



# NISN FACILITIES PROGRAM

## Grant and Proposal Development Topic 5: Writing about your School, Staff, and Partners

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A photograph showing a person's legs from the knees down, wearing bright red, high-top boots with colorful floral embroidery. The person is standing on a stack of seven books. The books are stacked vertically, with the following titles visible from top to bottom: 'COLUMBUS | MARTIN DUGARD', 'THE AMERICAN IDEA', 'COLUMBUS', 'THE VOYAGE OF THE VIZCAINA', 'COLUMBUS', 'CONQUEST HUGH THOMAS', and 'CORTES'. The background shows a library setting with bookshelves filled with books and a window with a view of the outdoors.

## 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 grant/proposal areas focused on your school, partners, and staff. These can appear in various areas of the narrative and may split up general organization information and project-specific information. Often, funders ask for accompanying attachments like resumes. The following slides cover general tips for presenting you capacity and capability well—but always craft your responses to meet funder instructions.

# ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Typical placement  
of organization  
descriptions in a  
grant narrative

Needs Statement

Project Design

Goals and Objectives

Organization & Partner  
Info

Evaluation



# FUNCTION OF THESE SECTIONS

Common functions of these questions are to:

- Demonstrate you have the experience and knowledge to carry out your proposed work
- Show you have the infrastructure to manage a grant award well – including overseeing funds, reporting, and project management
- Show that the project will have adequate staffing and clear areas of responsibility
- Detail partnerships and what role other parties will play
- Provide context and background for your organization

# AGENCY AND PARTNER DESCRIPTIONS

## Tips for Organizational Descriptions

- Assume the reader is unfamiliar with your school and area
- Highlight distinctions and accomplishments
- When it comes to listing strengths, look to show it, not just say it (include numbers, commendations, parent survey data, etc.)
- Define partner roles and their distinctions
- Demonstrate commitment to the project's success by explaining how the proposed work supports and aligns with your mission

# DEMONSTRATING AGENCY ABILITY

## Explaining Organization Capability & Capacity

- Mention similar efforts you've undertaken
- Think about your capability in areas like proposed work, grants management, policies in place, and accounting
- Let the funder know resources and infrastructure you bring to the project like office space for new staff, a bus for student transport, etc.
- Highlight partnerships that will support the work
- Mention similar or larger grants that you've successfully managed
- For new schools, consider leaning on established agencies as partners and potentially as joint grant applicants



# DEMONSTRATING STAFF ABILITY

## Staff Capability & Capacity

- Show you will have adequate staffing level for the work involved
- Select a strong project director and write about their qualifications
- Explain your ability to serve population needs well (e.g., staff is representative of student populations, training completed, languages spoken)
- Mention relevant education, certifications, and experience
- Show clear roles for oversight and carrying out project areas





# BALANCING PERSONNEL

Doubts about adequacy of personnel levels comes up often in reviewer discussions. Looking at the proposed work and budget, reviewers may have concerns about whether the staff and time available to the project look like enough. Or they may suspect staff already have full workloads and may not have the availability to make sure grant work stays on track.

Have the discussions with staff about duties and time while writing the grant—this is the time to find out if someone will not be able to manage the envisioned work. Be realistic about time demands and include the staffing levels you will need. This may mean reevaluating the project scope. Consider hiring a coordinator/manager for big grants.

# SHOW YOUR SHINE

Remember, you are the experts.  
Communicate what makes your school and  
your approach special and effective.

