are both competitive in peer review and manageable in practice.

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Susan Perri, MPA has a decade of experience designing, writing, and managing grant programs for organizations nationwide. Her track record securing federal, state, corporate and foundation funding has yielded over $30 Million in healthcare, education, economic development and environmental conservation programming. Susan has also served on multiple federal and community grant review panels including the U.S. Department of Education. She is a member of the Grant Professionals Association (GPA) and serves as the Acquisitions Manager for the GPA peer-reviewed Journal.

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Best Practices for Managing Complex Proposal Development

What makes a proposal complex?

- Multiple collaborating programs/departments, centers, or institutions
- Multiple projects and/or core resources
- Substantial institutional commitment in financial or other resources
- Related but distinct components managed/envisioned/implemented by distinct individuals or groups
Major Challenges in Proposal Development

- Keeping all team members engaged
- Keeping all cores/programs aligned with the overall vision
- Maintaining timelines
- Obtaining institutional and departmental data
- Pushback from other programs (turf battles)
- Budget creep
- Personality and capabilities management
Strategic Interdisciplinary Research Office (SIRO) at Pennsylvania State University Recommendations

1. Planning to plan

2. Three phases of proposal development:
   - Framing
   - Collaboration
   - Refinement

3. Sustainable process
Best Practices

Understanding the RFP

- Confirm eligibility and obtain institutional approval for applying
- Break down the RFP in such a way that everyone involved clearly understands all requirements
  - Summarize funder’s goal(s)
  - Identify all required components of the proposal package
  - Define key terms for members of the team who are less familiar with specialty language
Best Practices

Proposal Development Timeline

- Establish a timeline for all activities in the three proposal development phases (framing/planning, collaboration, refinement)
  - Analysis and Planning
  - Problem Development
  - Program Officer Input
  - Partnerships
  - Management/Personnel
  - Budget
  - Proposal Writing
### From a SAMHSA Primary Care/Behavioral Health Integration Grant (2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section A: Population of Focus Statement</th>
<th>Assigned Team</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic profile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship of population of focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe nature of the problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe how currently provide primary care/health home services to SMI clients</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section B: Proposed Evidence-Based Service/Practice</th>
<th>Assigned Team</th>
<th>Timing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe purpose of project including goals and objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe evidenced-Based Practice that will be used and justify its use for population of focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe any modifications that will be made to EBP with reasons for modifications</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section C: Proposed Implementation Approach</th>
<th>Assigned Team</th>
<th>Timing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe proposal with regards to the required health home services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe plan to meet Meaningful Use Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>How will individuals be identified and referred to the health home program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe anticipated program, policy, and reimbursement barriers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe how achievement of goals will produce meaningful /relevant health outcomes for your community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide a chart or graph depicting a realistic time line for entire project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe how you will ensure meaningful participation of consumers/peers and family members</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Best Practices

Establish a Team

- Principal Investigator
- University Advocate
- Development Specialist
- Research Administrators
## Roles and responsibilities by phase of proposal timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Phase 1: Framing</th>
<th>Phase 2: Collaboration</th>
<th>Phase 3: Refinement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal Investigator</strong> (PI)</td>
<td>• Finalize key participant &amp; collaborator list; Recruit partners&lt;br&gt;• Define proposal outline (incl. Vision, Goals, &amp; Themes)&lt;br&gt;• Start writing assignment outline&lt;br&gt;• Identify graphics&lt;br&gt;• Draft/estimate budget&lt;br&gt;• Identify necessary University resources (Admin Issues, Space, Data, Cost Share)&lt;br&gt;• Interpret solicitation, and identify appropriate teaming Strategies</td>
<td>• Refine partner participation; identify external commitment letters&lt;br&gt;• Finalize writing assignments&lt;br&gt;• Identify management structure&lt;br&gt;• Refine budget and cost share&lt;br&gt;• Identify internal commitment letters&lt;br&gt;• Compile technical plan draft text and prepare for University review</td>
<td>• Track writing assignments &amp; follow-up with missing contributions&lt;br&gt;• Finalize management structure&lt;br&gt;• Finalize budget, justification and cost share&lt;br&gt;• Finalize Commitment Letters (internal/external)&lt;br&gt;• Review technical plan and make final edits based on University review&lt;br&gt;• Verify that Institutional approvals have been obtained to submit the proposal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Needs to be supportive of the 12-week plan. Ultimately controls the process, but relies on key players to complete tasks and stay on the timeline.*

## Proposal Team & 3 Development Phases

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<tr>
<td>Advocate (AV)</td>
<td>• Participate in University limited submission process</td>
<td>• Verify writing assignments and draft text components are on track.</td>
<td>• Participate in the proposal University review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contact with PI to verify necessary University resources (space, cost share, admin support)</td>
<td>• Support the PI</td>
<td>• Support the PI</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Verify that the PI has completed initial proposal vision/goals outline</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Verify that University approvals have been obtained to submit the proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>• Organize limited submission process</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Select and support PI/Advocate with necessary resources</td>
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*Needs to be identified by University and PI. We recommend an institutional administrator (i.e. Research Dean, Institute Director, Department Head)

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<td><strong>Development Specialist (DV)</strong></td>
<td>• Serve as a catalyst in University limited submission process</td>
<td>• Refine partner participation</td>
<td>• Assist w/ finalizing commitment letters</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assist PI in conceptualizing Draft/estimate budget</td>
<td>• Coordinate drafts for nontechnical proposal pieces</td>
<td>• Coordinate and make final edits based on University review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify necessary University resources (Admin Issues, Space, Data, Cost Share, outreach, diversity)</td>
<td>• Interpret solicitation, and identify appropriate teaming strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interpret solicitation, and identify appropriate teaming strategies</td>
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<td>• Help compile technical plan draft text and prepare for University review</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Edit text if necessary</td>
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*Are typically Masters or PhD-level professionals who serve as catalysts in the proposal process and participants in writing/editing.

# Proposal Team & 3 Development Phases

## Roles and responsibilities by phase of proposal timeline

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</table>
| **Research Administrators (RAs)** | • Draft/estimate budget  
• Identify necessary University resources (Admin Issues, Space, Data, Cost Share)  
• Interpret solicitation, provide feedback; contact sponsor if necessary | • Contact participants for Biosketches, Current/Pending Support, CIO tables, Appendix material  
• Refine budget and cost share  
• Assist w/ commitment letters (internal/external)  
• Compile draft text | • Finalize budget, justification and cost share  
• Assist with finalizing commitment letters  
• Review proposal text for compliance issues  
• Verify that University approvals have been obtained to submit the proposal |

*University authority for proposal submission. Assist w/ compliance, budget and administrative functions.

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**NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award**

- 5-year, ~$20M Center grants to establish integrated resources to improve CT science
- Single institution with multiple departments and resources or multiple institutions
- Original solicitation included ~15 separate Cores and Resources with independent descriptions in the proposal (~250-page narrative; ~750-page full proposal)
Case Study - CTSA

- Research Administrators and External Consultant directed the collection of supplemental documents
- Dedicated RA compiled all documents, and Dedicated RA and external consultant reviewed and revised all materials
- PI, University Advocate, and Dedicated RA ensured all university approvals were complete prior to submission
Best Practices

Problem Development

- Define vision & goals
- Develop a proposal outline
- Estimate the budget and obtain institutional approval for cost share / other commitments
- Obtain institutional data or review preliminary data to support need statement or rationale
- Refine outline with project team
Best Practices

Solicit Funder Input

- Contact Program Officers for Feedback
  - Email or phone
  - Elevator pitch
  - Concept/white paper
- Refine outline with project team
Establishing Partnerships

- Recruiting internal and external partners
- Defining and refining partner involvement
- Formalizing partner involvement with MOUs
- Soliciting and obtaining support letters
  - Templates vs. outlines
  - Timeline challenges
Case Study - CTSA

- Two External Partners
  - For-profit healthcare system with large patient population but limited research infrastructure
  - Independent university campus within the same state system
- Identified representatives from partners to participate in the full proposal development process
- Integrated personnel from external partners in multiple Cores and Programs
Best Practices

Effective Management/ Personnel Planning

- Identify management structure
- Collect and edit biosketches
- Write and secure internal commitment letters
Best Practice

Budgeting

- Draft an internal budget
- Determine external partner needs and determine budget division
- Determine cost share needs
- Secure cost share
- Refine overall budget and prepare justification
- Confirm budget is aligned with all activities included in the proposal narrative
Case Study - CTSA

- Collaborative Budget Process
  - Core and Program Directors submitted requests
  - Senior leadership team and university advocate identified opportunities for university contributions
  - University advocate obtained institutional commitments
  - Senior leadership team and university advocate reviewed and revised Core and Program requests
  - Core and Program Directors submitted revised requests
  - Senior leadership team revised and finalized budgets
Proposal Writing

- Prepare a style guide
- Establish a shared document repository and guidelines for editing, file names, and file ownership
- Assign writing sections and prepare drafts
- Compile first draft and revise
- Circulate for comments and revise again
- Internal and external review and additional revision
- Full revision for unified style, consistency, and final check for alignment with RFP requirements and internal/external requirements
- Compliance checks, internal/external signoff
Case Study - CTSA

- Distributed proposal writing
  - 12 of 15 Core/Program directors developed their first drafts
  - 3 of 15 Core/Program directors requested that the external consultant assist with the first draft
  - PI and external consultant drafted the overview

- Centralized revision and editing
  - Senior leadership and external consultant reviewed all drafts
  - External consultant directed subsequent revision cycles and was responsible for the final stylistic revision and consistency check for the full proposal
Best Practices

Other Useful Tools and Techniques

- Planning Retreats
- Style Guides
- Shared Document Storage (Dropbox, Google Docs, institutional options)
- Multiple review cycles
Case Study - CTSA

- 3 planning retreats (two in framing/planning phase and one in collaboration phase)
  - Retreat 1—reviewed RFP, agreed on overall vision, assigned writing tasks and established timeline
  - Retreat 2—Core and Program directors outlined their ideas and received feedback prior to developing full drafts
  - Retreat 3—Reviewed first drafts
Case Study - CTSA

- Internal/External review
  - Full project team reviewed the full proposal (prior to final stylistic revision and consistency check)
  - Three external reviewers reviewed the full proposal
  - Team and external reviewers provided written feedback
  - University advocates reviewed the proposal and provided feedback in a session with senior leadership
Best Practices

Evaluation Planning

- Develop metrics
- Measure community impact
- Research activity
- Educational and outreach programming and development
- Other tangible returns
- Apportioning faculty credit
- Benchmarking
Evaluation Resources

Best Practices

Sustainability Planning

- Show broad stakeholder support and buy-in via institutional commitment and adoption of program budget line items.
- Identify partners who will provide certain services to or support.
- The grantee and partners should demonstrate leveraged resources to take grant capital and keep a program going.
Thank You

Thank you for participating in this Hanover Research webinar. A link to the recording of this webinar and a post-webinar brief will be emailed to you.