

PREP DOC

IMPROVING LIVES APPLICATION

Thank you for visiting our Prep Doc page. We think you'll be glad you did.
We've made this page to help you organize the information you'll need to provide for our online application.
The Helpful Hints may come in handy too!

Organization Information:

Tax ID (Employer Identification Number or EIN).

HELPFUL HINT: Your Tax ID number should be formatted as follows: 35-XXXXXXX. We need your Tax ID to verify your organization's nonprofit status. Public schools and government entities do not need to complete this section.

Organization Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone Number

Fax

Web Address

Primary Contact

HELPFUL HINT: This is your organization's president, CEO, executive director, superintendent etc.

Primary Contact's Title

Primary Contact's Email

Annual Operating Budget

Sources of Income and percentage of the total that each source makes up

HELPFUL HINT: Your answer to this question may look something like this:

Fees for service: 76%

Fundraising events: 5%

Grants: 15%

Earned Income: 4%

Questions about your organization:

1. What is your organization's mission and vision? Please include any principles or values that are used throughout your organization and its programs.
2. What types of things does your organization do especially well? How do you know that you do them well?
3. How likely is it that your organization will be sustained for the long term? Please list both financial and program factors that contribute to your sustainability.

HELPFUL HINT: Following are some indicators of long-term sustainability: 1. Broadly diversified sources of income. 2. History of successful financial management. 3. Volunteers who give their time and talent. 4. Many local donors who contribute cash or goods and services. 5. The absence of debt or manageable debt that makes sense given the organization's size and level of maturity.

4. In your geographic area, what groups are most similar to you? What differentiates you from them?

Proposal Contact Information:

Primary Project Contact

HELPFUL HINT: This refers to person who is the 'point person' for the project. This is the person who our staff will contact to discuss this proposal in more detail.

Project Contact's Title

Phone number

Email

Proposal Information:

Project Title

HELPFUL HINT: This is a short project title limited to 4 words.

Project Budget

Request Amount

Other sources of support for your project

Project Start Date

HELPFUL HINT: This is the date that you will begin your project.

Project End Date

HELPFUL HINT: This is the date by which you commit to completing your project goals.

Questions about the participants in your proposed program:

HELPFUL HINT: For each of the remaining sections, we'll use the same overall example. It begins below.

5. What specific problem will you address with the program that you propose?

HELPFUL HINT: Usually programs and projects are started because needs have been observed. In this section please talk about that specific needs that you have noticed in the children that you serve. For example, one prospective grantee told us, "So many of the children that we serve do not live in homes where proper English is spoken. Unless children can hear their language spoken correctly and richly, they will not be able to rise above their current educational level and status in life. Studies show that five exposures to language role models per week over a year's time are enough to raise children's vocabulary and grammar by two grade levels. Currently some children don't have enough dedicated and intentional exposure to proper grammar and expanded vocabulary."

6. About how many individuals within your focus area have this problem?

HELPFUL HINT: Think about the answer in Question 5 above. While some children live in language-rich homes, others obviously do not. In this question we want you to distinguish between the two groups. You will probably need to estimate to answer this question.

7. What is the total number of participants you plan to serve with your program?

HELPFUL HINT: Think about your answer above. Can you serve all of the children who have the problem you've identified? Do you need to focus your efforts on a portion of the population with this need?

8. Please talk specifically about the people you have chosen to address with your program. What do you know about their lives/habits/demographics? Are they in any way different from the full set of people who have the problem that you cited above?

HELPFUL HINT: This question will help you, and us, think thoroughly about the participants you want to serve. Information about their lives, habits and demographics will help us all understand whether or not the proposed program is the best solution to address the problem.

9. Considering the total number of people you plan to serve with your program, enter the number you anticipate will have:
- Few barriers* to success.
 - Moderate barriers* to success.
 - Many barriers* to success.

Explain the factors that would put a person in high and low barrier categories.

HELPFUL HINT: In Question 5 above, we talked about children who lack adult role models that speak English in an educated and professional manner. This rich use of language has been identified as a factor that could lead to a child's success in high-level careers. Some children will obviously fall into Category A. above—their parents model professional literacy through their everyday interactions. Some children lack positive language modeling in their home, but have had access to quality early childhood education where language role models were present. For that reason they may fall into Category B. above. A final group of children may lack both formal educational and language role models. They would fall into Category C. above. Through your proposed project you may choose to work with children in any or all of these categories.

Your projected results:

10. Please list one or two key results that are you committed to achieving for participants in your program. Please state how you will go about achieving those results.

Result Number One:

Children who lack formal education and language role models will have at least four opportunities each week to hear rich, formal expression of the English language.

How will you go about achieving Result Number One?

Four days a week children will listen to recorded books and participate in a teacher-led story time.

Result Number Two:

Children who lack formal education and language role models will have at least one opportunity each week to interact with a role model who expresses English correctly and professionally.

How will you go about achieving Result Number Two?

On day per week each child will have a half-hour mentoring session with a specially-selected community volunteer who will come into the classroom and read one-on-one with each child.

11. Is your method backed by evidence of success? If so, what evidence exists?

HELPFUL HINT: Did you do any research? Did you talk to other people who may be addressing the same problem? What books have you read on the topic?

12. Of the total participants you've chosen to serve, how many do you think you can help to reach that level of success?

HELPFUL HINT: You might want to express your answer to this question in the following general format: We have chosen to work with the 20 children in our group who we feel have many barriers to success. We believe that we can accomplish our desired results for 75% (15) of those children.

13. How long will participants retain the benefits that they gain through your program? If some people are forecast to lose the benefits they achieve within a few years, what will you do to help ensure the staying power of their accomplishments?

HELPFUL HINT: You might answer this question in this way: Research shows us that language patterns developed in early childhood stay with children for the rest of their lives. That is why this program is so critical at this time. One thing we could do to improve their preservation of these skills is to work with the public schools to make them aware of the importance of developing the language skills of this particular group of students.

14. Given the problem you stated above, if your program is not implemented, what do you think will happen to your proposed participants? How many people are likely to move beyond this problem even if your program is never implemented?

HELPFUL HINT: Lack of proper business/professional language skills is one of the strongest barriers for young people who aspire to be the first in their family to attend college and pursue a professional job. It seems logical that the career choices of many of the children we propose to serve would be narrower without this program. It is possible that some of the children in need of better language development may be influenced by a teacher/youth program or neighbor.

Your project:

15. Please provide a brief summary of the project you plan to implement.

HELPFUL HINT: Continuing with our example from Question 5: We plan to implement a "Reading Buddy" program that immerses children in age-appropriate literature offered by community volunteers and classroom teachers.

16. What other project options did you consider?

HELPFUL HINT: Feel free to tell us about your thought process as you designed your program or project. Did you try anything that didn't work? What other ideas did you try?

17. What about your chosen project made it the best option?

HELPFUL HINT: This answer will be strongest when it includes research, experience and/or knowledge of the people you serve.

18. What is your organization's core knowledge in this program area? What do you know how to do especially well? How do you know that you do that well?

19. What have you achieved in the past three years that is most like the project for which you seek our support? (Focus on measurable changes that you have created for the people that you serve.)

20. What assumptions can you make about the intensity and duration of service that will be needed to gain the results you discussed above?

HELPFUL HINT: Your answers here may come from your research and conversations with colleagues in your field.

Tracking to success

21. How will you know when participants have met the results stated above? What information or evidence will you use to verify your success?

HELPFUL HINT: Your answer might include pre- and post-observations of children's grammar and vocabulary. You might also want to include pre- and post-testing of children using a scale that is appropriate for their age and developmental level. Answers to Question 22 may look something like this:

--Children with strong barriers to language development will improve their vocabulary by two developmental levels as measured by XXXX assessment after six months of program participation.

22. Halfway through your project, how will you know if participants are on course to achieve results with the time and money you have remaining? What milestone behaviors or accomplishments will be good predictors of participants achieving the final project results?

HELPFUL HINT: This question is asking about the mid-project milestones that need to be met so that participants will accomplish the longer-term results that you've set. Answers to Questions 23 may be something like this:

--One quarter of the way through the project, on 00/00/0000: Participants will have had five weekly exposures to role models who intentionally model correct and professional use of language. This goal must be completed each week to accomplish long-term program goals.

--One quarter of the way through the project, on 00/00/0000: Teachers will intentionally observe children building better vocabularies and grammar skills.

--Halfway through the project, on 00/00/0000: Children will improve their vocabulary by one developmental level as measured by XXXXX assessment.

23. What information will you use to track participant's success and make course corrections in your program? Do you have the administrative capacity to track these things?

24. What do you most want to learn from this project?

Key people and partners

25. Who will be responsible for leading the project to its results?

26. What characteristics in that leader are the best predictors of success?

HELPFUL HINT: While many people may be involved in carrying out your project, one person should be ultimately responsible for its success. Who is that person? What about him or her indicates an ability to accomplish goals?

27. Who are the key people who will deliver the program to your participants? What about these people and their experience suggest that they can help participants to get the results that you intend?

HELPFUL HINT: This question refers to the people who will work directly with the participants to accomplish the program goals.

28. Are any partners, consultants or intermediaries critical to your success? If so, please list them and indicate what role they play in your program and any evidence that they are committed to playing that role.

HELPFUL HINT: Will you work with any other organizations, consultants or volunteers who will play an important role in your ability to complete your project? Who are they? How have they indicated their commitment?