Tips for Budgets & Outcomes

BUDGETS

You will want to present your program budget in a way that will make an excellent impression on the grant reviewers and help tell the story of your program/project.

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Your budget should stand on its own and answer questions (not raise more questions)

- Healthy organizations should attract money from various sources

- Be as specific as possible about potential sources of ongoing funding, and when applicable, note if income is historical, pending or secured.

When preparing your budget, it may be helpful to follow these steps:

- **ALWAYS** double check your figures for accuracy

- Print the budget on its own page

- Include column headings

- Align your figures correctly

- Organize the budget so it is easy to follow and can be understood

- Include a budget narrative if you feel something will not be easily understood

- Always include detailed sources of income and expenses

- Identify **ALL** costs that are necessary and reasonable for the success of your project/program

- Be sure to indicate which expenses will be **covered by the grant** if funded

PARTS OF A PROGRAM BUDGET

Although every program will have unique expenses and revenue streams, here are some examples of categories that are often part of a solid grant program budget.

EXPENSES: Personnel (salaries), Fringe Benefits (taxes, workers comp, sick leave, vacations, insurance, etc.) Travel and Continuing Education, Equipment (usually items you will have at least three years), Supplies, Contractual Services, Indirect Costs (buildings, maintenance, insurance, utilities, trash, etc.), Direct Services (payments to or on behalf of clients), Marketing directly related to the Program/Project.

REVENUE: Individual Contributions, Foundation/Private Grants, Government Grants, United Way Funding, In-Kind Donations (can include the value of volunteer time), Client Fees Paid for Services, Fundraising, Memberships.

If you need more guidance in developing your grant budget, you can find many examples of budget templates for grant program/projects online.

Outcomes

Outcomes help organizations assess their programs as a step toward greater effectiveness. Outcome measures help us understand how our funding is stimulating positive change. In your proposal, you will be asked to identify three target outcomes and if funded, to report on those target outcomes in the final report.

In the Grant Application form, you must:

- Identify three (3) outcomes that will result from the proposed project, and

- Indicate the method(s) the organization will use to measure the outcomes.

WHAT IS AN OUTCOME?

Outcomes are changes that occur in individuals or groups as a result of their participation in a program or activity. To help you think through developing your outcomes ask the following question: *What changes because of what we will do; how does our customer benefit?* Outcomes are always related to changes that involve knowledge, skills, attitudes, behavior, performance, status or condition.

OUTCOMES VS. OUTPUTS

Do not confuse outcomes with broad or vague statements or with counting program activities. Counting activities is an Output not an Outcome. Statements such as "Young people will feel more empowered," are not adequate outcomes because they are vague and too broad. Similarly, counting program activities (like the number of people attending a training session, or the number of meals served to homeless families) only describes the number of services delivered. It does not indicate what changed, or if participants benefited from the program.

Remember that each outcome should have two parts - a prediction of results and a measurement method to determine whether each outcome has been achieved.

Outcome Example

GOAL:
Helping children read at grade level.

GRANT:
Create a literacy program for children in K through third grade.

OUTCOME:
65% of children who enroll will read at grade level by the end of the school year.

MEASURE:
Reading scores will have risen to grade level as seen on state standardized tests given at time of enrollment and again after six months of participation.