



Corporate and Foundation Relations

DEVELOPING YOUR GRANT PROPOSAL

Following are questions to help you think through and begin to draft your proposal. Of course, grant applications and specifications vary, but this guide is a solid start to making any case for support.

1. What exactly is the problem you propose to solve for the local community, the region, the nation, or the world?

Note that this is not a question about how you will address the issue, nor is it a question about your/JMU's/your department's needs. Summarize your answer in 2-3 sentences, and to support your problem statement, also answer these questions:

- What data and sources can you cite to support your assertion of this need?
- How did you determine the need exists? What formal or informal assessment have you conducted?
- Who is affected by this need?
- What will happen if you don't address this problem now? Will the need grow? Will the cost to address it rise? How else will the problem evolve over the short and long term?

2. What will improve because of your efforts?

Summarize your answer in a sentence or two. To define scope and anticipate impact, also answer these questions:

- How well/how widely will you be able to address or fix the problem?
- Who will be helped by your solution to this problem? (Likely a subset of the "who is affected" population.)
- What specifically do you imagine will be different? Provide measurable objectives and target finish dates.

3. What is the workplan?

- What exactly will you do? A timeline can be a great way to answer this question. Be specific about your activities and rationale.
- Why is this your plan, and how did you come up with it? Have you collaborated with other experts? Are you following up on a pilot project? Are you modeling this on something else that was successful?

- Do you have previous experience that's relevant to this project and will ensure that the work gets done well and on time?
- Who will be involved in implementing the plan? Name specific individuals and summarize their credentials (e.g. degrees, certifications, security clearances). Also specify organizations and departments and explain why they are important.

4. Describe your research plan.

- For programs: What kinds of assessments (summative v. formative) will be conducted? Who will conduct them?
- For research: What is your methodology? What tools will be used for data collection? How will you analyze data? Who will be involved?

5. What is the future of your program or research?

- What will happen when the grant period ends?
- What is your sustainability plan?
- How will you use the data you've collected to continue or improve?

6. What parts of the plan require funding? How much do you need?

- Include salaries (OSP may assist with full budgeting of these personnel costs), travel, equipment, supplies and materials, consultants and contractors, construction, etc.
- Have you already received funding from any other source?

7. Summarize as briefly as possible what you are proposing.

- Replace jargon.
- Examples: *research the effectiveness of providing free peanut butter for improving job satisfaction* or *residency program for harmonica proteges in the Shenandoah Valley*

8. Please share anything else you believe will strengthen your proposal.

- What preliminary research has been completed or seed data collected?
- Have you already experienced success on a smaller scale or with a related effort?
- Do you have any moving stories to share?



We are here to help you talk through your ideas, identify prospective funders, and complete the proposal process.

Please email Karen Risch Mott at rischmke@jmu.edu or call (540) 568-5926.