

ngNOG -November 2007
Bayero University Kano

Writing Good Project Proposals and Reports

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Permit me to start with a disclosure!

I have written some proposals and lots of reports but never told anybody how to do one. So consider me on virgin territory.

Don't get me wrong it was an opportunity to explore. It seems it is a gold mine!

The Other Perspective

- Next time we have exchanges on these issues-you must hear from the horses mouth.
- Good to know what the donors think about the proposals and reports that we write.
- It is what they say that really counts-
anyway let's get on with it!

The Origin of Proposals

- *A proposal is developed from ideas from one or more members of a team.*
- *There is a dire need to discuss the proposal exhaustively so that every member of the team has the same conception of it.*
- *Then one member of the team goes to the drawing board and produces a draft which is discussed and approved by the team.*
- *That is the beginning of the exercise!*

The Sharing Trick

- *Share the draft with professional proposal writers in Your Advancement/Development Office.*
- *Share the draft with colleagues with relevant experience*
- *Share the draft with as many operators as you can.*
- *The proposal can only be better as a result.*

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A Big Institutional Project

- Starts with Publicity. An advert and RFP.
- Independently solicit proposals from ECOE.
- Project proposal born out of a big idea with component parts.
- Never loose sight of the big picture.
- Proposal in line with institutional SP commitments.
- Relevant quotes from the strategic plan confirm so.

Monotony and Guidelines

- Maps, Charts, Tables and Bullets to focus attention and bring diversity into the narrative.
- Follow the donor's proposal guideline even if an alternative is allowed.
- No given guideline- study a few old proposals and fashion one out for yourself.

Outputs and Outcomes

- Outputs are the products which come out of the project.
- Outcomes are long term benefits much harder to measure.
- Be modest about outputs and outcomes.
- They are self imposed bench marks against which the donor will assess you.
- Be modest and be an over achiever.
- If you are too ambitious you may be seen as an under achiever.

Summary, Work Plan and Budget

- Provide an executive summary.
- Provide a work plan with realistic timelines.
- Provide a comprehensive budget.

Publicity, Publicity, Publicity

- Create a project web site;
- Talk about the project within your institution – lunch time seminars ideal.
- You can learn so much from independent observers.
- Give the project publicity at national and international conferences.
- The donor likes publicity too!

The Jos Carnegie Proposal(2002)

\$2,000, 000.

- We go through the JCP proposal to illustrate the use of these procedures.
- 150 pages; written in 9 months with several international reviews.
- Was a stressful adventure.
- Great fulfilment when award was made.

Jos HP (2007)

- A little one -\$70, 000.
- 6 pages; prepared in one week.
- Little sleep doing essentially nothing else.
- Writing and rewriting; interacting with the team.
- A pilot in the making.

What about good reports?

Report internally more frequently than donor prescribes.

- If the benefactor expects annual reports in a given format?
- Request monthly reports in a table format. Work plan plus one column.
- Request quarterly reports in the prescribed format for annual reports. (share the advantages)

Remember

- The donor does not want to get excuses for not accomplishing tasks!
- The donor expects you anticipated and factored out all likely delays.
- Reports should most of time say task accomplished within time lines.
- Does not mean you can not time lines not met or work plan rescheduled. Just don't do it all the time.

Presentation

- Report successes first;
- Challenges MUST follow;
- Donor may provide additional support if justified;
- Donor may put in a word to influence your DM.
- Make sure you enjoy the full confidence of the program officer. Your greatest ally! You have common interest –to make the project successful.

Current Trends in Proposal Writing and Reporting

- Do a logic model.
- Do an instrumentation plan.
- Follow up with QNDA and QLDA.
- Methods of QLDA now made transparent through software such as Atlas.ti
- Increasingly professional support will be necessary.
- Jos supporting a RET team for capacity building.

JCP-ICT Math

We review a report of the small JCP- MATH
ICT intervention.

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