

Suggested Format for Foundation Proposals

(Always refer to the funder's guidelines for specifics)

I. Proposal Elements (A cover page is optional)

Summary (5%)*

- Summarize entire proposal, highlight key elements
- Include a sentence about the organization's credibility
- Specify the total cost of the project, funds committed, and the amount requested in the proposal

Introduction/Organizational History (10-15%)*

- Include brief history and mission statement of applicant
- Summarize current activities and recent achievements
- Explain why you are the right organization to undertake this project

Problem (Need) Statement (20%)*

- Clearly define need or problem you are addressing and why it is urgent
- Frame problem as an opportunity, be hopeful
- Use statistics and numbers where appropriate

Your Solution/Program Description (40-50%)*

- Describe specific, measurable objectives of your program
- Include strategies, methods, specific activities you will undertake
- Emphasize elements in which the foundation has an interest
- Include a timeline and description of key staff where appropriate

Evaluation (5%)*

- Describe how you will monitor and evaluate the success of your project

Budget (10%)*

- Provide a stand-alone financial summary of the project
- Include a budget narrative, if needed

Funding Request/Conclusion (5%)*

- Call for action, ask foundation for specific amount
- Describe other prospects and sources, future funding strategy if the project is ongoing

II. Attachments

(Always refer to the foundation's guidelines to see what they require)

- IRS 501(c)(3) letter is a must
- Recent financial statement, list of board members, with affiliations, current organizational budget (income & expenses) are standard
- Include relevant credibility boosters such as newsclips

*Suggested percentage of proposal devoted to this particular element