**Assignment Module 1**

1. Discuss four motivations that make grant makers (donors) to enter into grant making endeavors.

All grant making organizations have their own ways of working, but almost all of them approach the grant making decision process in a relatively similar way. All funding organizations want to know certain pieces of information such as how your organization’s values align with theirs, your track record and the impact that your proposed project will make on the community. The following motivation factors explains an insight into why grant makers reach decisions to enter into grant making endeavors.

1. **Shared values**: The very first thing a grant making organization will consider upon receiving an application is to see that both the purpose of your organization and your project matches their current interests. Grant makers are motivated to work with organizations who they share a similar passion with and who they are confident are working in pursuit of the same goals.

Funding bodies will also consider the methods and approaches that an NGO typically uses to deliver their projects. The more aspects an organization shares with a funder the better placed they will be to receive funding. It is important to remember that funders put their reputation on the line by investing grants in different organizations and they need to be absolutely confident in the values and ethos of the NGOs they choose to work with. Therefore, before you even begin to write an application it is important to understand what shared values the two organizations have and how you can emphasize them in a project proposal.

1. **Priorities:** The second thing that motivates a funder is whether your project fits within their current priorities in terms of beneficiaries, location, impact, delivery method and more. If your organization has applied to a specific fund or call for proposal, there are likely to be strict eligibility criteria on the types of organization and project that can apply. These criteria will be rigorously checked against your proposal to ensure that you are eligible and that your project will be delivered in the desired way, to the appropriate group of people and result in a specific targeted impact on the community or beneficiaries. Even if your NGO is applying for a grant with a relaxed approach to how results are achieved, the funder will still expect your project to fit within their established priority portfolio and philosophy.
2. **Status & reputation of the organization:** One of the next things a funding organization may investigate is the current status and reputation of your organization within the community that you work. They will be able to find information about your organization from newspapers and websites as well as contacting organizations you have worked with in the past to see what they have to say about your NGO. Funders are likely to be particularly motivated and interested in the experiences of other grant making organizations who you have previously worked with. This is another reason to invest in donor management and cultivation so that even if a particular project doesn’t quite work as you intended, the funder will still report positively on your organization. Funding organizations will be intrigued by your past funders whether you have raised income from the community or from other government or private organizations. Your past track record can be a massive advantage to you as a grantee, so make sure to include information on your website about who has supported you in the past.
3. **Proposal to address the problem:** The next critical aspect that will be closely scrutinized by a grant maker is exactly how you propose to address the problem you have highlighted. At this point the questions will come thick and fast and are likely to include at least some of the following asks: Is the solution innovative? Does it have any past success? Have similar projects worked elsewhere? Have they considered any downsides to their proposal and how will they mitigate them? Is it good value for money? Will the community embrace it? Will the organization be able to deliver it as proposed? Is it too complicated? etc. All of these questions and more will be asked of your project proposal and consequently if you are to be successful you need to have written a clear and concise method that includes citations as well as how you will mitigate any potential problems. If you can answer a grant maker’s questions before they have even asked them then you will be doing well.

One of the most important aspects of your proposal will be how you will sustain your project after the funding period ends. Do you have a well-developed exit strategy? The last thing a funder wants to see is a successful project end prematurely because the funding has run out and no alternative sources have been found. Most funders will only supply initial seed funding so it is fundamentally important that you can provide a realistic explanation of how the project will become self-sustainable. There are a number of ways to achieve this from in-house fundraising, subscriptions, sponsorship, corporate support, major donations and almost any other income generation method.

These factors are some of the most senior considerations of a grant maker. Each organization will also consider a series of other factors that differ from one another depending on how much value they place on each. Often a funding organization will tell you its ideal approach and where you can, you should mirror that behavior whilst being careful not to over promise on what you can deliver. Some of the other factors a grant making body may consider include fiscal management, the depth and involvement of the board of trustees, the use of volunteers, ability to handle unexpected shocks and changes, qualified and competent staff, sound methodologies, quality monitoring and evaluation techniques, good reporting structures and how accessible the organization is to the funder.

1. What are the components of a winning proposal? Explain four

Successful grant proposal involves the coordination of several activities, including planning, searching for data and resources, writing and packaging a proposal, submitting a proposal to a funder, and follow-up. While a funder may require that your proposal be presented in a particular format, most grant applications adhere to the following components:

1. **Abstract/Summary**

A winning proposal requires a concise executive summary that explains the community problem as well as your solution. The executive summary is the first thing that potential grant funders read in a grant proposal. It should give an idea of what the proposal is about. The abstract presents a brief summary of the project. It must be clear and concise, and no longer than one page (usually 250-300 words, single space!). The abstract/summary should include information about who are you? where can you be contacted? what is the purpose of your project? whom will you serve? what will you do, and how? what are your project’s goals and objectives? what do you expect to achieve? How will you measure success? what is the total amount you ask from the funder?

1. **Statement of Need**

The statement of need presents facts and evidence to support the need for the project you are proposing. It also establishes your organization as being capable of addressing the need. It clearly specifies what issue you are addressing and why does it matter? why is what you propose necessary? What is the void in knowledge? why hasn't this issue been addressed sufficiently in the past? It should provide convincing evidence that what you are proposing does not duplicate other work.

1. **Project Activity, Methodology and Outcomes**

**This component of the proposal highlights** the specific activities involved, who will do them, what are the timeline of the activities. It also brings out specific outcomes to be achieved, why your organization is the best one to do what you proposed to do. This component of the proposal also stipulates how the problem will be approached and what methods will be employed to accomplish the stated objective.

1. **Project Monitoring Evaluation (Progress Reporting)**

This section should contain a description of how the organization will monitor the progress and the outcomes of the project and its contribution to indicators of achievement. This should be both quantitative and qualitative, if feasible; stating clearly the methodology that will be used to assess the project’s success.

1. Giving examples explain four challenges your organization faces in Grant Management.
2. **The team can’t easily comply with mandates, grant requirements**:

My organization has trouble managing compliance requirements, and meeting grant agreement principles. There is no central or easy way to allocation of resources, documenting the use of funds, especially when it comes to grants for highly regulated sectors. There are i**mproper payments, f**inancial monitoring and reportingis difficult**.** Example; many grantees do not understand the difference between eligible and ineligible costs, and as a result so many costs end up being disallowed by the donor and that creates a challenge in working backward trying to justify and recover the funds wrongly spent. Control of spending—An approved grant proposal clearly and specifically identifies how project funds are to be spent. Changing how the funds are spent without approval of funding agency can result in expenses being disallowed. It is a misconception that grant funds are "free money" and that how to spend the grant funds can be decided after the grant is awarded.

1. **Purchasing mistakes**:

The purchasing process involves tasks such as securing purchase authorization; obtaining bids; navigating the electronic requisitioning system, creating purchase orders, and managing quote requirements, among others. Double checking policies before making purchases is the best way to ensure proper procedure is followed. My organization is facing a challenge of grantees jumping, ignoring or splitting procurement procedures. Example, some grantees goes on to procure items without following the procurement procedures, some would go for single sourcing or direct purchasing even if it is above the required threshold.

1. **Co-mingling of funds:**

Grant funds must be kept in a separate account. Comingling is when all your budget funds, including grant funds, are put into the same budget account.It’s an administrative nightmare when the organization receives more than one grant at a time.  There is no ability to consolidate grant management, the team often loses track of important information for reporting on each grant.  Nor is it possible to consolidate grants and keep each one organized separately for ease of reporting and reduction of risk. Example, if an organization received grants from both USAID and European Union at the same time. Because the two donors may have different requirements and system, sometimes documents meant for USAID ends up being submitted to European Union and vise versa.

1. **Data collection:**

A grants management system will standardize data collection and reporting processes across the entire organization. This will help drive transparency, produce more timely and accurate reporting, and help comply with grant requirements. Adequate data collection is a must for any successful grant project. Project Directors should review project data analytically to identify what is and what is not working and to make continuous improvements. Projects that do not adequately collect data will find it difficult to document performance and demonstrate that they have succeeded in accomplishing their objectives. Example, there are three primary types of data that grant recipients are typically required to collect: financial data (such as expenditures, project or services funded by the grant award etc.), compliance information (data to ensure that recipient is following regulations and that they still meet each of the eligibility and operational requirements of the grant) and project data (data that highlights the progress and/or impact of the organization’s efforts on their community). Each of these categories reflects different aspects of the coalition’s operation and the grant’s influence on it.

1. Identify and explain any four features or characteristics of a Project.

when considering whether or not you have a project on your hands, there are some things to keep in mind. A project has several characteristics as below: -

1. **Temporary**. This key characteristic means that every project has a finite start and a finite end. The start is the time when the project is initiated and its concept is developed. The end is reached when all objectives of the project have been met (or unmet if it’s obvious that the project cannot be completed – then it’s terminated). Ongoing maintenance of a product occurs after the project and is not considered part of the project. Example: The production of a software to manage sales.
2. **Unique Deliverable(s)**. It requires the doing of something different, something that was not done previously. Even in what are often called “routine” projects such as home construction, the variables such as terrain, access, zoning laws, labour market, public services and local utilities make each project different. A project is a one-time, once-off activity, never to be repeated exactly the same way again. Every project is unique. Any project aims to produce some deliverable(s) which can be a product, service, or some another result. Deliverables should address a problem or need analyzed before project start. Example: Building a fiftieth school is different from building the forty-ninth one. The location is different, the design is different, and there are different categories of students.
3. **Progressive Elaboration**. With the progress of a project, continuous investigation and improvement become available, and all this allows producing more accurate and comprehensive plans. This key characteristic means that the successive iterations of planning processes result in developing more effective solutions to progress and develop projects.
4. **Change:** Projects are a way to introduce change. During the process, projects pass through several distinct phases, which form and are called the project life cycle. The tasks, people, organizations, and other resources will change as the project moves from one phase to the next. The organizational structure and the resource expenditures build with each succeeding phase; peak; and then decline as the project nears completion. Example: A new sales website will change how clients purchase items.
5. Discuss the five components of a good monitoring and evaluation design.

Monitoring and Evaluation Systems require some important components in order to function effectively and efficiently to achieve the desired results. Five of these M&E components are discussed in detail below:

1. **Human Capacity for M&E**

An effective M&E implementation design requires that there is not only adequate staff employed in the M&E unit, but also that the staff within this unit have the necessary M&E technical know-how and experience. As such, this component emphasizes the need to have the necessary human resource that can run the M&E function by hiring employees who have adequate knowledge and experience in M&E implementation, while at the same time ensuring that the M&E capacity of these employees are continuously developed through training and other capacity building initiatives to ensure that they keep up with current and emerging trends in the field.

1. **M&E frameworks/Logical Framework**

The M&E framework outlines the objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes of the intended project and the indicators that will be used to measure all these. It also outlines the assumptions that the M&E system will adopt. The M&E framework is essential as it links the objectives with the process and enables the M&E expert know what to measure and how to measure it.

1. **M&E Work Plan and costs**

Closely related to the M&E frameworks is the M&E Work plan and costs. While the framework outlines objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes of the intended project, the work plan outlines how the resources that have been allocated for the M&E functions will be used to achieve the goals of M&E. The work plan shows how personnel, time, materials and money will be used to achieve the set M&E functions.

1. **Routine Programme Monitoring**

M&E consists of two major aspects: monitoring and evaluation. This component emphasizes the importance of monitoring. Monitoring refers to the continuous and routine data collection that takes place during project implementation. Data needs to be collected, analyzed and reported on a continuous basis to show whether the project activities are driving towards meeting the set objectives. They also need to be integrated into the program activities for routine gathering and analysis.

1. **M&E databases**

The data world is gradually becoming open source. More and more entities are seeking data that are relevant for their purposes. The need for M&E systems to make data available can therefore not be over-emphasized. This implies that M&E systems need to develop strategies of submitting relevant, reliable and valid data to national and sub-national databases. Closely connected to database is supportive supervision and data auditing. Every M&E system needs a plan for supervision and data auditing. Supportive supervision implies that an individual or organization is able to supervise regularly the M&E processes in such a way that the supervisor offers suggestions on ways of improvement. Data auditing implies that the data is subjected to verification to ensure its reliability and validity. Supportive supervision is important since it ensures the M&E process is run efficiently, while data auditing is crucial since all project decisions are based on the data collected.