Grant Management:
From Acquisition to Maintenance

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Course Objectives

☐ Provide the necessary guidance to empower individuals to locate grant opportunities and to successfully complete grant applications.

☐ Offer tools and strategies to maximize grant funding opportunities through appropriate grant management and maintenance techniques.

Course Overview

- ☐ What is a grant?
- ☐ A strategic approach to grant management
- ☐ The current grant climate
- ☐ The pieces of the grant puzzle
- ☐ End Notes

What is a grant?

Definition of a Grant for a Public Safety Agency

- ☐ A grant is a financial investment made by a granting agency to fund a project for a public safety.

- ☐ This investment is made because a public safety agency is able to demonstrate and justify their agency's need for the funds in their project's grant application.

Grant Sources

- ☐ Grants can come from either public or private sources.

- ☐ Grants from public sources have the greatest funding potential and the broadest funding guidelines.

- ☐ Grants from private sources tend to have lower funding thresholds and are more project specific.

Grant Sources

- ☐ **Public Granting Agencies:**
  - ■ Federal -
    - ☐ Discretionary (competitive peer review or application process)
    - ☐ Earmark (direct appropriation from Congress)
  - ■ State -
    - ☐ Formula (set amount of funding according to established formula)
    - ☐ Block grants (most latitude in use)

Grant Sources

- ☐ Private granting agencies can be locally or nationally oriented.
- ☐ Examples of private granting agencies:
  - ■ Foundations
  - ■ Organizations
  - ■ Civic groups
  - ■ Advocacy Groups
  - ■ Vendors

Grant Trends

□ Federal grants are increasingly obtained by public safety agencies through an earmark process rather than a competitive process:

- The greater the amount of a federal grant the more likely it was achieved through an earmark.

- Political connections are becoming increasingly more important.

Grant Trends

☐ Grant monies passed from the Federal government to individual states often have state-specific requirements:

  ■ Established guidelines for communication, interoperability, and emergency management

  ■ Pre-qualification or certification often required

Grant Trends

- ☐ Application for and maintenance of grants are becoming increasingly automated.

- ☐ Most Federal grants and many state grants have an online application and reporting process.

- ☐ Most grant awards are sent to agencies as electronic fund transfers not checks.

Implications of Grant Trends

- ☐ It is not what you know, so much as who you know.
- ☐ Understand which agency is the gatekeeper for grant funding.
- ☐ Public safety agencies will increasingly need to look at grant funding from a regional and a strategic perspective.

Implications of Grant Trends

☐ Agencies must have the appropriate level of technology to apply for and maintain grants:

- Internet access to apply for grant funds and supply periodic grant reports
- Necessary bandwidth, appropriate Internet browser, and required software such as Adobe Acrobat for PDF files

Financial Viability

- In their grant application, a public safety agency must demonstrate that they are a good financial investment as well as a good financial steward.
- A public safety agency demonstrates its financial viability by following the grant application guidelines to develop a well thought out implementation plan.

Financial Viability

- ☐ The implementation plan must detail the measurable benefits that will result from the investment of grant funding.
- ☐ Most grant applications will have established guidelines to use to demonstrate financial viability:
  - ■ FTE (full-time equivalent employees)
  - ■ Cost-benefit analysis (costs vs. benefits)

Define and Calculate ROI

- ☐ ROI is the net benefit of a project divided by the cost.
- ☐ It is generally expressed as a percentage that is returned to an investor as a result of funding a project.
- ☐ ROI can also be expressed as the period of times it takes to recover an investment.

Calculating Net Benefits

- ☐ A benefit is any component associated with a project that generates a cost saving.

- ☐ Financial estimates are made for each anticipated benefit identified.

- ☐ Net benefits are the sum of all cost savings associated with a project.

Examples of Benefits

- ☐ Ease of use and more efficient utilization
- ☐ Connectivity improvements
- ☐ Greater efficiency from upgrades
- ☐ Reduction in utility consumption
- ☐ Redeployment of FTEs
- ☐ Improvements in workflows

How do I Calculate Costs?

- ☐ Define what type of cost first:
    - ■ Implementation or life of project
    - ■ Maintenance
    - ■ Re-occurring
- ☐ Costs can change from the planning stage to the implementation stage.
- ☐ Anticipate hidden costs.

The Grant Management Process

- ☐ Grant management is a process.
- ☐ Grants should be part of your agency's financial planning process.
- ☐ Grant funding should address funding gaps in operating and capital budgets.
- ☐ Grants should be managed through a strategic approach that is defined in an action plan.

What is the Current Grant Climate?

Grants and Political Agendas

- ☐ Grants do not occur in a vacuum.

- ☐ Grants opportunities are directly related to political events and administrative agendas.

- ☐ Grant priorities are based on public policy goals and objectives.

- ☐ It is imperative to stay informed.

How do I stay informed?

- ☐ Read the newspaper or watch the news.
- ☐ Pay particular attention when federal and state budgets are being discussed.
- ☐ Think about how these governmental budgets may affect your own agency budget and the supporting role that grants may play.

Opportunities from Disasters

- What represents a disaster to one person may become a grant opportunity for another.
- Grant funding can be opportunities to learn from our mistakes or short sightedness.
- Consider how other agencies have solved problems with grant funding.

Legislation

- What legislation is being considered on the federal and state level that can potentially impact your agency's grant funding?
- Do you have a good relationship with your legislators?
- How can your legislators help you secure grant funding?

Timing is Everything

- ☐ Grant funding is not a matter of luck.
- ☐ Grants receive funding because of good timing and research.
- ☐ A project that does not get funded in one grant period, may get funded in another.
- ☐ Grants have their own niche.

Looking Ahead

- ☐ Focus of local funding has moved from individual states to regions.
- ☐ New system will encourage regional preparedness and cooperation.
- ☐ Considerable flexibility in forming regions.
- ☐ Need to know how you will spend money before you submit application.

A Strategic Approach to Grant Management

The Grant Management Process

- ☐ Grants should address a defined agency need.
- ☐ When an articulated funding source is a grant, strategic goals become "needs statements" on a grant application.
- ☐ Need should drive the review and identification of potential granting sources.

The Grant Management Process

- ☐ Grant solutions can not be determined before a need has been identified.

- ☐ Needs can and should have multiple grant solutions.

A Strategic Approach

- ☐ A strategic approach is a planned approach that embraces a systemic process or methodology.

- ☐ It begins by identifying specific agency goals.

- ☐ These goals should be defined and articulated in an agency's strategic plan.

A Strategic Approach

- ☐ Every project should be identified with the implementation of a strategic goal and have an associated funding source.

- ☐ Needs are always established through a strategic planning process.

A Strategic Approach

- Three levels of strategic planning that are relevant to grant management:
  - Mega-level
    - Strategic view
  - Macro-level
    - Tactical view
  - Micro-level
    - Implementation view

A Strategic Approach

- ☐ Critical success factors for Mega-level:
  - ■ Think globally and act locally
  - ■ Distinguish between what and how
  - ■ Plan to use and link all three levels of results
  - ■ Use an ideal vision as the underlying basis for planning

A Strategic Approach

- Critical success factors for Macro-level:
  - Prepare all objectives to answer the question where you are going and how you will know when you have gotten there.

A Strategic Approach

- Critical success factors for Micro-level:
  - A need is a gap between current and desired results.
  - This is the point at which you need to look at outside funding sources for your objectives.

Develop an Action Plan

- ☐ Create a short abstract to summarize each project for which you are seeking funding.
- ☐ Develop a planning matrix as a strategy to maximize potential funding for each project.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with grant funding cycle.

Develop an Action Plan

- ☐ Contact gatekeepers to discuss the merits of your project and its applicability to your agency's goals.
- ☐ Establish a timeline for grant submissions.

Maximize Grant Potential

- Proactive Outreach:
  - Many grants require Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to receive funding.
  - Support of local executives – (three C's):
    - City/County administrator (CEO)
    - Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
    - Chief Information Officer (CIO)

Maximize Grant Potential

☐ Proactive Outreach:

- ■ Endorsement of grant application by local government during budget approval process.

- ■ Availability and approval of matching funds.

- ■ Compatibility, supportability, and maintainability of grant funded technology with locality's IT infrastructure.

Maximize Grant Potential

- ☐ Build coalitions with other public safety agencies to expand grant opportunities:
  - ■ Police/Sheriff
  - ■ Fire
  - ■ EMS
  - ■ Emergency Management/Disaster Planning
  - ■ Advocacy Groups

Maximize Grant Potential

- Develop partnerships based on similar needs:
    - Regional Approach
    - Mutual Aid
    - Location (metropolitan area versus rural)
    - Interagency
    - Vendors

What are the Pieces
of the Grant Puzzle?

Parts of a Grant Application

- ☐ Agency Information
- ☐ Needs Statement
- ☐ Project Description
- ☐ Budget
- ☐ Evaluation
- ☐ Supporting Documentation

Put Your Best Foot Forward

- Never hand write a grant application:
  - Most forms are available online
  - Type if necessary
- Read the grant guidelines first:
  - Page limits, fonts, and spacing
  - SF-424 Grant Applications & Certifications
  - DUNS number
  - Priority deadlines
  - Supporting documentation

Put Your Best Foot Forward

- Introduce yourself to the grant administrator:
  - Do not speak negatively about yourself by referencing your lack of grant writing and grant management experience.
  - Do not apologize for asking "too many" questions.
  - Keep notes of your discussions and follow-up with an e-mail.

Agency Information

- Make sure all contact information is correct:
  - Titles, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and street addresses
- Make sure all individuals are aware that they have been listed as contacts, especially if they are an agency head or local administrator.

A Needs Statement Should…

- ☐ Answer the question why an agency needs grant funding for a project.
- ☐ Clearly relate the project for which grant funding is sought to the funding priorities of that grant.
- ☐ Be written from a factual basis, not an emotional one, and use quantifiable data to support the agency's need(s).

A Needs Statement Should…

- ☐ Express as succinctly as possible, using short concise sentences rather than long run-on sentences, the agency's need(s) for grant funding.

- ☐ Demonstrate that funding is not available through local operating or capital budgets and requires extraneous funding.

A Needs Statement Should…

- ☐ Avoid any type of jargon or abbreviations.
- ☐ Utilize format(s) provided in the grant guidelines.
- ☐ Make sense to an individual not familiar with the project for which you are seeking grant funding.

Project Description

☐ The most important information about the project, how the project addresses the need(s) identified by the agency, should always be contained in the opening paragraph.

☐ The project description should offer a thorough explanation of the project, and provide the required information listed in the application instructions.

Project Description

- ☐ Paragraphs should be trim and not include extra verbiage.
- ☐ If the project description is complete at a length that is shorter than the page limit, do not extend it to the limit.
- ☐ End the description of the project by discussing the project goals that will be achieved with funding.

Project Description

☐ Other project description terms:
- Program narrative
- Outlining management capabilities
- Resource allocations
- Challenges and impediments
- Major initiatives

Budget and Budget Narrative

- ☐ Both direct and indirect costs need to be considered in developing a pro forma budget for the grant.
  - ■ Direct costs are those costs that are directly attributable to the project.
  - ■ Indirect costs can be described as fixed costs or overhead.
- ☐ Operating costs can not be transferred to the grant project (supplanting).

Budget and Budget Narrative

- ☐ The grant application will list items that are ineligible for grant funds and should be omitted from the pro forma budget.

- ☐ Items that are not eligible for funding will need an alternative funding source (operating budget).

- ☐ Most grants require a local match.

Budget and Budget Narrative

- ☐ Before a grant application is submitted, an agency must make sure it has available the necessary matching funds.
- ☐ Access to matching funds may require prior approval.
- ☐ Do not forget to consider the re-occurring costs to the agency after the grant funding has ended.

Evaluation

- ☐ The evaluation methodology identifies whether or not project goals have been reached.
- ☐ The methodology should be quantifiable and be a reasonable estimate of project success.
- ☐ This is often the most difficult section of a grant application.

Supporting Documentation

- ☐ Supporting documentation is not optional and a grant application will be rejected if it is not included.
- ☐ Types of supporting documentation:
  - ■ Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)
  - ■ Annual Reports
  - ■ Certifications

Now That I Have a Grant, How Do I Manage It?

- [ ] As soon as you receive a grant award, create a folder to keep copies of all grant related correspondence.

- [ ] If your network goes down, an electronic copy is not very useful.

- [ ] Send a thank you note from your agency head acknowledging the grant.

Now That I Have a Grant, How Do I Manage It?

- ☐ Make a note of all due dates for grant reports.

- ☐ Prepare a Press Release announcing your agency's grant award.

- ☐ Find out how the grant funds will be transferred to your agency and alert the appropriate agency head.

Operationalizing Your Agenda

□ Individually:

■ Consider all of the materials presented today.

■ Create a short list of grant management priorities to accomplish when you return to your agency.

■ Pick one priority and share it with the class.

Grant Management "To Do" List

- Examples:
  - Review agency's current IT strategic plan or create one if a plan does not exist.
  - Talk with agency head or supervisor about grant initiatives.
  - Develop self-education program.
  - Host a regional planning session.
  - Take another public safety professional to lunch.

In Summary

- ☐ Grant writing and management is an acquired not an inherent skill.
- ☐ Grants become manageable if they are approached as a process.
- ☐ Grants are a financial resource that is often underutilized.
- ☐ The hardest part with grant writing and grant management is getting started.