



NISN FACILITIES PROGRAM

Grant and Proposal Development Topic 2: Project Design

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A photograph showing a person's legs from the knees down, wearing bright red, high-top boots with intricate floral and geometric embroidery in blue, green, and orange. The person is standing on a stack of seven books. The books, from top to bottom, are: 'COLUMBUS | MARTIN DUGARD', 'THE AMERICAN IDEA' (with 'The Best of The Atlantic Monthly' on the cover), 'THE LAST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS' by Martin Dugard, 'THE VOYAGE OF THE VIZCAINA' by Clemens Höges, 'COLUMBUS THE FOUR VOYAGES' by Lawrence Bergreen, 'CONQUEST' by Hugh Thomas, and 'CORTES'. The bottom-most book is 'The Conquistadors'. The background shows a library with bookshelves filled with books and a window with a view of a blue sky and trees.

BACKGROUND

This slide set is part of a learning module for school leaders who are writing grants and other types of funding proposals.

For access to other slides in this series and referenced tools, visit the [Facilities Resource Hub](#) and [Preparing Grant Requests](#) module.

TOPIC OVERVIEW

This topic covers project planning and describing your project. These processes vary widely depending on the type of funder, type of project, award amount, and grant guidance. Some general tips are provided to get you started but the leading planning considerations should be the grant instructions and the review criteria.

INITIAL PLANNING

We have learned over the years that it is helpful to define key project characteristics and create an initial budget as one of the first steps.

This doesn't set anything in stone! It does make the team think about scope and priorities early. And it helps everyone understand how far the dollars will go.

This saves time, saves rework, helps identify needed inputs (e.g., budget estimates, additional partners), and helps maintain focus on the core of the proposal.

INITIAL PROJECT MAPPING

Think like a reporter and write down:

- Who?
- What?
- Where?
- Why?
- When?
- How Much?



INITIAL PROJECT MAPPING

- **Who** | Who will be the focus of work (certain grades, classes, families, etc.)? Who are the partners and stakeholders?
- **What** | What will you be doing (interventions, strategies, broad activity areas, a phase of facility design and planning)?
- **Where** | Where will the project/program take place? Where will its benefits be felt? Where are beneficiaries located? Do students need to be transported?
- **Why** | Why is the project or programming needed? Why are you the best entity to meet the need?
- **When** | When will the project/grant take place? When will major work phases take place?
- **How Much** | How much funding will you need? How much will you accomplish (e.g., # people in programming, # sessions, building phases completed)?

ROUGH BUDGETING

Some groups like to tackle the budget first-which is great! If you don't do a full detailed budget, at least create a rough budget to guide planning and development of your proposed work. Rough budgets:

- Show your true “ceiling” of funds for awards that have a maximum amount by accounting for proportional costs (e.g., indirect/overhead) and costs required by the grantor (e.g., required training trips)
- Capture estimated big costs (like personnel or major construction expenses) to show the major driving forces of your budget and what is left to spend
- Capture costs that are necessary—before you start thinking about desired spending
- Give you an early idea of how much money is available for sub-grants and contracts, if applicable, which helps guide those conversations with third parties

ROUGH BUDGETING

Items to Include in Rough Budgets

- Total funding requested and amount per year
- Overhead or indirect rate or costs
- Required spending (e.g., grantee training, % for evaluation)
- Estimated staffing dollars (current and hired, salary + fringe)
- Approximate cost for major scope pieces (program cycles)
- Major equipment/facility purchases (transit costs can be high when located in Tribal areas)
- Construction cost areas (include a % for contingencies)
- Amount for any contracts and contracting amounts
- Travel costs, if mileage or out-of-state travel is significant



Jan

- 19. Today → Planning
Mt. Tim. Table
- 26. Fix Track Camp/Study Hall
Exercise

Feb

- 2. Chop
- 9. Computer
Agriculture
- 16. Rock

March

- 2. Bosque Bike Ride
- 9. Arrow Heads
Traditional Arts
- 16. Anti-Bully Project
(Eagle work)
- x23. Spring Break
- 30. Ninja Park

April

- 6. Eagle Wolf (Art)
- 13. Agriculture
→ bike ride to Keweenaw
- 20. Planting Day
- 27. (G.O.N.) → Zell?
(CAMPING)
& Fishing

May

- 4. Service Day

Writing about
Project Design

NACA
STANDS WITH
STANDING ROCK
Water is Life
Nani Nishon
To'ei'ima
Kya'alka'ho
Sle'w'ishon

Lower
Truth

PROJECT DESIGN

Typical placement
of the program or
project
description in a
grant narrative

Needs Statement

Project Design

Goals and Objectives

Organization & Partner
Info

Evaluation



PROJECT DESIGN ELEMENTS

Common Project Information Needed in Proposals

- Overall project description
- Justification of approach
- Activities
- Details of execution
- Timeline



PROJECT DESIGN SECTION TIPS

Tips for Describing your Project

- Address the needs and barriers you identify in a need/problem statement (see Topic 3: Demonstrating Need)
- Talk about overall approaches and strategies
- Be detailed and specific about what will happen
- Highlight use of best-practices and evidence-based methods
- Paint a picture of the program or project, the reviewer should be able to envision the work
- Think about including a timeline—even if not requested