

**THE COMMONWEALTH FUND**  
**Board-Level Grant Proposal Guidelines** (reviewed 11-2005)

These guidelines are to be used by prospective grantees when preparing proposals for projects that require Board-level approval. Please do not prepare a full proposal unless you have been in contact with a Fund program officer and directed to submit a full proposal. A prospective grantee will have had preliminary discussions or submitted a letter of inquiry before reaching the full proposal stage. Fund staff are not able to review and consider unsolicited full proposals.

Proposals for Board grants should include the following components:

- I. **Letter** or email from the project director on the applicant institution's letterhead to the Fund requesting support for the project. Please assure that all correspondence is dated.
  
- II. **Proposal** including:
  - A. **Executive Summary**
  - B. **Background**
    1. Nature and importance of the problem to be addressed.
    2. Population that will be affected.
    3. Contribution of the grant to solving/ameliorating the problem.
    4. If the project is a subsequent phase of a previously funded project, please provide a progress report. The progress report should provide a summary of work under the earlier phase of the project.
  - C. **The Project**
    1. Purpose of the project.
    2. How the work will be done. Attention should be paid to major activities, stages of work, methods, including data sources, specific topics to be addressed, and sites if relevant. If the project is data-driven, provide specific questions you seek to answer. If the project is policy-oriented, describe the policies you seek to change.
    3. Work plan/time line (flow chart). The anticipated dates for major products should be included in this work schedule.
  - D. **The Products**
    1. Expected products of the project.
    2. Communications/dissemination potential (target audience[s], distribution mechanisms).
  - E. **Expected Outcomes of the Project.**

Describe briefly how the project would contribute to work or knowledge in the area, raise public or professional awareness, meet an articulated need, advance the Fund's goals, or set the stage for future work. Factors that pose a risk to the success of the project can be mentioned here as well.

**F. Grantee Organization.**

Describe the mission, size, length of time in existence, assets, Board of Directors, major sources of support, and unique qualifications of the grantee organization to carry out the project.

**G. Project Management.**

Describe the Project Director, staff, and other key players (degrees, publications, pertinent honors, memberships, experience in the field, unique qualifications to be in charge of the project, past projects for the Fund).

**H. Budget with Justification.**

Detail all assumptions and cost calculations. We advise applicants to carefully review the Fund's *Budget Guidelines* for more specific requirements.

- III. **Letters of commitment** and/or proposal for any portion of the project to be conducted by a consultant or subcontractor, including scope of work, budget with justification, timeframe, workplan, resumes.
- IV. **Resumes** for Project Director and other key staff listed in the project budget.
- V. **Tax Papers**. Evidence that the grantee institution is exempt from federal taxation under IRS Code 501(c)(3) and not a private foundation under IRS Code 509(a), along with a letter signed by a responsible officer of the applicant institution certifying that the copies are true and correct copies of the originals on file and that they remain in full force and effect. If the grantee organization is not exempt from federal taxation under IRS Code 501(c)(3), please provide organization's articles of incorporation and the organization's most recent audited financial statements.
- VI. **Applicant Information Form**. Please attach a completed *Applicant Information Form* with the proposal.