

Bringing Home the Bacon!

An overview of lessons learned and best practices to improve your grant experience

Virginia Public Health Preparedness Summit

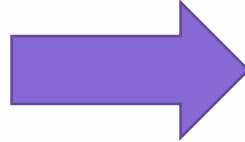
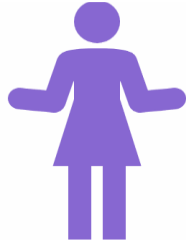
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PlanRVA

- **Importance of grant writing skills for emergency management (and any profession!)**
- **Types of funding sources**
- **Things to consider when researching and applying**
- **Resources to improve your grant writing skills**
- **Benefits to working with Planning District Commissions**
- **Q&A**



How I started...

“Fluff writer”

Not knowledgeable on funding institutions and how grants worked

Not familiar with procurement rules, purchasing, or contracts

Had mostly done academic research

Didn't know the right stakeholders or partners

Organized, but mostly worked independently

Detail-oriented, but needed to create the “big picture”

Competencies

- Technical writer – “tying the narrative with the data”
 - Expanded research skills
- Project manager – not just someone who fills out applications
 - Convener:
 - Pulled in the right stakeholders and partners to get buy-in and support
 - Managed a team

Types of Funding Sources



Central Virginia

COVID-19

Response Fund



FEMA



Government

- Federal
- State (typically pass through)
- Local (typically pass through)

Foundations/Non-Profit

- Family
- Independent
- Corporate/Business
- Financial Institutions
- Federated Funds
Community

More than just writing!

Writer

Researcher

Organizer/Team
Leader

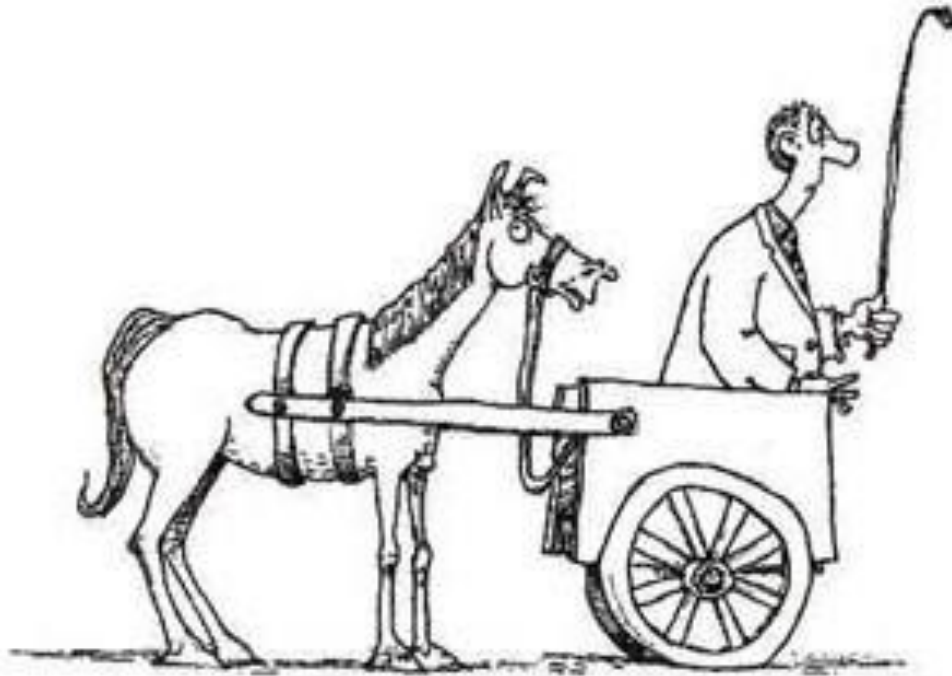
Project Manager

Procurement
Agent

Administrator

Organization's
Representative

Before we begin...



Avoid the “Cart Before the Horse”!

- Develop your project ideas BEFORE applying for the grant!
- Ensure your project’s goals and milestones are measurable.

Get everyone on board!

- Does this project align with the values and vision of my organization?
- Does my organization qualify for this grant?
- Am I creating an impact in the community or is this more of a special interest project?
- Does my organization’s leadership support this/give buy-in?

Award Logistics

- Is there a match required – in-kind or cash?
- Do I have the necessary time to manage this project over the next xx months/years?
- Do I have a team to assist me or am I doing all the work?
- Capacity to manage purchasing records, reporting, etc.
- Negligence COULD mean legal/financial implications!

•Get over self-doubt – “in it to win it”

•Consider grant-funded projects as a reflection of your overall work program

- Projects often take several years to produce the intended effects – don't create more work for yourself that isn't relevant
- Investments mean value – in yourself and organization

The biggest secret to winning grants....

**You *don't* have to be a great writer to be a
successful grant writer!**



Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

“Boiler plate” or your organization’s background

Supporting documentation

- Support letters
- A final report or example of successes from previous/similar projects
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)’s, agreements, etc.

Financial documents

- Copy of budget or audit report from previous fiscal year
- Documents related to tax status
- DUNS or Tax ID number

List of your organizations’ representatives

- Finance Officer/Director
- CAO or Director of Administration

Key staff participating in the project

- Including their role, experience, and qualifications.

Work plan/timeline

- Project work plan to include scope of work (SOW), measurable milestones, and outcomes.
- “Key Tasks” should follow SMART objectives: i.e. We plan to hold one complete CERT Basic class by June 2023.

Budget

- Line items should match expenses.
- If using vendors for equipment or contracts – obtain quotes beforehand to help determine your expenses.
- Ensure expenses are reasonable and allowable (also SMART!).

Key dates for award

Grant application from previous year/cycle (if applying again)

- If using last year’s application – update dates or years.
- **Always looking to improve last year’s application!**

Time to Bring Home that Bacon!



Read and follow ALL grant instructions!



Attend the grant informational session/webinar, if possible.



Introduce your problem statement as clearly as possible – be compelling!



Be concise - use data to support your narrative, but don't overload with facts.



Read questions **closely** and answer **completely**.



Attach your supporting documents with a cover page and Table of Contents.



Start working on the application with enough time to submit ahead of deadline in case you have any technical issues.



Proofread! And have someone else proofread.

Proposal Title

50-character limit including spaces – TEXT ONLY – no special characters or numbers

Regional Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training

Please provide a summary of your project and how your project addresses the project type selected in 100 words or less.

Proposal Description

The Emergency Management Alliance of Central Virginia (the “Alliance”) seeks funding to support its regional Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs within its footprint. This project facilitates regional training, exercises, classes, and education across CERT programs in the region, ensuring regional cohesiveness when faced with a wide-spread incident.

The mission of the Alliance is to prepare our community for emergencies and disasters through education and training. One of the most successful vehicles in accomplishing this goal is the regional CERT program. The Alliance’s CERT Committee supports its regional programs, utilizing grant funding to provide continued support for grant training, exercise, and resources.

Examples!

Describe how the project has a credible plan to share resources. Provide documentation as appropriate (e.g. MOUs, contracts, etc.) that demonstrates collaboration and/or agreement from multiple jurisdictions, and/or multiple regions, and/or multiple disciplines (fire, police, and emergency medical services).

Resource Sharing	<p>All Basic CERT training is standardized and follows the FEMA guidelines for the program; therefore, the training is applicable to all. Standardized advanced training enables the Alliance and its member localities to have a more robust regional CERT team. The Alliance maintains a training calendar where the local CERT program managers can post any upcoming classes available to partner jurisdictions.</p> <p>The Regional CERT Committee also maintains a regional instructor cadre list that is available to the Alliance, allowing localities to access instructors and trainings from other jurisdictions who may have specific class or capacity need. We also routinely share training equipment, supplies, and other resources with other CERT programs, facilitated by the Regional CERT Committee. The Committee collaborates to organize regional trainings, exercises, and professional development opportunities for CERT members and Program Managers; these opportunities are also often opened to statewide CERT Program Managers who may benefit from the information.</p> <p>The Alliance maintains MOU's with PlanRVA and the Virginia State Police (attached). The Regional CERT Committee also routinely collaborates with partners such as our public safety partners, Virginia Department of Health, Department of Social Services, and other private sector partners to hold trainings, exercises, and awareness events.</p>
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- Two-part question – **answer all parts of the question**
- Use these questions as an opportunity to elaborate/ provide examples.

Can the project be easily replicated beyond the initial scope or area of initial concern (e.g. training, planning or some other document asset that can be implemented elsewhere)?

Project Replication	<p>This project could easily be replicated elsewhere. Regional CERT Programs are standardized across the country through FEMA, and the national program continues to advance in its level of training. Instructor materials, curriculums, and guidance is available online through FEMA's website.</p> <p>Our Regional CERT Program strives to serve as an example of regional collaboration and success to other programs across the state, specifically in the areas of training and exercise. Regional exercises scenarios, curriculums for training, and other planning documents can be shared with any CERT program. For example, the regional "tornado scenario" developed for our 2018 regional exercise could be replicated elsewhere in the state, using a similar environment such as the Enon Fire Training Facility. Other training plans can also be shared, in addition to best practices for collaborating with other CERT teams.</p>
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Questions like these are also “missed opportunities!” Ensure your application is scored high in all areas.

Budget

In the following section provide a budget narrative and a budget request based on the POETE elements that the project addresses. The Budget Narrative may be used as a guide to assist applicants in the preparation of the budget and budget narrative. All required information (including the budget narrative) must be provided using the cost categories of Personnel, Travel, Supplies, Consultants/Contracts, and Other (Indirect costs should be placed in the other category). Any category of expense not applicable to your budget may be deleted.

Budget Narrative

A total cost of \$15,750 is being requested for this project. This cost is determined by carefully planned costs for regional CERT trainings, exercise costs, training equipment, and attendance at the National CERT Conference for 3-4 representatives. Management costs are also added for the fiscal administration of the project. All costs are reviewed and approved by the Regional CERT Committee before submission.

Training Costs (Instructor fees, equipment, materials for continuing education classes) - \$7,000

Exercise Costs - \$3,000

National CERT Conference - \$5,000

M&A: \$750

Total: \$15,750



You forgot
to upload an
attachment



You double-
checked
your work
and all is well

Track your grant's status in application portal, if possible.

Participate in "peer review" or SME process for grant if it's offered.

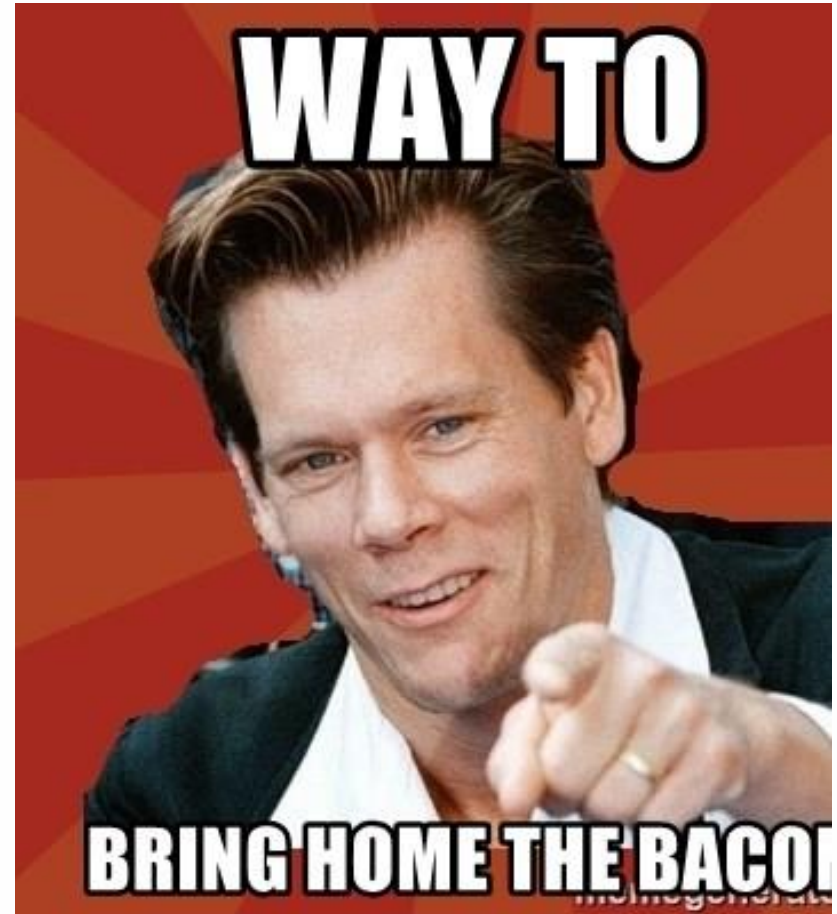
Follow up with funding organization's grant administrator.

Attend any interviews or meetings – "sing for your supper."

Once awarded or not awarded – request grant scoring or feedback.

You got the award!!\$\$

- Notify your organization's leadership – in case agreements or contracts need to be signed; approved in the budget, etc.
- Complete preliminary forms and submit on time.
- Attend the Grantee Informational Session if offered.
 - Reviews allowable expenses
 - Is grant an upfront check or reimbursement type?
- Do NOT start grant activities until the official "start" of the grant period.



Execute the milestones of your project in a timely manner

- Also consider your project timeline – i.e., you need to put out an RFP that's going to take six months from writing the contract to hiring the consultant.
- Check requirements for an extension if needed.

•Organize your team or key stakeholders

- Meet on a regular basis to gather input or provide updates.

•Maintain award compliance

- Submit quarterly reports on time, follow the grant rules, maintain proper financial documentation.

Stay knowledgeable about your project

- You might have to give a report on your project/grant to a governing board or group of leaders.

Training

- Record # of personnel trained and outcomes.
- Maintain attendance records and lists of classes.

•Outreach Activities

- Ensure activities align with the scope of the grant.
- Maintain stats and records throughout the year.

•Equipment

- Follow your organization's procurement policy.
- Check on auditing implications or capitalization treatment.
- Consider costs to maintain or repair equipment.
- Utilize Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)'s or transfer documents if purchasing on behalf of another organization.
- Check NOFO or OMB guidance on record-keeping requirements.

Grant Closeout Steps

Ensure grant award is spent down by end of grant period.



Complete ALL grant activities during grant period (not before or after).



Submit final reimbursement paperwork and receipts.



Complete/submit final grant report, ensuring you have completed milestones, executed purchases, etc.



For some Foundation or private grants – may require a final report write-up, photos for their donors.

LITTLE MISS

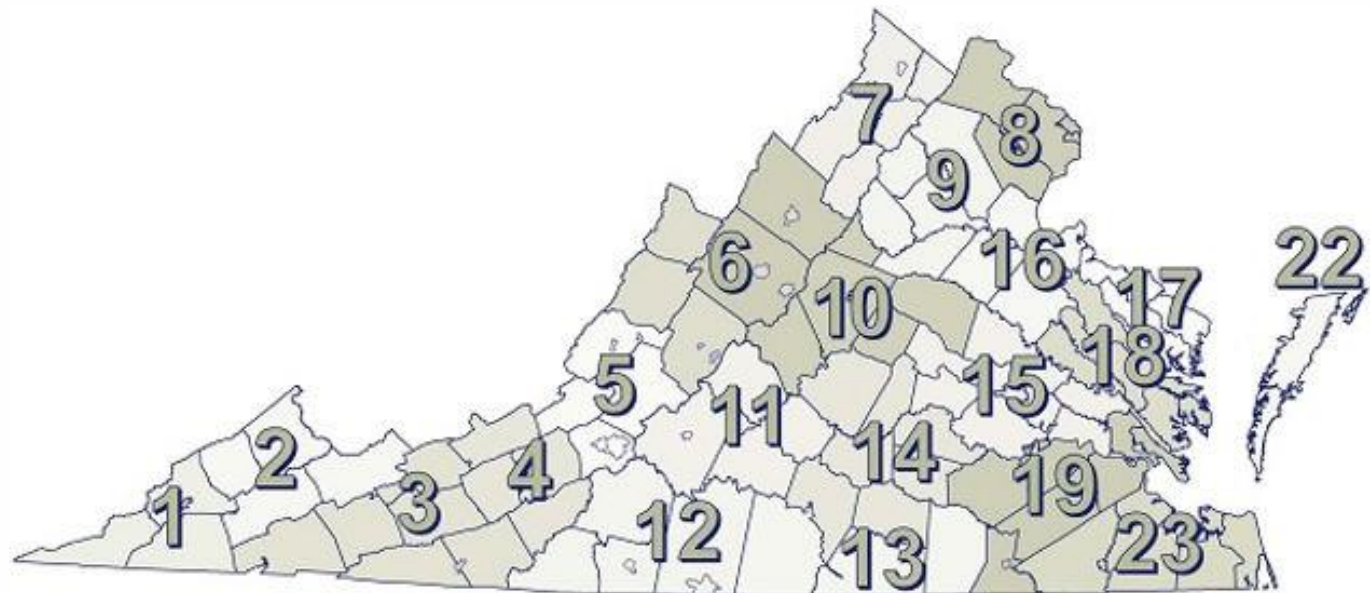


**HAS HER
PAPERWORK DONE ON TIME**

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Working with Planning District Commissions

- Political subdivision of the Commonwealth chartered under the Regional Cooperation Act
- 21 PDC's in Virginia - made up of elected officials and citizens appointed to the Commission by member local governments.
- Provide technical and program services to member jurisdictions related to areas of regional significance.
 - Transportation
 - Emergency Management
 - Regional economic development
 - Land use planning
 - Environment
 - Resiliency
 - Housing





Data management



Project visualization



Technical and admin support



Convener

Take a grant writing class!

- Grant Writing USA – Grant Writing; Grant Management Class
- Grant training webinars

Grant Professionals' Association (GPA)

- Annual conference
- Special interest groups
- Local chapters

Procurement resources

- The OMB “supercircular” – certainly not pleasure reading, but become familiar with it

Other recommended resources

- Govgrantshelp.com
- Grantstation.com
- Grants.gov
- Bedford Handbook
- Grant Writing for Dummies
- Census Bureau (<https://www.census.gov/>)



Any questions?

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