Missouri
COMMON GRANT
APPLICATION
Version 2.0

User Guide

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Background

In 2012, representatives from the St. Louis grantmaking community came together with the Gateway Center for Giving to create a Missouri Common Grant Application (CGA) and related materials.

The CGA was designed to help make the grantmaking process simpler and more efficient for nonprofits while at the same time encouraging dialogue between funders and nonprofit organizations.

The goals for the creation of this application are:

- Designing a standard, yet customizable, Common Grant Application (CGA) for Missouri grantmakers.
- Allow Missouri grantmakers and grantseekers to work from a common set of questions that reinforce solid nonprofit practices.
- Save grantseekers time and effort by using a single form for many different applications.

2017 Revisions:
The Gateway Center for Giving convened a committee of grantmakers and nonprofit representatives in 2016-2017 to update the CGA by incorporating a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). A DEI framework informs the work of both grantmakers and nonprofits and offers a mechanism to address the profound disparities in opportunity that exist for marginalized groups. The inclusion of DEI-related language and questions throughout the CGA and related materials is meant to:

1) Provide a valuable perspective to grantmakers about their potential grantees' capacity to navigate DEI issues; and
2) Encourage self-assessment and dialogue about DEI issues by both nonprofits and grantmakers.

Other technical revisions throughout the CGA Version 2.0 were made in response to practitioner and funder feedback.

Why the User Guide

The developers of the CGA created this User Guide to help organizations write more effective grant applications. The User Guide provides a greater understanding as to why each question is important to grantmakers and what grantmakers hope to learn about an organization from a particular question.

Each topic covered in the questions and attachments is an integral component of a well-run nonprofit. The User Guide elaborates on each topic with the intention of reinforcing the fundamentals of solid nonprofit practices. If you find a question particularly difficult to answer, then recognize that this is probably a topic that needs to be discussed by the organization's leadership (staff and board). The User Guide may provide helpful conversation starters for such discussions.

The User Guide is also intended to alleviate some fears that organizations may have. While the questions are uniform, grantmakers expect wide variation in the answers based on an organization's budget size, years in existence, location, and mission. Again, there is no one "right" answer.

It is not essential for a grant writer to reference the User Guide when completing the CGA. The CGA itself is designed to stand alone. However, for those new to grantwriting or for anyone who is not clear about the intent of a particular question, the User Guide provides information that will hopefully alleviate confusion. It is also appropriate to contact a grantmaker directly if you have questions that are not answered on the grantmaker's website or in its grant guidelines.

User Guide Overview

The User Guide covers each question and attachment of the CGA. It can be read start to finish or referred to for clarification related to a specific component, question, or attachment.

The User Guide gives a brief explanation of why a particular question is being asked and provides additional insight into the intent of the question. The items specified in the text of the questions or attachments need to be addressed in your answers. The "Tips and Things to Consider" sections are suggestions, not necessarily requirements.

Considering the extreme diversity of the types of organizations completing the CGA, some of the items listed may or may not apply to your organization. The tips section is offered to help stimulate your thinking if you are unsure about what information would be relevant to convey in response to a specific question.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Is there a page or character limit for this application?**
   There is no set page or character limit for this application unless stated by the funder. We recommend that you answer each question as completely as possible. All fields in this application expand to fit whatever text you input into them.

2. **May I use bullets to answer the questions in this application?**
   If the question lends itself to using bullets, then feel free to use bullets.

3. **Do I need to submit a letter of inquiry before completing this application?**
   Many foundations ask potential grant recipients to first submit a brief letter of inquiry before receiving an invitation to submit a full proposal. Check with each individual funder.

4. **Can I use this form for capital campaign requests?**
   If the specific funder accepts capital campaign requests and they accept the common grant application, then this form may be used unless a funder specifies otherwise. Please note that there are additional questions that are required for capital campaign requests and they are listed at the end of the narrative section. In general, include the same information as for a project proposal. Explain how this building project, or the creation or expansion of your endowment, will help you do a better job of serving your community. But also write about your long-term plans for financial health, especially if you want funds for a building. The funder doesn't want to help you buy a building if your organization can't afford to maintain and operate it.

5. **Can I use this form for general operating requests?**
   If the specific funder accepts general operating requests and they accept the common grant application, then this form may be used. While we made attempts to modify each question in the application to make it applicable to both project requests and general operating requests here are some general tips: 1) Needs statement: What issues was your organization founded to address? Why is your organization needed?, 2) Project description: Use this section to explain what your organization plans to accomplish during the year for which you seek operating funding and the intended impacts for that year's activities, 3) Sustainability: Who are the other funders providing operating support for this year and what is your long-term funding plan for the organization, especially if your operating budget is growing?, 5) Evaluation: In general, how do you evaluate your work?

6. **Can I use this form for special event requests?**
   This form will not be accepted for special event requests unless otherwise specified by a specific funder. Please check with the individual funder as to whether they accept special event requests and what form they would like you to use.

7. **Do all funders accept the Common Grant Application?**
   Not all funders accept the Common Grant Application. Please check with each individual to funder to determine if they accept this application, and ***confirm that they are using the CGA Version 2.0****.*

8. **If a funder accepts the Common Grant Application, then can I still call with questions about program and mission fit?**
   Many funders recommend that you reach out to them when you are applying to ensure program and mission fit before taking the time to submit your application. Not all funders want you to contact them prior to application submission. Please check with each individual funder guidelines to better understand their policy with regards to contact.

9. **Do all funders who accept the Common Grant Application accept all types of requests?**
   Please check with the individual funder to determine what types of requests they accept. For example, even though a funder accepts this application for project requests, they may not accept this application for general operating support or capital requests.

10. **Why are there questions about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the CGA?**
   The Gateway Center for Giving recognizes the importance of including DEI in grantmaking, as using a DEI lens informs the work of both grantmakers and nonprofits and offers a mechanism to address the profound disparities in opportunity that exist for marginalized groups. The inclusion of DEI-related language and questions throughout the CGA and related materials is meant to: 1) provide a valuable perspective to grantmakers about their potential grantees' capacity to navigate DEI issues, and 2) encourage self-assessment and dialogue about DEI issues by both nonprofits and grantmakers.

11. **How do you define Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)?**
   There are a variety of definitions for these terms. You can find the definitions we utilized in the User Guide's Glossary of Terms.

Tips for Writing Successful Proposals

- Communicate with funders if their grant guidelines let you know that it is okay. When in doubt, ask for clarification. Make sure you understand what's expected. Even funders who accept the Common Grant Application format may require additional information.

- Follow the directions. Answer the questions in the order listed, submit the number of copies grantmakers request, and include only the materials specified.

- Be clear, concise, and accurate. Make the case for your proposal in your own unique way, but include precise data. Avoid technical jargon.

- Emphasize what your organization will do. Spend more time describing your solution than the issue. Economize content and avoid repetition.

- Evaluation counts. Keep what you want to learn and evaluate in mind, as well the assessment tools you will use to evaluate your project (e.g., records, surveys, interviews, pre- and post-tests).

- Proofread carefully. Make sure numbers add up and typos are removed. Double check the funder's name.

- Seriously, proofread! If your proposal has been adapted for multiple funders, then make sure you omit other funders' names, as well as references to previous requests.

- Ensure that your request to each funder is based on their mission, vision, and funding interest. This Common Grant Application is NOT meant to be completed once and then sent to every grantmaker in the community.

Glossary of Terms

Activity/Tactics: Actual events or actions that take place as part of the project to achieve goals and objectives.

Capacity Building: Supporting projects that strengthen the development of an organization's core skills and capabilities, such as leadership, management, finance/fund-raising, programs, and evaluation, in order to build the organization's effectiveness and sustainability.

Capital (Campaign) Request: A planned undertaking to purchase, build or renovate a space/building or to acquire equipment.

Collaboration: Organizations often submit joint proposals for funding to address common issues of organizational capacity and program outreach where they have similar outcomes to accomplish.

Cultural Competency: The process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, spiritual traditions, immigration status, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.[1]

Diversity: Term that describes the presence of individuals from various backgrounds and/or with various identities. The term is often used to include aspects of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, and ability. [2]

Doing Business As (DBA): Name under which the business or operation is conducted and presented to the world but may not be the legal name.

Equity: The condition that would be achieved if the identities assigned to historically oppressed groups no longer acted as the most powerful predictor of how one fares, with the root causes of inequities eliminated. (Examples include the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce or fail to eliminate differential outcomes by group identity/background).[3]

Evaluation: The process of undertaking an analysis, at various degrees of formality, of the impact of a grant-funded project, usually communicated in the form of a report to the funder.

Fiscal Agent: A nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that acts as a sponsor for a project or group that may not have its own tax-exempt status. Grants or contributions are made to the fiscal agent who manages the funds.
General Operating Support: Grant funds to support the ongoing services, mission, or goals of an organization.

Goal: What is the desired result of the project in general terms? The broad, overarching purpose served by your project or service -- for instance, "Our purpose [or goal] is to help women victimized by abuse recover their strength, stability, and self-esteem."

In-Kind Support: A contribution of equipment/materials, time, non-cash item, and/or services that the donor has placed a monetary value on.

Inclusion: The degree to which individuals with diverse perspectives and backgrounds are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes of an organization or group.[4]

Letter of Intent (LOI): Also known as concept paper, white paper and pre-proposal, it is a brief, preliminary letter describing an organization and proposed grant request, usually sent prior to a full proposal.

Long-term Goal: Occurs after the funding period.

Marginalize: The process of making an individual, group, or class of people less important or relegated to a secondary position, which often leads to exclusion from meaningful participation in society.

Method(s): A particular procedure for accomplishing or approaching something. See Activity/Tactics.

Needs Statement: Presents the facts and evidence that support the need for the project and establishes that your organization understands the problems and therefore can reasonably address them. The information used to support the case can come from authorities in the field, as well as from your agency's own experience.

Operational Support: A grant given to cover an organization's day-to-day expenses such as salaries, utilities, office supplies, etc.

Outcome/Objective: The changes in (or benefits achieved by) individuals or communities due to their participation in project activities. Time-specific, measurable statements describing the results to be achieved and the manner in which they will be achieved. This may include changes to participant's knowledge, skills, values, behavior, conditions, or status. For example, "30 of the 40 third grade students participating in the literacy program will increase their reading level by one grade level."

Output (Product): Direct product of project activities; immediate measures of what the project will do and/or has done in the past.

Program: An organized set of services designed to achieve specific outcomes for a specified population that will continue beyond the grant period.

Project: A planned undertaking or organized set of services designed to achieve specific outcomes that are time-limited. (Note: A successful project may become an ongoing program of the organization.)

Responsibility: Individual(s) responsible for the stated activity and measurements.

Short-term Goal: Occurs during the funding period.

Strengths-Based Practice/Perspective: Model of intervention that shifts the focus of work with clients and communities from power-over to power-with, from deficits to capacities, from expert-focused to the-client-as-expert. Nonprofits using this lens recognize the communities/clients they serve as capable, resourceful, and gifted rather than deficient.[5]

Technical Assistance: Operational or managerial assistance given to a nonprofit organization. It may include fundraising assistance, budgeting/financial planning, project planning, legal advice, marketing, or other aids to management. Assistance may be offered directly by a foundation or corporate staff member, or in the form of a grant to pay for the services of a consultant.

Timeline: When is the activity taking place and/or what is the duration?

[1] National Association of Social Workers, *Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice,* 2015.
[2] Baltimore Community Foundation*, DEI Definitions of Terms*. Drawn from Baltimore Racial Justice Action. 2014.
[3] Ibid.
[4] D5 Coalition*, State of the Work: Stories from the Movement to Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*, 2016.
[5] Hammond, Wayne. Resiliency Initiatives, *Principles of Strength-Based Practice*, 2010.

PART I. COVER SHEET

Use two-page template provided.

Rationale
The Summary Sheet Form is intended to provide a "snapshot" of the organization. Often, this information is entered directly into a grantmaker's grant management database.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Be brief. Remember, this is a quick look at the organization. Detailed explanations should be reserved for the narrative portion of the application.

- Be sure that the information on the Summary Sheet Form (budget figures, requested amount, etc.) matches any reference made later in the application.

- Update the Summary Sheet Form anytime you update the Narrative or Attachments to ensure that the information is consistent throughout the application.

- Regarding specific items on the Cover Sheet:
    - **Legal Name of Organization** - This should be the exact wording from the IRS 501(c)(3) letter.
    - **Doing Business As** - The name that the organization is widely known by, if different from the legal name.
    - **Board President** - In the case of potential staff changes at the organization it is important to also list the current Board President.
    - **Main Contact for this Proposal** - If this is different from the CEO or Executive Director. This could be the development director, program director, or other person who should be contacted for further information or questions regarding the application.
    - **Geographic Area Served** - The name of the city(ies), county(ies), region(s), neighborhood(s), or state(s) your organization serves. Be as accurate as possible within a short space.
    - **Tax Exemption Status**
        - If the organization applying is operating under the fiscal sponsorship of another organization, then provide the legal name of the fiscal agent. The Fiscal Agent/Fiscal Sponsor section outlines the information needed for the fiscal agent/fiscal sponsor. Everything else in the application should be completed with regard to the organization applying, not the fiscal agent.
        - Examples of "Other than 501(c)(3)" include municipalities, counties, schools, special tax-exempt districts, other governmental entities, and religious organizations.
    - **For requests other than general operating support, name the project, and describe what the grant will be used for** - Be brief and clear. Do not respond to this question if the request is for general operating support, unless there is something very specific that you want to identify. Typically, general operating support implies flexible overall support for the organization, and a description is not needed. For project, capital or other requests, a project name and one-sentence description will suffice.
    - **Financial Information** - Organization's current budget. Ideally the budget will cover the year in which the grant will be used. (Note: the date should be formatted mm/dd/yy.) Be sure this number matches the information contained in the financial attachments.
    - **Member of a Giving Federation** - To be completed if you receive allocations (not one-time grants) from one of the listed federations.
    - **Executive Director Signature** - The signature should be that of the Executive Director or authorizing official on behalf of the organization.

PART II. NARRATIVE

SECTION A, QUESTION 1 - ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Discuss the founding and development of the organization, and the organization's current mission statement. Explain the original issue and/or opportunity the organization was founded to address and how that may have changed over time.

Rationale

By offering a solid description of when, why, how, and if relevant, by whom the organization was founded, as well as how the organization may have changed over time, you provide context for understanding an organization's current reality.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Founding: This is asking for a brief history of the organization's origins, not a detailed chronology of events. This is the place to convey the passion and commitment that led to the organization's creation. Even if the organization is well-known in the community, it is still necessary to provide the brief history that is asked for in this question.
- Development: If the organization has evolved over time in response to internal or external factors, then briefly describe here.
- The original issue and/or opportunity the organization was founded to address: This is the place to describe the need for the organization. This version of the CGA moves away from the language of a "needs statement" in favor of language that has a more positive orientation ("issue and/or opportunity," in place of "need"). However, it is still very important to explain what concern the organization was founded to address and – if it has changed – the concern that is currently being addressed.
- It is not necessary for organizations with long histories (more than 20 years) to cover all of the intervening years. Major milestones or significant changes in the organization's approach to its mission should be included only if such information will add to an understanding of current circumstances.
- If the organization has had a rocky past, then describe how those difficulties were overcome or are currently being addressed. Candor is appreciated and respected. If you have already described the situation in the cover letter, then do not repeat it in the organizational background.

SECTION A, QUESTION 2 - ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Provide a brief description of the organization's current services. Include population and numbers served, as well as expected results. If this request is for a specific project, then describe that project in Section D; describe the organization's other projects here.

Rationale

By reading about the organization's projects, the grantmaker will learn how the organization has chosen to deliver on its mission and goals.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- The size and complexity of the organization will determine how much information you are able to convey in your response to this question. Large organizations with many projects may need to describe project areas, rather than specific projects. Small organizations applying for a general operating support grant may decide to include more in-depth information about their projects.
- By including information on the population served, you provide a clear sense of the current beneficiaries of the organization's projects and services. A description of the population served typically involves an explanation of the demographics of the population impacted by this grant. Be brief—only a limited amount of demographic information is needed.
- Numbers served offers a sense of scope and size of an organization. In describing numbers served, provide information on whether the numbers represent unduplicated individuals or total units of service delivery, and provide both if possible.
- High or low numbers are not inherently good or bad. For example, an organization with one or two projects may be taking a very focused approach. In terms of numbers of individuals receiving services, serving 1,200 children vs. 15 children probably reflects a very different kind of project. It does not mean that one is more important or effective than the other.

SECTION B, QUESTION 3 – DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION: EFFORTS & AMBITIONS

Your answers will provide a valuable perspective on our grantees' capacity to address the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

Rationale

A growing number of grantmakers and nonprofits are embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work. Grantmakers are seeking an understanding of their own and their potential grantees' capacity and/or hopes to effectively navigate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues in a world of profound disparities in opportunity for marginalized groups.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Funders like to know if and how an organization is working to best incorporate a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into their work.
    - If your organization does not have any active efforts or initiatives that incorporate a DEI lens into its work, list any DEI goals your organization hopes to achieve in the future (e.g. developing a more diverse board of directors, conducting yearly cultural competency trainings with staff, active inclusion of diverse vendors, mechanisms for senior accountability for DEI performance, etc.).
    - Answers to this question should focus on the organization's overarching DEI practices. They can be supplemented with DEI practices related to the specific program for which funds are being sought.
- There are no "correct" answers, as every organization's work in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is different and can present opportunities to grow. It is up to each organization to identify what "diversity," "equity," and "inclusiveness" means to them within their organizational and community-based context.
    - If you need additional guidance about how an organization might define these terms, please see our Glossary of Terms on Page 5 of this User Guide.
- If you are having difficulty answering this question, we encourage you to start small. Consider whether your organization has a non-discrimination policy which outlines your organization's commitment to fair employment practices or a statement on diversity, equity, and/or inclusion, which summarizes your organization's values and stance on DEI.

EXAMPLES

- *Focus on the organization's board of directors:*
    - *ABC Non-Profit, Inc. is committed to building an inclusive and diverse organization. The organization is led by a diverse board of directors, which consists of 50% African-American individuals, 20% Hispanic/Latino, and 30% White/Caucasian. In addition to racial diversity, we strive to be inclusive of all sexual orientations and abilities, as our board has two self-identified gay individuals and another individual with a physical disability.*
- *Focus on the organization's cultural competency:*
    - *We provide materials to our clients in both Spanish and English, and ABC Non-Profit, Inc. covers translation costs into other languages upon request.*
    - *ABC Non-Profit, Inc. annually offers cultural competency training to board members, staff, and volunteers, and has implemented new employee orientation specific to issues of inclusiveness.*

Additional Resources

The following resources have helpful suggestions for ways in which an organization can begin or further its commitment to DEI. Please contact the funder to which you are submitting this application if you have questions about their commitment to DEI and/or their DEI expectations for grantees.

- *Bridgespan Group—Five Ways to Build and Maintain Staff Diversity (2013)*
- *D5 Coalition—Policies, Practices, and Programs for Advancing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (2013)*
- *The Denver Foundation—Inclusiveness at Work: How to Build Inclusive Nonprofit Organizations (2005)*
- *Gay & Lesbian Fund for Colorado—Inclusive Workplace Toolkit (2011)*
- *Green 2.0—Beyond Diversity: A Roadmap to Building an Inclusive Organization (2017)*
- *Lever—A Step-by-Step Guide to Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion Part 1: 50+ Ideas (2017)*
- *National Council of Nonprofits—Nonprofits, You Are the Champions for Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (2016)*
- *Stanford Social Innovation Review—Five Ways to Build Diverse, Inclusive Leadership Teams (2015)*
- *Third Sector New England—Achieving Diversity in the Nonprofit Workplace: A Step-by-Step Guide (2010)*

SECTION B, QUESTION 4 – DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION: DEMOGRAPHICS

Note: Your answers will provide a valuable perspective on our potential grantees' capacity to address the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

Rationale

A growing number of nonprofits are embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work. It is essential to have diverse perspectives and life experiences within a nonprofit's leadership team, as it encourages richer conversation and understanding, leads to greater innovation, and increases the likelihood of achieving impactful organizational and programmatic outcomes.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- There is no wrong answer. Grantmakers are looking to hear your organization's story and how it has shaped your internal community.
- Recognizing the differences in history, mission, and culture among nonprofit organizations, it is the responsibility of each nonprofit to determine how to incorporate the voices of, and be accountable to, the communities/clients they serve.
- When answering this question, consider how your organization defines diversity within your community/clientele, and how you ensure that everyone is represented in your organization.
- When taking an inventory of the diversity/demographics present within your organization, it is best to avoid guessing or assuming how people would identify. Whenever possible, organizations should ask their staff, board, and volunteers how they choose to identify their race, sexual orientation, etc.
- If you are having difficulty answering this question, we encourage you to start small and consider your stakeholders, including partner agencies. Your organization might be a part of a regional coalition or rely upon focus groups or committees to gain the perspective of people representing various demographics, including the demographics of the community/clients your organization serves.

<u>RESPONSE EXAMPLE</u>

- *ABC Non-Profit, Inc. primarily serves low income, African-American women and girls. Our organization mainly recruits female staff from local communities with an emphasis on priority neighborhoods. More than 20 young women (ages 15-18) volunteer annually at our organization for pre-employment experience, the majority of who identify as African-American/Black.*
- *ABC Non-Profit, Inc. provides quarterly practicum supervision to three, female, University of XYZ Masters of Social Work graduate students.*
- *Our Board of Directors consists of five, White/Caucasian men, one White/Caucasian female, and two African-American/Black females. The remaining two positions on the board of ABC Non-Profit, Inc. are reserved for a community advocate and youth advocate, both of whom are required to be female members of the community. To remove barriers to participation, our board policies include provisions for accommodations for persons with disabilities, and for board members who claim daycare and travel expenses.*

SECTION C, QUESTIONS 5 & 6 – DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY/CLIENT NEEDS & STRENGTHS

Identify the concern or issue a project/organization will address. This is the place to highlight an organization's understanding of the need it is addressing through this specific project. This section also provides an opportunity for an organization to acknowledge some of the key strengths, capacities, and assets of their clients/community in need and re-imagine the outcomes of their work using an aspirational, strengths-based perspective.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- This is where you demonstrate to the funder the importance of the issue you want to tackle. It is an opportunity to demonstrate that your organization has expertise on the issue and has the ability to utilize a strengths-based perspective in your work.
    - A strengths-based perspective does not *deny* that people experience problems and challenges, but rather, encourages those who are facing a problem to participate, take control, and learn in an effort to break the cycle of emphasizing deficits and reliance upon outside experts. (More information on strengths-based approaches in the last few bullets of this section).

- Don't assume the funder knows much about your subject area. Most grantmaking staff people are generalists. They will probably know something about topics like Shakespeare, water pollution, or HIV/AIDS, but you should not assume that they are familiar with Troilus and Cressida, taconite disposal methods, or Kaposi's sarcoma. If your topic is complex, then you might add an informative article or suggest some background reading.
- Why is this situation important? To whom did your organization talk, or what research did you do to learn about the issue and decide how to tackle it?
- Describe the situation in both factual and human interest terms, if possible. Providing good data/statistics demonstrates that your organization is expert in the field. If there are no good data on your issue, then consider doing your own research study, even if it is simple.
- Describe your issue in as local a context as possible. If you want to educate people in your county about HIV/AIDS, then tell the funder about the epidemic in your county — not in the United States as a whole unless national data would provide valuable context to the local information.
- Describe a problem that is about the same size as your solution. Don't draw a dark picture of nuclear war, teen suicide, or lethal air pollution if you are planning a modest neighborhood arts project for children.
- Don't describe the problem as the absence of your project. "We don't have enough beds in our abused women's emergency shelter" is not the problem. The problem is increased levels of intimate partner violence. More shelter beds are considered a solution.
- Don't use acronyms that haven't been clearly explained.
- A strengths-based approach to work in the social service sector is a subtle way in which nonprofits can use a DEI lens in their work. Often, nonprofits tackle social challenges by viewing their work in terms of the needs, problems, and deficiencies of a community/client (e.g. lack of jobs, opportunities, skills, investment, etc.). When nonprofits recognize the communities/clients they serve as capable, resourceful, and gifted, they view that community/client through a different lens. Nonprofits can utilize this positive lens and empower their communities/clients to make the most of what is working well and allocate their resources more effectively. Organizations using an asset-based lens thwart the "one-size-fits-all approach" and "acknowledge that not all communities are the same—that each has [unique] strengths and interests and thus different strategies will work with different communities based on their internal interests and capacities."[1] By recognizing that a community/client has "expertise" in their own problem(s), and furthermore, the solutions needed to address those problems, it encourages inclusion of community members/clients in nonprofit program development and evaluation and promotes a balance of power between nonprofits and the communities/clients they serve.
- Remember that nobody has nothing. Strengths can take the form of:
    - Human assets (e.g., skills, knowledge, labor, health);
    - Social assets (e.g., social networks, relationships of trust and reciprocity);
    - Natural assets (e.g., land, water, fertile soil, weather patterns);
    - Financial assets (e.g., cash, savings, pensions); and
    - Physical assets (e.g., roads, bridges, schools, clinics, transportation, and sanitation).
- Contextual considerations: Some nonprofits have a more difficult time identifying client strengths if their primary function is solely to manage crisis. In this case, examples of strengths can be a client's help-seeking behavior, social supports, hope for the future, and/or effort put forth to stabilize their life.
- To help you identify the strengths and assets of the community/clients you serve, consider the following questions and statements:
    - Identify a time when the community/clients your organization serves was at its best.
    - What does the community/clients your organization serves value most about itself?
    - What is the essence of the community/clients your organization serves that makes it unique and strong?

<u>EXAMPLE</u>

Issue: There are documented known gang risk factors within the youth population of the City of St. Louis.

Gang risk factors are defined as neighborhood concentrations of documented gang presence and regular gang and youth violence. Contributing factors include high crime, poverty, and unemployment rates, and low education levels. Additional factors include a high percentage of school students who qualify as disadvantaged (Title I) and schools with poor daily attendance (below 80%).

[1] Preskill, H.S. & Catsambas, T.T., *Reframing Evaluation Through Appreciative Inquiry*, 2006.

As reported by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch in 2007, the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department estimates 5,000 youth across the metropolitan area are members of a street gang. They are unusually hybridized, compared with Los Angeles or Chicago gang types, forming alliances evolved from local traditions, immigrant populations, and neighborhood divisions. According to a senior economist with the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, the metropolitan area now has some of the nation's highest neighborhood concentrations of joblessness, low income, and lack of education.

Many young people living in communities with high crime, poverty, unemployment rates, and low education levels have high levels of resiliency, as seen through their abilities to survive past adversity and cope with emotional stressors. In addition, youth often have a close personal network of friends and family members who act as a self-organized support system that promotes engagement within a community via religious services, sporting groups, and/or local businesses.

If the strengths of the community our organization serves are mobilized, then a community with less gang activity within the youth population of the City of St. Louis would result. Instead of joining gangs, young people would find accessible, affordable, and inclusive opportunities to develop their leadership skills and boost self-esteem, which are goals of this project. In addition, youth would be able to safely participate in constructive leisure activities such as community sports and volunteering.

SECTION D, QUESTIONS 7-18 - PROJECT INFORMATION

This section provides the opportunity to present a thorough description of the specific project for which funding is being requested. Being able to answer all of the topics outlined in the questions demonstrates a well-conceived project that addresses a clearly defined issue(s). This section asks for the goals and objectives of the project for which funding is requested, as opposed to the organization's overall goals and objectives (unless it is an operating or capital request).

Rationale
Rather than provide an open-ended narrative format, we chose to break the narrative down into specific questions.

SECTION D, QUESTION 7 - POPULATION SERVED

Tips and Things to Consider:

- The target population and number to be served, if applicable.
- Only discuss the issues and/or opportunities (or concerns) that the target population faces, as opposed to the needs of the organization.

<u>EXAMPLE</u>
ABC Non-Profit, Inc. offers Gang Resistance Education And Training (GREAT) classroom-based services for at-risk elementary and middle school students in the City of St. Louis. The 25 schools proposed as the population served were prioritized by the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department and located in the U.S. Department of Justice's "Weed and Seed" Neighborhoods. Each school has more than 80% of students qualify for Title I "disadvantaged" services. Eight of the proposed 11 middle schools have daily attendance below 80%. This project will serve a total of 2,120 St. Louis students.

SECTION D, QUESTION 8 - PROJECT GOALS

Tips and Things to Consider:

- It may be relevant to explain why now is the best time to address the issue and/or opportunity.
- Goals convey the general direction or overall purpose of the project for which funding is requested.
- Make sure that the goal says explicitly whom the project will impact. Make sure the goal describes the direction of the change that is expected (e.g., reduce, expand, increase, decrease). Be realistic.
- It is common to have several goals for a single project. If this is the case, group objectives beneath the appropriate goal.
- In terms of goals for a capital campaign, explain what will be different once the capital project is complete. For example, with facility expansion, explain if more people will be served, or how your agency will be able to better serve project participants.
- For expanded projects, differentiate between current and expanded activities.

EXAMPLE

There are two major goals for the Gang Resistance Education And Training (GREAT) Project.

- *Goal #1 – To immunize students against delinquency, youth violence, and gang membership.*
- *Goal #2 – To provide life skills to students to help them avoid engaging in delinquent behavior and violence to solve problems.*

SECTION D, QUESTION 9 - ACTIVITIES

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Activities refer to the essential tasks or projects that need to take place to accomplish the goals and objectives.
- Explain the project in such a way that a reader who knows nothing about how the project is implemented will be able to visualize it.
- There should be a very clear link between the activities you describe in this section, the goals and the outcomes/objectives you have previously defined. Be explicit in your writing and state exactly how the activities you have chosen will fulfill your project's goals and outcomes/objectives and help deal with the needs/problems on which your proposal is focused.
- Are the specific methods you are proposing for your project very important to your unique clientele? Make sure you clarify this for the funding organization.
- Answer what, how often, for how long.

EXAMPLE

The primary activities for achieving the goals and objectives of the Project will be:

- *Uniformed police officers trained in GREAT curriculum will teach in classrooms of 20-25 students for one hour per week each semester, serving the schools in the neighborhoods they are familiar with and becoming a focal point for more trusted relationships.*
- *Additional police officers will be recruited/trained in GREAT curriculum and assigned to appropriate schools.*
- *Teachers will remain in the classroom and work with the officer to present each GREAT lesson, to enhance a positive educational environment and provide the basis for sharing analysis and improvement of safety strategies.*

SECTION D, QUESTION 10 - OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES

The changes in (or benefits achieved by) individuals or communities due to their participation in project activities. This may include changes to a participant's knowledge, skills, values, behavior, conditions, or status. In general, outcomes are described in quantitative or qualitative terms.

TYPES OF OBJECTIVES

There are at least four types of objectives:

- Behavioral - A human action is anticipated.
  Example: Fifty of the seventy children participating will learn to swim.

- Performance - A specific time-frame, within which a behavior will occur, at an expected proficiency level, is expected.
  Example: Fifty of the seventy children will learn to swim within six months and will pass a basic swimming proficiency test administered by a Red Cross-certified lifeguard.

- Process - The manner in which something occurs is an end in itself.
  Example: We will document the teaching methods utilized, identifying those with the greatest success.

- Product - A tangible item results.
  Example: A manual will be created to be used in teaching swimming to this age and proficiency group in the future.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Discuss short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes/objectives and be sure to differentiate from outputs.

EXAMPLE

Gang Resistance Education And Training (GREAT) for St. Louis has the following objectives:

- *To create a School Component that will handle the GREAT service delivery.*
- *To provide GREAT services to 25 schools: 1,000 middle school students and 1,120 elementary school students.*
- *To provide GREAT training for an additional three qualified police officers.*
- *To partner with different organizations such as government agencies, other non-profit organizations, and business establishments to ensure collaboration in linking gang prevention efforts.*
- *To develop a website that will help promote support for gang prevention in St. Louis.*
- *To lessen the number of youth who are involved in documented gang violence.*

SECTION D, QUESTION 11 - TIMELINE

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Timeline – Explain any key dates or chronology associated with the project or capital campaign. This could include dates when enrollment is open; how many months out of the year the project is offered; the start and completion dates of a one-time project, a project design phase, or a pilot project, etc.
- For a capital campaign this could include dates for launching specific components of the fundraising campaign, achieving certain fundraising milestones, design phase, groundbreaking ceremony, project completion, etc.
- A clear indication of the time frame for the project and the times when each aspect of the project will be implemented.

EXAMPLE

1st Year Timeline

Month One

- *Advertising and interviewing Project staff positions*
- *Meetings with police department*
- *Meetings with school administrators and community leaders*

Month Two

- *Hiring and orienting Project staff positions*
- *Meetings with teachers and pre-trained police officers*
- *Selecting school classrooms for first half of first semester*
- *Finalizing assignments of pre-trained officers to school locations*

Month Three

- *Orienting police officers, staff, and teachers*
- *Preparation for classroom operation*
- *Order GREAT-approved curriculum and student incentives*

Month Four – Six

- *Hosting parent/community meetings at schools*
- *Collection of baseline data on students*
- *Implementing GREAT in classrooms*
- *Recruitment/selection/training of additional police officers*
- *Assigning officers to classrooms for remainder of academic year*

Month Seven – Twelve

- *Conclude implementing GREAT in classrooms*
- *Hosting parent/community GREAT graduations at schools*
- *Hosting police officer appreciation event*
- *Conducting of regular formative evaluation*
- *Final summative evaluation at end of twelfth month*

SECTION D, QUESTION 12 - COLLABORATION

Describe the organization's most significant interactions with other organizations and efforts. For project requests, address this question with respect to that project only.

Rationale

The effectiveness of nonprofit organizations often depends on successful relationships with others in the community. Regardless of form – partnership, collaboration, cooperation, or coordination – these relationships, or strategic alliances, can serve a variety of purposes, including resource sharing, policy influence, and improved operational efficiency.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Do not create a simple list of key partners, as such a list does not convey very meaningful information. Instead, select the organization's most significant interactions and explain the goals and/or outcomes of those relationships. Interactions run the gamut from simple awareness of other organizations to making referrals to other groups, attending networking meetings, sharing staff/volunteer trainings, strategic alliances, and formal partnerships/collaborations. Due to space limitations, describe the interactions that are most important to the organization in terms of helping it achieve its goals.
- Project requests should limit the response to interactions specifically related to that project. However, if space allows and there are other collaborations the organization is involved in that are important to convey, by all means do so.
- Can you show that you have the support of the clientele group to move ahead with the project? In what ways have members of the clientele group been involved in the preparation of the proposal?
- What other agencies are involved with this clientele group (and have these other agencies been included in your proposed project)?
- It's important for some funding agencies to see how much the clientele group has been involved with the project and the preparation of the proposal. (Sometimes a project is funded and then the director finds that the clientele group does not want to be involved! Don't let that happen to you.)

<u>EXAMPLE</u>

- *Office Space – A small, furnished office cubicle with phone and internet services for the Project staff will be provided by ABC Non-Profit, Inc., plus parking and office supplies.*
- *Meeting/Event Space – Space and chairs for meetings and graduation events will be provided by the schools; space and set-up for the officer appreciation event will be provided by St. Louis Regional Arts Commission.*
- *Salary/Benefits – St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department will provide some funds towards salary and cover all fringe benefits.*
- *Travel – St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department will cover the costs of travel expenses associated with GREAT training in LaCrosse, WI. They will cover local mileage costs for officers participating in the School Component.*
- *Community Program – St. Louis Children's Hospital Safety Street program will provide trained police officers and educational materials for elementary school students, teaching them pedestrian safety, stranger danger, refusal skills for dealing with gangs, avoiding stray dogs, and bicycle safety.*
- *Community Program – Missouri National Guard will offer 14 scholarships to its six-day DEFY Summer Day Camp (Drug Education for Youth) for selected GREAT graduates residing in Weed and Seed Neighborhoods.*

SECTION D, QUESTION 13 - DIFFERENTIATING FACTORS

Tips and Things to Consider:

- What makes this organization/project unique? Note: Grantmakers do not expect that every organization/project is unique.
- Often, grantmakers want to be sure that an organization is not duplicating services that are already offered within a community. New organizations with very little history should explain the deliberate decision to launch a new organization in relation to:
  - The existence of other organizations with similar missions, and;
  - Assessing the issue and/or opportunity the organization plans to address.

SECTION D, QUESTIONS 14 & 15 - KEY PLAYERS & TRAINING NEEDS

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Use these questions to describe the roles of the various people associated with your project and the importance of each. Be sure to explain if staff is already in place or needs to be hired.
- Make sure to clarify how each role is essential to the success of the project and how each role clearly relates to operationalizing the methods you have described.
- So what do you say about your key people? To start, make sure you include name, title, experience, and qualifications. Is this an existing position or a new position? Include other information if you feel it's important to the success of your project. This is a good place to use bullet points.
- The descriptions of your personnel should let the funding agency know that you have excellent people who are committed to the project. The validity for what you are proposing is directly related to the people who will work with the project.
- If you will be using a Steering Committee (e.g. Advisory Committee, Governing Board, etc.) to assist in your project, then this is a good place to describe how it will be organized and who will be included.
- Consider how and if the key players at your organization may benefit from additional training. For example, cultural competency sessions, workshops on the effective use of social media, or training in new technologies. Identifying these needs is not a sign of weakness, but rather, indicates organizational self-awareness and a growth-mindset.

EXAMPLE (Question 14)

The Project will employ two staff for part of their time, two police officers for part of their time, and 14 police officers for hourly overtime, and engage their supervisors.

- *Project Director (10% of full time) – Responsible for hiring project staff, overseeing project development and operation, establishing and maintaining links with local government agencies, and budget. The Project Director will be Lisa Jones, Vice President of K-12 Services, ABC Non-Profit, Inc. (author of this proposal).*
- *Project Coordinator (40% of full time) – Responsible for developing project and implementing operations, enhancing links with local government agencies, reviewing invoices for budget, and routine communications. Responsible for collecting entry level data regarding students' risk factors and conducting periodic assessment of changes in their level of knowledge, comprehension, and application of that information. Also responsible for developing and implementing a system for periodic formative evaluation of the work of the police officers. Will be housed at ABC Non-Profit, Inc.*
- *Police Coordinator (20% of full time) and Assistant Police Coordinator (20% of full time) – Responsible for recruiting police officers, establishing and maintaining a working linkage with the schools, selecting officers for GREAT training, and scheduling officers for service delivery at the schools. The Police Coordinators will have a background in juvenile justice, crime suppression, gang culture, and police intelligence, surveillance, and operations. Will be housed at the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department.*
- *Police Officers (hourly overtime at 3 hours per week for 26 weeks) – Responsible for delivering GREAT curriculum lessons to elementary and middle school students, in coordination with classroom teachers. Each officer will have a background as trained/certified in GREAT, familiarity with the neighborhood where assigned schools are located, and an interest in juvenile justice.*

EXAMPLE (Question 15)

- *All staff and police officers will be required to attend a 2-day, 5-hour Diversity Training by XYZ Training Organization. The goal of attending the training is to raise awareness around the importance and impact of diversity and inclusion, and to provide tangible tools and resources staff and officers can utilize in their specific roles for the Project.*

SECTION D, QUESTIONS 16 & 17 - LONG-TERM GOALS AND FUNDING

Rationale

Strong organizations are proactive in preparing for their future. Nonprofits should engage in sound planning to define a clear vision for the future with specific strategies for reaching established goals.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- This question is asking for a broad overview of the organization's approach to planning for either the organization in general or this specific project.
- Report if the organization has developed or is currently working on any variety of plans, including, but not limited to a strategic plan, a long-range operational plan, a fund development plan, a succession plan for board and key staff, a board development plan, a plan for providing ongoing professional development for staff, a disaster management plan, a risk management plan, etc.
- Describe how the proposed project complements the organization's long-term goals.
- Describe the planning process used for the proposed project.

SECTION D, QUESTION 18 - APPROACH

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Evidence based approaches – Many grantmakers want to know that an organization's projects reflect best practices or utilize evidence-based approaches. If the organization is using a specific model or evidence based approach, then provide that information.
- If the project is not based on a specific best-practice or model project, then explain why the organization chose to address the issue and/or opportunity in the way that it did. It may be appropriate to highlight the uniqueness of the organization's approach and, perhaps, why the approach appears promising.
- If the reason for the approach is based on evaluation results, then it may be appropriate to refer the reader to your response to the Evaluation section where you describe project results.

SECTION E, QUESTIONS 19 & 20 - EVALUATION

Rationale

The strongest nonprofits evaluate their work, analyze and understand the results, and implement modifications to improve programming.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Best practices in nonprofit operations encourage that organizations engage in some examination of their activities to help guide their work.
- Grantmakers realize that organizations in the startup phase (less than two years old) may not have a lot of outcome data to report.
- A complete answer to these questions requires you to provide information about your future plans for measuring impact, as well as reporting on previous evaluation results or findings.
- Describe the methods (e.g., client feedback, pre- and post-tests, focus groups, surveys, co-design evaluation tools, co-collecting data with community members, etc.) for measuring progress toward achieving established goals or desired outcomes and/or the names of specific tools that the organization uses to measure outcomes. Include what the organization is measuring, how often each tool is used, and, if appropriate, why a particular tool or method was selected.
    - Co-designing evaluation tools and co-collecting data with your community members/clients are evaluation tactics organizations can use to be more inclusive in their work. Involving the community/clientele your organization serves in the development of evaluation tools and collection of evaluation data can: 1) expand the capacity of your organization to gather data with rigor, 2) provide a community/clientele a greater sense of ownership over the data, 3) better identify the needs of a community/clientele, and 4) create a sustainable and cost-effective way to utilize the expertise of your community/clientele.
- For project requests, limit the answer to how outcome is measured for that specific project.
- For startup organizations, describe how the organization is planning to measure outcomes.
- For general operating or capital requests, summarize key evaluation results or findings that demonstrate the organization's outcomes and indicate the time frame for the results or findings.
- For existing project requests, summarize key evaluation results or findings that demonstrate the project's past results and indicate the time frame for the results or findings.

    - Do not be afraid to share disappointing results. The key is what the organization learns from experience and how it adjusts its practices in light of the results. Many nonprofits are addressing very complex social issues, and therefore, it is a real sign of strength to have uncovered a flaw in the organization's approach. Deliberately working to address those flaws can lead to improved outcomes in the future.
    - Summarize what the organization learned from its most recent evaluation results that best reflect the organization's overall impact. Be sure to include the timeframe the evaluation results cover. Include composite data (e.g., "Over the past 5 years, the graduation rate for our youth in mentoring relationships was 85%" or "Habitat enhancement and reintroduction of 10 river otter pairs yielded a net gain of 22 pups over the course of two years.").
- This section may include your organization's plan for disseminating information of/from the project to other audiences. Most funding agencies are interested in seeing how their financial support of your project will extend to other audiences. This may include newsletters, workshops, radio broadcasts, presentations, printed handouts, slide shows, training projects, etc. If you have an advisory group involved with your project they can be very helpful in disseminating project information to other audiences.

EXAMPLE
Project evaluation consists of two different evaluative strategies - formative and summative.

- *Formative Evaluation – Primarily qualitative in nature, the formative evaluation will be conducted through interviews and open-ended questionnaires. Police officers will be asked about the day-to-day operation of the GREAT School Component, the topics covered in the training and orientation, the attractiveness of the training materials, and other questions to provide feedback for the ongoing improvement of the operation of the Project. The Project Coordinator will meet regularly with police officers to share findings from the formative evaluation effort. Periodic reports will be prepared that identify the major findings of the formative evaluation and how they have been used to improve Project operation.*
- *Summative Evaluation – Primarily quantitative in nature, the summative evaluation will begin with the establishment of baseline data at the beginning of the Project (using a random sample of students to assess their gang risk factors and life skills knowledge) and then be conducted at academic semester intervals (just prior to each group of police officers completing their Project service). Data for the summative evaluation will focus on the two primary goals of the project and the objectives of each.*

  Goal #1
    - *Pre/post tests of knowledge gain on the part of the student in gang resistance information (Objective 1.1).*
    - *Selected interviews of students to assess their ability to effectively apply gang resistance information (Objective 1.2).*
    - *Selected interviews of students to evaluate changes in their life skills and non-violent problem solving (Objective 1.3).*

  Goal #2
    - *Records of number of students involved in the project (Objective 2.1).*
    - *Documentation of agendas/attendance rosters from all classroom sessions (Objective 2.1).*
    - *Documentation of number of students graduating from GREAT and number of police hours recorded in the school classroom (Objective 2.3).*
    - *Comparative analysis of Goal #2 data with similar data from previous GREAT projects (Objective 2.4)*

The GREAT Program believes that the community we are serving should be an active partner in designing and shaping our program, rather than being passive recipients of a pre-determined model of service. As a result of this core value, elements of both of our evaluative strategies have been co-designed with the multiple stakeholder groups involved in the project, specifically, police officers, students who both have and have not been exposed to the GREAT School Component, and those student's parents and teachers. At the end of every school year, the GREAT Program hosts a focus group for all stakeholders in order to communicate the results of our program and to learn how we might better evaluate our program impact.

The GREAT Program also ensures that our evaluation techniques are culturally sensitive in order to build an environment of inclusivity with our constituents. This is important to us because it helps build internal and external enthusiasm for the organization and its strategies by encouraging individuals to take ownership of the goals and efforts to achieve our stated outcomes. In addition, it ensures that our informational database reflects the needs and perceptions of all stakeholders *involved in the project and incorporates a level of objectivity into the process which leads to greater clarity in our evaluation results.*[2]

A yearly online report will be issued that presents the formative and summative findings to the broader community.

Additional Resource

The following resource has suggestions of ways in which an organization can engage community stakeholders in evaluation planning, data collection, and the interpretation and use of findings as part of place-based initiatives.

- *Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO)— Building Community Capacity for Participation in Evaluation: Why It Matters and What Works (2017)*

SECTION F, QUESTION 21 - BUDGET NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION

Rationale

The budget narrative justification serves two purposes: it explains how the costs were estimated and it justifies the need for each budget item.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- The narrative may include tables for clarification purposes.
- Be sure to provide details for what is included in the line labeled "other" on the line item budget section.
- Often times, percentages will be used in the budget narrative justification. If you are assuming that your project expenses will be x% of your total organization budget expenses, you would explain that in the budget narrative.
- Funders like to know what % of an FTE the project involves.

EXAMPLES

Lisa Jones, PI, will serve as project director and will oversee the entire project. Additionally she will do XYZ for the project. She is a 10% FTE. She will devote XX months effort and $$$$ salary. The fringe benefit rate is 28%. Salaries are increased 3% annually.

Local travel is calculated at 12 round trips from ABC Non-Profit, Inc. to the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department to meet with police officer coordinators. Each trip is 30 miles round trip. (12 x 30 = 360 total miles) The mileage rate is $.48 per mile. The total cost for local travel is 360 x $.48 = $172.80.

SECTION G - CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS ADDENDUM

Section G should be completed only if this request is for a capital campaign. This section addresses the below listed questions:

22. Discuss the feasibility and cost of the capital campaign and its implications in relation to the organization's ongoing operations expenses.

23. Specify support received to date and the number of prospects approached and/or identified.

24. Identify potential naming opportunities.

25. Indicate the board's financial participation in the campaign (percent participating and amount contributed).

26. Describe plans for funding the ongoing maintenance of the new capital project.

27. Detail financing (e.g., loans, tax credits, etc.) that might be undertaken in addition to raising funds from the public.

28. Indicate whether the campaign is open or in its quiet phase, and when the campaign began. Also indicate if timing is a factor or if a "window of opportunity" exists that could impact the success of the campaign.

[2] Drawn from the Colorado Nonprofit Association, *Evaluation: A Toolkit to Support Principles & Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Colorado*, 3rd ed.

PART III- REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1 - A copy of the current IRS Letter of Determination indicating tax-exempt status

- A determination letter is the most important legal document your organization possesses. The IRS sends you this letter after you have successfully applied for the recognition of your organization's tax-exempt status. In this document the IRS indicates under which section of the Internal Revenue Code your organization is qualified.
- The determination letter is the only official document and proof that your organization is recognized as a tax-exempt organization. A state-issued tax exempt letter is not the same thing.

ATTACHMENT 2 - List of current board of directors including their professional affiliations (name of organization of employment and title), and ZIP code of residence.

Rationale
The detailed list of current board of directors' members makes clear the composition of the board. Their professional affiliations indicate key leaders, and provide information on the various skill sets represented on the board. Their ZIP code of residence reflects the residential geographic distribution of your board.

Tips and Things to Consider:
- Contact information for the board of directors is not required.
- The information should include name, title on board (if applicable), name of employer, job title, and ZIP code of residence.
- Board members influence the way an organization approaches its mission, how it views and interacts with the community/clients it serves, how money is spent, what initiatives are given priority, and how success is defined and measured.[3] These decisions are best made by a leadership team with diverse careers, perspectives, and backgrounds.
    - A board member's ZIP code of residence <u>may</u> indicate diversity of lived experience, including their access to resources, their cultural environment, their social-economic-status (SES), and other demographics.

<u>EXAMPLE</u>

Marcia Lopez, Board President
ABC Law Firm, Partner
ZIP Code of Residence: 63105

Joseph Smith, Secretary
Community Volunteer
ZIP Code of Residence: 63135

Susan Michaels, Treasurer
LMN Energy, Vice President Administration
ZIP Code of Residence: 63116

ATTACHMENT 3 - Letter of support from collaborating organizations that explains their role and is signed by the top director(s) of that organization(s). *(if applicable)*

- Funding agencies would like to know that others feel strongly enough about your project that they are willing to write a letter in support of the project. Talk through with the potential letter writers the sort of focus that you think will be important for their letter. (Try to draw on the reputation of the letter writing group).
- Do not get pushed into writing the letters on behalf of agencies - they will all sound alike and will probably defeat your purpose of using them.
- The letters must be substantive. If not, then do not use them!

[3] Moyers, Rick. *A Stronger Case for Board Diversity*. Nonprofit Leadership Blog, 2017.

- Have the letters addressed directly to the funding agency. (Do not use a general "To Whom It May Concern" letter - it makes it appear that you are applying to many different potential funding agencies and are using the same letter for each. This may really be the case, so make sure you personalize each letter to the specific potential funding agency).

ATTACHMENT 4 - The memorandum of understanding or the contract between the organization and the fiscal agent/fiscal sponsor. *(if applicable)*

- A Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement (MOU/MOA) is a written agreement, usually simpler and less formal than a legal contract, which outlines an arrangement between parties.[4]
- A MOU describes an intended common line of action among two or more parties. It is often used in cases where parties either do not imply a legal commitment or in situations where the parties cannot create a legally enforceable agreement.
- An MOU doesn't need to include complicated legal conditions, exclusions, indemnifications, etc.
    - If two entities are collaborating on a project, the purpose of an MOU might be to indicate goodwill on the part of both parties, or to help them keep track of the items upon which they have agreed. The agreement may help to clarify the relationship between both organizations, and to make clear responsibilities of each party.[5]

ATTACHMENT 5 - FINANCIALS

Part 1 - Project Budget (must use Excel template)

Please note that you can add in extra rows to the template as needed. Not every line item will be applicable. If not applicable, then leave it blank. The project budget must be explained in the budget justification narrative. If your request is for general operating support then the project budget is your organization budget.

Expenses

Expenses are broken down into total project expenses and the expenses that you are seeking from this funder.

1. **Salary & Benefits**
   Include the expenses for all the people who will work on the project. ***Break out the employee detail in the budget narrative justification.*** Don't forget to add payroll taxes (FICA, Medicare, unemployment, and workers' compensation) and fringe benefits such as health insurance. You can include a portion of these costs equal to the portion of the person's time dedicated to the project.

2. **Contract Services (consulting, professional, fundraising)**
   Non-employees that are contracted to do work related to the project. Whenever grant funds are used to pay a third party (individual or organization) outside of the organization, these costs should be included in the grant budget under this category.

3. **Occupancy (rent, utilities, maintenance)**
   Direct project expenses that would not occur if you did not do the project. Some organizations assign a % of these expenses to each project.

4. **Training & Professional Development**
   Costs related to developing staff and preparing the organization to take on this project.

5. **Insurance**
   Costs related to insuring this project that are above and beyond the regular insurance costs for the organization.

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[4] Colorado Nonprofit Association, Collaboration Toolkit: Creating an MOU, 2013.

[5] Work Group for Community Health and Development. *Community Tool Box, Chapter 9: Section 9: Understanding and Writing Contracts and Memoranda of Agreement*, 2016.

6. **Travel**
   Travel related to the project. Could be local or non-local. When budgeting for travel you may want to consider the following: airfare, ground transportation, per diem, lodging, mileage for personal vehicle usage, etc.

7. **Equipment**
   Nonexpendable, tangible property. Typically thought of as items that are more costly and durable. When there is a need to rent or buy equipment for use on the project, provide information on the type of equipment to be rented/bought, the purpose or use on the project, the length of time needed, and the rental/purchase rate**.**

8. **Supplies**
   Typically thought of as items that are less costly and get used up. In an office setting a computer would be equipment and the pencil would be supplies.

9. **Printing, Copying, & Postage**
   Photocopying, printing, mailings, postage, and express mail charges that are directly related to the project.

10. **Evaluation**
    Costs related to doing project evaluation. May include hiring external evaluators.

11. **Marketing**
    Costs related to the marketing, advertising, and the promotion of your project. Might include additional website costs that are above typical website costs related to your everyday business.

12. **Conferences, Meetings, etc.**
    Costs of holding (or attending) a conference or meeting are included in this category. Some examples are the rental of facilities and equipment for the meeting, honorariums/fees for trainers/guest speakers, travel, and per diem for speakers. Details of costs for each conference or meeting should be broken out and provided in the budget narrative.

13. **Administration**
    Non-personnel expenses you will incur whether or not you do the project. Some organizations include as a % of management staff in this line item.

Revenues

Please specify whether the Contributions, Gifts, Grants, & Earned Revenue are committed or pending. Committed means there is a firm agreement with the donor to give a contribution. Pending means that a request has been made but not yet agreed to or granted. It would be helpful to explain some of the committed versus pending amounts in the budget narrative justification. For example, if you have a request that you plan to submit please explain it in the budget narrative.

1. **Local Government**
   Group together all local government revenues (related to this project) and then break out the detail as necessary in the project budget justification.

2. **State Government**
   Group together all state government revenues and then break out the detail as necessary in the project budget justification.

3. **Federal Government**
   Group together all federal government revenues and then break out the detail as necessary in the project budget justification.

4. **Individuals**
   Group together all individual donations and then break out the detail as necessary in the project budget justification.

5. **Foundation**
   Group together foundation grants less than $1,000. Break out foundation grants greater than $1,000. Add rows as needed.

6. **Corporation**
   Group together corporate grants less than $1,000. Break out corporate grants greater than $1,000. Add rows as needed.

7. **Federation**
   Group together federated grants less than $1,000. Break out federated grants greater than $1,000. Add rows as needed.

8. **Other**
   Other grants not covered by the above listed categories.

9. **Membership Income**
   Revenues expected to be received from membership dues as related to this project. Explain how your dues work in the budget justification narrative.

10. **Project Service Fees**
    Revenues expected to be received from project participation.

11. **Products**
    What people give you in exchange for the service or product your project generates. Not all projects generate income, but many do. A play generates ticket income and maybe concession income. An education project may have income from publication sales or tuition.

12. **Fundraising Events (net)**
    Revenue expected to be received related to this project for fundraising event. Please subtract out the cost of the event.

13. **Investment Income**
    Income coming from interest payments, dividends, capital gains collected upon the sale of a security or other assets, and any other profit that is made through an investment vehicle of any kind.

In-Kind Support
Gifts of goods or services instead of cash. They can include donated space, materials or time. If you list in-kind contributions as income in your budget, then you must also show the corresponding expenses. If someone gives you something at a major discount, then you would show the whole expense and then list the portion being donated under in-kind contributions. This might include volunteer involvement – for example, a volunteer offered his marketing services to the firm and it would have cost $xxx amount if you would have had to purchase those services.

Part 2 - Income Statement
Internally prepared income statement (also known as budget) for current fiscal year (may use organizational budget included in this application).

Part 3 - Audited Financial Statements OR 990's and Internally Prepared Financial Statements
NOTE – Financial statements are to be prepared according to Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP).

1. **Complete copy of organization's audited/reviewed/compiled financial statements for the last fiscal year which includes two (2) years of financial information. Note: Some funders will only accept audited statements. Please check with individual funder.**

   OR

2. **Organization's most recently filed Form 990 plus internally prepared financial statements for the past two (2) years. Must include:**
   Form 990
   The IRS Form 990 is titled "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax." It is submitted by tax-exempt

organizations and non-profit organizations (except congregations) to provide the Internal Revenue Service with annual financial information. A short version, Form 990-EZ, may be used by organizations with gross receipts of between $25,000 and $500,000 and total assets of less than $2.5 million. (Organizations and congregations with gross receipts of under $25,000 in a year are not required to file a form 990). Another variant, Form 990-PF, is available for private foundation organizations.

Statement of activities (income statement)

Also known as profit and loss statement (P&L), statement of financial performance, earnings statement, operating statement, or statement of operations. It indicates how the revenue is transformed into the net income (the result after all revenues and expenses have been accounted for, also known as the "bottom line"). It displays the revenues recognized for a specific period, and the cost and expenses charged against these revenues, including write-offs (e.g., depreciation and amortization of various assets) and taxes. The purpose of the income statement is to show whether the nonprofit made or lost money during the period being reported. It represents a period of time. This contrasts with the balance sheet, which represents a single moment in time. It is important to specify whether it is accrual (preferred) or cash accounting. Some funders require accrual.

Statement of financial position (balance sheet)

A summary of the financial balances of your nonprofit. Assets and liabilities and fund balances are listed as of a specific date, such as the end of its financial year. A balance sheet is often described as a "snapshot of a nonprofit's financial condition." It applies to a single point in time of a business' calendar year.

Statement of cash flow

Shows how changes in balance sheet accounts and income affects cash and cash equivalents, and breaks the analysis down to operating, investing, and financing activities. Essentially, the cash flow statement is concerned with the flow of cash in and cash out of the nonprofit. The statement captures both the current operating results and the accompanying changes in the balance sheet. As an analytical tool, the statement of cash flow is useful in determining the short-term viability of a nonprofit, particularly its ability to pay bills.

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Common Grant Application Version 2.0 Committee:

- Dianne Benjamin, ARCHS
- Clare Brewka, Gateway Center for Giving
- Cynthia Crim, Commerce Bank
- Kathy Doellefeld-Clancy, Joseph H. & Florence A. Roblee Foundation
- Diane Drollinger, Network for Strong Communities (NSC)
- Deb Dubin, Gateway Center for Giving
- Wendy Jaffe, Trio Foundation of St. Louis
- Samantha Sherrod, United Way of Greater St. Louis

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- Lisa Thorp, St. Louis Public Library, Grants & Foundation Center

The following resources and reports were used to help with developing the Common Grant Application Version 2.0:

- *Colorado Common Grant Application* & *Colorado Common Grant Application User Guide*. 2010.
- Baltimore Community Foundation, *Grant Application—Education*. 2014.
- Baltimore Community Foundation, *DEI Definitions of Terms*. Drawn from Baltimore Racial Justice Action, *Definitions*.
- The Denver Foundation, *Grants Guidelines*. 2016.
- Philanthropy Massachusetts, *Common Proposal Form*. 2016.
- The Chinook Fund, *Funding Guidelines & Grant Application*. 2016.
- D5 Coalition, *State of the Work: Stories from the Movement to Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.* 2016.

Common Grant Application Version 1.0 Committee:

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The following resources and reports were used to help compile the information found in the CGA Version 1.0 User Guide:

- Barbara Davis for the Minnesota Council on Foundations, *Writing a Successful Grant Proposal*. 2005.
  Colorado *Common Grant Forms.*
- S. Joseph Levine, Ph.D. for Michigan State University. *Guide for Writing a Funding Proposal*. 2011.
  Foundation Center- *Proposal Writing Short Course*.
- Ohio Grantmakers Forum (dba Philanthropy Ohio).
- University of Arizona Foundation- *Helpful Grantseeking Links*.
- University of Arizona- *Grants Glossary*.