



## FGI Webinar Series Show Me the Money February 2, 2023

**Michelle Day:** [00:00:00] Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to The Fletcher Group Rural Center of Excellence's webinar series. Today's session is scheduled to run from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM Eastern Standard Time. My name is Michelle Day and I'm your moderator for the session, along with Janice Fulkerson and Erica Walker. A couple of brief housekeeping items and then we'll begin.

You enter today's session on mute and your video was off and will remain so for the entirety of the webinar. Your chat feature is located at the bottom right of your screen. Use the dropdown feature to communicate with either the panelists only or panelists and attendees. Please direct all questions regarding the webinar content to the Q and A section.

Be advised that this meeting is being recorded and will be available to you on our website once it has been transcribed. You can access our website at [www.FletcherGroup.org](http://www.FletcherGroup.org). Also, at the conclusion of today's session, there will be a short survey regarding [00:01:00] the webinar content. Your participation in that survey is greatly appreciated and will only take a few moments to complete.

Today's presenter is Pamela Baston, Technical Expert Lead with JBS International Incorporated. Pamela has over 43 years of experience working in a variety of behavioral health capacities, including serving appointments under two Florida governors to manage Florida's publicly funded drug prevention and treatment system. One of the largest in the country.

She ran Safe Port, the largest family centered treatment program in the country at the time, for child welfare, involved pregnant and parenting women with concurrent opioid, methamphetamine, and other substance use of mental health disorders and their children. Serving 100 people, including children at any given time. Pamela provided training and or technical assistance to every state, two US territories and 160 tribes on a variety of behavioral health topics. [00:02:00] She brought in more than 100 million dollars in grant funding over a six year period, and through her training, shares her nearly 30 years of grant writing proposal development tips.

Pamela.

**Pam Baston:** Well, hello everybody. Um, welcome to, uh, today's, uh, webinar on grant writing. Um, my name is Pam Baston and it's a pleasure to be with you. Uh, I am just trying to get this slide advanced here.

**Pam Baston:** Okay. Hi everybody. Uh, nice to, uh, to be with you today and thank you for the introduction.

I'll be following, uh, this presentation called Show Me the Money: Practical Grant Writing Strategies. Um, so really the biggest takeaway I think from my introduction is that the strategies that I'll be sharing with you today, um, and the ones that I used to bring in a hundred million dollars in a six year period was very [00:03:00] part-time.



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Like I was probably working maybe 15 or 20% time to get that amount of funding in, um, by using very practical strategies that, um, that I'll be sharing with you today, uh, that I hope you will find useful. So I wanna start first with just a quick chat, uh, question, which is when do you believe that your organization or jurisdiction, if you're a county or a region, or a state or a tribe, um, when do you, uh, believe that you should begin, um, writing your proposal?

When when's the first time to begin? And you can put your answer in the chat. And if someone wants to, uh, read me just a handful of those so we can keep moving.

**Janice Fulkerson:** You bet, Pamela. It is ASAP. Right [00:04:00] now. Today. As soon as a grant is posted. Yesterday,

**Pam Baston:** Yesterday, . I think that's my favorite answer of all time. Very good. Um, yesterday is a good one. Um, but way before, way, way, way before, um, a proposal drops, as we call it, the funding opportunity drops. Um, the submission times, as you know, are very brief on, um, most of the, uh, proposals. And for the most part, the ones I'll be talking to you about today are the larger proposals, like federal proposals, state proposals. Some of these don't apply as tightly to private foundations in the smaller kinds of opportunities, but.

But basically you'll have anywhere from 10 days to six weeks. Generally it's more like 30 days, um, to write a proposal. And I don't believe that the success I have had is, um, due necessarily that [00:05:00] I have any particular skill that someone else doesn't have. It's that we always, always, always start long before.

And so, um, there's a cover. Couple clever ways to do that. So one is obviously anytime you or somebody on your staff or a colleague says, you know, gosh, I wish we had, uh, transportation to do mobile outreach or a, you know, a van, or I wish we had an afterschool program, or whatever it is that you wish you had, that somebody should say, you know, Hey, can you jot that down and maybe write up, what if, if you had a perfect world in, in a funding to support that, what would that look like? What would it cost? Where would you implement it? You know, what do you have to support the need for that? But one of the real, um, helpful things you can do, which a lot of people don't think to do. And that is that probably your organization collects a lot of data right now on other things.

And hopefully, and if you're not, you should start this yesterday. Uh, hopefully you're collecting data around, um, the, [00:06:00] how the participants that come to you for services, whether you're a school or a community-based program or whatever you are. Um, Hopefully somebody is, um, sharing, uh, that, asking the participants or the clients, you know, what they thought of the experience that they had with your staff or with your organization.

And there's some of these in treatment world is called like a perception of care survey. You know, did you, do you feel like the services we provided you or your family were effective? You know, if, if you, were there any barriers we could have overcome to help you, you know, participate more easily? Um, if you could change anything in our program, you know, to make it line up with your needs better, what would it have been?

You know, what was the most helpful thing that we did? What was the least helpful? And so we want to do that as a publicly funded organization. And actually even privately for-profit, private for-profits want to do this. To just really make sure that you are meeting the needs of [00:07:00] your, uh, participants. Well, and that you're also then tweaking, adjusting if, if you're getting feedback that suggests that you need to make changes.

Well, not only is that a really good practice, obviously, but you then have something that you can sneak into your grant proposal to say, you know, "*in our ongoing surveys of, um, our perception of care or satisfaction with programming or whatever you want to call this, um, 72% or 95, whatever it is, percent of our participants indicated that they needed so and so and so and so,*" you know, um, whatever it is that you're gonna ask for, for funding for.

So what what it also does is it sets the tone to let the grant reviewer know this is an organization that cares. They really care about their participants, about their clients because they care enough to ask. And then they take those data and they, you know, utilize that to inform, uh, programming. So, um, I would look at all the different things that you have already gathered about [00:08:00] needs in your area.

Um, and anytime if somebody sends a fan, like a phenomenal quote about how you saved their child's life or their life, or that it, you know, they were able to, to be successful or now they have a job and any of those things that you normally take and you put it in a file and you're like, yay us, you know, we did a good job.

Those are the things that you now wanna keep in a special place, that you can insert a quick little text box that brags about what you did, um, you know, in the past so that they know that this is a really good, reputable organization. And, um, that, uh, you can, and you work that in. Um, the good news about, uh, writing a proposal in advance is that almost all federal funders, and even most, but not all state funders, um, do have a very predictable format.

And this is just a sample only, and you might see a little different wording. But for example, almost always the very first section is, what do you need? What's the pro statement of problem? [00:09:00] Statement of need? It might be written in different ways, but this is where you make your case of why you, why your county, your tribe, your school, um, and then there'll be points assigned to that. And then the next one might be, okay, well what's your proposed approach? Or they might, it might be called approach methods. What do you intend to do now that with this problem that you've clarified or, or shared with us, what are you going to do about it? That usually has the most points associated, but not always the, these are just random points happen to track a real, real proposal, but, um, but this is general.

Um, then there's often a section called goals, objectives, and timeline, or sometimes that's included as part of an evaluation section, so that could always be different, but that's often something included. Then there's a section called organizational capacity. Um, staff and relevant experience. And that's like, you know, how do we know that you can, um, your organization has the bandwidth, the expertise [00:10:00] to, to do what you just said you were going to do.

Um, and then of course, how will you prove that? Through your data collection, performance measurements. Um, but you'll see that there's points assigned for each. Area. And I always do two things. I write to my points and I write to the grant reviewer. In other words, sometimes we think about the funder as this, you know, massive federal agency or what have you, or big state, and often that's the case.

But it's individuals, people, like us who will be reading these proposals and they often get many, many proposals. And after a while, believe me, as a former grant reviewer, they all start looking alike after a while. And it's just an overload situation. So I always say, you know, how, what can I do to make my proposal stand out, to make it memorable, to make it really resonate with that person who is reading this proposal. Um, and so if something is confusing, sometimes the format is not great. Sometimes formats [00:11:00] are crazy and you're like, who thought of this? Like, I'm having to tell something here that I haven't even described till I get down to Section D. You know, sometimes it doesn't make sense.

Well, you can always put a note. I always call it Reviewer Note. You know, please note, You know, based on this particular format, the detail for this is provided in another section or, or whatever. But we'll come back to that when we talk more about points, uh, assignments. But for example, if you know that the proposed approaches were 30 points, um, unless you are prescribed the number of pages per section, um, and, and often it's a range, it'll say, you know, your whole proposal can't be more than 10 pages or 50 pages or whatever it is.

And it might say, for example, Section A can be one to three pages. Section B can be two to 10 pages. You know, it might give you a range. I always say if the whoever has the most points, I'll divide that number of points into the total number of pages that you're [00:12:00] allowed to get a ballpark of how many pages, or how much real estate, of your proposal you will dedicate to that section.

Um, and again, that's only if you were allowed to flex on your pages. Sometimes there it's very strict. It can only be one page, it can only be three pages, what have you. But this would be an example. If you had a 20 page proposal, um, y and, um, using the points that I showed you just a minute ago, we would've done, you know, we would've probably sectioned it out, something like this, you know, dividing the, the, the weight of a section, uh, to give it the most pages.

Um, So, um, I, uh, really believe in hitting the home run in the very beginning. If these reviewers are human, believe it or not, they really do make a decision pretty early on. They get a feeling for you about whether you're in or you're out. And they may not make that decision, obviously, till the very end or till the points [00:13:00] line up, but they're starting to get a sense of, of you very early in.

This is a real section of a grant and a real picture that I included in a grant that I wrote. This happened to be right outside of Atlanta. And it was a little area, um, that I had been asked to write a grant on HIV prevention. And, um, I was living in North Carolina at the time and I drove three hours and a half away to this town to, to, cause I wanted to meet the people I was writing this proposal for.

And literally as soon as I crossed over the railroad tracks, I saw spray painted on this building Welcome to Hell, which is what you see over the, uh, the, um, ,door doorframe there. Um, literally for a moment I thought I was in a developing country. I could not believe that there were homes people were living in that had no power, that hadn't had electricity in a long time.

Um, there were, um, people just pushing grocery carts down the street. Um, there was just, um, there were PE [00:14:00] there. Men who were, they looked like grandparents. I mean, they were probably in their seventies, literally injecting, uh, drugs into their necks, sitting on, uh, upside down pink buckets in a field. . And when I got out of the car, I looked and saw literally the skyscrapers of downtown Atlanta's shadow on this community.

And I, I was struck with how, how can this happen? How can we have these like, and, and I literally thought, monuments to success. You know, they had Coca-Cola, they had all these big, and then here they were, here was this really struggling community where a lot of these parents were incarcerated and so the grandparents were now raising the children.

There was just a lot of, of, um, A lot of, of struggle. That was very apparent. And so these grant reviewers, they don't know this little town. I gave it a make believe town, it was called The Bluffs. And actually, I even talked about that in the, in the, um, proposal that, you know, my, I'm, I now live in Florida and my family lives over in Palm Beach.

And so they have communities called The [00:15:00] Bluffs, you know, and you, they were these like beautiful, you know, um, landscaped, I don't know what you call these things that billow in the breeze and little sea oats and all this kind of stuff. And that's what, you know, the Bluffs. But no, this is, this was the Bluffs or what they self proclaimed this, this little community to be.

And so I felt like. I gotta bring that grant reviewer to where I am. They have to understand what is this community? Because they're gonna be asked to fund a ton of communities that they've never been in, never heard of, you know? And so it's my job as the grant writer to bring them there, to give them that experience.

Here's another one that I wrote. All of these were funded by the way, thankfully. Um, but this one is, um, is a, um, it was in Miami Dade, Liberty City. Um, not too far from the airport in Miami, if you've ever been there. And so, um, this, this, these are, this is actual texts that I just literally plucked out of some of the proposals I've written. But to explain to them that, you [00:16:00] know, this was a vibrant Black community, very peaceful, very successful.

And then the city came in and they plowed right down the middle of this community with an interstate, and it ripped that community apart. It's never been the same. And all kinds of unintended consequences came a, after that. Um, and so again, these are just little snippets that I'm sharing with you, but to, just to give you a, a sense of.

Um, that yes, the statement of need will absolutely have to have statistics. It will absolutely have to have data to back up everything that you say. But if you have the opportunity to give

just a little bit of, um, of a window into what this community is like, um, and especially if you're trying to make a point like the, the, the slide right before this, uh, was for a trauma grant and, and, and, um, so is this one actually, this is for a trauma grant.

We got that one as well. Um, and so, um, you know, in this interview, this young, young mother reports that she and her baby were, you [00:17:00] know, were almost shot during a shootout on the next block. And when she tries to go to sleep at night, she hears the chopper, uh, sound of the AK 47 shooting over her heads. And, you know, all of this.

Um, and you, you can begin to imagine how traumatizing it would be to be a child growing up where those are the sounds you hear at night. Not the birds chirping or not something lovely, you know, the ocean or the river, you know, you're hearing these horrible gun sounds. So anyway, um, and I know we have a, a question and I'm, I'm not sure whether we do that now or later. I don't know if you have a preference.

Um, so, um, then we went on to discuss, you know, the other part of the county where we put this particular grant and the, what the Hurricane Andrew did to that. Um, and these are just, just various examples of, um, what it's like to live in a particular community that you're trying to [00:18:00] provide services in. Um, this.

Um, and see now you'll see I started to work in some data. So in this case, um, we had these, um, little areas where women were being sex trafficked. Um, and so we described what those establishments were like. Um, and we started to then begin to work in some of the statistics. And again, I'm pulling out, and obviously this is large font, so this represents a, uh, you know, just little.

Little vignettes, if you will, that are in, embedded in these particular proposals. Um, and in that same area, um, you can see now these, the two areas in red, uh, are where we literally were asking for funding. Um, and this one was the, the, um, homestead area, the one at the bottom. And then the littler one at the top was, um, in Liberty City.

So, um, and I believe, and I have v very limited technology skills, I can assure you, and I was [00:19:00] able to figure out in how to, how to add arrows and how to find things and get them colored in hotspots in this kind of a thing. Um, By playing around with, uh, different approaches. Um, this is another slide of when you provide statistics.

Um, this was for pregnancy prevention. And just look at this when you, instead of just aggregating the statistics, I broke them out by race and gender. And boy, what a difference that made. I mean, let's just take a look for example, at having sex before age 13. I mean, that just blows my mind. I'm trying to think of what I, what I was doing at 13.

I think I still had training rails on my bike or something. I mean, it's hard to believe being 13 and already having sex, but look at the difference between the black females at 2.5 and the black males at 16.8. Or the Hispanic females as an example. Um, you know, so what these data by show, by displaying data like this, [00:20:00] you now not only are, have a better





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sense of where to zoom in and how to tailor your messaging and, and how to, what kind of staff you want to have for your program to make sure that your, your staff and your your, um, participants are similar.

But it also shows the reviewer that you care enough to, to look at your data, to disaggregate your data by race and ethnicity. Um, and now with all of our focus on social determinants of health and, you know, diversity, equity, inclusion, these are the kind of things that if you don't do it, you will probably lose points.

Um, now I know I have written for some communities that are not real diverse, you know, in, um, places where, you know, I'm thinking like Idaho and different places I've been that are largely white. But you have diversity in lots of different ways too, you know, in terms of rural and urban and, you know, um, wealth and, and poverty.

And so there's different ways [00:21:00] if you don't have race and ethnicity data to really look at uh, where are other differences that might be important, uh, in identifying or targeting, um, services. So, um, this, these are just, um, various, um, various ways to, to display the data. Uh, I do want to say, before we move to this next section, that, um, one of the other critical things about, um, about the, the Statement of Need, especially if that's your first section, is that, um, you have to also be careful technically.

So sometimes the question will say, describe the geographic area of focus and your target population, or what we now call population of focus. We don't like to use the word target, but, but let's say that's the question. What, as a grant reviewer, what I would see is people would just start writing, oh, you know, Miami Dade, it's this county, it's this big, blah, blah, blah, blah.

But they lose the nuance. Well, no, no. Let's go back and look at the [00:22:00] exact wording. The wording said, you know, describe your, your, let's say population of focus. It might say by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, um, disability status, da da da da, da. If it has all of those things, then you address each and every one of those.

So a lot of points are lost when, when the attention to the subtext or the sub bullets or whatever you want to call, all of those sort of random little prompts that sometimes follow a header like statement of need. It's very critical to, to cover exactly. Um, and if you don't have the data, like sometimes it's hard to get

sexual identity data, especially in Florida now where I live. Um, that you can then apply a national statistic against a, um, you can say, "*while these data are not available or not currently available, um, you know, please note that applying a [00:23:00] national average of 6% or 10% of, um, you know, um, gay, lesbian, transgender against our population, would determine that approximately this percent are likely to fall into this category.*"

So there are ways to simulate, um, you know, your, if you don't have the answer, you just have to disclose that to the grant reviewer that this is how you arrived at that. If you're, it's



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really better to always use the most current data, the best available data. And sometimes there's lags in that. And so you ha, you should always tell the grant reviewer, just put a little note that says *latest available data* or something so they know, you know, that there was, um, that you used it even though it might be two or three years old.

So then we go into, okay, here's your problem. Now, what are you going to do about it? What's your proposed approach? Um, and so often, um, it'll ask you for what's your evidence-based model that you're going to use? And people will just plow right into [00:24:00] the description of their evidence-based model. However, um, sometimes it, it's not clear.

Well, why did you select that? Um, you know, I, I spent seven years on the National Registry for Effective Programs and Practices. I was, I reviewed the most evidence-based program of anyone in the country at that time. I want to say 87 or something. And, um, you know, there's a lot to choose from. And so why did you pick this?

And, and so the reviewer would be very impressed to know, well, we really look closely at the needs of the population that we just described in the prior, you know, section. And we saw alignment in these ways. You know, these were how, or that this model had been tested on the diversity, you know, that our population represents and found to be efficacious.

And so that was part why we selected it or what contributed towards our selection. So, um, you know, or that it has been tested in urban and rural areas. If you're, if you're, in our case, we were doing one urban, one rural, uh, demonstration of something. Um, [00:25:00] And so this is just some various, I just want to show you a chart where what we do here is we take, in this case, um, what were the outcomes that we were wanting to achieve?

And some of those were given to us by the funder, the expectations of the funder, uh, and of the funding opportunity where you're supposed to get this money and reduce post-traumatic stress and other trauma and so forth and so on. So we put the outcomes on the left, and then we showed, well, how does our evidence-based model line up with that.

So we created this chart that would basically show the crosswalk, if you will, and I am famous for, I will crosswalk anything. I create charts and graphs out of almost anything because what you'll notice as a grant reviewer is often they are, um, exhausted by the volume of things they have to read.

Especially some of these Feds will have proposals 70, 80 pages long. Um, and it's really hard to say what you need to say and, um, and read all of that, you know, times eight or 10 different [00:26:00] proposals and keep up with them. So I like to put things in charts, what I call At a Glance, where you can kind of get the whole picture and they appreciate it as well.

Also, hint, hint sometimes charts and graphs can be two points font smaller. Like they might say you have to use size 12 font, but in a chart or graph you can use 10. So sometimes you can get a little bit more squeezed in. Um, but at any rate, So, um, here's just another example of a proposed approach, just little excerpts from what might have been 3, 4, 5 pages.



I'm just showing you a paragraph or two, but where in this case, um, we were, we decided to create an advisory, uh, committee. I think we were only required to do one advisory committee, and we decided to also do a youth leadership one, um, which they loved. We got great points on that. Um, you know, got, got max points on that section.

They just thought that was great that we were going to get youth voice and it wasn't going to be token. It was authentic in how we were going to do that. And so they really liked that. Um, one of the biggest [00:27:00] problems people have in the section where you do your proposed approach is they often shortcut it too much to, to what I call If We Build It, They Will Come.

Not, um, you can't just stand something up and assume it's going to take off. So the review, and maybe you can, and maybe it would, but your reviewer isn't going to want to take that chance on you. So, you know, how will you identify the participants? Will you do social marketing? Will you build referral pipelines?

That, that's a great word by the way, referral pipelines. It just sounds like you got all these referrals coming in, cause remember the Feds are taking a chance on you. They've got to go to Congress and show that all this money is serving a greater good and is serving all these people that their, their constituents.

And, um, the worst thing that happens, and it happens a lot more than you think, is somebody turns in a great grant and yet they, um, do not have, um, the um, They hadn't really worked through the whole pipeline of getting people in. And so, um, [00:28:00] not only what will you do to, to refer people and recognize, there's usually, you know, do you have a no wrong door approach?

Do you have multiple, you know, uh, ways to get in? Um, but, uh, and then of course your marketing materials that you might market your program to a school teacher might be very different than a parent, might be different than a justice, uh, staff. You know? So you have to kind of slant your materials for your audience that you're trying to refer or get into your program.

Um, how will you engage the individuals, the participants? Will you use incentives? Will you use same age peers or near peers to have credibility? Will you use special outreach folks? And once you get 'em, how will you retain them? What will your barrier reduction strategies be? Cause just cause you get 'em in doesn't mean they stay in.

In a treatment study I did not long ago, uh, when I was doing, looking at some states and their systems, they had over a 50% loss between assessing someone for treatment and showing up. So 50% got the [00:29:00] assessment, never came back again. Um, so how do you retain them? What is, how, what's your strategy? And then how will you include their perception of care or other feedback, other ongoing feedback in your, um, your.

To make sure that you're always adjusting your program in line with the feedback that you're receiving from your participants. Um, so then, and, and I'm moving through, you know, y'all are getting the Reader's Digest Cliff notes version of, uh, you know, I do these grant writings can be three days. We have 'em where you, where you spend three days and you come out with an actual proposal.

We have them for a day long. We have all kinds of different models. This is the, you know, reader's Digest Cliff's Notes so bear with me cause it's, um, we're moving quick. I know. And, and I want to save time for questions. Um, organizational capacity staff and, um, What, that, your experience is. So, um, you always obviously want to start with, well, how long have you been doing this work, you know, in this [00:30:00] space that you are now asking for funding to support. Let's say you're new.

Okay. Well, I, I will never, ever lie in a proposal ever, but I will use some creative ways to respond. So, if I were a fairly new organization, but I had really terrific staff, I might say something like, you know, while we've only been established in the last two years, three years, whatever it is, The staff that we are proposing for this project collectively have 120 years of experience or whatever.

What, has to be legitimate. You have to make sure you can back it up. But, um, there's a lot of ways to describe this. Um, and it may be, um, that you've had a lot of years of doing something, but maybe this particular program you're requesting funding for is a, is a departure. Well, then your best bet is to acknowledge that it's a departure, but show how, where there are similarities, um, you know, whether it's a similar population or you're going to use similar programming, even if it's a little [00:31:00] different, um, that you're basing it on a foundation of success.

Um, and um, maybe that's another reason why you might want to even suggest an advisory group or something to help guide you. So, um, really important to describe in this section, um, the diversity of your organization, um, from the board all the way down. Um, and there are some groups that this is just not good. I mean, it's, um, I was on with one yesterday and they literally had a completely all white, um, board and they were working in a very diverse area, and it's like, y'all got to fix that.

I mean, there's, there, there's no way that's going to fly. And so, um, that's something that you'll have to take a look at, you know, and, and you know, if it's something you're working on, unless they ask you that question, maybe you just don't volunteer it and you work frantically to improve it. Um, but sometimes they'll ask, some of the questions might ask you to describe that.

Um, so at any [00:32:00] rate, um, these are, this is the section where they just, the Feds or the funder rather, whoever that is, wants to make sure that you've got the capacity to pull this off. Um, So, um, also it, let's say you're going to implement in this particular grant, if I recall this correctly, we were going to try a brand new evidence, evidence-based program that we had never implemented before, and we had zero experience with that.

However, for 15 years, the organization had implemented other evidence-based practices, so we made the case, further than what you can see here, you know, we understand what it's like to implement an evidence-based practice. There's a certain amount of structure that goes with that. Making sure everybody gets trained in the evidence-based practice by the developer, making sure that we do random fidelity checks to make sure whoever's implementing is supposed to be doing something on such, such and such a date and time that you randomly pop in and see is that going according to plan, um, [00:33:00] that you get plenty of feedback in case you need to make mid-project adjustments.

Um, you know, so this, these were the examples of the different evidence-based practices that we listed to let 'em know, Hey, we got this. We know how to do this work. Maybe we're new in this other area, but we have a portfolio that's quite impressive of evidence-based practices. And we, we did get that proposal too.

And then also if you're applying to a federal agency, they might want to know, you know, do you understand what it's like to implement a federal grant? There's a lot of accountability, there's a lot of reporting, there's a lot of data management. You know what? What can you convince us that you know how to do that?

So even if you haven't worked with the particular federal agency before, that, that, that, or you know, or a particular state agency, but you can at least describe what's the closest you got to that, that you, you know, that, that you've got, you're in good, a provider in good standing or an organization in good standing.

You have the right kind of licenses or certifications, or that your staff do [00:34:00] or that you've gotten, you know, this is a place to brag, by the way, if you are, if you're getting awards or certificates of recognition. Um, you know, this particular group I worked for got the Miami Beach Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce Award.

Um, and so, and we were actually going for, um, a, a proposal to serve, uh, the gay lesbian community. So this is a very, um, targeted kind of example that we wanted to make sure they knew that we knew what we were doing and that we had, um, good credibility with the population that we were proposing to serve. I'm also famous for using quotes.

This is actually a quote we got permission to use from a federal project officer who was praising how well this initiative and turned out in this particular initiative, this, um, this client that I was working with, writing this grant, uh, for the organization, that organization was like the top performer of like a hundred other, of uh, uh, other, um, awards [00:35:00] that were in that same portfolio.

And so she was really praising him and we said, Hey, we're applying for another, can we put that in? She's like, sure, go ahead. So we did. So because again, if you are, if you're sitting in your federal perch and you're trying to decide on some funding in, you know, Milwaukee and you've never been there and you don't know who they are and you don't know anything about



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'em. To to hear someone else, , uh, validate their, you know, their value, uh, as a, as an awardee, as a grantee.

That's really important. Um, so always in this section, you're gonna have to, uh, describe your staff and, um, speed up. Okay. Your staff, um, their qualifications, um, their specific role. Just, just to point this out here, that in this prompt, this happened to be a SAMHSA, uh, chart, Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, but the question they asked, describe your staff, their level of effort, their qualifications, and their role.

I made a [00:36:00] chart out of that. Just to make sure that I had every little thing covered. And believe it or not, probably over half the people that responded missed one of these. They either put the qualifications but not their role, or they put the role, but not the level of effort or what have you. Because if you don't map this out to the detail, you miss it. Um, or can miss it. That's a risk.

So, this chart would then show exactly how that is. Um, timelines are always key. Um, I always, um, you, you're almost always required to have one. I found a few little tricks that help me. One is that I never have enough room, so I have to do everything in codes. So I put this little code up top. A GA is grant award.

A p a PC is project coordinator, or PD is project director. Whatever my code is. The evaluator is EVLTR, whatever. And that way I can fit more in and not have as many spaces. Um, I also often will not bullet things cause bullet requires too much indentation and you leave a lot of real [00:37:00] estate open there.

But I put little symbols, like these little, um, little, uh, arrows and things to kind of separate the thoughts, but without having, losing a lot of space. Um, and then, um. And you know, there's no reason why y'all can't do a timeline right now for, for an, an anonymous program because the steps are almost always the same.

The first thing you want to do when you get a, a, a grant award is share that great news with everybody. Not just all the people that helped you, not just your partners and the, the the clients or whoever else, but you want to kick it up a notch. You want to go, because remember, you're going to want to sustain this with other funding.

So alert your governor or your tribal chief or your single state authority, or whoever is the people that make the decisions, or that are likely that you might likely hit up for funding, to let them know from the beginning, good news, you know, we got this. And so I added this milestones column. It was not [00:38:00] requested, but I always like, try to kick everything up a notch

if I can just go that little extra mile if I have the, the real estate, you know, the space on the, uh, proposal to do that. Um, a big section left off a lot on these grants, uh, at least the ones I've reviewed over the years, is they don't really talk much about how they're going to



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manage the project. And believe me, a lot of federal and state projects run off the road. Despite everyone's best intentions.

You have a harder time hiring staff than you planned, or you have more staff turnover than you plan, or something happens. Um, and so they want to know that you have really thought through your project management. You're going to have weekly meetings. You know, I always take that timeline and use that as part of our agenda for the staff meetings to say, Hey, we were supposed to do this on this day.

Did we do it? Did we meet the deadline? Or you turn your, your, um, timeline into a, a project management chart, maybe adding a little more detail. But be sure to tell the grant reviewer that that's your [00:39:00] intention. Um, and then, the, um, the last section is, you know, your performance, um, your, your, your performance or your evaluation, um, of performance management.

How will you, how will you prove and collect data and use your data and so forth. Um, and so we generally talk about qualitative data and quantitative data. Qualitative, the surveys, the words, you know, when you do focus groups and key informant surveys and things like that. That might be with words. And then the numbers are, you know, did you hit your benchmarks?

Did you, you said you were going to serve 200 people, did you, you said you were going to have 20% reduction in pregnancy, did you? Whatever, whatever they were um, and so you usually have to, in most funded applications, show what data are you going to collect, what's your plan to collect it, how will you analyze it?

Are you going to use a special software? Who's going to be involved? Um, and analyzing it as important. Cause remember data tells you [00:40:00] something did or did not happen. But it doesn't tell you why. And so there's a whole lot of reasons that, um, can explain why your data maybe didn't come out the way you were expecting or, and, and usually that'll come from a follow up, um, survey, uh, follow up focus group or something to say, you know, Hey, we thought we were going to get this kind of attendance and we didn't.

What happened? Oh, well because you've put it on a night that conflicts with all these other things we do. You know, whatever, whatever it is. Uh, and then you go back and you, you do continuous quality improvement and make those adjustments. Um, and you want them to know you have experience collecting and reporting data.

Here's a very simple, uh, chart to do that. To show what are your measures? What's the source? How often will you collect it? Who's responsible? And then my pictures here are over the last column, so I can't see that, but hopefully you can. Um, so you know, again, lots of, of, uh, ways to, um, display things. Um, I do want to say a couple other things and then we'll start with questions.

One is, um, [00:41:00] really I always recommend that you have your evaluator of, um, your evaluator um, Involved from the beginning and tell them that. You know, because I think one of the worst things evaluators would tell you is someone else conceptualized the program, had it all designed, written out, got it funded, then handed it to 'em and said, Hey, we got to evaluate this and here's what we, the things we have to evaluate it on.

And they would say, wow, you know, I never would've designed it this way, or you missed all these other opportunities. So I know sometimes you can't, you have to do a proposal and it has to be competitively bid. You can't always do that. But, um, if you have a chance to involve whoever is going to evaluate this in the beginning and always recommend having some participants of your population, a focus, whoever that is, also get involved in some way, especially in the early conceptualization when you're thinking about how to design it and create it.

Um, and then tell your reviewer, you know, in preparation for this, And, and [00:42:00] I also often will do planning meetings and take pictures, showing us planning. And hopefully your room is diverse. Hopefully you've got clients there. You've got all, you know, so that you can say, listen, we're, we've got a big tent, you know, and we're very inclusive and we're, we have all look at all our community partners and we were meeting, putting this together.

You know, uh, you may have to have permission to do that and releases and such, but, uh, and not every proposal will allow you to, to do pictures. You know, it just depends. Um, but those are things you ask to in writing if it's not clear from the proposal. Uh, directions. Um, the only other thing I wanted to say before we open to questions is that, um, The, there's a whole, you could do a whole class almost on writing goals and objectives and things.

And I always laughed at, as a grant reviewer when, you know, you would see what people come up with for goals and objectives, and you picture them in there like pulling their hair out, like, oh, what's our goal going to be? And what are all these objectives? And yet you turn to a [00:43:00] couple pages into the, to the directions of, you know, the notice of funding, uh, opportunity, the application itself.

And it's, it'll, the f the, the funder will tell you, here are their required activities. You know, or the goal of this funding is to expand and enhance the opioid use prevention in, in across the country? Well, if the federal, or the state, or the funder's goal is to expand and enhance, in this case opioid prevention, let's say, um, that should be your goal.

You know, how you get there may be very different, but, but there should be no mystery. Your, your goal should very closely align with what the funding says you ha, you, they want you to do. Um, and then the activities that you're required to do are really your objectives. They can very easily be formatted as objectives.

Um, and so you don't have to sit there and pull your hair out and make stuff up. It's very easy to align in that way. So I am going to stop. This is a super fast reader's Cliff's Notes version, but I'd like to stop and take questions and, [00:44:00] um, see what's on your mind.



**Janice Fulkerson:** Fantastic. Thank you Pamela. Um, we have lots of questions building, um, in the queue. So I'll start with, uh, one of 'em that, um, is asking about evaluators. How do you find and choose an evaluator?

**Pam Baston:** That is a really great question. Um, so, um, usually if, if it's a, if it's a big pot of money, you're going for let's say half a million or more. Um, and that I'm, by that I mean per year, not split over multiple years.

Um, then. That it may behoove you to look through the funding notice, you know, where they're asking you, here's, here's what we're giving the funding for. And they usually will describe the problem, and you can pick up some hints from the actual proposal that, you know, uh, let's call it the a the grant application [00:45:00] that they're putting out for you.

Um, and you can see in, in the way the funder described the problem they're wanting to solve with the grant. You can see some themes and then you can maybe start Googling those to see, you know, researchers or evaluators that have worked in these topic areas, and then see how many of those are close to home.

The good news is now we, now we're so remote in so many ways that it isn't even necessary for the evaluator to be in your backyard or even in your state or tribal area. Um, now your, your state or tribe may have rules that you are not to utilize funding outside of your area. So you may have other constraints, but, um, particularly if you're writing like a research grant, something like that, then, then it pays to really take that time to get somebody who's, who, where it's not their first rodeo and they've really been doing this for a while.

Um, and then, um, [00:46:00] usually in my experience, and that's all I can really share with you, is that the, uh, that most of the, in fact, every evaluator I've worked with in over 40 years, has always written that section at no cost with the agreement that they get the funding to evaluate it. If we get the grant, and usually the typical kind of going rate is 15 to 20% of the total award.

So if your award is \$500,000 a year, you might pay your evaluator 75,000 to a hundred thousand to evaluate. Um, now, you know, smaller grants may not support that. You may have constraints by the funder that says you cannot spend more than X dollars. And so you may look at getting a relationship with a university, perhaps one in your area, and, um, go to the Department of Social Work or if it's this H I V grant, the Department of Health, um, and, and that college and see are there graduate students, is there a, you know, you, you want to maybe [00:47:00] get, get somebody who can, um, be the lead and then maybe they supplement with graduate students. But

for the most part, I've had to move away from where we have to do it on the side because most evaluators, if they, uh, if they're from a university, have to charge university overhead and it could be like 60%. So that's a lot. But, but many of these universities have created, because of that problem. Little, little organizations on the side, like, I don't know if they're



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501c3's or what they are, that they can take a lower overhead rate and so you can contract with them.

Um, and then the other thing is, um, you know, just, uh, I mean I have a network of people I use, um, and, um, that are very reasonable, you know. Um, so I think my phone number's at the end, and you could, you could text me and I'll give you some suggestions, but, um, um, at any rate, uh, and [00:48:00] also, um, in some cases, like at J B S, where I work, sometimes we will evaluate for someone. Well not for, we can't do it for any portfolio we manage. So cause that would be a conflict of interest. So there's a lot of different ways to approach that. So hopefully something in there might have been helpful to you.

**Janice Fulkerson:** Thank you. Um, we have several more questions. Um, uh, one of our, um, attendees is asking how do you find the grants? Is there a website? Is there a database? Where do I look?.

**Pam Baston:** Okay. grants.gov is your best source. Just grants plural. .Gov. G-O-V.. And then, um, that one, it's overwhelming though, and there's so much money out right now. It's not even funny. So much out there. Um, And I believe HRSA has funding out right now. SAMHSA. S-A-M-H-S-A. SAMHSA has money out right now.

[00:49:00] Bureau of Justice Assistance has money. I think almost all the feds have money right now. We're in what we call, sort of, grant season. Um, and, uh, generally they start getting released about now, sometimes even right over the end of the holidays at the end of the year, and then, um, then go till mostly by April, May.

Um, they're, they end the, the awards, you know, the opportunity to apply is over because normally on a federal calendar, the Feds usually start their programs on September 29th or 30th or October 1st, depends on what type of money they're using. And so they, if you back up the calendar from there to give them time to hire the grant reviewers and get them on.

And sometimes the grant reviewers only make recommendations, but a higher authority, an advisory board or something makes the final decisions. And that meeting might only be quarterly. So when you back up the calendar, that's why usually right about now [00:50:00] through, you know, through May or so, is when most of them are out and have to be responded to.

Um, You can also do simple Google searches, like Google, things like, um, grants for pregnancy prevention, grants for drug prevention, grants for drug treatment, grants for overdose reversal grant, whatever it is. And often you'll be, you'll see a whole list of ones and then you just have to continue to kind of, you know, go down those rabbit holes.

You know, when, when you see the links. But Grants.gov is your best bet for federal, um, funding. Um, states have their own way of letting people know, but um, you could even call. Uh, the best thing to do is to figure out the topic you want to apply for, whether it's health, whether it's mental health, whether it's substance use, whatever the topic area is, then that's



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where you would go within a state. Whoever heads, if it's maternal health, for example, you would go to the maternal health office [00:51:00] of whatever state you're in and say, Hey, um, do you have a funding cycle for grant awards? Can I get on a list or can you give me a link? You know? Um, so that takes some time to pull that together and to constantly be mining those opportunities.

And then when you find them, you have to very carefully look at the one called Eligibility. Every funding opportunity will have something called Eligibility. And it may say you have to be a state or a tribe or a, a low, a ju, a governmental jurisdiction, or it might say a nonprofit or university. It'll tell you who's eligible and who's not. Um, it's never for individuals, it's always for, um, for, uh, usually organizations of some kind.

**Janice Fulkerson:** And, uh, Pamela, I will, uh, share with everyone that we, uh, try to get those Notice of Funding Awards or Notice of Funding Opportunities out, um, into our community. Sometimes it's done by newsletter, sometimes it's done in our social media feeds.

So, um, if the [00:52:00] attendees here haven't signed up or liked us on Facebook or following us on LinkedIn, uh, I would recommend you do that because when we see specifically grants that are, um, available, um, through SAMHSA, through HRSA, you know, that are specifically to substance use disorder work, we will get those out as we can, um, uh, to everyone who is connected to our organization.

Recommend, uh, people sign up for the HRSA newsletter and the SAMHSA newsletters because oftentimes they will put those notices in those routine, um, newsletters that go out. Okay, Pamela. We have, so,

**Pam Baston:** And, and you know what else? They also put out what's called the Forecast. So usually in the fall, um, not every federal agency, but they'll often put out that what's called a Funding Forecast. And that's like Coming to a Theater Near You. So it lets you know, Hey, we intend to fund these things. No guarantees, but we probably will. We just don't know when yet. That's also when you start [00:53:00] writing, when you see something in there that you think you could really benefit from.

**Janice Fulkerson:** Great advice, Pamela. Lots of good comments and thank you's in the chat. Um, question, do you suggest, um, a particular grant writing platform, this, uh, questioner says they're all so daunting. How do you navigate a write, a grant writing?

**Pam Baston:** Well, I don't even really know that I know what a grant writing platform is. , I'm embarrassed to say, but I can tell you what I do, and again, this is in a longer version of this is almost a cruel tease, like this little short version.

You know, I, I just like, cause there's so much more to go, goes with this. But basically what I do is I go, what I, when I find a, a funding opportunity I'm going to apply for, I go to the application itself. I open it up. And it's what mumbo jumbo, mumbo jumbo, goals, everything, what we want to do, da, da, da. And then it'll say, here's where you start writing.

It'll be, you know, this is Section A, this many parts, Section B, this many [00:54:00] points, Section C. And I copy and paste that onto a Word document. And then I start writing into make sure I line up with each thing and then. Um, usually the, there's, and, and personally I only write the narrative. I don't do budgets, kinda like I don't do windows, I don't do budgets cause it's almost impossible in the short time for one person to take lead on the writing and, and then also do the budget and also do the letters of support and also do all the, the, the front pages that you have to do.

And that must, but might be what I'm thinking, what you mean by the platform. Because normally you do, you have to upload these things. Back in the day, we used to, um, FedEx, 'em, you know, and you have to make multiple copies and put 'em in the FedEx. Now you just upload 'em and they go electronically. Sounds a lot easier than it really is.

I can assure you. It is complicated, but what you want to do is start your upload a day, at least a day ahead. Um, because they [00:55:00] have all the upload opportunities on the, whoever you're applying for. They usually have a help desk. Sometimes they have to be real close attention of when is the help desk open.

They're not open 24/7. They're not, sometimes they're open on different time zones. And so you can get all kind of help to get that thing put up in there if you've never done it before. And they have all kind of manuals and things. But I would recommend never, ever being alone with an upload. Uh, making sure you know, someone that's done it before doing some practice sessions, but the actual writing I do in Word, even if it's a format where I have to copy and paste my stuff in later.

Um, but usually the ones that I usually write for, you upload the narrative by itself. You upload the job descriptions by itself. You upload the budget by itself, you know, separately. Um, and there's no reason why too, you can't start working on your job descriptions. And, you know, and the last thing I want to say about that too is that,

you want, you want a story. And, and I've, I've learned so [00:56:00] much from working with Native American people, and it's the value of the story and to be able to, what a, to me, what a good grant is, is a good story. It has a beginning and then it has a middle, and then the, you know, the closing, the end of what you're hoping to do and accomplish.

And there should be consistency all the way through. So if you say you're going to implement an evidence-based program, for example, those job descriptions should have something in there that says, who's monitoring that you're implementing with fidelity, who's doing the fidelity checks, you know, who's doing the right kind of documentation, the right kind of data collection, you know, your letters of support would talk about, you know, different things that you've written in your grant that wouldn't just be, Hey, we think this is a great company.

Everything should tie together, should be continuity all the way through. You don't want your budget referring to case managers, if you've called them care coordinators in the grant. Um, you want to write with what J B S calls One Voice. Where even though you'll have a team of



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people helping [00:57:00] if, unless, unless you don't value your sanity, um, you'll want to have, um, uh, have the end that sort of one voice where you make sure everybody's calling things the same and, and that there's a similar, um, cadence to it.

**Janice Fulkerson:** Fantastic. Alright. We have more questions than we can get to. So Pamela, if you're,

**Pam Baston:** I'm happy to stay as, as long as you need.

**Janice Fulkerson:** Okay. Yeah. Great. We, I,

I believe we can stay for a little bit over the hour. Um, this question is, um, about, um, certification or grant writing programs or grant writing education.

**Pam Baston:** Mm-hmm.

**Janice Fulkerson:** Do you have any recommendations for a new grant writer who wants some additional, um, education?

**Pam Baston:** Well, I know there, there was one, I mean, it was over a thousand dollars. I know somebody who went to one. Oh, I only know one person who went to one and it was, um, it's like one of the more popular ones and I'm so sorry I can't remember the name.

But, um, and they [00:58:00] came back with like a notebook like this, the literally of everything, you know, it, it, it was, uh, very intensive. Um, but I think most people now do them virtually. But no, I don't, I, I don't have one to, and I'll, I'll try to just check that out after we hang up, um, and see if there's any that I recognize.

But, um, you know, you could also get them, you know, you, one thing you might do, because really the, some of these are very generic and so it may not help you with your particular focus area. So you might want to think about, um, getting together with a group of other local organizations and all pitching in and hiring someone to come in and do one just for y'all. You know, for whatever your needs are, whatever topic you, you have, um, that you want to cover.

You know. Even if the topic is as broad as social services, let's say, versus educational services in a school or something, you know, if you've got some common denominator. [00:59:00] So, um, and you can follow up with me later if you want. I'll, I'll, I'll check into that.

**Janice Fulkerson:** Okay. That sounds great. We, um, will, for everyone who's listening, we will send out a link to the recording, the slides and some of the resources and questions that have been asked today, next week after we get it all compiled and posted on our website.

And then also, uh, the video will be in our YouTube channel. Um, and anyone who has uh, further questions is welcome to submit a TA uh, request from the FletcherGroup.Org. And then Pamela has posted her phone number on the screen, so, um, she's, uh, clearly inviting you to call her. Is that right, Pamela?

**Pam Baston:** Yeah. Text is probably a little better cause I'm, I'm not, I'm still working. I'm, I'm retiring in a few months, but what's happening is, um, if, because I'm on Zoom a lot, I can't always take calls, but, um, if I'm not presenting and I'm on Zoom or we have breaks or whatever, text is [01:00:00] always better. And then we can set a time to talk when it's not as crazy.

**Janice Fulkerson:** Great. That sounds great. Uh, well we are a little, we're at the, uh, just a little over the hour. Um, and so I'm going to say thank you Pamela. We have captured all of the questions that people have submitted in the chat as well as in the Q and A and we will do follow up. And send this information out to everyone who participated today.

We really want to thank you for connecting with The Fletcher Group, um, and for, uh, attending our webinar today. Thank you. Any final words, Pamela, before we close?

**Pam Baston:** Show me the money. Just get out there and bring that money in causes it's out there. There's a lot of it and I wish you well and, um, thanks for having the opportunity to, to chat today.

**Janice Fulkerson:** Thank you.

**Pam Baston:** All right, bye everybody.

**Michelle Day:** Thank you everyone for attending. There will be a brief survey that shows up on your [01:01:00] screen or you will also receive it via email. If you don't mind to complete that for us. Thank you again and have a great day.