



# Preparing Successful Grant Proposals

## WASTE MANAGEMENT



## IN INDIAN COUNTRY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Office of Solid Waste recognizes that the lack of adequate funding is an impediment to effective solid waste management activities in Indian Country. To help tribes, Alaska native villages, and tribal organizations secure financial assistance for solid waste management programs, EPA recommends following the process described below when developing grant proposals or applying for funding for solid waste management activities.

## PREPARING FOR THE PROPOSAL

Grants are sums of money awarded to finance a particular project. Federal, state, and private organizations all sponsor grant programs for various reasons. Since organizations base their funding decisions on an applicant's ability to meet the goals and objectives of their specific grant program, you should have a thorough understanding of those goals before developing your proposal. If possible, contact the organization to discuss their program goals before you prepare your application. Remember, the basic requirements, application forms, information, deadlines, and procedures will vary from one grant program to

another, so you are strongly encouraged to contact the grantor before preparing your application.

## WRITING THE GRANT PROPOSAL

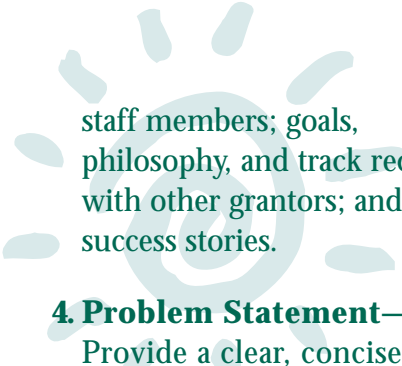
Successful grant proposals are thoughtfully planned, well prepared, and concisely packaged. More important, they are written to meet the requirements and objectives of the grantor's program. In general, a solid proposal package contains the following 10 basic components:

**1. Proposal Summary—** Present a brief outline of the project for which you seek funding. It can take the form of a cover letter or a separate page, but it should be no

longer than two or three paragraphs. Write your summary after preparing the rest of the proposal, so that all key points and objectives of the project are sure to be included. This summary provides an initial impression of your tribe, village, and/or organization. It may be the only part of the application that the grantor carefully reviews before deciding whether to consider your project.

- 2. Title—**Provide a descriptive name for your project.
- 3. Background—**Include information about your tribe, village, and/or organization and a general description of the project. Some features to consider are a brief history of your tribe, village, and/or organization; resumes of key





staff members; goals, philosophy, and track record with other grantors; and any success stories.

**4. Problem Statement—**

Provide a clear, concise, and well-supported statement of the problem that will be overcome using the grant funds.

**5. Goals—**Describe in detail the goals of your project and how the requested funds will help you accomplish them. Describe the expected results and benefits for each objective, list the specific criteria of the grant program, and describe how the proposal meets each criterion.

**6. Activities—**Provide a step-by-step list of tasks that meet the goals of your project. Break larger tasks into smaller ones and present them in a timeline. This breakdown provides an opportunity to consider the personnel, material, and other resource needs of the project.

**7. Methodology for Measuring Success—**

Describe what the project will accomplish and how you will measure the progress made.

**8. Timeline—**Describe approximately when each activity will be completed in terms of the lifespan of the funded project (e.g., Month 1 or Month 24) rather than using specific dates.

**9. Sustainability—**List anticipated sources of continuing funding to be used when the proposed grant ends. You also may be required to list other current sources and amounts of funding obtained.

**10. Budget Detail—**Demonstrate how funds will be spent. At a minimum, divide items into the following categories: personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and other. “Other” can be subdivided into telephone, rent, printing, and mailing costs, etc. If the grantor requires applicants to provide matching funds or in-kind contributions, use separate columns for requested funds, matching funds, and total project costs.

## GRANT RESOURCES

For a catalog of available grants, consult the guidance document *Grant Resources for Solid Waste Activities in Indian Country*. To order a paper copy, call the EPA RCRA, Superfund, and EPCRA Hotline at 800 424-9346 or TDD 800 533-7672 (hearing impaired). Callers in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area must dial 703 412-9810 or TDD 703 412-3323. To download an electronic version (ASCII or PDF), visit [www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/publicat.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/publicat.htm) on the Internet.

The U.S. General Services Administration publishes the *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*, a list of all federal domestic assistance programs. To read the catalog online, visit [aspe.os.dhhs.gov/cfda/index.htm](http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/cfda/index.htm). To order a paper copy, contact the Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog Staff (MVS), General Services Administration, 300 Seventh Street, SW., Suite 101, Washington, DC 20407. Phone: 202 708-5126.



# CASE STUDY

## THE SITKA TRIBE OF ALASKA'S JOBS THROUGH RECYCLING GRANT PROPOSAL

In 1996, the Sitka Tribe of Alaska received a Jobs Through Recycling (JTR) grant from EPA. JTR provides money for recycling and reuse businesses that contribute to economic development and job creation or retention. In its grant proposal, the Tribe described its plans to develop a fish and timber waste composting facility. They explained how the facility would stimulate the creation of jobs and reduce the amount of waste going to municipal solid waste landfills. The Tribe's grant proposal effectively followed the directions in the JTR grant guidance and was successful for the following reasons:

**PROPOSAL SUMMARY:** Included a concise, three-paragraph abstract describing the project and its participants, how it met the objectives of the JTR grant program, and how it would enhance the immediate and future community recycling market.

**TITLE:** Sitka Tribe of Alaska Recycling (STAR) EPA Jobs Through Recycling Program.

**BACKGROUND:** Provided a brief description of the history of the Sitka Tribe and listed resources available to the Tribe for use during the project.

**PROBLEM STATEMENT (OR NEEDS ASSESSMENT):** "Alaska lacks markets for waste materials that are recyclable. In order to create a market, increase recycling, and create industry, a technology suitable for implementation in Alaska must be developed. Composting is a proven technology that can work in Alaska."

**GOALS:** Demonstrated how the project met all of EPA's objectives for JTR grants. The proposal established a clear link between the goals of JTR and the composting project. These goals included:

- ◆ Waste diversion, increased market capacity, and reduced generation of greenhouse gases.
- ◆ Partnership development with other groups and leveraged resources.
- ◆ Economic development and job creation and retention.

**ACTIVITIES:** Stated clearly all planned activities during the first 18 months of the project. Larger tasks were broken into smaller ones on a timeline.

**METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING SUCCESS:** Explained how the Tribe would determine whether the project made an impact on the problems they sought to correct, if the project achieved its stated objectives, and what elements of the program would be changed to improve the effectiveness of the program in the future. Included specific methodologies for measuring success, such as a database, a visual charting system, and periodic evaluations by participants.

**TIMELINE:** Outlined objectives and corresponding activities on a monthly basis.

**SUSTAINABILITY:** Demonstrated how collaboration on recycling economic development projects would sustain technology transfer, as well as ongoing and future initiatives.

**BUDGET DETAIL:** Used the three-column format to describe grant requests, other funding sources, and total budget. Also included a brief narrative for each feature of the budget.

# CHECKLIST FOR PROPOSALS



- The proposal clearly describes how the project will meet the criteria outlined for the particular grant program.
- There is a clear identification and background description of the population to be served by the grant.
- The proposal mentions other groups with whom the tribe will partner. The application includes letters of commitment from these groups.
- The proposal adequately outlines the problem and the approach to solving it.
- The proposal clearly links the goals of this particular project to those of the agency or organization providing the funding.
- The application identifies specific tasks, objectives, and timeframes.
- The methods for evaluating or measuring the success of the project are clear, and success is achievable.
- The project can be completed in the specified funding period.
- The budget figures add up.
- The basic requirements (e.g., correct number of pages and copies, etc.) have been met.
- The application includes all the information specifically requested.
- The proposal has been checked for spelling, grammar, and typographical errors, as well as for format consistency.



**United States  
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Office of Solid Waste (5306W)  
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**Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use  
\$300**