13 TIPS
HOW TO WRITE A
SUCCESSFUL GRANT PROPOSAL

FP™
FAMILY PLANNING
2020

1) FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LETTER
- Turn in proposals on time with all the required attachments.
- Carefully read/reread ALL the instructions.

2) KNOW YOUR DONOR
- Do your research! Understand their mission and reference it in your proposal. Know *who* they funded and *what* exactly they funded.
- Google, LinkedIn, and Social Media are great sources for information.

3) REPEAT BACK THEIR OWN LANGUAGE UPFRONT
- You must understand *exactly* what they want, so make sure to mimic their language.
- Resist the temptation to cut and paste your mission to the page, and instead tailor your language to them.

4) MAKE UP FOR YOUR INEXPERIENCE WITH THE "PAT" TECHNIQUE
- **P:** Passion **A**: Ambition **T**: Technique.
- Don't hide your inexperience. Acknowledge your newness and show how your **P**assion, **A**mbition, and **T**echnique drive you.

5) WRITE A HEADLINE
- Hook your reader. Stay away from vague, nonspecific titles.
- Ex: Instead of Saying "Proposal for the Ford Foundation" say "We Want to Help 120 Million Women Use Contraceptives" which is more specific and exciting.

6) USE THE "V.V.H." TECNIQUE TO CRAFT YOUR STATEMENT OF NEED
- Your statement of need is one of the most important parts of your grant, but many new grant writers make the same mistake: they say *what* they want instead of *why*.
- Be dramatic and include three key pieces of evidence: V.V.H: **V**illain, **V**ictim, and **H**ero. Issue a call to arms: (the Villain) to address a specific population (the Victim) and how the donor can help (the Hero).

7) GET DETAILED
- Details win. Generalities fail. Always support your plan with specifics.

8) GIVE YOUR BUDGET A NARRATIVE
- Many donors say the budget is the first thing they look at. Show how you will be a responsible spender.
- Don't just estimate prices, do research on costs and show how/where you are saving money by eliminating unnecessary costs.

9) AVOID JARGON
- Never assume that your readers will understand topic-specific language. Define acronyms and use plain language.

10) SET INTERNAL DEADLINES
- Allow yourself and your team a buffer. Do not turn in a proposal last minute.
- Don't assume that even though you submitted the proposal on time that the donor got it. Follow up over the phone or through email.

11) SET-UP A RED TEAM
- Establish a team that has not been involved in the grant development process to go through the full proposal, budget, etc. and ask them to comment and edit.
- This team should be made up of people who are and those who are not familiar with the topic. This will likely reflect the donor team that reviews your proposal.

12) TAP A FINAL DEDICATED EDITOR
- Ideas may be good, but the proposal may be written poorly. An editor can fix typos and ensure consistency.

13) MAKE IT LOOK PRETTY
- Format and design can show that your organization is professional and polished.
- How it looks matter just as much as what it says.