

NEED

When possible, use local data to support your need. Be sure to look for the most current data and cite your sources. A good source for local data is <https://www.mwhealth.org/Learning-Insights/Health-Data-Center>, which provides health and demographic statistics for the region. If there isn't sufficient local data available, we recommend including anecdotal and other qualitative data to demonstrate your knowledge of the need. If there are other organizations providing similar services, note how your organization is different.

PROGRAM DESIGN

This section is the heart of your proposal. Don't be afraid to include a lot of detail in this section. Fleshing out the details is important so that reviewers can understand the flow of your proposed project.

- Include how many people will be served and how. Provide as clear a picture of your constituents as possible. Also describe how they will be recruited. If this is a new population for your organization, detail how you will reach them.
- Detail what kinds of activities the grant will support. Give times, frequency and duration where possible. This will help reviewers understand the scope and intensity of the intervention.
- Be honest about the barriers your organization may face in implementing this project. It is not unusual to have challenges when starting a new program.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Try to be succinct about your organization's history and services. The reviewers are more interested in your current ability to provide this service than your longevity or size. List the staff who will be involved in their project and their experience working on projects like this and/or with the target population.

OUTCOMES

The outcomes section of the proposal is often applicants' biggest challenge. The reviewers want to know how many will be served, but even more they want to know residents' health will improve because of your project. This section is where you can further explain your logic model, as the logic model is meant to be a short visual representation of your project's activities, outputs and outcomes.

TRACKING SUCCESS

Reviewers want to know that you can measure your results. Do you have an existing database that tracks client progress? Do you have baseline data? Is the measurement instrument your organization uses appropriate to the project, clients, intervention, etc.? Often applicants will cite an outcome with no way of measuring it because the data is not able to be captured by the applicant, e.g. reduction in ER visits.

HEALTH EQUITY

Stating that your organization does not discriminate and is open to everyone is not sufficient. Reviewers want to know how you will help underserved populations overcome the barriers to receiving your services. Talk about how you engage the community in your work and why your agency is well-positioned to serve disenfranchised populations. Check the literature for known health disparities in your work. Be honest about the challenges you have faced serving linguistic and ethnic racial minorities and/or low-income individuals and how you have adapted to serve them more effectively. Reviewers want to have confidence you understand who is most adversely affected by the issue you are addressing and that you have plan to engage that community.

COLLABORATION

Letters of collaboration are not the same thing as letters of support. Letters should detail how each partner will contribute to the project, not just that they believe it is a worthy idea. Reviewers take notice when applications lack letters of collaboration from organizations specifically mentioned in the proposal. They also do not look favorably upon duplicated form letters from collaborators.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustaining a program is not just about replacing foundation funding. Stating you are planning to apply to other foundations is not viewed as a viable plan by reviewers. You should think about elements of the project that can be absorbed by your agency or one of your collaborators at the end of the grant period. Detail your successful efforts to sustain other projects started with private grant funds. If there is a potential funding stream, be sure to mention that. Be as specific as possible.

FINAL TIPS

- Please help the reviewers by using 12-point font. Do not use a smaller font to fit the narrative to the ten-page limit.
- Reviewers find it easier to read your proposal when you include the questions in the section headings.
- Reviewers come from diverse backgrounds and knowledge of health issues. Don't assume they know as much as you do about the issue area you are addressing. Try not

to use acronyms or terms that are not universally known. One reviewer noted, “I shouldn’t have to Google it.”