

BACKGROUND INFORMATION USEFUL TO INCLUDE IN GRANT APPLICATIONS

If you can find the time to keep track of the following information you'll have a reasonable knowledge of your own publication and its distribution/impact. Including such information in grant applications indicates you are efficient at managing and understanding your publication.

READERSHIP

- subscription data: total numbers, numbers by province or region, comparisons with previous years' figures, estimated growth (if any) for the coming year, any specific info (e.g. gifts)
- retail sales data: same information, looking at both total numbers distributed and sales percentages
- renewal data: renewal return rates, comparisons with other years, any data you might have specific to types of renewals (e.g. gifts, retail purchasers)
- readership profile: if you've ever done a readership survey, compile a summary of findings

OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR:

Writing out objectives (either to be in the body of an application or in appendices, depending upon the nature of the funding request) is useful for you -- it helps your organization figure out where it is and where it's going -- and it indicates to your potential funder that you have a good handle on organizational planning. Objectives might fit within any of the following areas, depending on both where you're at and where you think the grantor is at.

- product-related: that is, directly affecting the magazine itself. E.g. funding authors to improve writing, altering design to improve readability or sales, changing your editorial mechanisms, finding money to increase page length.
- distribution-related: that is, influencing who gets the magazine and how they get it. E.g. increasing number of bookstores carrying your magazine, promoting to increase subscriptions within a certain part of the country or among certain types of readers, moving to a different distributor, doing a readership survey to better understand your readership.
- organizationally-related: that is, related to the way in which you function as a group. E.g. stabilizing volunteer involvement, increasing paid staff, altering functions carried out by paid staff, getting an office or new equipment, focusing on skill development within your group.

FINANCES

Any analysis you can supply related to both your revenue and expenditures is useful.

- budget: let your funder know how you plan your budget, and supply an overall budget for the organization as well as a project budget if you are applying only for a discrete project. If you have an accountant or an auditor make sure they know this; if you don't ignore it.
- revenue: state sources of anticipated funding, sources from which you sought but did not receive funding, any comparative information from one year to the next and some statement about how the year-to-year changes are benefiting you or how they will be overcome
- expenditures: state key areas of spending, discuss changes from previous or future years (e.g. one-time-only cost) and some indication of how this fits into a long range plan

ACTIVITIES OF YOUR ORGANIZATION

Especially if you are applying for a specific project, let the grantor know the extent of related activities and your overall track-record.

- routine activities: give a summary of your general working and what you produce (e.g. summary or range of issues addressed in the periodical)
- special projects: any thing you've done outside the ordinary as an organization. E.g. conference planning, supplementary issue
- participants' activities: summarize range and extent of activities undertaken by members independently to show your organization's integration into the women's, publishing or special interest movements

This is a rough framework only. It is not necessarily complete, nor are all items required for a successful grant application. The most important thing is to convince your potential grantor that you have a handle on who/what you are and that you are capably managing your organization ... thus, being able to manage the money they might give you. If you can't supply this information, don't worry -- but do try to discuss the general framework of each area and how you are intending to learn more about yourself in each year. If you don't achieve something you indicated (e.g. reducing volunteer time) or don't learn something you said you would (e.g. better analysis of readers), you then move on to telling your funder very understandable and acceptable reasons for not having done so!

NOTES FOR PREPARING GRANT APPLICATIONS

[The following pointers and questions are adapted from a federal government department's form for outside reviewers of project-oriented grant applications. Not all points will be pertinent for all types of applications. The overall framework, however, is useful and your application will be stronger if you can answer each of these concerns and have addressed each in your application as needed.]

IMPACT

You may or may not have to address this. Manpower grants, for instance, are often more interested in your impact on a specific employee's ability to obtain future jobs than they are in what impact you will have on women (your readership) or your local community. Other departments or funding programs will require you to show how a feminist publication will improve women's lives.

Be sure your application shows:

- . your understanding of the problem or target groups to be addressed
- . demonstrated need for your publication or project
- . potential of your publication or project to influence or reduce the consequences or extent of the concern being addressed
- . project or publication's contribution to new knowledge, resources
- . the level to which your project or publication differs from other programs or publications (i.e. non-duplication)

METHODOLOGY

The following questions, if answered, will indicate the soundness and feasibility of the proposal you are presenting for funding.

- . Are objectives clear? realistic? results-oriented?
- . Is the proposed methodology adequate to meet the stated objectives?
- . Does the proposed workplan match the stated objectives? define activities? include measurable outcomes? establish a realistic schedule?
- . Is the workplan based on realistic workloads?
- . Does the proposal make provision for input from its intended target population? in development? in implementation?
- . Do the project sponsors have the necessary expertise to carry out the project? Do past experiences and activities of the project sponsors indicate that they will be capable of carrying out the project?
- . Will the sponsoring organization's structure allow or facilitate appropriate management of the project?
- . Is the proposed budget realistic (in terms of planned activities)? Is it reasonable (in relation to prevailing rates & costs for each item)?
- . Is the proposed budget feasible in terms of the grantor's available

- . Is the proposed budget feasible in terms of the grantor's available funds? in terms of the grantor's previous pattern of giving?
- . Are project objectives written so they can be easily measured and evaluated?
- . Does the workplan include evaluation components?
- . Is the type of proposed evaluation appropriate? Are outcomes/indicators defined? Are methods for data collection identified? Is proposed analysis of data appropriate?
- . Does the workplan include an adequate plan to distribute findings or materials produced?
- . Will the product or results be useful to other organizations? Are such organizations indicated within distribution plans?

You may or may not answer each question in the application. Sometimes alluding to an area of concern is sufficient. For instance, in Healthsharing's applications for 1985/86, in addition to itemizing the actual data we could use to evaluate our overall existence (i.e. subscription growth, renewal rates, bookstore sales), we included a brief discussion about the relative impossibility of evaluating the impact of a magazine. By including general statements about the impact of magazines (e.g. from CPPA, from Eleanor Wachtel's report to Women's Program), we were able to justify an evaluation that looks only at process (what we did) and not at outcomes (what happened because of what we did). The time put into that short section of our government funding applications, implied that we understand the importance and methods of evaluation.

Since a lot of our publications on the surface appear somewhat similar, it is important to point out the differences between us -- readership, range of issues addressed, political perspective, etc. -- and how we complement one another. If you're seeking purely local funding or Manpower funding, this generally isn't an issue.

Connie Clement (Healthsharing) 2/6/85

WHAT TO DO AFTER YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE MONEY

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOUR FUNDER ... Figure out what your potential for future funding from the same source is, and then decide how much time you should invest. For instance, in working with Manpower, where turnover is relatively high and each office is large, your written file might be the only thing passed on when you next apply for funding. At Women's Program, however, where turnover is (hopefully) becoming less and the office is quite small, the personal opinion of staff who have worked with you will play a part in funding consideration.

As a minimum ...

- . send new issues of your periodical
- . send notification of changes in activities being funded
- . send a report upon completion of the funding
- . notify her (him) of any change in address or telephone

Depending upon how much you like and trust the person supervising your funding, and how likely your organization will be to seek further funding from the same source, it is beneficial to ...

- . send a cover note with each issue of your periodical
- . send copies of anything extra you've produced
- . keep her (him) informed of significant changes in your organization (e.g. new staff, loss or addition of several members, new equipment)
- . keep her (him) informed of significant changes in direction (e.g. new editorial or promotional thrust)
- . use the telephone or personal visits to relay information and maintain a sense of being connected with each other
- . consult her (him) about planning, other funding sources
- . thank her (him) for their time, support, lobbying on your behalf -- whatever is appropriate
- . forward information about events, articles, etc. which might be of interest or use to her (him)