

# Applying for (and winning!) funding in Renewable Energy.

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# Aim

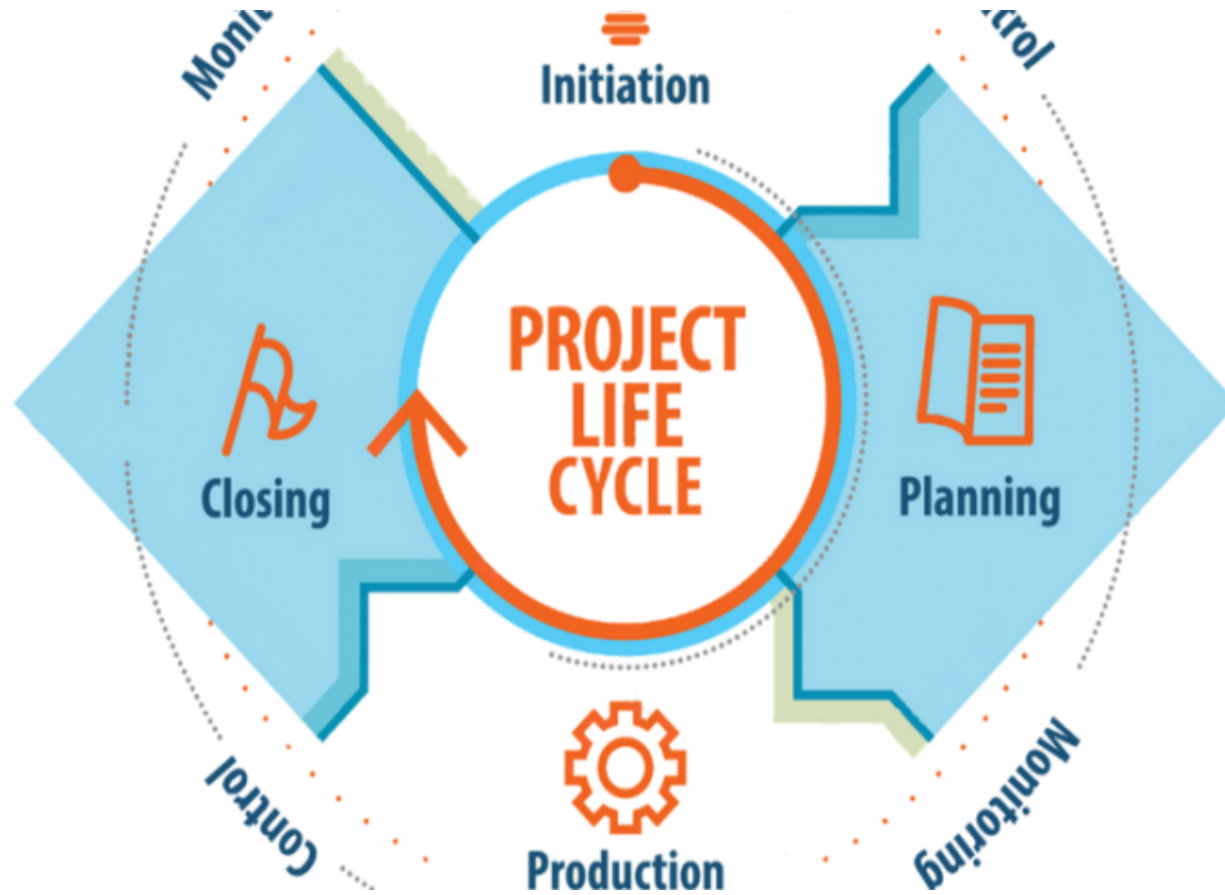
The session on project proposal writing aims to create an understanding of:

- ▶ Role of the project proposal and the activities related to each stage;
- ▶ How project proposals fit into project management;
- ▶ How to structure a good project proposal;
- ▶ Tips to successful proposals;
- ▶ What donors look for;

# Proposal writing



- ▶ A proposal is simply a document outlining a logical processes towards solving a particular problem.
- ▶ Donor funding proposals are used to solicit funds from donors therefore imperative for it to be **innovative, practical and methodological**.
- ▶ Proposal writing is only one of the phases of project management. It is one of the numerous actions that form a logical sequence of events usually referred to as the **project cycle**.



Project life cycle

# Proposal writing



- ▶ A proposal can either be **solicited** or **unsolicited**. A solicited proposal is usually sent to donors who issue an RFP providing description of needs, formatting instructions, evaluation criteria that will be used to make a selection.

## Common terms used

- ▶ NOFO - Notice of Funding Opportunity
  - ▶ RFP - Request for Proposals
  - ▶ RFA - Request for Applications
  - ▶ SOI - Statement of Interest
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- ▶ Unsolicited proposal is sent to a donor who has not requested it.

# Terms used in the process

- ▶ **Key Performance Indicators** – those elements of the project plan that translate the project’s purpose and results into measurable units and thus provide the basis for measuring the impact.
- ▶ **Input** – the investment of resources (human, material or financial) invested in the project.
- ▶ **Output** – the results achieved.
- ▶ **Activity plan** – a description of the flow, timeline and responsibilities for the project’s activities.
- ▶ **Resource plan** – a description of how the resources will be used in relation to the activities.
- ▶ **Gantt chart/Theory of Change/Logframe** – a specific model for activity plans that illustrates how the activities interconnect
- ▶ **Income** – the funds secured for the project’s implementation.

# Project planning

Regardless of a project planning model, quality proposal writing is not possible without proper planning.

## What to consider

- ❖ Beneficiaries of the project
- ❖ Project team and cooperative partners
- ❖ Success criteria
- ❖ Goal and objectives
- ❖ Methods chosen to achieve project goal
- ❖ Costs and expenditures
- ❖ Own contribution
- ❖ Potential funders

# Where to start

Project planning

Read the announcement carefully

Build a team to develop the proposal

Read a few winning proposals just to provide insight

Create a proposal outline: Follow donor guidelines, use correct terminologies, format and language

Include relevant case studies, data and facts to support your case

Keep only one goal per project

Avoid plagiarism: credit all sources

Simplify the budget: Meet agencies requirements, have budget narratives

Review and edit



# Desired structure

## Cover letter

## Executive Summary:

- Presents the overall project in a nutshell. Why, How and What of a proposal

## Organizational background:

- Overview, accomplishments, human resource capabilities, location

## Problem statement/project rationale:

- Specific issue in a society and how the organization will address it

## Project goal and objectives: SMART

## Operational model/Strategy

- Methods, activities, timelines to final phase reaching beneficiaries

## Monitoring and Evaluation plan

- Log frame/Theory of Change: links activities, outputs, outcomes to impact

## Sustainability & Profitability

- Ensure there is community participation, stakeholders engagement, and increase revenue streams that will sustain the project post initial funding e.g. membership fees

## Comprehensive Budget

- Simplify the budget and include narratives

# LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Design a project by identifying how resources and activities contribute to project goals

	DESCRIPTION	INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Goal	Insert text	Insert text	Insert text	Insert text
Outcomes	Insert text	Insert text	Insert text	Insert text
Outputs	Insert text	Insert text	Insert text	Insert text

<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>8,000 women empowered in clean energy entrepreneurship, improved health and living standards for 3.5 million people globally through increased access to clean energy technologies and reduced Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.</b>				
<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<b>Women entrepreneurs enhance their business skills, have access to finance and clean energy products to increase business performance.</b>				
<b>OUTPUTS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased information access and awareness regarding the central role of women in clean energy entrepreneurship.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhanced business skills, access to finance and clean energy products.</li> <li>2. Increased understanding of why prioritizing women's entrepreneurship in clean energy important.</li> <li>3. Improved clean energy business performance.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased support for wPOWER partners in women nominees taking part in the mentorship programme.</li> <li>2. Increased availability of training, coaching and mentoring services for wPOWER partners and potential women entrepreneurs.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased coordination and collaboration of public and private stakeholders in the sector and accelerated women engagement in clean energy entrepreneurship.</li> <li>2. Increased number of businesses producing affordable clean energy products, with a particular focus on women as users.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Growing number of relevant programmes (including finance and other types of support) and policies available that support and/or explicitly focus on inclusion of women in the clean energy value chain.</li> </ol>
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Case studies.</li> <li>2. Success stories.</li> <li>3. Partner spotlights.</li> <li>4. Newsletters.</li> <li>5. wPOWER Social media platforms.</li> <li>6. wPOWER overview document.</li> <li>7. wPOWER website.</li> <li>8. Online resource site.</li> <li>9. Best practice postcard.</li> <li>10. Online interactive platform.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lessons learned document.</li> <li>2. Evaluation reports</li> <li>3. Research publications.</li> <li>4. Indicator reports.</li> <li>5. Learning curriculum tool.</li> <li>6. Exhibition.</li> <li>7. Baseline report.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mentorship programme.</li> <li>2. Community trainings in clean energy entrepreneurship.</li> <li>3. Africa-India exchange visit report.</li> <li>4. ToT workshop report.</li> <li>5. Community training modules.</li> <li>6. Training of Trainers workshop.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partner profiles.</li> <li>2. Network of global partners.</li> <li>3. Partnership strategy.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate and provide opportunities and spaces for dialogues, knowledge sharing and networking.</li> <li>2. Advocacy working groups.</li> <li>3. Advocacy publication.</li> <li>4. Advocacy strategy.</li> </ol>
<b>PROGRAM ASPECT</b>	<b>SHARING BEST PRACTICES</b>	<b>BUILDING EVIDENCE</b>	<b>TRAINING, COACHING AND MENTORSHIP</b>	<b>PARTNERSHIP</b>	<b>ADVOCACY</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Case studies to highlight success and challenges.</li> <li>2. Mobilize, publish and disseminate sector resources and partner profiles.</li> <li>3. Identify best practice principles for the sector.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct midterm and end term evaluations.</li> <li>2. Conduct literature review on existing knowledge.</li> <li>3. Collect and collate data from wPOWER partners.</li> <li>4. Exhibitions of clean energy technologies.</li> <li>5. Conduct baseline survey.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify global coaches and mentors.</li> <li>2. Conduct community entrepreneurship trainings.</li> <li>3. Africa-India exchange visit.</li> <li>4. Develop curriculum for community trainings.</li> <li>5. Training of Trainers (ToT) Curriculum development.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate networking opportunities for partners in clean energy sector.</li> <li>2. Conduct mapping of public and private stakeholders and their respective existing role in the clean energy value chain.</li> <li>3. Conduct donor mapping.</li> <li>4. Develop partnership engagement strategy.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create advocacy communication materials.</li> <li>2. Form advocacy working groups.</li> <li>3. Develop advocacy strategy and engagement plan.</li> </ol>

# Why Proposals fails

Failure to follow guidelines

Vagueness

Poor presentation and errors

Lack of an M&E plan

Not keeping deadlines

Incompleteness

# What donors look for



**Transparency:** in developing and implementing a project



**Accountability:** How each penny will be accounted for and how it contributes to the overall project goals



**Impact:** Measurable outcomes and the M&E process. In highly competitive bids, donors compare project proposals



**Organizational capacity:** Skills, resources, expertise, past achievements



**Feasibility:** How practical it is to achieve the desired goals in light of any constraints e.g. time, resources, social-political environment



**Sustainability and affordability** to beneficiaries



**Budget:** Check application guidelines for limits, if not collect intelligence about it

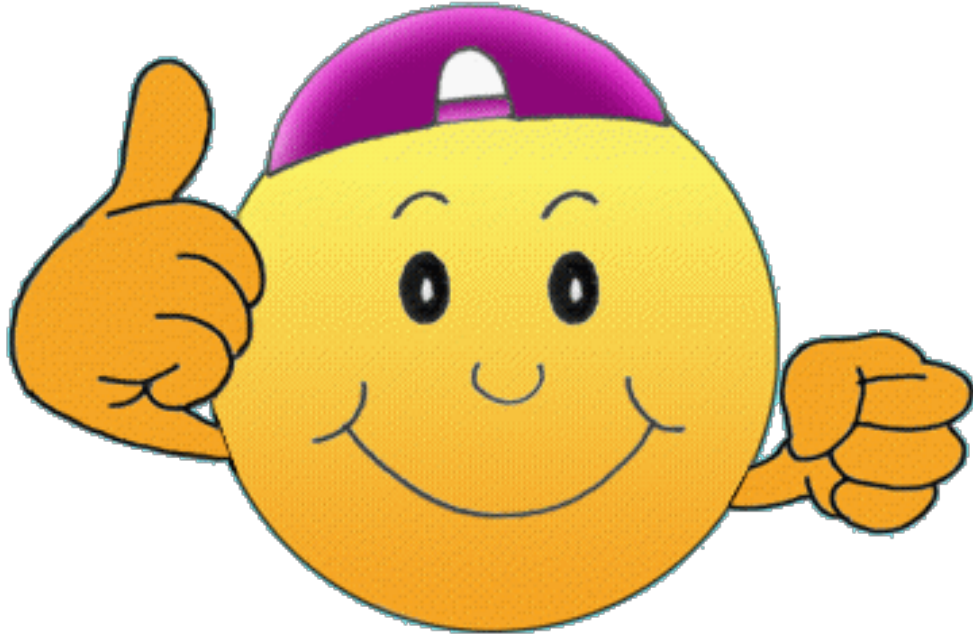
# Types and Sources

- ▶ Equity: Capital outlay provided by owners
- ▶ Debt: Borrowed capital
- ▶ Grants/donor funding
  - ▶ Restricted funds-only used for a specific purpose as agreed with donor
  - ▶ Unrestricted funds-can be used for any purpose that helps your org achieve its mission.
- ▶ Crowdfunding-KIVA, gofundme,(crowdfunding renewable energy eBook)
- ▶ Clean Cooking Alliance, GIZ, SNV, HIVOS, UN-Habitat
- ▶ Green Climate Fund-7 approved projects worth 2.8b
- ▶ Netfund, Equity Foundation, KCIC
- ▶ Small and growing business fund
- ▶ Aspire small business fund
- ▶ Africa Renewable Energy Fund
- ▶ Africa Opportunity Platform: Renewable energy
- ▶ Global Partnership for social accountability: Only CSOs
- ▶ GOK renewable energy portal/ Funds for NGOs
- ▶ Frontier Investment Management
- ▶ Climate Investment Fund
- ▶ Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund
- ▶ Willow Impact Investors
- ▶ Agence Française de Développement (AFD), EU, World Bank, USAID-grants.gov, DFID, Kfw, Acumen fund, Schooner Africa Foundation, UNIDO

# Working together

- ▶ Combine efforts on a joint proposal; It makes your proposal a better investment for funders.
  - ▶ Application done by **lead applicant** and ensure ;
    - ▶ Implementation arrangement
    - ▶ Project team
    - ▶ Budget sharing scheme
    - ▶ Consider working with an existing NGO rather than recreating the wheel. Include a letter of interest from them in your proposal
    - ▶ Have MoU or a contract
- ▶ Show that you've done your research. Don't duplicate effort - fill a need that is not already being met; know what others are working on in your proposed area.
- ▶ Partnerships (esp. among CSOs) is based on the idea that social accountability processes require various types of civil society expertise and capacities in order to be effective.

**GO FOR IT !**



**GOOD LUCK !**

Experience  
Sharing and  
Q&A

“A goal is a dream with a deadline.” - Napoleon Hill