

New Ventures
IN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE FOR INDIANA

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Have Idea...Need Cash

Developing a successful grant proposal

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3 Keys to Success!

- Important Venture
- Proposal Matches the Call for Proposal (CFP)
- Top Quality Proposal
 - A logically consistent story
 - Easily understood story
 - Convincing to the reviewers
 - Matches the evaluation criteria

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Is your Venture Important?

- Do your goals match the goals of the granting agency?

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Does your Project Fit Notice?

- Understand the Notice
 - Read, Reread, Reread . . . the Notice
- Call the contact person
 - Obtain clarification on all your questions
 - Confirm that your project fits the category of the grant
 - Confirm Eligibility
 - Know and meet ALL DEADLINES

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Application Three Main Parts

- Project Proposal
- Budget
- Reference Letter

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A Top Quality Proposal Involves:

1. An effective “Plan of Attack” in developing/delivering the proposal
2. A carefully crafted document that is submitted

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Keys to an Effective “Plan of Attack”

- Have an Important Project
- Have Previous Work that shows strong probability of success
- Develop Linkages with Appropriate Partners
- Establish your Team (to complete the proposal) with Necessary Expertise
- Matching Funds

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Important Problem

- If your Project doesn’t “score” well on the criteria listed:
 - Adapt or change your Venture
- Essential to **demonstrate** in your proposal that you have an important Project

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Previous Work

- Highlighting previous work helps to **demonstrate** that your group is action-oriented and will make things happen

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Appropriate Partners

- The appropriate connections are important because that increases the probability that your Venture will be successful
- You must **demonstrate** that you have the appropriate links with key partners

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Expertise of your Team to Carry out this Proposal

- You need to **demonstrate** that you have your team structured so that you have the necessary expertise to carry out the planned activities for this proposal **successfully**.

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Matching Funds

- Requirement of some granting agencies
- Want to ensure you and your group are really **committed** to this – matching funds is the indication you are willing to put something up yourself.

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Document Preparation/Submission

- Forms
 - Make sure they are complete and correct
- Text of Proposal (the guts of the proposal)
- Supporting Materials
 - Letters from Partners
- Follow Directions/Details
 - Page limits, Fonts
- Meet Deadlines

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Text of the Proposal

- The GUTS of the proposal
- Write, Rewrite, Rewrite, Rewrite
- Get comments from other (people who are willing to tell you it doesn't make sense)
- Rewrite, Rewrite,

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Putting the Proposal Together

- Go back through the Notice – and include section by section
- Make sure you address everything the funding agency is asking for and
- Make sure it is easy for the person reading your proposal to see that you addressed everything

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Effective and Ineffective Text

- Examples of first few lines of text for different sections of the proposal
- Examples of both effective and ineffective text
- Slide of text followed by
- Slide of comments

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Proposal Summary

This risk management extension program will address all five risk management areas of production, price, financial, legal and human. Through the use of case studies price risk, financial risk, production risk, legal risk and human resource risk will be incorporated. Participants will learn how to identify and evaluate the various risks, and implications for returns, of new business ventures. This risk management program will be delivered to Purdue Extension Educators and producers throughout Indiana in a series (between 4 and 6) of 1-day workshops.

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Comments

- Summary from a successful proposal
 - Submitted a couple of years ago
- 5 areas of risk management
 - Directly noted in the RFP
 - Incorporated them into the 1st sentence
- Use of case studies
 - To incorporate all 5 areas of risk management
- Participants will learn to identify and evaluate risks and returns of new business ventures
- Noted who the audiences will be and the type and number of workshops

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Nature of the Proposed Venture

ABC producers have formed a cooperative to produce organic cheese from the milk that their members produce. The members of ABC producers are among the top milk producers in the region and always produce a top quality milk. The cheese that can be made from this milk is superior.

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Comments

- Fictitious example for marketing project
- Why all the talk about production of milk when the focus of the grant is on the marketing of value added products (cheese)?
- How is the cheese superior? Is it superior in any way that consumers care about?
- What makes ABC's cheese unique?
- Think about this content for later in the section
 - not the opening paragraph

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Qualifications of those Doing Studies

ABC producers will employ MNL Marketers to complete the marketing plan for selling the top quality organic cheese, from the milk production of ABC producers. ABC producers are among the most efficient milk producers in the region and have a reputation for high quality milk. The 3 person team from MNL Marketers bring a combined 45 years of experience in marketing agricultural products

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Comments

- Fictitious Example
- Does ABC producers have any experience
 - in direct consumer marketing? (notice all the focus on their reputation for quality milk production)
 - in supervising a consulting firm?
- What sort of criteria are ABC going to give MNL? Do the members of ABC know the right questions to ask?
- Noting the expertise of MNL consulting is good – but how is the 45 years of experience spread over the 3 people?

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Project Leadership

The President and Vice President of ABC Producers, Sam Jones and Tom Smith bring valuable leadership to this project. They have effectively worked together in the past to develop the plans, raise the money, and bring to implementation a multi million dollar business and community center.

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Comments

- Fictitious Example
- Noted that Sam Jones and Tom Smith work well together
- Noted that Sam Jones and Tom Smith have history of success with multi faceted projects

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Commitment

ABC Producers has extensive support from the dairy producers in the region. Over 75% of producers in the region having joined the cooperative and contributed the initial venture capital of \$5000 each. In addition ABC Producers has extensive support from the Dairy Producers as evident by the letter of support included in this proposal.

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Comments

- Fictitious Example
- Good use of numbers
 - Over 75% of producers (although specific area is not noted)
 - \$5000 investment/producer
- Reference to external letter of support

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Work Plan/Budget

The work will begin 5/1/07 and be completed by 4/30/08. As noted in the table below, the initial market assessment will be completed by 7/1/07 and focus groups will be held during August and September. The final version of the marketing plan will be delivered to ABC Producers by 2/15/08. ABC Producers will review the marketing plan and develop final report that will be submitted by 3/31/08.

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Comments

- Fictitious Example
- Good use of dates – specific
- Use of a table to show timeline of events is good idea
- Could note the person responsible for the conclusion of each component

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Amount Requested

- State the amount that you are requesting
- Remember that for some grants you receive extra points for smaller grants, while for others you don't
- You may want to note some specific items, and \$\$ associated with those, that are particularly important for this project

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Supporting Letters

- May need letters for different reasons
- From each of your Partners/Collaborators
- Partner needs to indicate support in the first paragraph (and state both name of group submitting and title of proposal)
- Clearly identify type of support
- Any information partner can provide to augment proposal

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Directions/Details and Deadlines

- Follow Details
 - Page Limits
 - Font Size
 - Spacing on page
- Meet Deadlines
 - Use a courier service – especially for anything going to Washington DC

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Resources

- **New Ventures Team**
 - www.agecon.purdue.edu/newventures
- **Writing a Successful Grant Proposal**
 - https://www.agecon.purdue.edu/newventures/Grant_Writing/index.html

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Funding Sources

- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)
 - www.sare.org
- USDA-SBIR
 - Small Business Innovation Research
 - www.sbir.gov
- USDA-Rural Development
 - www.rurdev.usda.gov/in/

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