



Module 4: Conferences & Writing a Proposal

Learning Objectives:

- To understand why attending conferences are/are not important
- To understand key elements of fundraising for conferences
- To apply material learned in e-course

Now that you have learned how to prioritize your fundraising needs, find grants and write proposals, it is time to put these skills to use! First research possible funders both on-line and off-line in your country (try internationally, **only after doing local research!**). Then, follow their instructions and requirements. Make sure you follow all instructions in previous modules before submitting a proposal. Good luck! (see exercise 4 for a typical example of a request for proposals from a funder).

CONFERENCES: WHY GO?

Everyone likes to attend conferences; they provide excellent networking opportunities, experiential learning and the opportunity to showcase one's work. However, it is not always practical and/or in one's best interest to attend a conference. Before attempting to apply and/or fundraise to attend a conference, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is the conference really relevant to my work?
2. Can I afford to leave work to attend a conference? Is it fair to my organization and colleagues?
3. Am I really attending the conference for professional reasons or is it just an opportunity to travel? What will be the value-added to my organization/institution if I attend?
4. Will I have to cover the costs? Will the organizers pay for my costs?
5. Could I obtain similar networking opportunities by using ICTs such as the Internet?

If you still consider that you should attend a conference after answering these questions, please think of the following suggestions to **raise funds**:¹

1. **Formalize your needs in a budget.** You'll need one when you start asking for money.
2. **Think through what you expect to get out of the conference?** Do you want to network, learn more about the field, learn new techniques, etc? Clear objectives lead to successful fundraising proposals.
3. **Make it easy for funders.** Your proposal should be organized and well written. Be succinct. Don't send lots of information about yourself if the funding agency wants a 200 word description of your project.
4. **Have you tried to offer yourself as a volunteer?** A lot of conferences will allow volunteers to attend conference sessions for free, and some will also be able to provide food and accommodations. This will also help organizers understand that you are truly interested and committed to attending the conference. This is best done a good while before the actual conference so try to contact the conference organizers as soon as possible.
5. **Have you checked for scholarships from the conference registration?** Sometimes conferences offer scholarships to talented participants who can show that

¹ Some of these tips come from <http://www.furnituresociety.org/next/beyond/23togo.html>



they will enrich the sessions by sharing their work. For example, with the International AIDS Conference (IAC) in Toronto in 2006, there will be Young Investigator Awards that are provided to young researchers in the field of HIV/AIDS who reveal insightful information due to their research. These are often provided with scholarships to attend and present their work. To be considered, you must look carefully at the application and fill out the appropriate information.

6. **Write letters to relevant companies, societies, and funds in your community.** Philanthropists, clubs (such as Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary) and social investors in your community could provide help to your endeavors if you justify the social value of your project. You would have to make your case very well! Keep the letter short and to the point, one side of paper. You do not want the person to read the first paragraph and move onto the next piece of mail.
7. **Check and double-check every item on the grant proposal.** A quick phone call to your local library can help you verify information like this. You can't proofread your own work. Have someone else go over your application looking for typos, gaps in logic or missed words. Spell-check can't catch it all.
8. **Ask lots of people for small contributions.** There aren't many people out there who will be interested in footing your entire trip. Think about the trip in small chunks. Sometimes, it might be useful to fundraise from several small sources (i.e. local businesses, friends, etc).
9. **Talk with your academic dean about the availability of unrestricted funds.** Some program heads have a few discretionary dollars for young talent to take advantage of special opportunities. If you volunteer or present at the conference, you'll have a better case for tapping into this very precious resource.
10. **Go get money!** Take on a weekend job where the money you earn goes straight into the fund for your trip.
11. **Utilize what you learned in this course.** There is a lot of helpful information in the previous modules about presentation, expectations and information about grant writing – use it when you write other documents to request funds and tailor it to the specific objective (conference attendance or other).

In the final exercise below, you will apply what you learned in this module by creating a grant proposal. This is applicable to those of you **who do not have a specific funder in mind**. Some of you have already done research to identify a funder that is appropriate for a project that you want to start. Thus, if you do have a specific funder (some of you mentioned various local and international foundations, etc), then please send the link with the application info and/or provide the information yourself and create a proposal that fits the requirements of your funder.. Please complete **ALL** the necessary information. If there is a specific deadline date, please let us know so we can be sure to provide feedback in time.

This is really an important chance for you to exercise what you learned in this course and apply it!

Good luck!!!!



Exercise 4: FINAL GRANT PROPOSAL EXERCISE

The following is an adapted Request for Proposals (RFPs) from a well-known funder in the field of health services. Please respond to this RFP and submit a proposal to the course facilitators.

Request for Proposals - TB/HIV Advocacy Grant Competition

Introduction

Despite the fact that tuberculosis (TB) is preventable, treatable, and curable, TB is the most common co-infection and a leading killer of people with HIV. Historically, these two diseases have been approached by government health services as completely separate, with little attempt to coordinate services and care.

In 2004, the World Health Organization (WHO) called on countries to implement a set of collaborative TB/HIV program activities (Interim Policy for Collaborative TB/HIV Activities, (http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2004/WHO_HTM_TB_2004.330.pdf) to establish mechanisms for collaboration, to decrease the burdens of TB among people with HIV/AIDS and to decrease the burden of HIV among TB patients. Moreover, with appropriate linkages, TB control programs are a potential gateway to antiretroviral therapy for at least 500,000 HIV-infected persons with TB per year (<http://www.who.int/3by5/en>).

Community-based advocacy, education and mobilization are key elements in expanding TB services to communities affected by HIV/AIDS and in establishing effective linkages between HIV and TB programs. Funder X's TB/HIV Advocacy Grant Competition aims to promote a community oriented policy approach that utilizes these key elements to improve TB/HIV policies and programs in regions burdened by the dual epidemic.

Project Summary

Funder X is calling for proposals to support projects aimed at improving local, national or regional policies and programs on TB/HIV co-infection. This TB/HIV advocacy small grants competition is intended to support TB/HIV advocacy work by organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), HIV/AIDS treatment advocates and activist community groups and regional PLWHA networks in countries and regions affected by the dual TB/HIV epidemics.

The program focuses on AIDS groups—groups led or with major participation at all levels by people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA)—because such groups are the effective leaders of HIV/AIDS treatment literacy and treatment advocacy in most countries affected by the dual epidemics, and because integrating TB as a core concern of such groups is a critical element in improving TB policies, programs and services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Projects proposing activities in one country can apply for up to \$5,000. Projects from regional networks may apply for up to \$15,000.

Purpose of Competition



* To fund the activities of community based groups and networks of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in countries with high or concentrated burdens of HIV and TB co-infection;

* Through these activities, to improve policies and programs (or implementation of existing policies and programs) related to TB/HIV co-infection and expand resources for joint or coordinated programming.

Activities Eligible for Funding

* Advocacy for adoption of joint TB/HIV policy guidelines at local, national or regional levels

* Advocacy for improved implementation of joint TB/HIV policy guidelines at local, national or regional levels

* Advocacy for better coordination of TB and HIV programs at local, national or regional levels

* Advocacy for increased resources devoted to TB and HIV programs in countries affected by both epidemics

The following types of activities WILL NOT be eligible for support:

* Research

* Direct lobbying

* Service delivery

* Purchase of drugs, diagnostic test kits, or medical equipment

* Programs for work in Western EU countries, the US, Canada, Australia, Japan, or New Zealand

Criteria for Participation in Competition

* Grant application must come from existing community based organizations or regional networks.

Organizations must demonstrate:

* Capacity to implement advocacy work related to TB and/or HIV;

* Experience/focus on policy change;

* Adequate representation of PLWHA on board, staff and community levels; and

* Evidence of community based support and involvement.

Funding available

Projects proposing activities in one country can apply for up to \$5,000. Projects from regional networks may apply for up to \$15,000.

How to Apply

Interested organizations should submit the grant application described below. Applications can be sent via e-mail by November 17th, 2005.



Selection process

A grant selection advisory committee consisting of global and regional experts and TB/HIV advocates will review the grant applications and select a group of finalist for the grant awards.

Application Instructions

This grant application consists of nine parts:

Part 1. Contact information

Part 2. Summary Statement

Part 3. Detailed Proposal

Part 4. Budget & Budget Narrative

Part 5. Project Timeline

Part 6. Institutional Information

Part 7. CVs of key project staff