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# **Unfunded Application?**

## **Now What?**

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Office of General Counsel  
Grants Program

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## Questions for Today

1. Why was I not funded?
2. What do I need to do to get funded?

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I am sure you have many questions, but the reason why you are here is because you received a letter from SCDE and your application was not funded. So you ask yourself, What do I need to do to get funded?



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# 1. Why was I not funded?

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) denial letter explains why your proposal was not funded.



## Common Issues:

1. Memorandum of Agreement signed by authorized representatives was not included.
2. Budget narrative was missing.
3. Information was inconsistent.
4. Application was incomplete.
5. Weekly Schedule lacked clarity.



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## 2. What do I need to do to get funded?

- Learn from this season
- Reflect
- Go back and review the RFP
- Create a work plan/checklist for next submission
- Ask more questions.



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Reflect: review slide 3 and determine if you were in that group for denial. Determine if you have additional questions after you attended this session and we answered your questions. Review the comments made by the reviewers.

Baseline: Follow the directions of the RFP, review the reviewers comments



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## TIPS



- Read the RFP announcement thoroughly
- Note all the “must items”
- Create work plan/timeline (see sample)
- Ensure all documents are fully executed and have valid signatures
- Create a checklist of all required documents for submission.

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See the sample handout the time line.

Go to: <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/gc/grants/> for more samples

Must items are items listed in the RFP referred to “must contain, must obtain, required to....

Not all RFPs come with a checklist, if not create one



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## Regardless of how you start...

A winning proposal is based upon  
a carefully planned, thorough  
program/project that addresses...



- a **Need** (problem)

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How do you determine your needs? (needs assessment)

Sample language "...applicants may want to consider looking at **the magnitude of the need for academic achievement among the target population** and the extent to which this project will address identified needs, gaps or weaknesses in current service delivery systems and build infrastructure for a sustainable academic delivery system. While applicants may address this priority in any way that is reasonable, applicants may want to **describe the school population to be served by the grant using recent data, the current academic needs of that population, and gaps in services not addressed by current core academic instructions.** "

Further guidance:

Follow the flow of the RFP

Organize the proposal as it is presented in the RFP

Include needs that this program/funding will NOT address.

Include your plan for fixing the need in this section. That comes later.

Include outdated data and statistics to prove the need. Use the most current data and statistics.

Include unnecessary or outdated research.

Limit quotes unless the quote is essential for proving a point



## **And addresses that need through...**

- Goals and objectives
- Selected research-based strategies
- Clear management practices and qualified personnel
- Effective evaluation and dissemination plans
- Sustainability Plan
- Expenses that are legitimate and necessary.



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## Goals



- What does the program target?
- What is the program designed to do?

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This sample is based on EEDA At Risk and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Lab RFP. Therefore, the reference to student

Goals tend to be overarching, long-term (beyond the specific project/grant funding term); Therefore, the targeted numbers as stated on the application cover sheet can not deviate from the numbers listed in the proposal or the budget. They all must be consistent.



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## Objectives



- What do you want the target population be able to do at the end of the project?
- How will the target population demonstrate the ability to do that?
- How many individuals (of the total number served) should be able to do that?

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## Strategies/Activities



- For each objective, identify what you will do to help the targeted population achieve/advance (strategies).
- For each objective, identify what targeted population will do to learn/advance/achieve (activities).
- How will this activity/strategy help address the need you have identified?

For example: Teachers use “strategies” in the classroom to engage students in learning. Students in the classroom engage in “activities” to learn.



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## Management and Personnel



- Who will implement the project?
- Who will be responsible for daily oversight?
- Where does the project fit into the current chain of command?
- How will you ensure that management is effective?
- How will you ensure that the project is implemented well?
- What are the credentials of key staff?

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Examples of questions for a typical management plan



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## Evaluation Plan



- Success toward achieving goals/objectives
  - How will you know whether you are achieving the objectives?
  - What are your performance measures?
- Quality of Implementation and Planning
  - How will you assess how the project is implemented?
  - How will you identify problems and resolve them quickly?
  - How will you assess the use of funds?

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“The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, measurable, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.”

2 elements to consider in creating your evaluation plan: how you will evaluate whether you achieved the objectives and how you will evaluate how well you implemented the project (plan for future)

“The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.”

“The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.”



## Evaluation Design Questions



- What types of data will be collected?
- When will the various types of data be collected?
- What methods will be used?
- What instruments will be developed and when?
- How will the data be analyzed?
- When will reports of results and outcomes be available?
- How will you use the evaluation to monitor progress and provide accountability information?



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## Sustainability



- What will you do to ensure that the essential elements of the project continue beyond this grant funding?
- Can the project become part of a strategic plan, an academic unit/approach, standards, etc.?
- What will you do to ensure that the personnel “pass on” the project (sustainable leadership)?

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Pass on the project: Make sure that management/supervisor is aware of the commitments made when leadership changes. It is best to create a fact sheet about this program and identifying all terms and documenting all commitments.



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# Budget



Two parts:

- Budget Narrative or Justification  
(spreadsheet w/line items, calculations  
& formulas)
- Budget Summary or Form  
(totals and subtotals)

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Validate the numbers is by checking with your finance/accounting office  
Doing web searches  
Have informal or formal quotes

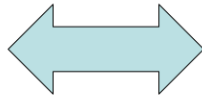


## Relationship of Project Plan and Financial Plan?



Project Plan = Narrative

Narrative = Ties to Scope  
of Work



Financial Plan = Budget

Budget = Need a detailed  
description (ties to narrative  
and numbers)

Every grant application is comprised of a program plan (narrative) and a financial plan (budget).

The budget will show how much it will cost to carry out the plans described in the narrative



# Importance of the Grant Budget

Scope of Work &  
regulatory  
restrictions

Who, what,  
when,  
where and  
how?



+, -, /, or x  
= \$\$\$\$\$

- It is a stand alone document that is tested against the deliverable (Scope of Work) and any regulatory restriction.
- It answers the basic questions as to: who, what, when, where, and how.
- It requires a well written detailed narrative and detail showing the calculation of the numbers.



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## Unclear Budget Narrative Sample



<b>Admin Cost</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
Postage, paper	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 200.00
Technology	\$21,000.00	N/A	N/A
Licenses	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
<b>Salaries</b>			
Facilitator/Coach	\$31,350.00	\$31,350.00	\$31,500.00
Benefits	\$ 8,151.00	\$ 8,151.00	\$ 8,151.00
Tutors	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
<b>Travel</b>			
Facilitator/Coach	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Participants	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$78,551.00</b>	<b>\$57,551.00</b>	<b>\$50,651.00</b>

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Ask your what are we funding? When will we fund it? Where will we go? Why do we need it? How many will go or how many will we need? How will it be done? How much will it cost?



## Budget is a Roadmap



- Tells a story
- Tracks plan
- Shows deviations + / -
- Assists in the next step

Refer back to EDGAR 74.21(b)(4) & 74.25 as well as 80.20(b)(4) & 80.30

It becomes your roadmap/plan when implementing that allows you to stay on track and show any deviations.

Deviations can be +/- that are either cost savings or cost overruns attributed to unforeseen events or poor planning.

Budget modifications can be easily initiated when well tracked.

It tells a story.





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## Improved Budget Narrative Sample

<b>Admin Cost</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
Purchase paper supply to build student portfolio and print materials related to permission slips, profile sheet and assignments at 0.05 cents per page. Estimated costs is based on 75 students , 60 pages at \$.05 per page. # of pages are decreased in yr 3 to 50	\$ 225.00	\$ 225.00	\$ 187.50
Postage and envelopes purchase for local area business for sustainability efforts mailing.	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 12.50
25% Start up cost for a computer lab (15 desktops, monitors, 1 network printer and necessary cables and wiring, MS Office and APEX) to allow students to do assignments, surf the internet for college career choices, practice writing application essays, for example. Computer station (\$1500*.25*15), Network Printer (\$1400*.25), Microsoft Office Package with License (\$300*.25*15), APEX software \$500 license separate and specific to Gear Up, Wiring	\$ 7,600.00	N/A	N/A
25% build out of computer lab (\$54,000*.25)	\$13,500.00	N/A	N/A
License for APEX	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
<b>Salaries</b>			
0.75 FTE for Facilitator/Coach (\$41,800*.75)	\$31,350.00	\$31,350.00	\$31,350.00
Fringe Benefits @26% (Health, Dental, Pension, FICA & WC)	\$ 8,151.00	\$ 8,151.00	\$ 8,151.00
5 Tutors @\$21 per hour for 3 hours a week for 32 weeks	\$10,080.00	\$10,080.00	\$10,080.00
<b>Travel</b>			
75% of total travel cost to SCDE for 2 technical assistance @260 miles *\$0.565*2 for Facilitator Coach	\$ 110.18	\$ 110.18	\$ 110.18
Rental Fee for 2 school buses for 4 exploratory college trips per year \$750*2*4	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	
Snacks and light lunch for 75 students and 5 chaperones @\$12.00 per person)	\$ 960.00	\$ 960.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$78,301.18</b>	<b>\$57,201.18</b>	<b>\$50,191.18</b>

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## Tips for Budget

- Use validated numbers
- Round-up numbers (don't show cents)
- Test costs:
  - Must be logical
  - Must be reasonable, necessary, eligible and allocable.

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## Test Cost and Final Questions

For federal and state grants:

- Is my cost necessary and reasonable?
- Is my cost allocable?
- Is my cost authorized under state, local laws or regulations?
- Is my cost aligning with the scope of work?
- Is there program income?
- Do I have an indirect cost rate agreement?





## What is necessary and reasonable?



Goods and services are necessary to run program/project and cost must be reasonable in price (must be *both* necessary *and* reasonable).

**Example:** Run a computer lab for 3 weeks with 10 computers. Will need computers, printers, and software. Cost: \$1,500 per computer station including printer and \$50,000 for software and license fee (typically purchased for 3 years in advance).

Necessary is a programmatic determination. Expenditure must be necessary in order to achieve an important program objective. Must prove need.

Reasonable requires the prudent person standard in accordance with A-87. The cost is reasonable in its nature and amount. It would not exceed what you, the prudent person, would spend on such purchase. Market price for comparable goods or services.



## What is allocable?



Goods and services in question are chargeable and the program/project benefits from this expense.

**Example:** Purchased 20 computers for a computer lab and 5 computers (25%) are paid for by Migrant Education Program (MEP). If you allocate cost, you must be able to demonstrate/evidence that 25% of computer time is used by MEP.

Chargeable means the cost can fully allocate to the program as a direct benefit. If an allocation method is chosen, must provide the method of allocation in order to test how this benefits the program/project. For example there are many centralized costs that can have a reasonable allocation method consistent with the indirect cost rules. Need to ensure that the method chosen makes sense and contributes to the success of the program/project.



## What is authorized?



Must be allowable under nonfederal law and federal law. See statute, cost principles, state and local laws or regulations.

**Example:** Federal programs frequently allow incidental food costs funded with professional development or parental involvement. If state law prohibits food purchases, the federal funds cannot pay for them, regardless of the federal rules stating otherwise.

Reminder, must be consistent with policies, regulations and procedures and also consistent with the treatment of assigned costs.

Another example: Per diem rates for travel. If the per-diem rate for employees whose salary and travel are paid from state and local funds is one amount, then there cannot be a separate, higher amount for employees paid from federal funds.



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## Basic Parts of a Proposal

- Abstract/Summary
- Management
- Need Statement
- Sustainability
- Project Design  
(Goals and Objectives)
- Evaluation
- Budget & Narrative
- Activities/ Methods
- Supporting Documents/  
Appendix

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Document structure can vary



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## Supporting Documents

- Certification Signature Page
- Timeline of Activities
- Résumés
- Memorandums of Agreement (MOA)



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The funder will dictate these in the RFP.



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## **Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)**

- a document written between parties to cooperatively work together on an agreed upon project or meet an agreed upon objective
- purpose is to have a written understanding of the agreement between parties
- can be a legal document that is binding and holds the parties responsible to their commitment or just a partnership agreement
- can be called a cooperative agreement.

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Think of clauses for when and what if.



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## **MOA Requirement(s) - sample**

- If the fiscal agent is a non-school entity, the MOA between that entity and the school district being served must mandate that the school/district will be responsible for ensuring all 21st CCLC students are coded in PowerSchool, the state's student information system.
- The district superintendent and the principal(s) of the school(s) to be served must sign the MOA.

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Detail is always provided in the RFP. Follow all requirements so you don't fail the initial review process for non-compliance or partial information submitted.



# Contract



## **Merriam Webster:**

“a binding agreement between two or more persons or parties; *especially*: one legally enforceable”

“a business arrangement for the supply of goods or services at a fixed price <make parts on *contract*>”

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## Features of a Winning Proposal

- ✓ Organized
- ✓ Focused
- ✓ Clear and Concise
- ✓ Energetic and Vivid
- ✓ Accurate/Correct



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## Organized



- Follow the structure in the RFP (titles and subtitles)
- Begin each section with a one-sentence answer/response to the directions for that section
- Keep paragraphs short and focused on ONE point
- Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence.



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## Focused

- Answer questions/address issues in the order they are presented in the RFP
- Write all the information BEFORE editing
- Get right to the point.

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The number of referrals for disciplinary reasons must include all incidents in which a student was referred to school personnel (including, but not limited to, the principal, the vice principal, school security, and guidance counselors) for violations of the school's discipline code.

☐ The number reported must be the number of referrals for disciplinary reasons, **not** the number of students referred or the number of disciplinary actions taken.

☐ ... must include all referrals for the entire 2010-11 school year.

☐ ... from all schools targeted for grant services. Do not include referrals from schools not targeted for grant services.

☐ ... must include all referrals from all grades in schools targeted for grant services.



## Clear and Concise



- Use small, familiar words when possible
- Avoid jargon or big words
- Edit wordy sentences to remove “take up space phrases”
- Remove redundancies
- Use short, active sentences instead of long, passive constructions.



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## Energetic and Vivid

- Use Active Voice *not* Passive Voice
- Avoid “is” or “was” sentence constructions because they create weak sentences  
Example: The generators were destroyed by the storm last night.  
Example revised: Last night, the storm destroyed the generators.
- Write what you will do, *not* what you might do or could do.

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“This section requires an **itemized budget breakdown** for each project year and the **basis for estimating the costs** of personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs and any other projected expenditures. Be sure to complete an itemized budget breakdown and narrative for each year of the proposed project (up to 36 months).” 3 year budget



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## Use Active Verbs

### Weak verbs

- Make an adjustment
- Make a decision
- Perform an investigation
- Take into consideration
- Are working
- Is planning

### Strong verbs

- **Adjust**
- **Decide**
- **Investigate**
- **Consider**
- **Works**
- **Plans**

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For energetic and vivid language, use active verbs.

Active verbs are better because they are shorter, clearer, and more interesting.

Repeating the same verb again and again makes the reading boring and the applicant sound unimaginative. This is part of the editing process – editing out wordiness.



## **Ensure these are Accurate/Correct**

- ✓ Grammar/usage
- ✓ Math (budget)
- ✓ Dates
- ✓ Credentials
- ✓ Page numbers



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## Suggestions



- Read the RFP, re-read it, and re-read it again as you complete your application
- Create a checklist of everything needed for the application
- Create a work plan/timeline document (see handout)
- Involve content specialists in the drafting, and the best writers in the final stages.

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Number pages and use a table of contents

Use the timetable to assist with a quality proposal on time



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## **Suggestions, continued**

- Use precise, specific language
- Proofread the entire application
- Follow the directions
- Answer the questions.

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Tip: Have someone that was not involved in planning and writing the proposal read the entire document and compare against the scoring rubric provided in the RFP. This person is not the designated proofreader.



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