



## Proposal Development

## Key Point

- A lot of the work happens before you begin writing:
  - Determining exactly what you want to do
  - Stating exactly why your project is important
  - Defining exactly how your project fits with the funder's priorities
  - Deciding exactly what to include in your proposal
- This is the conceptualization of your work
- It involves thinking not writing



## Ingredients

1. Explicit link to funder
2. Easy language
3. White space
4. Use invited pyramid
5. No silly mistakes
6. Clear “messages”



## More time thinking = less time struggling with writing

Think about.....

- Problem
- Strategy
- Customers, Users, Payors
- Value Proposition
- Financial Sustainability
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Path to Scale



## Explicit framing with funder needs

An effective proposal makes it clear to the reviewer that the project matches the funder's priorities

- Read request for proposals and instructions carefully
- Re-read the instructions and highlight:
  - Keywords the funder emphasizes or uses frequently
  - Statements that match your project's focus and goals



## Explicit framing with funder needs

Read about other projects the funder has supported

- Make notes of how your project fits with the funder's stated priorities and requirements
- Incorporate these notes into your grant proposal, especially in any "summary items"
  - Covering letter, abstract, executive summary, conclusion
- Use the keywords the funder uses





## Easy language

- Many grant reviewers are generalists rather than specialists and/or may not be experts in the specific field of your project
- They may not have specific technical or methodological knowledge for your project
- Effective grant proposals are written in easy, conversational language
- Write it plainly

## Easy Language

- Short words
- Short sentences
- Short paragraphs
- No jargon and no clichés
- Avoid figures of speech and idioms
- Active better than passive





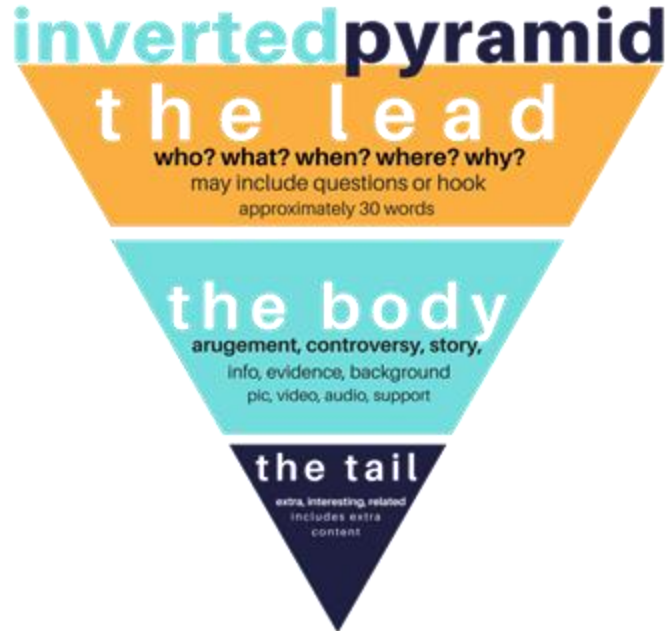
## Ensure there is a white space

- Do not feel obliged to fill every space in the grant application or maximize the word limit
- Readability for the reviewer is improved with some spaces between paragraphs and sections
- Careful use of font size, subheadings, indents, and bold/italics/underline can complement the use of white space



## Write using inverted pyramid model

Start with the most important aspects



## **Avoid stupid mistakes**

- Most grant proposals are written for funders who hold a competition
- Most times the competition is fierce – only a small proportion of all submitted grants will be funded
- Why reduce your chances of success by making silly mistakes?

## Stupid mistakes include

- Typos
- Word counts that exceed limits
- Page counts that exceed limits
- Using abbreviations that are unknown or undefined
- Not following instructions about:
  - Information to include in each section
  - The structure or headings to use
  - Fonts or other style requirements

ONE STUPID  
MISTAKE CAN  
CHANGE  
EVERYTHING.

   [Quotling.com](https://www.quotling.com)

## Avoid silly mistakes

- Read instructions again carefully
- Use your colleagues, co-applicants, and/or spouse as peer reviewers
- Ask that they read your proposal to spot any typos or areas where you can cut words
- Spell out or avoid abbreviations
- Take a break from your proposal and return to it fresh for final editing



# Key Statements for a Grant Proposal

1. Problem statement
2. Need statement
3. Process statement
4. Impact statement
5. Sustainability statement



*Best of luck!*