

# How an Idea Becomes a Grant

## Do Your Research First

- Establish the need for your idea.
- Who, What, When, Where and How?
- Do the statistics and other information in the field bear you out?
- Is the implementation of this idea consistent with your organizations mission?
- Will it advance your organization's core goals and objectives?
- Does your proposal duplicate other efforts in the community

## Talk to Other People

- Are they successful? How could they be improved?
- Has it been tried in this area, in other states, in other countries?
- Is there literature on the subject?
- Are there other programs that have implemented your idea in some fashion?
- Are there viable models that can be built on?

## Identify Possible Collaborators and Partners

- Are there other agencies that could make your idea stronger or make it reach father?
- Who are the "big" providers in the field?

## Carefully Read and Analyze Potential Funding Sources'

- Principles
- Policies
- Guidelines
- Timeline

## Understand the Funder's Internal Process

- The Role of the Board of Directors
- The Role of Staff
- Internal Merit Process
- Functional Time line

## Define Outcomes, Measures and Benchmarks

- State the outcomes you want to accomplish with your idea.
- State the measures that your idea can achieve.
- State specific benchmarks that will occur if your idea works.
- State several milestones in implementing your idea.
- Evaluate your idea in the context of your stated outcomes, measures and benchmarks.
- Is your idea still viable?

### **Structure a Program**

- Staffing needs.
- Components: Location? What services will be provided? How will clients be identified?
- Workplan Based on Outcomes, Measures, and Benchmarks
- Timetable for operation or implementation.
- Articulate a monitoring, evaluation, and sustainability strategy

### **Work-out a Preliminary budget for the first year.**

- What are the sources of income?
- What are the likely expenses?

### **Write an Implementation Plan**

- What will you do first to put the idea into action?
- What are the next steps?
- Who is responsible for them?
- Are the operations or services going to be phased in?
- When do you expect full implementation?

### **Develop a Fund Raising Strategy that Includes Private and Public Funders**

- Leveraging resources are important. It is rare that a Foundation would be sole source of funding a project.
- Decide which funding source will you approach to support specific parts of your budget
- Make sure you understand which funders will support which components:
  - capital expenses
  - core operating expenses
  - program cost
  - staff development

### **Select Potential Funders and Write your Proposals**

- Use the Philanthropic Center at the Main Library at the New Haven Public Library.

### **Some Potential Pitfalls**

- Do not write all your funding requests to cover the same expenses
- Be realistic in developing your budget; do not under-budget the project
- Be candid and straightforward about your potential challenges and weaknesses
- Follow instructions to the letter on number of copies, format of proposal, etc.

### **Some Good Things to Remember**

- A Foundation staff person is your best resource; answer questions honestly.
- Keep your board members informed about your proposal.
- Allow for things to take longer that you expected.