Bid Writing Masterclass part 2: the win strategy

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AGENDA:

6:00 – 6:10 1: Recap

6:10 – 6:30 2: Funders POV

6:30 – 6:50 3: Writing with Purpose

6:50 – 7:10 4: Effective Editing

7.10 – 7.20 5: Critical Friend

7:20 – 7.30 6: Questions & Close

1: Recap

"The quicker you become compliant, the sooner you can compete!"

Housekeeping Rules:

"Before you can bid and win grant funding, you must 'get your house in order first"!

Pre Qualification

- Organisational Overview – Legal Status & Governing Structure
- Financial Standing – Accounts & Insurance
- Policies & Procedures – Compliant with legislation

Funding Landscape

- Who distributes funding: grant making trusts, foundations, charities, local and central governments
- Difference between a Grant and Service Contract
- Use Portals
- Subscribe to Funding Newsletters

Think it through…

- Do I have the right legal structure to apply?
- Are my accounts up to date?
- Have I taken out appropriate insurance cover?
- Do I need to create or review my policies?
- Does my website/social media channels need an MOT?

2. Funders POV

Understanding funder objectives:

"It's not about what I can offer, but what they want from me!"

- The website, specification or guidance documents will clearly state why the fund has been set up
- Funders always let you know who the funding should benefit
- Funders always outline in detail what they what they want to fund or 'buy'
- Instructions/guidance documents should be read and taken seriously

Example:

Esmée Fairbairn **Foundation** aims to improve the quality of life for people and communities throughout the **UK** both now and in the future.

The Foundation is one of the largest independent **grant-makers** in the UK. In 2018 we made grants of £40.5 million towards a wide range of work **within the arts, children and young people, the environment and social change**.

We believe that **communities working together with partner organisations** or social movements can make more of a difference to people's lives. We support **creative or unexpected approaches** to community action, and work that makes the sharing and exchange of ideas, methods or data easier.

Think it through…

- What is the funders background, vision, objectives and priorities?
- What is the scope of services?
- What is their preferred approach and methodology?
- What time frame have they set?
- Can you deliver the outputs and outcomes?

3. Writing with Purpose

"Tailoring responses to a bid, tender or grant application"

The art of winning a bid, is learning how to tell a story in a compelling, convincing and concise way!

The best tool is persuasion - understanding the funder, identifying their need, and then showing that you have the solution

Your project description needs to explain:

- What you are going to do
- How you are going to do it (including the resources you will need)
- When you will do each thing you need to do
- Who will be responsible - both for individual activities and for the overall management of the project
- How you will know you have done it

Describing & Defining your Project:

	Definition:	Example:
Aims:	The changes you are trying to achieve. They describe the difference you plan to make in the lives of the people you work with.	• To increase confidence and self-esteem • To improve the mental health of women on Anyplace Housing Estate • To enable women to find employment
Objectives:	The planned activities which will enable you to achieve your aims.	• To facilitate a support group for isolated women • To provide training in job search skills • To provide information and advice on local volunteering opportunities
Outcomes:	The changes, benefits, learning or other effects that actually occur as a result of your activities.	• Increased confidence and self-esteem • Improved mental health • Increased numbers of women taking up voluntary work
Outputs:	The detailed activities, services and products your organisation actually does or provides i.e. what is on the 'menu' for service users, what they're actually able to access	• Befriending service for isolated women • One to one counselling service • Job search training

Example:

We plan to **provide an outreach service** for **isolated women** on the **Anywhere estate**, including **older women, new mothers, those with mental health issues**, etc. We will **support 20 women per year**. The service will include **five home visits each week and a drop-in session** at the community centre on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. The home visits and drop-in sessions will be **run by a part-time support worker** (16 hours p/w) and the overall project will be **co-ordinated by a part-time project manager** (21 hours p.w.) The support worker will keep records re: **the women who access the service, including demographic information, case notes and feedback from 6-monthly reviews**. The project manager will **evaluate the service each year and write a report** for the Management Committee.

Think it through...

Section:
- What is the purpose / function of this part of the application?
- If the title is 'Capacity + Capability' focus on what you have to offer i.e. your qualifications, skills, experience, team, relationships, resources
- Don't cross-reference – multiple people will be involved in assessing different sections
- Always check the guidance – it provides clues to what is expected

Paragraph:
- Short – no longer than 10 lines
- Don't crowd the paragraph with too many ideas – make each one distinct
- Link paragraphs – so the flow of information is sequential/logical

Sentences:
- Short – 20 to 25 words max
- Be specific – no ambiguity – say what you mean – don't assume they know anything about you
- Mind your grammar
- Use plain English

Top Tips...

- Mirror key words from the question in your answer
- Write for the reader
- Use bullet points to break up text, short sentences and paragraphs
- Stick to the word or character count
- Make sure your application is a mix of story and stats
- Insert relevant evidence and research – more facts, less anecdotes
- Avoid jargon and acronyms
- Don't overly dwell on past glories - communicate added value
- Include case studies to demonstrate track record
- If you're struggling to respond to a question, see if you have the answer somewhere else, i.e. in your Business Plan, website or in a Policy

4: Effective Editing

"Conveying complex issues in language that can be clearly understood"

The 5 C's of Editing

1. **CORRECTNESS** – eliminating errors in grammar, spelling, sentence structure and punctuation
2. **CONSISTENCY** – in terms of style and phrasing (even if other people contributed) the goal is to ensure the text flows
3. **CONCISENESS** – presenting information clearly and comprehensively, in few words without surplus detail
4. **CONTINUITY** – making sure your points are set out in a logical order
5. **Coordination** – version control, number your drafts, then refine and review it

5: Critical Friend

- Always try to ask someone who knows nothing about your work to read the application to see whether they understand your project and whether your answers to the questions make sense.
- They can look for errors or inconsistencies and ask for explanations.

External Evaluation:

- Helps you to see the funders POV – not your own
- Makes sure you answer the question
- Removes emotion and inserts objectivity
- Weeds out 'extra padding'
- Helps to determine your ability to undertake the work
- Provides constructive criticism
- Helps with submission – final quality check
- Gives you time away from writing – so you can breathe!

Final Thoughts

Successful bid writers…

- Are technical in their style
- Know how to write clearly and directly
- Work methodically
- Does what the funder asks
- Cares about detail
- Understands outputs and adding value

We welcome your feedback

Please complete a short feedback form.

The following link is posted in the chat room, and will be sent via email:

- https://app.impactreporting.co.uk/surveys/VYnx75/r/e/10565

For information about how the British Library will use your personal data, you can view the Privacy Policy at:

https://www.bl.uk/about-us/privacy-policy'

Thank you.

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