

# **Grant Writing 101**

## **Webinar Transcript**

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[00:00:00]

Elizabeth: [00:00:01] Good afternoon. My name is Elizabeth Pyke. I am Director of Government Affairs with the National Criminal Justice Association. Today's webinar is one in a series sponsored by the Addiction Policy Forum and the National Criminal Justice Association to address issues surrounding addiction and translating science into policy. Today we're thrilled to have an expert with us talking to us about grant writing. We wanted to do this now because the solicitation from the Bureau of Justice Assistance to apply for CARA grants is out and the applications will be due at the end of April. So we wanted to have this session so that anybody in the stakeholder community who has an interest in applying for CARA funds can have the benefit of the expertise that Valarie Tickle is going to give us today. But we also want this to be useful for any grant not just for CARA. So her presentation is related to grant writing generally not just about CARA so that we can use these principles of good grant writing for any grant regardless of the topic. We hope these lessons will be applicable in the future. So we thank Valarie Tickle who is the Criminal Justice Coordinator with the Delaware Criminal Justice Council. She has years of successful experience in applying for grants from the Department of Justice and other agencies. But as important she reviews grants by localities and nonprofits in Delaware so she knows what grants need to look like and she conducts regular training for potential grantees in Delaware. So let me just start with a few housekeeping matters. All attendees will be on mute throughout the duration of the weapon or if you want to ask questions please do. You can do it using the questions dropdown menu in the go to webinar control panel and we are recording the webinar today and we'll make it available on our websites afterwards. So Valarie with that I will turn it over to you.

Valarie: [00:01:59] Thank you Elizabeth. And thank you everyone for attending today's webinar. I have been doing great writing for several years now it's something I do enjoy and it's a topic we try to make fun as much as that is useful. So this particular webinars today is a grant writing 101. So I just wanted to let the listeners know that it's a basic overview of grant writing. There may be a wide mixture of experience on the line. So we asked you to ahead and hang in there could be some sort of gem or thing that may be useful as a grant writer I do attend other trainings to see what one thing might help elevate my great writing to the next level. So let us begin on how to design a program and write a grant proposal. So in the world of grant writing and designing programs we use logic models. And even here this number of time and a lot of times that catch logic models to grants and they are really the connection between the activities the inputs the outcome and there are a series of if than statements. So logic models can be very simple or complex. We use logic models every day. I think you know even in coming to work if it is raining outside then I'll need to bring

an umbrella if there is traffic on the highway that I'm going to take then I'll take an alternative route. So it's really a linear way of thinking logically through a process and it's very useful in the great writing world.

[00:03:53] Grants are always tied to objectives. So when we think about creating objectives and being measurable we have an acronym we love acronyms and SMART Objectives. So when you think about your program and designing your grant you want it to be specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic, and time-bound. So we'll go over each one of these different types of objectives and how to work SMART Objectives into your proposal as you're writing and planning your grant.

[00:04:35] So in the program design this is a nice visual. I've kept this up in front of me as the logic model to work through the grant writing process. And it really breaks it down in a few steps needed to write a grant and it keeps everything on track and in line and organized in a fashion that's easy to follow.

[00:05:02] So we start with the problem statement. And just to disclose I am a big superhero fan so you'll notice in my example the little love for superheroes there. And so we focused on Gotham City because if there are any superhero fans on the line we know Batman has the best villains and Gotham City is just riddled with crime. So that was what we chose to use as our example. So in your problem statement you're taking a look at what's wrong and assess what needs to change what's going on in your specific area. You absolutely want to use local data and statistics as much as possible and evidence based argument. So when you think about your problem it's really you're trying to convey to the reader what's going on in your specific area in your world. What do you want to address. So the example here adult victims of crime in Gotham City do not have available services to adequately recover. And then there you site where you have that information. As a result 50 percent experience a decrease in their job school performance family life and mental health. Further 50 percent of individuals prior victimization are prone to re-victimization. Again citing where you get these statistics because it's important to tie them back to a source of information. So as a result Gotham City Police seek to start a victim's service unit to aid the victims in crime locating relevant services assisting through the prosecution process. So this unit will be started and led by the new victims service coordinator in Gotham city precinct. The VSC will contact victims of crime within 48 hours of the initial report. By offering these in-house services, the goal is that victims will feel less vulnerable, less fear, and an increased trust in the system after working with the new victim service coordinator. So that's a really short synopsis of a problem statement. I also try to let people know I come from a chicken little family so you know we don't want to say the sky is falling we don't want to put every different statistic of every different problem

into a problem statement. We want to make sure that we're talking about this specific problem that's relevant to the program you're about to propose so any factors that might play a part.

[00:07:45] You also and you know when you're using local statistics it's OK to start broad. The way I generally do it is I might use a national statistics and say you know across the nation and such and such as happening then I kind of bring it in I might say across the nation and then pare it down even to the east coast or west coast and then within my specific state down and down so on and so forth to if your Grant is dealing with some kind of even specific geographic location drilling down the data accordingly. But you want to just make sure that you're describing a problem that is the same size of your proposed solution.

[00:08:31] So when you're thinking about the problem statement it kind of feels like English class you're thinking about the Who What Where When and Why. So if you're answering these questions you're really building a solid problem statement. So who is your target population in this particular example we're looking at adult crime victims. What what's causing this particular issue. Our problem there is negative outcomes. When within 48 hours of the initial report and where is this problem taking place. And it's in the GCPD central precinct and why what might be causing this. Crimes are rampant in Gotham City which is causing an influx of victims. So again a quick synopsis of the problem statement there of Gotham City victims in Gotham City lacked the services to navigate the system so the primary experience is negative outcomes.

[00:09:36] Next you want to look at your goal statement. So all the program activities are tied to the goal. Your goal is really your broad sweeping statement of what you want to do what you want to address. And you want this to be measurable so following our example that that service coordinator will provide direct services to hundreds of unduplicated victims per year that GCPD anticipates the number will increase 3 to 5 percent each year due to the increased presence and trust in the community. And what's important here too is to note that a baseline will be established because a lot of times that you're putting in a measurable objective that that's something to measure against. So creating a baseline to measure against is important. So someone who who is reading the Grant knows that you have a way to measure these things.

[00:10:36] So the goal statement again following the problem how will the proposed program provide the resolution to the stated problem. What will be done and what action will be measured. So higher flowing through here.

[00:10:55] And then the implementation objectives. The implementation objectives when you're when you're writing a grant it's really your description of how you're going to get this project off the piece of paper and into the real world. So a lot of times these are the time limited and they're tied directly to the program. So there are the inputs the things that you need to build your particular project comprehensively. Are you hiring people are you. What materials are you buying. Do you need equipment. So all these different inputs that you would need to put into your program and you want to make sure to describe them in your grant writing and in your proposal exactly what you need. So in our example the GCPD wants to provide direct service to victims so if they want to do that then they will need to hire the staff establish office space by the staff person at the computer. They main need volunteers access to a car to transport victims. And again this example is transferable I would say to a lot of different program areas. So and lot of different topics. So then be the new coordinator will work with local agencies to coordinate wraparound services and transport the victims when necessary.

[00:12:30] So following our logic model the implementation again addresses how the program will become functional. How are we going to begin to move this from a design from a concept from the think tank onto the paper and out into the real world. So looking at personnel equipment and who will conduct the activity of the program it's essential to describe the roles and responsibilities in the different grants and proposals you want to make sure you're very clear in stating who will be doing what. If you're hiring a new person what what's that person's job doing. What's their responsibility to the program that you're proposing. What steps do different things. Will they be assigned to address directly the problem that you have stated.

[00:13:26] Your performance objectives are really your day to day activity. So with the operation the frequency of your particular program what the program does and how often. So this is the result your activities your input your focus and care on what's being done not what has changed yet. So major outputs from some different examples here would be on a daily basis or on a quarterly basis you want to make sure you're describing kind of that timeframe again. We made assist 90 victims provide 75 referrals to service providers. Advocacy and support to a hundred different individuals. So these are just some examples of the daily activities that you have described the problem. You went ahead and established your goal you hired your people obtain your necessary items. Now what are you going to do with all of that. How are you going to function in the program. So a lot of times in the applications and that's the next logical step would be how you're going to implement and what that implementation looks like. And the daily activities.

[00:14:50] So how are you going to accomplish those goals. Who will the program serve. And how many people will be served.

[00:15:03] And after all that we want to evaluate the impact what is the outcome of the project. So you can look at the impact objective in several ways. There is the initial and the intermediate and long term. And grants a lot of the grants will run in certain timeframes. They might be two years they might be three years or even one year grants. So a lot of times you can only do so much in that timeframe so you want to make sure when you're establishing your impact objectives and what the program accomplished that you have that in mind so of course your initial outcomes are what's closely related to those outputs. What first benefits might have happened or changes the participants or clients or whoever you are serving what they experience.

[00:16:01] In intermediate program outcome is what difference the program made. So it refers back to the problem and addresses whether that identified problem was truly indeed affected by the presence of your particular program. So what you know we have addressed we've established there was this problem. We have put these things in place. So what has happened. So here you are focusing on what has changed and did something make a difference. Are there new behaviors or changes based on the operation of your program are there. And has new knowledge been shared. Has connections been made to programs to resources skills that have been built. Your long term is looking way out into the future and your ultimate change. All this has happened and as a result of it. The world is in a better place. The changes in the condition the status of the participants the life change that's happened so we can get into the example here.

[00:17:16] So examples of our impact objectives our initial impact. So if the GCDP created a victim's service coordinator position then 75 percent of victims served were poured a greater knowledge of a community resources b safety planning's c their rights and options and d the criminal justice process. So that's what they got immediately. And increased their knowledge base now taking that increased knowledge then at least 50 percent of the victims will access the relevant service. So now we've given them the knowledge hopefully the access accessing the services within the long term if they are accessing the services then we envision that at least 25 percent will gain greater coping mechanisms and reduce the risk of future victimization. So here you can see how it kind of plays out accordingly from start to finish. As a result of the program.

[00:18:37] So just to go over the impact of objectives once again what did the program do. What did the program accomplish. What were these different impacts. So 75 percent of the victims reported greater

knowledge. The community resources and then take advantage of that knowledge.

[00:19:04] So when you're thinking about designing your proposal and your grant has to consider a lot of different things when you're talking about what you're going to measure. You have to think about what what's going to be the data source for the program and visual important things to describe when you're writing your grant. How will you obtain the information. Is it realistic. Can you get that information. So if you are maybe talking about outcomes as a result of a problem I work a lot in the offender re-entry world. So we talk about recidivism and decreasing that number I have to also make sure I have access to that data and I know where that data is coming from and how will it be collected. How will it be addressed. So I want to make sure that I describe in the program in the proposal those different elements can I get it and can I convey that my program was a success. It's also important to describe how will success or failure be determined. So I am very clear in saying success of the program will be and making sure that the reader understands how that is going to be determined as a result of the program. So in writing the grants you want to definitely make sure that the narrative is convincing. It's really a unique style of writing I've learned over the years because when you're writing a problem statement it feels a little bit like a research paper when you're going into your program design. It's really kind of pitching your idea. It's kind of a creative way to talk about your story and what you see as something that would help and you want to write with confidence. I think that's kind of an important thing when you go in and you're structuring your grant proposal you want to make sure the reader knows that you can operate this program. So you want to make sure when you're telling your story and designing your objective that you fill in all those holes and you are absolutely confident and you come across it in the writing of your grant.

[00:21:42] And these things I always keep in mind because writing the grant when you think about objectives a lot of times people will get a little apprehensive about putting numbers in you know my goodness if I say I'm going to decrease recidivism by 10 percent. What if that doesn't happen or if I say I'm going to serve a hundred individuals and that doesn't really come to fruition. I think they also in all my experiences with grant writing and different entities and different projects you want to be measurable in their objectives. Go ahead and put a number and put it in confidently and keep in mind that things are usually pretty flexible. And if you find when you're operating your program something is a little awry. Definitely talk to whatever funder you might have or a program manager. I tell the different teams here in Delaware. You know it's that good faith effort as well. So when you're an established objective and you're not quite just let us know how. Let us know why. And then if that needs to be changed. So I never

let those sorts of things get in the way of your writing. You want to make sure that you got out your program and it is realistic but you also want to be ambitious. And it's a little hard to kind of maybe find that fine line between the two. But keep in mind that that those things can often be looked at through the process throughout the process of the grant and of the project. And also I keep in mind that a lot of programs and in the real world there's all these different factors that affect grants environmental personality experience. You know sometimes a particular program works very well and it might be that that particular person operating the program that was just the perfect person for the job. And you know we have to think about that when we're designing a project or for replicating something you know what. What things make that Grant work. One example I use years ago we were writing grant for offender re-entry and we also teamed up with several other entities in the state. And we were looking at the Department of Labor Grant and a bureau of Justice Assistance Grant and we got everything ditherer got it in and we were successful in obtaining the grant. And it was back in that 2008 timeframe when employment just started going a little further down and not being quite so easy for those returning from incarceration. So we had no idea that that was really going to happen when we were planning the project. But that was one of those kind of broader factors that came after the fact we were still we had the grant we were still moving forward with employment. It was just we had to kind of think about how we would do that. As a result of something it was kind of out of our hands. So was thinking about the logic model it offers that relationship and just keep in mind things that that correlation does not exactly equal a causation. So when you're thinking about looking at the impact in the program evaluation you want to keep that in mind a lot of different grants call for researchers and they are wonderful in helping you design those portions of your program and of your grant. It will help guide you in looking at those sorts of things.

[00:25:46] So again just talking about the performance measurement it's really important and that we describe the program and that it is measurable and it's important for a lot of different reasons. It's important for the broad spectrum of the different Granter proposal. You have several reporting accountability evaluation replication. A lot of times we want to make sure that our particular program is going to give whatever funder the information needed to continue funding these sorts of things to continue health and people across the country or within your state. You want to make sure that it's very useful in the information. It also helps within the program the stakeholders there. So it helps you with your design implementation and managing your program and the different decisions you have to make as you move forward evaluating. And then of course with grant funding we know that it's got time limits and then it's over and we want to make sure our program continues on and is sustainable beyond

just those grant funds. So it's important when you have a strong program design up front that you can take it to the next level find other funding to continue on.

[00:27:14] So you also have to develop the budget. It's kind of interesting in the grant world lot of times we wear two hats. So I get to write and I get to do the calculations and then play with the budget. So when you're looking at your budget you want to make sure that you're looking at the different categories. Usually in the different grants they ask for a detailed budget worksheet and a budget narrative. So we'll talk about both of those and what those items look like. It's should really the budget should really reflect the quality of our program planning. You want to make sure that you cover all the costs associated with your program. So make sure you pay attention to all those little things that you need. Estimates are acceptable. Paralyzed with the objectives. You know you want to put your numbers in there but knowing that sometimes you have to estimate. You want to pay attention to the amount of funding available and the number of years to spend the funds. So that's really important as you're planning your program. Make sure need to double check how many years you might have to spend it. Now this bullet point here is important. I know that we do a lot of us do it. When you see a proposal a solicitation advertised you can write a slips through and you go write how much money can I get. That's great. Keep in mind that when you're designing your program you want to only put in there what the program costs. It may or may not being the total amount of available funding. There have been several times when we have planned a program and we did the whole design then took a look at it and the budget came up and it wasn't exactly to the ceiling of the dollar amount. So I just put in for what we needed. And sometimes that really works to your benefit because if a few people have done that then the funder may be able to a word instead of five or six grand seven or eight grand. So it's important to keep in mind that we're really asking for in the budget exactly what your program is paying for. So make sure that those things are related and make sense. You don't want to kind of just put a lot of random things in your budgets because it was the whole grant proposals all tied will point system. So you want to make sure everything makes sense and you maximize your chances in receiving the funds.

[00:30:02] Now this may be applicable to some and not to others but in a lot of the grants I write they are Justice grants so several grants might ask for a match. So the match dollars are your program buy in. So in the budget I make sure it is very clear what costs are our federal dollars and what costs are maybe state local resources what they call match. And a lot of times a solicitation or a grant is asking for a program buy-in or match it will be clear in the solicitation and they give you what calculation you have to use.

[00:30:47] So the different budget categories usually the funder will give them to you but you have your basic ones personnel your friends travel equipment supplies consultant others so your budget narrative is really your explanation of your cost in words. So it really answers the question why do you need this item in the budget. So it looks over those expenses. It should be brief only a few sentences. So I'm going to go through the different budget categories. I might go to them just a little quickly because I do want to make sure we get to the program tips at the end of the presentation and that we also leave some time for questions.

[00:31:33] So when you're looking at the budget personnel you want to ask yourself do you need to hire personnel to implement it. And if so you want to list the position title. What percentage of the position is being paid for in the grant. If you know who will be working on the grant. It's OK if you don't sometimes its a new hire. So you want to show that computation. The other important thing is if there isn't any personnel that you're hiring. I always mark the different category N/A and make sure its zero. I want to leave no questions in our viewers mind. So you want to make sure that if it's not something you're doing. Make sure it's clear that you didn't forget it that you are actually just aren't using that category. So here you can see how we broke down the calculations of the personnel. You want to show your math.

[00:32:31] So an example of a budget narrative statement since Gotham City Police are starting the victim service unit and they're locating the relevant services to assist them through the prosecution process. So it kind of describes where the person is going to be at why they're needed for the grants that 100 percent of the grant funded activities so the funds will pay for the victim service coordinator. There's going to be a supervisor involved and then a little job description of what that coordinator is going to do. And then you also want to say how you came up with that cost. So you based that salary on maybe different job duties and workload by similar coordinators and it follows your agency hiring skills. So you want to make sure that you're not just kind of pulling it out of thin air. You want to tell where you got these figures and how you came up with the numbers.

[00:33:38] So if you hire somebody you have to have fringe benefits as well. So you want to list them accordingly. So it's only for the percentage of time and hours devoted to the project. So if you hired someone 100 percent higher percent of their fringe should be listed. If it's 50 percent and so on and so forth so you want to make sure that in your calculations you show that as well.

[00:34:06] And then again in the narrative just explaining what the benefit rate might be. For your particular agency and then that break down in the

travel category you want to list you know a few of different grants might require training for conferences. So you want to make sure you read the solicitation in all those different areas and see if there's required training or there's anything that you have to include. In this particular example we have individuals going to Metropolis to get training which is the hometown of my favorite superhero Superman.

[00:34:52] We want to look at how those rates were determined. And to the GSA website is how you come up with those different calculations if you just Google GSA it will give you the rate for any area in the country and what the per diem is and all those calculations that you need to show in your budget. So you need equipment to meet your objectives. Then you want to list that as well. A lot of times the equipment's a one time cost so be careful if you're planning for multiple years if you're copying and pasting your budget or something like that just be sure that if you have equipment list in your but rebuying it in year two take that back out a reviewer will pick up on that. So you want to make sure that you've got everything set accordingly.

[00:35:42] And again the justification as to why you need that equipment and if you've obtained a quote or not.

[00:35:51] And you have your supplies in the operating. So you want to just list whatever is included in that category for that grant.

[00:36:02] And then justify what those costs are. Your office place your office supplies do you need cabinets.

[00:36:14] And then you have the consultant contract area. If you do have someone coming in to do a particular service and then making sure that you're following any guidelines that the funder the federal rate the allowable cost is six hundred and fifty a day. So you just want to make sure you include those items in those calculations.

[00:36:40] And again why you would need that particular person and then the other category. These are just things that don't fall nicely into one of the established budget categories. A lot of times it's the registration for different conferences trainings or workshops that would follow in your other category. And then what the justification for those items are.

[00:37:07] And then you want to do a summary. So what the overall costs look like I break it down per year and then I do a total. So it's very clear. Where we're going in each of the different grant years. And then again if there are max dollars I make sure it's clearly labeled as such in my budget.

[00:37:39] So just plan for everything.

[00:37:47] So again looking at the review of the program design describing your problem establishing your goals. Then your implementation or your input objectives your performance your output your budget and your evaluation impact and outcome.

[00:38:13] So here's your logic model. All follows accordingly. Do the different steps in really a very basic format of describing your problem and then following it through what you really want to do to institute change.

[00:38:37] So have we talked about before in the performance measurement tools will benefit all different parties and are used very broadly a lot of times to continue funding projects. Your logic models are a nice tool for program design basic for your next steps and formulating your objectives.

[00:39:00] And I'll say this a few times. The absolute if anyone asked me what is the number one rule of grant writing. If there was only one thing to tell about grant writing and designing your proposal the most important thing. Sounds so simple but at absolutely 100 percent is just follow the directions. You want to definitely follow the directions exactly. A lot of times what I find in reading different proposals. When you get in there and you're writing and you're kind of in the groove you can talk a lot about your different problem in your program or your design and you might lose sight a little bit of what exactly the solicitation has asked. So following the directions is absolutely crucial.

[00:40:00] So grant writing can be I think a little overwhelming to some and at some times. So if you look at it in the whole broad picture you might oh my goodness you know this is a lot of work. So I try to take it one piece at a time. OK today I'm going to work on this section tomorrow I'll look at this section. So you just want to make sure that you take it off in little chunks.

[00:40:30] It's a bit of work. It's very rewarding though when you're successful and you obtain an award. It really is truly a great feeling. So the tips part is one of the most illuminating parts for me I love I love this section so keep these things in mind. So before a proposal even comes out work with different people in your agency you to hold regular brainstorming sessions and continue to look at as a group what needs you're addressing what are the visions what you'd like to do. Always check the literature the newsletters the websites for announcements and things that might be useful.

[00:41:23] I am a paper and electronic packrat by now so any documents that come across that I think I might be able to use to justify a different program or different area I'm looking at in a grant. I keep that all in little folders to use to justify if I'm looking at a certain program and I know it worked in another state or it is on one of the best practices you know that gather that information and keep that for future use. And this is important when an opportunity surfaces. You want to determine the feasibility of obtaining that grant. If you get the grant are you going to be able to actually operate it. Can the agency manage another program. Does the agency have great experience and expertise a lot of times we see a bunch of different proposals and some are very appropriate for our agency and some just clearly aren't. So then I pass them forward to maybe a different agency that it is more appropriate for. So you want to make sure you can actually handle the program that you're designing. If you have a question definitely contact the program manager or the help desk or any person associated with the funding source. You want to make sure that you don't go forward with maybe any unanswered questions if there's something you're in doubt get confirmation. Contact their world of help. It is just much better to ask those questions up front and everyone is very useful and in giving you the guidance you would need if you think something is appropriate or fits in a particular grant or might not.

[00:43:22] So again follow the application guidelines in detail. You want to make sure that you have that solicitation and you're looking at each of those different items. Create a timetable and gather appropriate personnel for the gathering as soon as that funding availability comes out. A lot of times you know we'll do a lot of team writing. There are various people in the agency and you have some maybe you of someone who's very great at describing the problem and more a database person someone who's much better at the budget calculations to kind of build your team and create that timetable for you to finish those different items and take a look at who's good at what and how you can all work together.

[00:44:12] You want to keep in mind that you have to customize that proposal for the target funder. So when you're talking about your program making sure it's appropriate for the solicitation you're responding to a lot of times I might pick up a previous grant that follows the same format to kind of jumpstart. When I'm writing the next grant. So you want to make sure though that you take a look at that and it's actually targeted to the right funder. You want to describe the program with rich detail measurable objectives and not empty adjectives and excess of languages. I loved language I talk a lot. I know that one thing I keep in mind in my grant writing is to get to the point. You want to be able to say what you need to say and say in a very convincing pointed fashion. So while there are some lovely adjectives and some you know great use of words and a lot of the things I read you know what to make sure that you kind of hone in on

what exactly you're doing. And I think that there are some great statements like you know as a result of this program everyone will get along better and the whole world will change. And that's lovely. You just want to make sure that when you're grant writing that you go things measurable and things straight to the point and in the grant world you definitely want to propose your innovative ideas and solutions So grants are the opportunity to maybe take a look outside the box take a look at what's different not something maybe that's been traditionally in any kind of agency budget. This is your opportunity to try something new try a solution that maybe you've had and just haven't had the available funds to do so. I know a lot of different states and agencies might be in different budget situations so you want to describe that there's not funding available and in your problem statement definitely saying you know we can't get this off the ground because. And then this is your opportunity to be creative to try something that's different to look at the solution.

[00:46:55] You want to use subheadings and citations. So you want to make sure that if when I look at a solicitation if it's says statement of problem the heading I use is statement of problem. If it's a problem statement I say problem statement. It might sound like a little bit of a stickler but I want to mirror back the exact language in the solicitation and that's important that keeps it on point. For the different funder that you're applying to.

[00:47:36] So want to also avoid the passive voice you want to use active verbs. So you want when you're writing your grant proposal know that you're going to do it know that you're doing this program you're again like I said earlier that it that you're confident that it comes out very convincing. So you used the active verbs not you think maybe the result will be go ahead and claim it. You want to make sure that that the reader knows that you're going for it and you know I'm going to come in. We will do this. This many people are going to be served and you want to make sure that it comes across in your writing. And then we talked about the describing the problem that's the same size as the solution. You know don't chicken little it up. You want to use your local data. And if the data needs to be updated or if there's some data that that's called for and you don't quite have it what I do is I go ahead and I call myself out in the solicitation if I maybe have a recidivism rate or some sort of number then it calls for and maybe state it I'll say OK this is the most current data I have. And then I described the plan to obtain the updated information. So if something is there you don't want to let something go through and you don't want to lose points on not mentioning maybe a particular required item. If you don't have it call yourself out and then give the action plan as to what you're going to do to get that.

[00:49:27] This is big. You don't want to assume the reader knows the reader of your proposal knows much about the subject matter. So a lot of times when we're reviewing grants here we will pull in somebody from a completely different Grant area or somebody from a whole different population or a whole different set of eyes. So you want to make sure when you're writing your whole proposal that you describe exactly what you need to for it to be a full package. My families a lot of times I'll bring home a grant and say you know read this and does that make sense. Can you tell me what we're going to do. You know take someone who is outside of your whole world maybe and have them take a look at it if they have the time and see if they can articulate it back to you what your problem is and what you're going to do about it in some kind of cohesive way.

[00:50:36] So again keep in mind your capability of measuring the impact objectives. You want to make sure that you can go ahead and get any data that you need.

[00:50:47] It's very important. Sounds so simple to keep the format and the page limit you want to keep them in mind. If the solicitation says twelve point New Times Roman 12 inch margins double spaced absolutely do that. Make sure it is double spaced. Make sure because a lot of times if you have maybe only 15 pages it doesn't feel like a lot when you're writing. So but if you cut the corners or make it single spaced it could actually potentially bump you out of the running. You want to make sure that you don't do these little tiny things that knock you out of any consideration. So I follow it to a tee. The page limits are definitely there for a reason. And as a reader of a lot of proposals when you review the grants they it's a it's a blessing when they're all in here too. So I immediately when I look at a solicitation I pay attention to the review criteria so I will go through and find out if there's a scoring mechanism and what that looks like.

[00:52:04] You want to make sure you understand what emphasis is given to what section of each Section of the proposal. So and they change they change for different grants. So when I go in and I look I might see that the problem statement for one gram is 30 percent of my point. On another grant it might only be 15 percent. So I try to keep in mind how much of the proposal I've dedicated to that section. So if you have 15 pages and your problem statement might only be 10 or 15 percent and you go back in your book and you have five or six pages of a problem statement. You might want to consider tearing that down a little bit. It may be the first section you do want to hook your reader but you want to make sure that if you're writing in a particular section that it is about the right page length that matches just kind of the weight it's been given in the review of criteria. When I look at the solicitation I actually copy the bullet points in

a lot especially the BJA grants. This solicitation will give you each of the different bullet points in each of the different subsections of a narrative. I will copy and paste the exact questions from the solicitation and put them in my document. And until I've answered that question I don't erase it. I will leave it in there in bold and red and I go back and make sure because those bullet points are how your proposal is scored. So you want to make sure that you answer every single question that contained in the solicitation. That how you're going to get funded. That's how the scores are going to be built. So make sure every bullet point is answered in that program narrative.

[00:54:12] You want to build the rapport with the different partners. So make sure that if you're working maybe on a program in the community but your referral source is the Department of Corrections or a school or some different entities. Make sure you build that rapport with those partners ahead of time as best as possible and building the rapport is crucial in grant writing because a lot of times you're running up against deadlines and they come fast. Who will be able to pick up the phone and call somebody for that data right away. You want to make sure that when you're getting your letters of support or your memorandums of understanding that you've already built a rapport with these different partners so they have the trust in you when you're bringing this grant application to them and they feel comfortable signing on in doing that.

[00:55:10] I always write like the reader so if when I'm writing my different grants and my proposal I will write and then go back there you know like I'm the reader I want to know would I fund me. So does this sound convincing. So I always try to write in keeping the reader and mind. So what would I think of this program and how I described it. So always proof read. And we're getting close to time here I think I'm very close to the end. So a couple other little things I do I use bold text and exact wording to direct the reviewers to the required elements. So if they're asking for a target population I might put the word target population in bold. So the reviewer goes exactly to that and they see that I mentioned that required element.

[00:56:07] You want to be mindful of all the attachments in documents. Those are little things that will hold you up. So you want to make sure you have all the different things and components for your grant all the attachments all the different letters.

[00:56:22] What I do is they say in a solicitation name the files accordingly. I do if it's called program narrative I call it program narrative. And then one little simple thing I do in my computer I make a final document folder for that particular grant and I call it final documents. That way you don't accidentally upload maybe a draft. It makes it very clear in

calling it that final folder. Use the checklist that they give you in the solicitations or create one. Pay attention to the required elements necessary for moving forward in the review process. They'll tell you which items are essential to submit to make sure you get into the review and then follow the directions. Again it is one of the most important things absolutely to take.

[00:57:14] Here I just give you some different Websites that contain useful information. So go ahead and hop on those and find different things that could be useful for your grants and that's all I have. So I'm Valarie Tickle and I just thank you all for joining me.

Elizabeth: [00:57:37] Thank you so much Valerie this was really really good. Very helpful and thorough and so well organized to I know I learned a lot and I'm sure everybody else did. So we have questions coming in if anybody does have a question feel free to send it through the questions function on the GoToWebinar control panel.

[00:58:04] We don't have a lot of time for questions but we have a couple that have come in that I think are important and we'll just ask them and I guess maybe if you can keep your answers brief and if we need to do any further follow up we can.

**Q:1** [00:58:19] So there are a couple of short questions that are just sort of factual here. One is how do you do the budget in an Excel spreadsheet and do the breakdown that way and just hand it in to the department in your Excel spreadsheet.

Valarie: **A:1** [00:58:44] There are a lot of times as there are detailed worksheets that may be given to you. So if the funder has a worksheet you can certainly use that. Some time Excel and I aren't friends. I will also I'd use the word document in the past because it's a works. Use what works for you unless you notice the solicitation says it is required you use this document with this format. So for instance in an abstract there's a particular form. In the budget they'll say this is suggested. But if you use your own. Just make sure you capture these categories. So I'd say you know do what works for you. To make sure and just make sure you have all those elements. But if there is a required document use that.

Elizabeth: **Q:2** [00:59:35] Okay great. And then how long does it typically take to get an answer about whether you've been awarded a grant or not.

Valarie: **A:2** [00:59:43] Sometimes it feels like an eternity I will tell you. In the world that I live in a lot of the grants go in by the springtime and then the late spring or the summers when they're reviewed and usually we're here by September. So it depends. There may or may not be a timeline on this

solicitation when I do solicitations in state I will tell them my timeline. So I've heard some things in less than a month and I've heard others over several months. But generally speaking it is a few months because it takes time to review them.

Elizabeth: **Q:3** [01:00:25] And a related question. Is there any way to see successful sample grant proposals. Can people go online and see examples of good proposals that have been awarded been successful.

Valarie: **A:3** [01:00:44] A lot I know and I can speak of it more heavily from my experience with the Bureau of Justice Assistance so I'll let that be known. They will put on the Website the different states that have been awarded. I have contacted the states directly a lot of times. I share mine. You know people may or may not want to want you know have their different comfort levels but a lot of times you can find successful grant proposals and if you just maybe go to the funders website or see what previously been funded. Also just contact a different state agency if you have heard that they received an award that's helpful.

Elizabeth: **Q:4** [01:01:32] Okay great. Next question is on program planning and how did you decide to decide what to measure and how to access that data. How does this relate to the performance measures for the PMT that BJA in this case is going to put out and it's going to ask grantees to submit. Do you how do you sort of decide what you want to measure and how to access that data.

Valarie: **A:4** [01:02:05] So what I do and this is an interesting piece because in the solicitation it'll say these are the performance measures. You don't need to repeat them all. I think people also feel inclined to copy and paste that chart. We don't have to get that detailed in giving BJA back their words. They already have them. I will take a look at those and use them as a guideline and then tailor some of the objectives specifically to our program and our design. And then looking at the hiring of people what performance we're going to do and what impact we're we're going to make with the grant. So I think that they can be related. But you do want to create some that are tailored to your program and that way you can say you know I've got this. You want to definitely describe that you're going to keep those in mind. I always give full disclosure I am I'm aware of these performance measures I stated as such. And in the program in the in the proposal I'm aware of these measures. This is who's responsible for collecting that data. This is who will be reporting. This is the kind of amplified version of what we're going to look at. And that's specific to our program. Does that answer the question.

Elizabeth: **Q:5** [01:03:24] I think so I think it's a complicated issue but yes you answer the question. Thank you. You said that you have most success with

or most experienced with Department of Justice grants but for CARA of the other half of the pair reprogram is SAMHSA. So this question is about whether you have any tips for success with SAMHSA applications. And I would say I would add to that around any sort of performance measures and data that people are going to want to take advantage of. [1:04:05](#)

Valarie: **A:5** [01:04:08] I haven't I've only written a handful of the SAMHSA ones. I know that they sometimes are even more broad and more detailed in what it needs to be included. I would say go to the Website definitely make sure that there are any documents related to the solicitation that you have them sometimes I believe it is the SAMHSA the grants and maybe the National Institute of Justice grants the NIJ grants because I've only written a handful of them. There's solicitation that's specific for the grant. Then they also have their general grant writing rules. So you want to make sure you look at both of them and then keeping in mind what the particular funder is interested in. So when you're designing your objective or your program look at the mission statement of the funder look at what they're interested in what difference they want to make what other programs what other research they've done those sorts of things so you can make sure that you're speaking to that funder because if they're putting money into a particular program you want to respond accordingly and make sure it's within their mission.

Elizabeth: **Q:6** [01:05:29] Okay perfect. We're a little over time so I'm going to ask this question which may be specific to one or two in the audience but actually it may be applicable to more so this person says we are in New 501C3 organization applying for a local grant. The application says you have to be in existence for two years or show validation of credibility in the community if less than two years old. Any thoughts on best ways to show credibility in the community. This particular person is using the fact that major companies in their community have donated funds to them. But for anybody how do they establish credibility if they are new or even if they are small and have never applied for a grant of this kind before.

Valarie: **A:6** [01:06:20] OK I would say when I look at history and understanding the population when I'm reviewing the grants. Sometimes you can talk about maybe the individuals if it's a small agency. How long have you worked in the field. Maybe your a new 501C3 but what has been your prior experience. I also think partnerships are really essential a lot of times a new 501C3 might be kind of working with some other community entities or other agencies that have been in existence for a long period of time. So building that rapport saying I work with these people and saying you know hey I have this expertise as a new 501C3 and what you don't have maybe you are going to partner up to fill that gap. So I think you know if you're creating a new agency there should be some experience

that you can talk about as to why or where you're going or where you're going to supplement whatever thing you might not touch in your new agency. I think that that's important. Is that the whole question.

Elizabeth: **Q:7** [01:07:36] Yes that's a great answer. Partnerships are always important. So here's the last one. Is there a list that people can get on some sort of website or pushed out list from the federal government about solicitations available. And I would just add before you answer that Valarie I would just add that we at NCJA the National Criminal Justice Association do that service for our members so we push out a list of all grants available in the criminal justice arena and juvenile justice arena. I think it's every other week we call it connect to grants. And as a member benefits you would have to be a member and we would encourage that as well. But that's one way to do it. And I see that you brought back that slide for sources of information so I'll turn it to you.

Valarie: **A:7** [01:08:30] Yes grants.gov that is actually a clearinghouse for grants all kinds of grants because I think in grant writing as soon as you say you do grant writing the number one thing your friends family and new people you meet will say as they can you get me a grant. You become ATM machine. But its OK. You want to look at grants.gov there's a way to filter the search that you can find maybe what you're looking for. And again I have and NCJA on there as a useful website. And BJA. A lot of time if you get on these Websites to maybe listserv that you can sign up for that give you generate e-mails and so sign up for anything and everything that you can and I think once you start opening that doorway and the information about grants will come flooding your way. And then also looking the crimesolutions.gov is another fantastic site that talks about other programs across the nation that are made maybe promising practices best practices or evidence based practices. Take a look at maybe something that might be similar. And how did they get their money. Always ask the question well how did you get funding. So I always kind of also asked the questions of others to try to continue the search for other grants.

Elizabeth: [01:09:54] Great. Perfect. Thank you so much Valarie. This has just been really wonderful. Just perfect. To the audience again this has been recorded and we're going to put it up on the Addiction Policy Forum and the National Criminal Justice Association websites within the next couple of days. Her presentation is available will be available on the websites but is also available I understand it if you click on that handouts dropdown menu on the control panel and you have Valarie's contact information there so I know she's willing to take follow up questions as well. So thank you everybody very much. And good afternoon.

Valarie: [01:10:38] Thank you.

[AUDIO ENDS]