**MODULE 1 ASSIGNMENT**

**1.Discuss the following individuals who write project proposals clearly explaining the kind of proposals they write:**

**Programme officers in NGOs.** Programme officers in Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) might write applications to independent funders such as corporations and foundations. Jeremy and Lynn Miner state the ‘letter proposal format’ which is typically much shorter document of only a couple of pages (Miner and Miner, 2013: 69). This is effectively a succinct and pithy summary of the proposed project used in situations where a specific guideline is not stipulated, and can typically include seven brief points. These include; a quick synopsis of the proposal; the reasoning for choosing this grant; a statement of the gap to be filled, problem to be overcome; the solution offered; what qualifies this grantee to complete the project; exactly what funds are required and; a finishing statement to round off the proposal (Miner and miner, 2013).

**Government officers.** Government officer might write applications for public funding which are typically more involved documents which take considerable time to compile. Sometimes a shorter pre-proposal, called a letter of intent, can be used to test whether a proposal is of sufficient quality to be considered for the grant. This avoids wasting time and resources on the entire proposal, if the grantor does not align with your proposed idea.

As Miner and Miner highlight, a government proposal typically involves a specific, nine point application form with guidelines on how to complete the grant application. In contrast to the letter proposal, the full government proposal would include sections on; the methods to be used; how it is to be evaluated and amongst others; the sustainability of the project.

**Implementers of projects.** Implementors of projects might apply for operational support rather than project support which can also be done using a letter-style proposal (Miner and Miner, 2013).

This may be done to supplement the operational costs of projects and extend them. Smaller community groups who implement projects, may apply for micro-grants. Larger funders may not support the smaller community groups to have greater flexibility in applying for lots of smaller, less time-consuming grants.

**2. Discuss four motivations that make grant makers (donors) to enter into grant making**

**endeavours.**

**The space for change.** According to David Bauer, ‘motivation is enhanced when proposal developers reinforce the importance of their (the grantors’) commitment for change’ (Bauer, 2011: 25). By researching to highlight the difference between the current reality and a utopia, those appealing to donors can reveal the space for new projects and aid (Hall and Howlett, 2003; Bauer, 2011; Miner and Miner, 2013).

**Commitment.** Another reason donors would be motivated to fund one project over another is an impression that the grantee or applicant has the commitment to follow the project through to completion (Bauer, 2011). An indicator of this, is the history of the organisation that will carry out the project and whether the project to be funded works in harmony with their mission statement. Another indication of the grantee’s commitment to the project is the level of sophistication in their research. If the research is extensive then it shows that the grantee is motivated by the cause and not purely by the prospect of cash – the motivation of the grantee is mirrored in the grantor.

**Sustainability.** When discussing motivations for donors to start issuing grants, the notion that the impact of the project can be felt long after it has ceased, is a central motivator. This sustainability of the outcomes into the long term, reinforces an idea that the investment is worthwhile, but also that a legacy is created that will live on in the community. Miner and Miner identify five modes of sustainability ‘financial, structural, social, technological and environmental’ (Miner and Miner, 2013: 191). If true sustainability of filling a need can be established, a donor may gain a reputation as a notable figure in that field which may increase their publicity and attract further investment in the project or field (Miner and Miner, 2013).

**Political Influence.** A slightly more cynical motivation of donors funding grant seekers, is the opportunity for wielding soft power and political influence or business-strategic interests. As Eduardo Araral notes in his article on irrigation investment in the Philippines, donors are motivated by the prospect of increasing their loan portfolio (2008). It has been noted, that donors can feel a moral imperative to continue funding streams despite political winds, as ceasing these would disproportionately affect the least wealthy – this is known as the ‘Samaritan’s dilemma’ (Gibson et al., 2005).

**3. Briefly discuss four factors to consider when writing a problem statement of a development project proposal.**

**Urgency.** A problem statement, sometimes called a needs statement, is the section in the proposal where the necessity for financial backing is set out clearly for the donor. This is the opportunity to outline the problem to be overcome, pinpoint its causes and highlight the ways of solving the problem that have been suggested and showing how they are incomplete (Hall and Howlett, 2003; Bauer, 2011). For this, it is necessary to use facts and figures to reinforce the scale and urgency of the problem. Propelling a sense of urgency into your proposal and the gap in the humanitarian or development provision, is outlined by David Bauer as one of the central objectives of the statement of need (2011). This frequently involves using needs assessments, census and sometimes anthropologists to look at the quantitative and qualitative data that will document the necessity of your project.

**The donors’ perspective.** It is well-known in grants-writing that a problem statement needs to be written based on the viewpoint of the grantor and not the person applying for the grant. A project will be funded because the problem statement can ascertain that this project is the vehicle through which this need or problem can be filled. In this way, Miner and Miner define the grantee as a ‘change agent’ (Miner and Miner, 2013: 105). Donors often have particular demographics that they are mandated to fund, thus emphasizing the needs of that demographic and how it matches with the donors priority is the crux of the problem statement (Hall and Howlett, 2003).

**Geographical vulnerabilities.** Carrying out qualitative research to obtain accurate local data might be preferable to gain a sense of the root causes to problems. This qualitative research can help in showing why certain geographical regions are the most vulnerable to problems. As such, this can highlight where the donors funds can make a noticeable difference to need within a geographical boundary, making a goal more concrete and achievable (Miner and Miner, 2013). This shows the donor that you are involved and committed to a project and know your beneficiaries needs well. Furthermore by researching a particular donor and the projects they have funded in the past, you can learn who the donors are that may learn towards research documented primarily by quantitative or qualitative means.

**The Problem of Knowledge.** Another factor to consider in writing a problem statement, is the possibility that the biggest barrier to finding a solution to the problem is a lack of knowledge of the root causes of the problem. Therefore, if when researching for writing your problem statement, there is insufficient material, a lack of journal articles and published research into the group of intended beneficiaries, then perhaps the best way forward in aiding that community is to fill in the gap by conducting further research to increase knowledge, sometimes by applying for a separate, private needs assessment grant (Bauer, 2011). This may lead to further opportunities to address the problem in the future, as Bauer notes, this;‘May help you document the problem where it “lives” and ultimately make it possible for you to attract larger grants from other funding sources for conducting your project.’ (Bauer, 2011: 25)

**4. What do you understand by the logical framework?**

In order to define the term logical framework it will be determined where the tool sits in the project cycle to see how it is informed by the steps before it and its usefulness and application for the steps after it. The logical framework has many different names ‘logframe’ is possibly the most common, but is also referred to as ‘logic model’. All these terms refer to a tool which is used to set out the objectives, potential risks, ways of measuring a project. Bell has traced the logical framework back to the 1970s at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and proposed a link to Aristotle’s ‘doctrine of four causes’ (Bell, 2000).

It is a tool that is used when designing humanitarian, development and community projects by project designers implementers, managers (Cracknell, 2000) and may be requested by donors at the grant application stage to show that the potential recipient of the grant has considered what their objective is and thought – as the name suggests, logically – about the potential affects and consequences of obtaining those objectives and what barriers there might be. It specifically outlines the *activities* that will need to be carried out to obtain the objective and result in a successful project. It looks at the *assumptions* that are made by planners of the project and allows the donors to be able to translate these assumptions into potential risk factors which may affect the successful outcome of an activity. As written in *The Guardian* newspaper’s article ‘How to write a logframe: a beginner’s guide’, the contents of a logframe are the positive objectives that come from a logical look through the problems to be solved. In the project cycle , this is sometimes called a problem tree. The problem tree thinks through problems in a ‘cause and effect narrative’ (Larsson, 2015). For example, if a problem is a lack of protection for women, the objective would be to improve protection for women and this would be the basis of the objective in the logical framework.

The logframe is designed to provide an overarching view of a project which, as pointed out by Des Gasper, is useful for senior managers to find the objectives quickly, but because of their simplicity, can lead to inflexible project planning which can be counter to logic (2000). Because of the inflexibility produced by the table presentation, a narrow range of solutions is produced and does not allow for unforeseen ramifications (Jackson, 1997).

The basic logical framework has been criticised for not having a time expiration linked to its activities and expected outcomes and for only representing a picture of the project as it is shown to the donor but having less use once funding is obtained (Crawford and Bryce, 2003; Jackson, 1997). Therefore Crawford and Bryce suggested the third dimension to include a project timeframe by which the traditional logframe could be monitored, this would lead to improved utility of the logframe at the monitoring and evaluation stage of the project cycle (2003). Whilst additions have been made over time and the limitations identified, logical frameworks continue to be a useful quick overview tool for managers, help initial project design and are valued by donors, thus are necessary in many grant applications.

**5. What are the components of a winning proposal? Explain three.**

**Innovation.** A belief that this project or organisation offers something unique that stands out from other grant applications (Bauer, 2011). One way to make your project stand out from hundred other applications for the same funding, is to show how your project is innovative in its field and tackling familiar problems in an inventive, profile-raising way that will ameliorate the reputation of the grantor and get them excited about funding your project (Hall and Howlett, 2003). So important is the need to stand out, that some grantors are making innovation a separate section in their grant applications in an effort to breathe new life into areas of development that have stagnated in the public interest (Yang, 2012).

**Method.** Steady and methodical time management has been identified as a key component of a winning proposal (Bauer, 2011). By dividing up large tasks in government grant applications into smaller, more feasible steps, the resulting proposal is more logical and well thought-out. Methodical presentation of the application is key as there is so mch research that goes into the longer proposals that even the most well researched of proposals can fail if ‘grantsmanship’ is not laid out in a clear and logical manner (Yang, 2012: 34).

**Mission Statement.** A mission statement that truly represents your organisation and chimes with the sort of project the donor would like to fund. The key to a convincing mission statement is often thought to be its succinct and pithy presentation (Bauer, 2011). In this statement, it is shown how the organisation came into being and the catalyst for its creation. It also portrays the narrative of the organisation and charts its growth, from where it came, to where it is now and what programmes the funding can help realise next. If the content of the proposal is jarring with the mission statement of the organisation, this is an indication to the donor that the grantee is only chasing money and is not interested in the cause of the problem or the gap to be funded (Hall and Howlett, 2003). The donor is investing in not just the project, the cause and the beneficiaries, but also in the growth of an organisation. As such, it is important to stress in the mission statement, the long-term plan.

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