# San Jose State University

GRC Overview & Proposal Development 101

# Agenda

- **What is GRC?:** Grants Resource Center Services Overview

* Quick Check-In *

- **Proposal Development:** Before you write

- Write On!: 10 tips to transform your BIG idea into funds

- Common mistakes and ethical hiccups

- Traits of successful proposal writers

- Final thoughts

# **About GRC**

Established in 1967, as a not-for-profit premium service of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the Grants Resource Center (GRC) is open to four-year public and private higher education institutions.

# GRC Mission

The Grants Resource Center (GRC) strives to improve members' success in securing competitive grants from federal and private sponsors.

# GRC Mission in Action

GRC fulfills its' mission by providing the following pre-award services & products:

- Staff Support

- Publications

- Networking Opportunities (Annual Conference, Peer-to-Peer Connections, Linkages to decision makers, etc.)

- Grant Search Database

- Faculty Alert System

- Management and Funding Resources

# GRC Membership Profile

- Research administrators and faculty members

- Over 150 member campuses in 40 states, D.C., Guam, and Ghana

- Primarily public institutions and state systems

- Separate dues structure from AASCU dues

- Member-elected advisory board

# GRC Member Support Structure

- GRC staff members manage a portfolio of assigned campuses based on full-time enrollment (FTE).

| CATEGORY A | Under 5K FTE | Richard Wellons |
|------------|--------------|-----------------|
| CATEGORY B | 5K-10K FTE | Willette Brown-Fatoyinbo |
| CATEGORY C | Over 10K FTE | Erika Thompson |

- GRC staff members also are assigned to:

- Multiple federal agencies and foundations

- Complementary organizations (FDP, NCURA, NSPAA, etc.)

- GRC staff embody a significant level of working knowledge about federal agencies, foundations, higher education and funding trends, assigned campus strengths, and emerging interests.

# GRC Member Support Structure

Members rely on GRC staff to:

- Attend Washington, D.C.-area agency meetings and events;

- Answer funding opportunity-related questions;

- Perform funding opportunity searches;

- Obtain successfully funded proposals; and

- Link researchers and administrators to Program Officers through scheduled federal agency visits

# GRC Member Support Structure

Members rely on GRC staff to:

- Plan campus visits to provide agency overviews and conduct proposal development workshops;

- Meet with faculty to help them determine funding possibilities and prepare for meetings with program officers; and

- Strengthen professional ties amongst research administrators, industry leaders, and grant recipients.

# GRC Publications

## What We Publish

•*GrantWeek* (Mondays) e-newsletter about program details, pending legislation and federal appropriations, proposed changes to agency rules, and member spotlights

•*Bulletin* (Tuesdays and Fridays) synopsizes hundreds of funding alerts from Grants.gov, Federal Register and Federal Business Opportunities (FBO)

•*Deadlines* (monthly) programs with competitions closing in the next 30/60/90 days

## What We Publish

• Grants.gov, Federal Register, FBO, listservs and funding agency websites

• Latest deadlines, program priorities and pending legislation

• Outcomes of proposed policy revisions

• Technical assistance workshops and agency briefings

# GRC GrantSearch Database

Contains over **1,400 funding opportunities** that are cyclical, make multiple awards, and are national/regional in scope.

### Search Criteria Include:

- Academic Subject

- Activity

- Curriculum Development,

Fellowships, Research support, etc.

- Funding Sponsor

- Deadline Month

- Keyword(s)

### Search Profile Include:

- Funding Opportunity Description

- Links to Online Info.

- Deadline Dates

- Contact Information

# GRC Conferences & Webinars

**Annual Funding Summit** <span style="color:red">(2020 dates TBD</span>) features federal agency and foundation program officers who administer grant programs and influence funding decisions:

- General and concurrent sessions
- Private consultations (1:1 between participant and program officer)
- Webinar option for members unable to attend

**Annual Webinar Series** <span style="color:red">(2019 dates TBD</span>) highlights agencies and programs of interest to research administrators, faculty, and staff:

- Typically occurs in August and September
- One price per connection
- Funded PIs featured

# GRC Faculty Alert System

**Provides faculty with monthly email notifications about funding opportunities related to <u>YOUR</u> interests**

- Select academic areas of interest and program support themes closest to your interest area

- Control your search criteria

- Change keywords at any time

- Currently, there are over 2,400 faculty enrolled

# Management & Funding Resources

- Funded proposal library

- Agency fact sheets

- Sample administrative policies

- Limited submission funding opportunities

- Funding and proposal development guides

- Webinar recordings

- Funding opportunity search request form

# Quick Check-In

UP NEXT: Proposal Development 101

# Before You Write…

- Understand the ecosystem of proposal development
- Compare and research funding sources (federal, private foundations, corps.)
- Review the FOA in detail
- Complete internal approval process w/Sponsored Research Office
- Become familiar with systems to manage data and attachments
- Communicate w/stakeholders (internal & external)
- Gather and cross reference your research points with FOA
- Know your audience
- Determine your style/voice

# Before You Write…

## Understand the ecosystem of proposal development
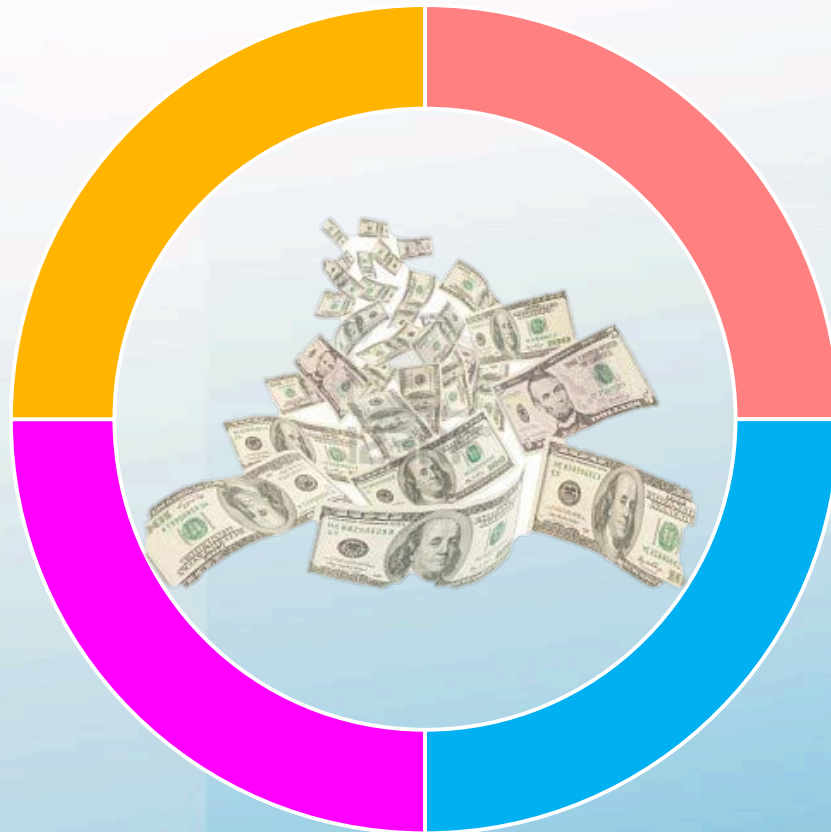
■ Grantwriting    ■ Research    ■ Communication    ■ Planning

# Before You Write…
## Compare and research funding sources

| Government funding | VS. | Foundation funding |
| --- | --- | --- |

**Government funding**

- Source: Federal- state- county funds

- Lucrative; larger award

- Largest supporter of university research projects

- Lengthy, complex application

- Prestigious; potential to increase institutional profile

- Maintains stringent reporting requirements under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) to ensure that goals of agency programs are met

- Especially interested in collaborations in leveraging federal dollars

- Review process overseen by industry experts

**Foundation funding**

- Source: Individuals- corporations- public

- Award amounts vary

- Inclusive of many organizational structures

- Shorter, streamlined application

- Prestigious; potential to increase institutional profile (PR/public opinion/comm. relations)

- Review process overseen by industry experts, volunteers and/or board members

# Before You Write…
## Compare and research funding sources

Mission

Priority areas & goals
(geo & philanthropic)

Budget

Previous award history

Beliefs?
Core values?
Vision?

Interest areas?
Geography?
Audience?
Target population?

Operational?
Funding?
Red flags?
990 check?

Who?
Why?
How much?

# Before You Write…
## Compare and research funding sources

- NOFA Notice of Funding Announcement (NOFA)
  - Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)
    - RFP Request for Proposals (RFP)
      - Call for Proposals (CFP)
        - Solicitations
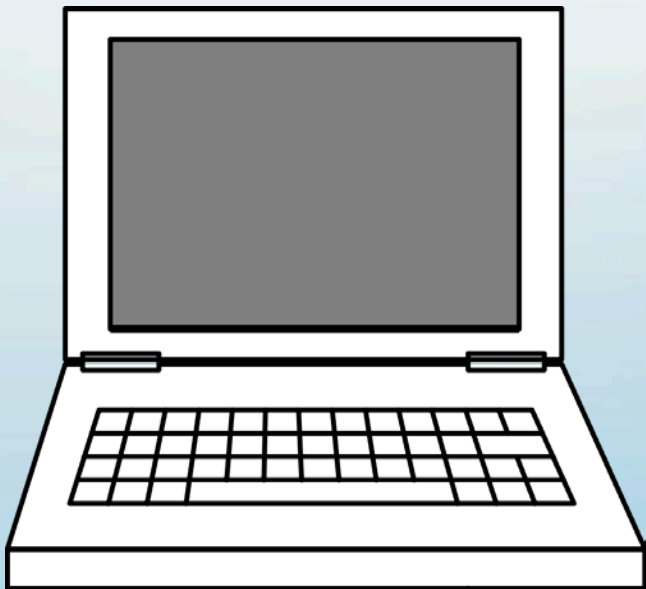
### What does it all mean?

- Outlines the bidding process and contract terms.
  - Provides guidance on how the bid should be formatted and presented.
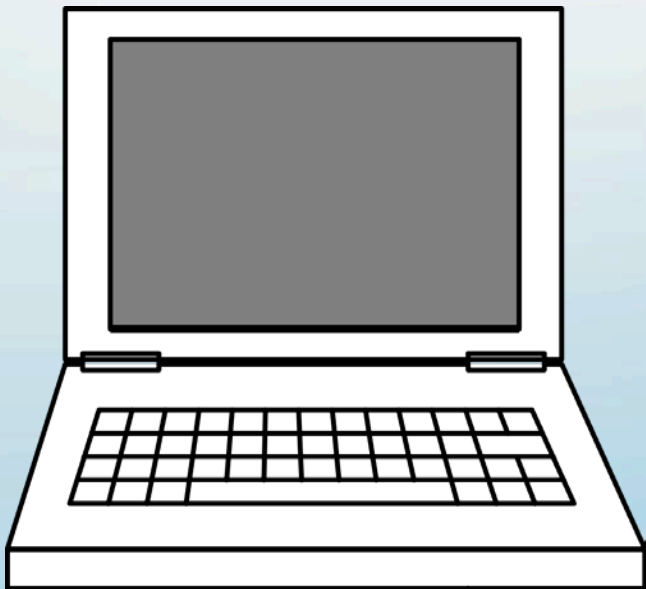
# Before You Write…
## Review the RFP in detail

- Funding description
- Award information
- Eligibility requirements
- Deadline
- Cost sharing/match requirements
- Attachments
- LOI
- Contact information
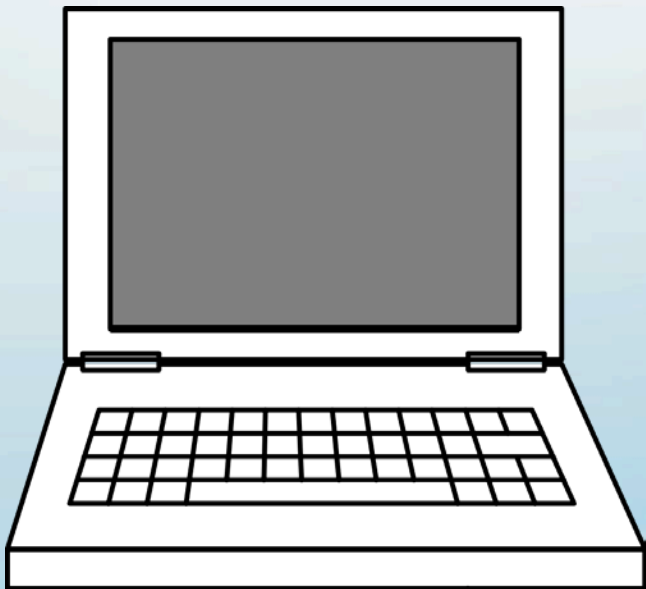
# Before You Write…
## Review the RFP in detail

- Some grantmakers may also request a **letter of intent (LOI)** prior to the proposal deadline.

  ✓ **What?** "Skelton version" of your proposal
  ✓ **Why?** Used to pique a grantmakers interests; helps grantmaker quickly determine a good "fit"
  ✓ **How?** Summary, organization overview, statement of need, methodology w/staffing pattern, other funding sources and budget

# Before You Write…
## Complete internal approval process w/SRO

- Familiarize yourself with institutional guidelines

  - ✓ What does your institution's internal routing process include?
  - ✓ How much lead time is required prior to the submission date?
  - ✓ Where can you find grantwriting assistance?
  - ✓ Who is responsible for preparing institutional attachments or letters of support?

**Input** → **Process** → **Output**

**FEEDBACK**
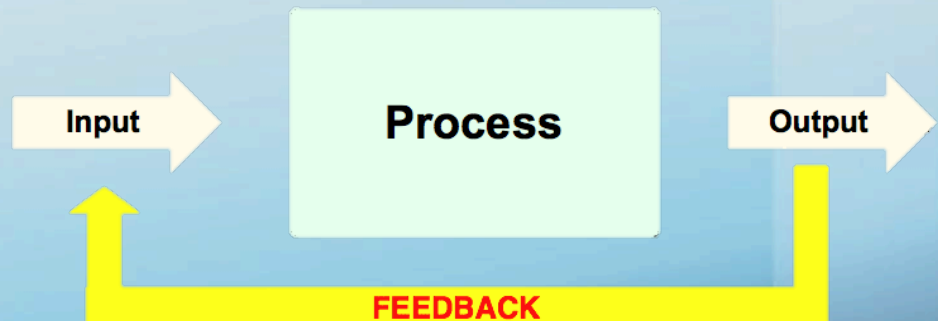
# Before You Write…
## Gather research points

- Familiarize yourself with institutional guidelines

    - ✓ What does your institution's internal routing process include?
    - ✓ How much lead time is required prior to the submission date?
    - ✓ Where can you find grantwriting assistance?
    - ✓ Who is responsible for preparing institutional attachments or letters of support?

- Gather and assess your team

- Communicate, communicate, communicate!

# #10: Ask the Tough Questions

**DEMAND:**

Does my project respond to a national need (social, educational, economic, public health) or positively contribute to a pressing matter?

# Ask the Tough Questions

**SIGNFICANCE:**

What makes my project unique?

Does my project advance the state of knowledge

in a particular discipline?

Has it been executed in the past?

Is the model positioned for replication elsewhere?

# Ask the Tough Questions

**TIME:**

How much time is needed to complete the proposal?

Can my team commit to the timetable?

What system/process will I use to track and document project deliverables, deadlines and benchmarks?

# Ask the Tough Questions



**BUDGET:**

Do I understand the funders policy on indirect costs?

What are favorable percentages deemed by the funder?

Have I scheduled time to review financials with the

sponsored research office?

# Ask the Tough Questions

**EQUIPMENT:**

What equipment will I utilize?

Did my institution purchase new equipment/tools note an honorable mention?

Will I rely on new, cutting edge technology?

Do I anticipate the purchase of new equipment related to the project/ research/ program?

# Ask the Tough Questions

## POLITICS:

Are you politically positioned to pursue this project?

Who is available to provide organizational sponsorship?

Are there other program or colleagues connected to your project or theme?

# Tough Questions =READINESS

- Agencies require administrative planning.

- A good plan indicates research competence.

- Hit the ground running when you are funded.

- Facilitates approval process within your institution.

  regarding compliance and other internal matters.

- RIGHT and RESPONSIBLE thing to do when dealing

  with someone else's money.

# #9: Develop a Compelling Abstract

### (Executive Summary)

- Provide a "big picture" summary of your plan and highlight innovative points that support your idea.

- Some funders will specifically state the information they wish to see included in the abstract. Keep it short, factual and impactful.

Complete last!
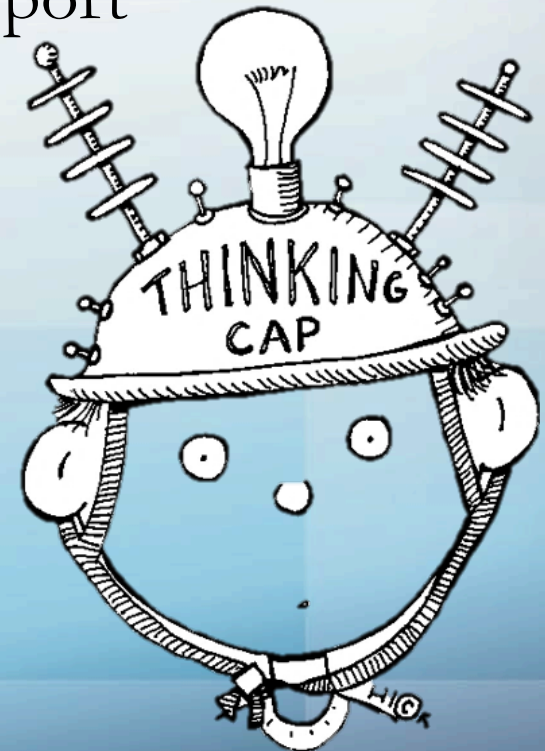
# #8: Highlight the Organization

- Mission statement

- Vision statement

- History/years of service

- Highlight significant milestones (centennial year, accreditation)

- Summarize core programs (goals, #'s served, etc.)

- Capture organizational capacity in staffing (staff size, credentials)

# #7: Develop a Needs Statement

## (Problem Statement, Hypothesis or Research Question )

- What is the nature of your problem?

- How does this problem impact priorities important to the funder? Community? Society?

- Elements to include:
  - Target population (history, trends, profile, etc.)
  - Data, data, data!! (empirical research, survey results, test scores, reports, etc.)
  - Project/program objectives (SMART)
  - Quantitative/Qualitative criteria for measuring the solution (how will you measure the outcome?)
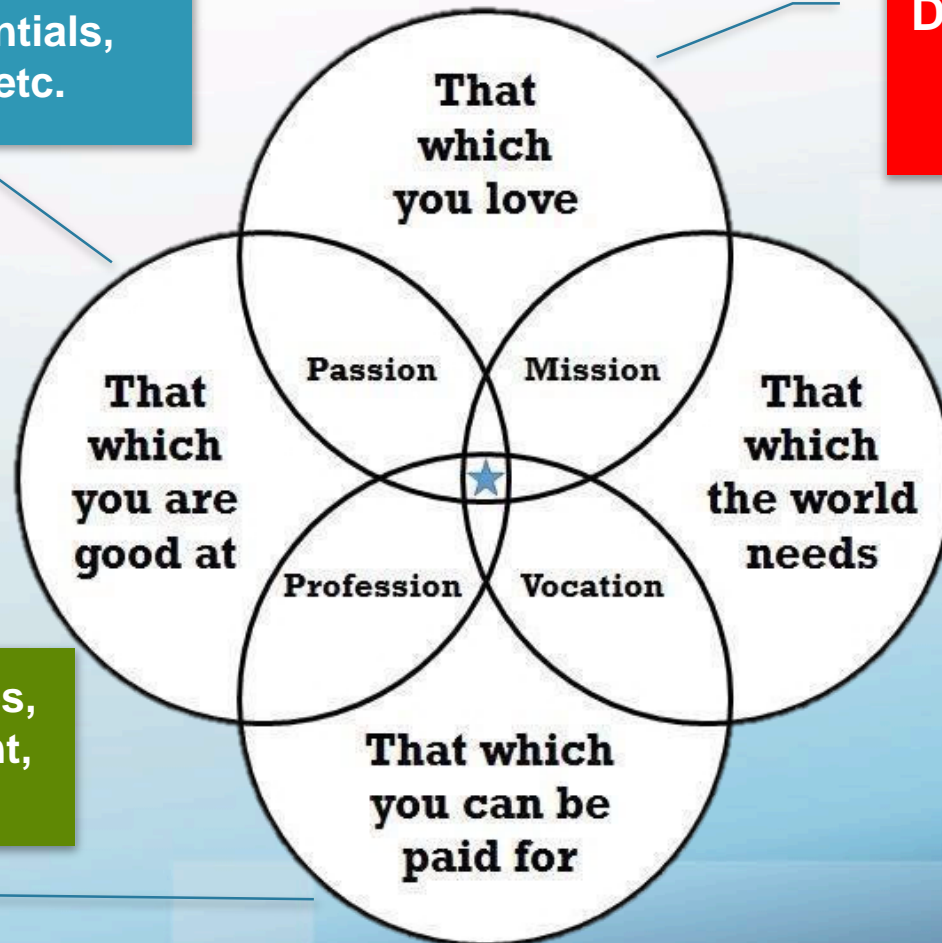
# #6: Explore the Project/Program

**(program description)**

- State how your solution meet the needs of the problem.

- Explain the overall goals.

- Match your goals with **SMART** objectives.

- Describe the activities you will execute to actualize the goals.

# #5: Access Goals & Objectives

| Goals | **VS** | Objectives |

- **Goals** are general guidelines that explain what you want to achieve in your community. They are usually long-term and represent global visions such as "protect public health and safety."
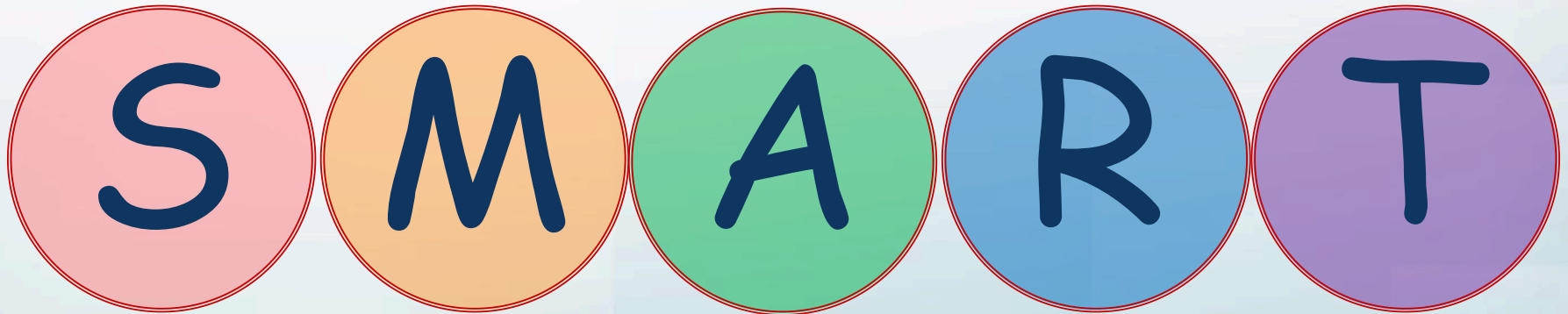
- **Objectives** define strategies or implementation steps to attain the identified goals.

- Unlike goals, objectives are specific, measurable, and have a defined completion date.

- Outlines the "who, what, when, where, and how" of reaching the goals.

# What are **SMART** Objectives?

| S | M | A | R | T |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Specific | Measurable | Achievable | Realistic | Time-Sensitive |

# #4: Explore the Project/Program

### (Program description)

- State how your solution meets the needs of the problem.

- Explain the overall goals.

- Match your goals with **SMART** objectives.

- Describe the activities you will execute to actualize the goals.

# #3: Budget Planning

- Realistic, well-thought numbers should match narratives

- Determine Source of Matching Funds

- Existing vs. New Money

- Facility Enhancements

- Travel Expenses

- Personnel Expenses

- Equipment Purchases

- Sub-Contracts
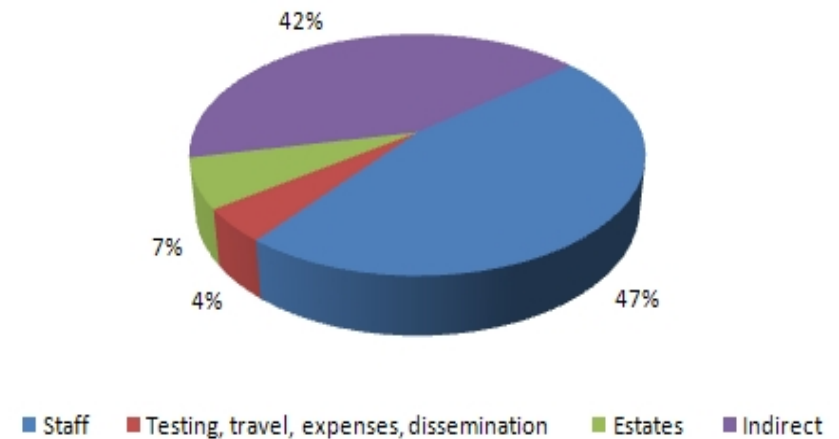
# #2: Assessment

- Describe **quantitative** and **qualitative** outcomes.

- Decide who is in charge of assessment NOW -- do not wait until you are completing your first project appraisal to determine who is managing this integral part of the project.

- Determine how findings will be fed back into the project to enhance and strengthen your progress.

# #1: Follow-Up

- Make a **HUMAN** connection.

- Educate the program officer about your project/program.

- Schedule phone calls and e-mails to stay relevant and engaged.

- Differentiate yourself from the competition.

- Welcome application feedback.

- **BE PREPARED** to resubmit, if applicable.

# Common Mistakes

# **Common Mistakes**

- Complex sentence structure

> The intrinsic labyrinth of wires must be first disentangled. The liquid contents of container should then be disgorged via the spout by the operator.

# Common Mistakes

**Reviewers Feedback**

| Disturbs the Reviewer | Confuses the Reviewer | Diminishes Credibility |
| --- | --- | --- |
| • Spelling errors<br>• Overuses technical terms<br>• Uses acronyms<br>• Uses gender-specific terms | • Writes overly, complex sentences<br>• Fails to attend to paragraph coherence issues<br>• Uses passive voice<br>• Includes non-parallel lists | • Fails to address criteria<br>• Abstract, problem statement, budget disconnect<br>• Fails to address assessment and administration<br>• Includes extraneous information<br>• Grammatic errors |

DO IT WRITE RIGHT THE FIRST TIME

# **Research Ethics**

- Conflict of Interest

- Scientific misconduct

- Preserve privacy and confidentiality

- Plagiarism

- Problems of Practice

    (fraud, deception, poor project management, sloppy research practices)

# Traits of Successful Proposal Writers

- Research skills

- Sales capabilities

- Written and oral communication skills

- Ingenuity and flexibility

- Administrative capabilities (leadership to accounting)

- Human relations skills

- Persistence, dedication, patience, and "Can Do" attitude

- Political acumen

- Integrity

# Final Thoughts

- Build campus capacity.

- Know community interests/resources/needs.

- Don't just chase $$- build a long-term strategy.

- "Publication is about science, and grant writing is about marketing".

- Program Officers are the best allies.

- Mantra: If at first you don't succeed, **TRY, TRY AGAIN!**

# GRC Staff Directory

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Questions?