

Step 4

Developing Your Proposal

4.9 Executive Summary

The executive summary is usually the last substantial piece of a proposal to be written. However, it is the first and most important page your prospective funder will see. It should provide the reader with a snapshot of what is to follow by summarizing all the key information. It should be considered a “sales” document designed to convince the reader that this project should be considered for support. Be certain to include:

Problem: A brief statement of the problem or need.

Solution: A short description of the project, including what will take place and what outcomes are expected.

Funding requirements: An explanation of the amount of grant money required for the project.

Sustainability expectations: Your plans for funding the project in the future.

Organization and its expertise: A brief statement of the name, history, purpose, and activities of your agency, emphasizing its capacity to carry out this proposal.

How-to Tips

- **Use headings and subheadings to highlight proposal sections.**
- **Highlight innovative aspects of your project.**
- **Use at least one technique to make an emotional connection with the readers.** Ideas are presented in the section Striking an emotional chord: persuading the funder.
- **Link the project to the funder’s priorities.**