



# Grant Writing 101 Webinar

---

August 30, 2017



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration

# Introductions



**Kari Banta**

Program Manager, RTAP and Section 5310  
Texas Department of Transportation



**Katharine Mitchell**

Senior Transportation Planner  
Regional Transportation Authority of Pima County, AZ



**Robin Phillips**

Executive Director  
National RTAP

# Overview

- Identifying Project Need
- Seek Opportunities
- Plan your Grant Proposal
- Write Your Grant Application
  - Narrative
  - Grant Writing Tips
- Submit and Follow Up
- Resources
- Questions?

# Identifying Project Need

- Determine project need and scope
  - Think of the specific project, not your whole program
  - What is the need?
  - Does it fit with regional transportation goals?
  - How does it fit with plan goals?
  - Do you coordinate with other entities?

# Seek Opportunities

## Steps include:

- Know where to look for agencies and organizations that provide grant funding
- Search for entities whose mission aligns with the purpose of the project
- Determine if the grant opportunity specifics encompass the project's need
- Ensure the organization and project request meet all eligibility requirements of the grant
- Request a grant application

# Seek Opportunities

- Federal Agencies

- FHWA
  - Multimodal Planning
  - Active Transportation
  - Transportation Demand Management
  - Federal Lands Access Program

- EPA

- State and Regional

- State Infrastructure Funding
- Economic Development
- Development Association

- Private Foundations

- Ford Foundation
- Frey Foundation
- Pew Charitable Trusts
- McKnight Foundation
- WK Kellogg Foundation
- Charles Steward Mott Foundation

# Seek Opportunities: FTA

## State-Managed, Rural Eligible

- § 5310
  - Contracted Service, Vehicles/Capital Assets, Mobility Management (varies by state; may include Operations)
- § 5311
  - General Public: Administration, Operations, Capital
  - Tribal Transit: Administration, Operations, Capital
  - Intercity: Private Match, Administration, Operations, Capital
- § 5339
  - Vehicles, facilities, including electronic equipment and software

# Plan Your Grant Proposal

- Determine project cost
  - What resources are required?
  - Is local match required?
- Determine community impacts
  - Who will be benefited? Who will be impacted without this project?
- Determine project support
  - Who could write a letter, come to a Council meeting, etc.? Are any required letters of support?



# Write Your Grant Application

Once you have identified an appropriate grant to apply for, follow these grant writing steps to complete the application:

1. Gather information
2. Organize your ideas
3. Develop a need statement
4. Outline proposal
5. Provide narrative detail

# Write Your Grant: Gather Information

- Read all grant guidelines and requirements
- Determine information needs
- Breaking out tasks for different partners
- Pay attention to scoring criteria; ask if not given
- Collect applicable and supporting information for your project, such as:
  - Current transportation options and ridership data
  - Demographics and other [U.S. Census data](#), [On the Map](#)
  - Geographical data, Google maps, route maps
  - Accessibility of health care, employment, and education

# Write Your Grant: Organize Your Ideas

- **Re-read** grant guidelines and make notes
- Identify main points, concepts, or themes
- Identify the goals of the funding source and determine how your project meets the goals
- Develop broad concepts (e.g. senior mobility, access to employment, etc.)

# Write Your Grant: Develop a Need Statement

- Present facts and evidence to support the need of the project proposal
- Establish your organization as capable of addressing this need
- Thesis statement supported by entire grant proposal
- Why care?

# Need Statement Successful Example

A 1999 **report** from the X State Department of Health showed that the Town of X ranked among the worst in the state over a 3-year average for infant mortality, low birth weight and premature births, late entry into prenatal care, unmarried parents, teen pregnancies and poverty. An X County Prenatal **Focus Group** report revealed that communication by families and doctors is generally poor. There is a **need for information** on: childbirth education opportunities, support services, childbirth preparation, breastfeeding, sibling preparation for new baby, and postpartum depression. The focus group indicated that the public library could be helpful in directing new parents to resources and materials. In order to meet this need, the library proposes a grant program to expand collections and programs by linking for the first time with family practitioners and the X Memorial Hospital to reach **expectant and post-partum mothers and their children.**

# Need Statement Problematic Example

Libraryfield is an economically depressed community with many people out of work. In the past, this community has been a thriving little town but with many industries moving out there is a large segment of the population who need help. Libraryfield has a population of teen mothers living in poverty. The library can help this population by providing services. The library will expand their family services collection by 1,500 titles dealing with pregnancy needs. The library and its partners will also offer eight programs over the grant year dealing with such pregnancy topics as: breastfeeding, prenatal care, post-partum depression and more. The addition of a grant-funded staff member to coordinate efforts with the local medical field will make the project a success.

# Write Your Grant: Outline Your Proposal

This initial outline will serve as guidance in writing the narrative detail and adding the supportive data:

- Determine the main sections of the proposal
- Create proposal checklist with internal dates and assign to partners
- Craft brief statements for each section
  - Make sure you hit key themes
- Check off completed sections of the outline

***Follow format requirements for the grant you're writing***

# Narrative: Scope

Craft a clear project scope.

- Issue: We need to replace two vehicles to keep our fleet safe and reliable...
- Background: Two of our vehicles are three years beyond their FTA useful life and using our state fleet analysis the need to be replaced...
- Response, Project Need: Two 16 passenger body-on-chassis with two lifts and system communications and bike racks...
- Ask or Result: We need \$136,000 for two new vehicles and will provide \$17,000 in local match



# Narrative: Project Detail

Always support the project need statement and scope of work.

- Provide a complete and coherent funding strategy with budget breakouts
- Include letters of support from the community, local delegations, and businesses
- Provide details on the project benefits and community impact
- Include human interest stories about real events and people if requested
- Demonstrate your knowledge, experience, and technical capacity
- Provide a project timeline

# Grant Writing: Tips

- Give yourself enough time
  - Leaving things to the last minute doesn't give you a chance to respond to unforeseen issues.
- Simplify, but don't generalize
  - Concise answers with relevant detail are the key.
- Avoid repeating exact phrases from grant guidelines
  - There's a balance between using key words and repeating whole phrases or sentences. Be sure to follow the instructions and keep the funder's mission in mind.
- Revise, edit, and clarify
  - Put it aside, then go back and reread. Does it make sense? Are there gaps? Get a second reader, especially someone not familiar with the project.

# Submit

- Understand the application submission process
- Allow time to register before the deadline
- If there is a technology problem or error when submitting the application and sections are deleted or entered incorrectly, it may count as an automatic disqualifier for award consideration

# Follow Up

- Understand the pre-approval process (if present)
- Stay in contact – keep track of announcement dates and know the key grant contacts
- Follow-up on your proposal and ask for feedback if your project was not funded

# Resources

National RTAP Grant Writing Technical Brief -

<http://demopro.nationalrtap.org/emailResource.aspx?design=1&fileid=898>

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance: Grant Writing - How to develop and write a federal grant proposal at [https://cfda.symlicity.com/downloads/CFDA\\_writing.pdf](https://cfda.symlicity.com/downloads/CFDA_writing.pdf)

Foundation Center - Information and resources about philanthropy, including a database of grants and grantmakers called Foundation Directory Online at <http://foundationcenter.org/find-funding>

Grantsmanship Center - Training and publications for non-profits, including a database of grantmakers, and lists of the top foundations and corporate giving programs in each state in the Funding Sources page at [www.tgci.com](http://www.tgci.com)

Grants.gov – A website for federal agencies to post discretionary grant opportunities and for grantees to find them and apply

State and Federal Grant Programs - DOT, FTA, FHWA, HUD, EPA, USDA

# Thank You

## **Kari Banta**

Program Manager, RTAP and Section 5310

Texas Department of Transportation

[Kari.banta@txdot.gov](mailto:Kari.banta@txdot.gov)

## **Katharine Mitchell**

Senior Transportation Planner

Regional Transportation Authority of Pima County, AZ

[kmitchell@PAGregion.com](mailto:kmitchell@PAGregion.com)

# Thank You

## National RTAP

888-589-6821

[info@nationalrtap.org](mailto:info@nationalrtap.org)

[nationalrtap.org](http://nationalrtap.org)

[facebook.com/nationalrtap](https://facebook.com/nationalrtap)

Recording will be posted at  
[nationalrtap.org/webinars](http://nationalrtap.org/webinars) and  
transcripts can be requested

## Robin Phillips

Executive Director

[rphillips@nationalrtap.org](mailto:rphillips@nationalrtap.org)

## 3<sup>rd</sup> National RTAP Technical Assistance Conference

Omaha, Nebraska

October 29-November 1, 2017

Early bird rate ends September 8!



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration