

Introduction to Proposal Writing

Upon completion of this training, you should be able to:

- List the basic elements of a proposal
- Draft a standard project proposal
- Identify next steps for submitting a grant proposal
- Follow up with funders after submitting a proposal

The writing process

Proposal writing process steps

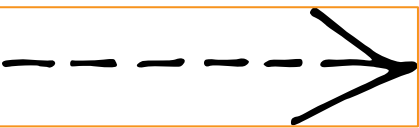


What do you need the money for?

Who will you approach?

How to put it all together?

What to do once the decision has been made?



Tip: Always follow the funders' guidelines

Formatting

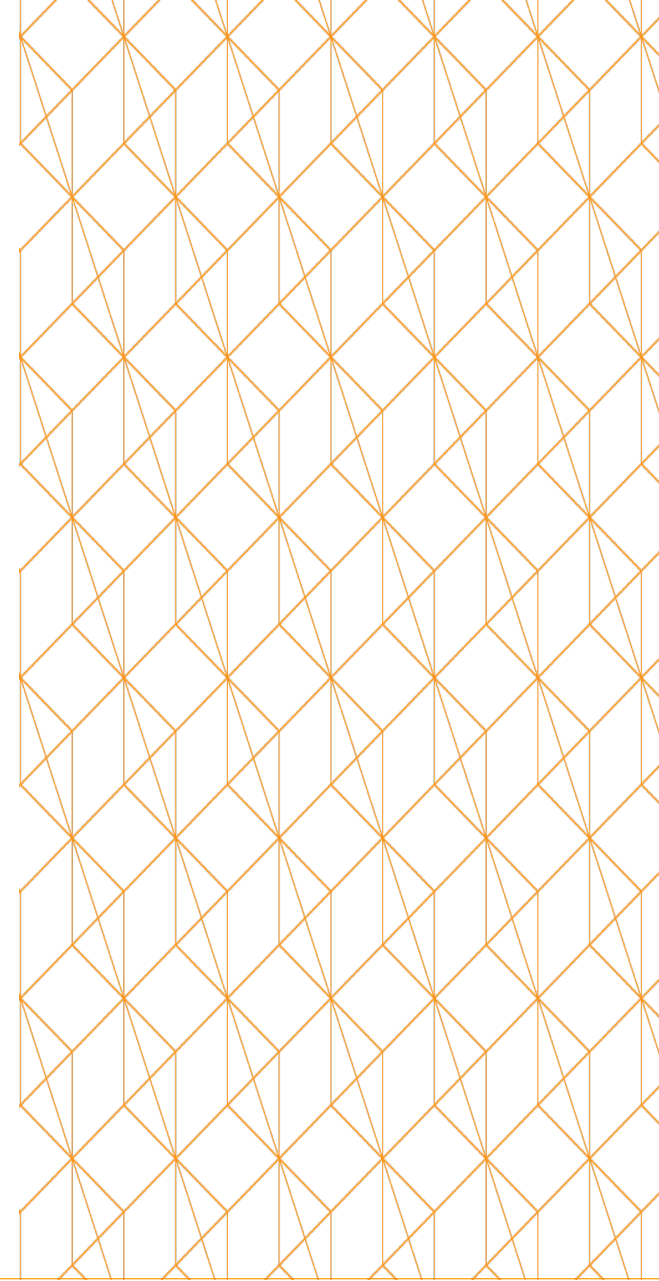
Many grantmakers use
online formats



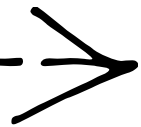
Typical proposal elements

- Executive Summary
- Narrative
 - Statement of Need
 - Project Description
 - Organization Information
 - Conclusion
- Budget
- Supporting Materials

What funders really want to know



What specific need are you addressing?



Tip: Make sure it fits the size and scale of your solution



What are you trying to achieve?

-----> **Tip:** Your outcomes must be measurable



What are your strategies for making it happen?

 **Tip:** Think of your proposal as an organizing plan

How do you know if you're successful?

- Specify program objectives in measurable terms
- Identify key indicators of success
- Outline data collection and analysis activities
- Develop a timeline to monitor the success of the program

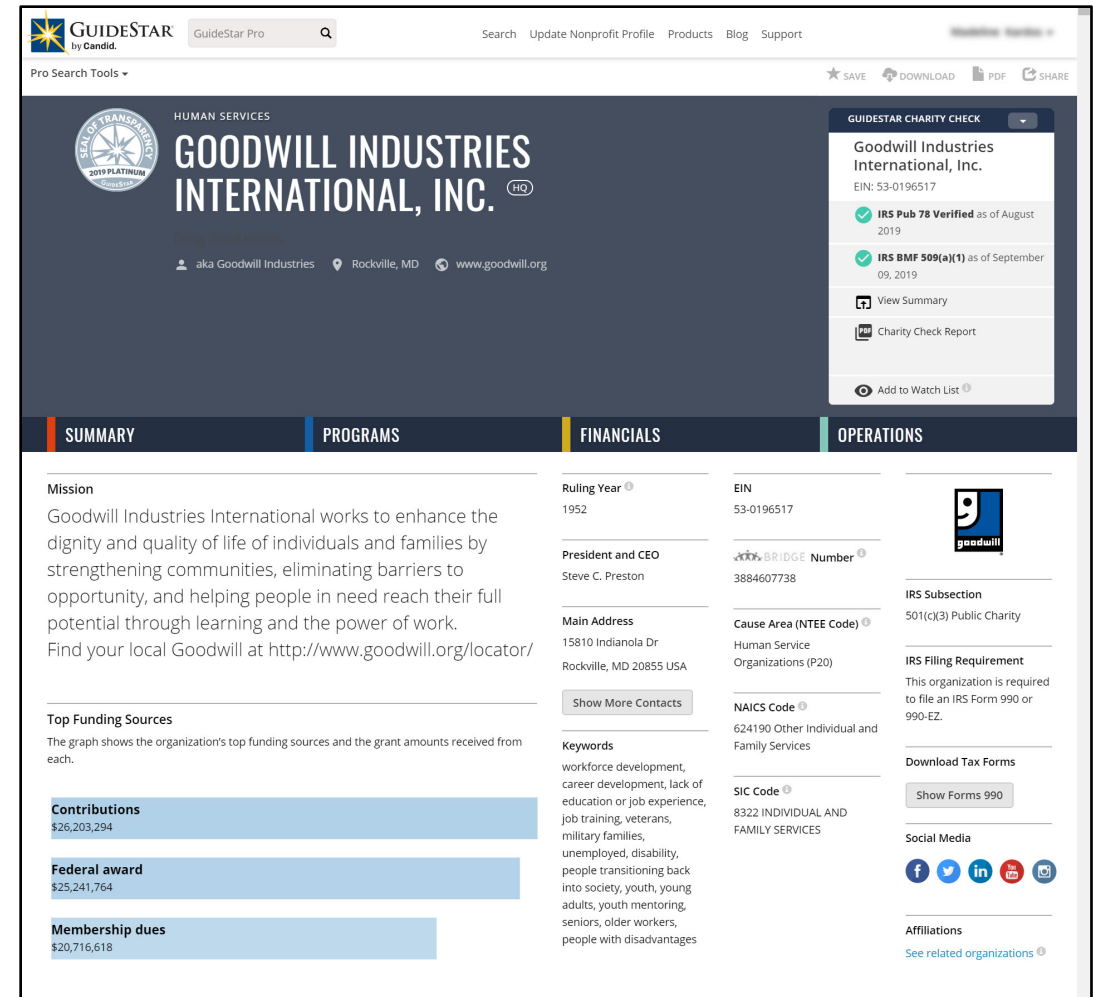
Why are you the best organization to do this work?



How will the project sustain itself in the long run?

Nonprofit profiles on GuideStar

- Many foundations review for due diligence
- Goes beyond IRS data
- Information from nonprofits themselves, 990s, and other 3rd party sources



The screenshot shows the GuideStar profile for Goodwill Industries International, Inc. The page is titled "HUMAN SERVICES" and "GOODWILL INDUSTRIES INTERNATIONAL, INC. (HQ)". It includes a "GUIDESTAR CHARITY CHECK" section with verification details for IRS Pub 78 and IRS BMF 509(a)(1). The profile is divided into four tabs: SUMMARY, PROGRAMS, FINANCIALS, and OPERATIONS. The SUMMARY tab is active, showing the organization's mission, top funding sources, and key information.

Mission
Goodwill Industries International works to enhance the dignity and quality of life of individuals and families by strengthening communities, eliminating barriers to opportunity, and helping people in need reach their full potential through learning and the power of work. Find your local Goodwill at <http://www.goodwill.org/locator/>

Top Funding Sources
The graph shows the organization's top funding sources and the grant amounts received from each.

Source	Amount
Contributions	\$26,203,294
Federal award	\$25,241,764
Membership dues	\$20,716,618

Key Information:
Ruling Year: 1952
President and CEO: Steve C. Preston
Main Address: 15810 Indianola Dr, Rockville, MD 20855 USA
EIN: 53-0196517
Cause Area (NTEE Code): Human Service Organizations (P20)
NAICS Code: 624190 Other Individual and Family Services
SIC Code: 8322 INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SERVICES

The Seals of Transparency



Provide basic information to **make sure donors find you**



Share program(s) information and brand details to **guide funding decisions**



Upload your financial details, board chair name, and leadership demographics to **gain trust and support**



Share your strategic plan, progress, and results to **highlight your impact and boost your funding**

Candid data partner network

Social Media & Tech



Giving Platforms



Financial Institutions



Grants Management



Media & Researchers



Other



3 easy steps to claim and update



Step 1
Claim your profile
Request access to your organization's profile



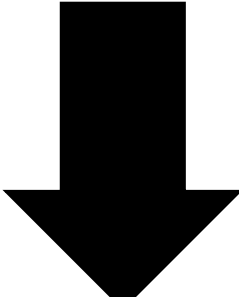
Step 2
Get approved
We verify your affiliation and approve your access



Step 3
Tell your story
Showcase your programs and your impact to fast-track your funding

Claiming your profile: First, sign in or create an account

Or we won't know who you are.



A screenshot of the GuideStar website homepage. The header includes the GuideStar logo (a star icon) and the text "GUIDESTAR by Candid." To the right of the logo are navigation links: "Search", "Update Nonprofit Profile", "Products", "Blog", "Support", "Create account" (highlighted in yellow), and "Sign in" (in a white box with a black border). The main content area features the headline "Connecting you with the nonprofit information you need" in a serif font. To the right of the headline is an illustration of three people: a woman holding a document, a man working on a laptop, and a child talking on a phone, with orange dashed lines and icons connecting them. Below the headline is the text "Search GuideStar for the most complete, up-to-date nonprofit data available." At the bottom of the main content area is a search bar with the text "GuideStar Basic Search" on the left, a yellow "Search" button in the middle, and a white "Upgrade now (free)" button on the right. Below the search bar is a link that says "Why upgrade?".

Next, click “Get started now”

The screenshot shows the GuideStar by Candid website. At the top left is the logo. To the right are navigation links: Search, Update Nonprofit Profile, Products, and Support. Below the navigation is a dark banner with the text 'Introducing the brand new 2020 Seals of Transparency'. The main content area features a large heading 'Update your GuideStar Nonprofit Profile' and a sub-heading 'Grow your online identity'. Below this is a paragraph: 'You have the power to choose what **tens of millions** of people see about your organization each year. Take advantage of your **free** profile and share up-to-date information.' A yellow button labeled 'Get started now' is positioned to the left of a large black arrow pointing left towards the button. On the right side of the page, there is a vertical list of links: Features, How to update, Seals of Transparency, and What people say, each separated by a dotted line.

Have questions? Go to our Help Center

- Go to **help.guidestar.org** for
 - Guides on how to claim your profile
 - Guides for how to earn a Seal

Conclusion

Tailor it to speak to this particular funder's guidelines and interests

Executive summary

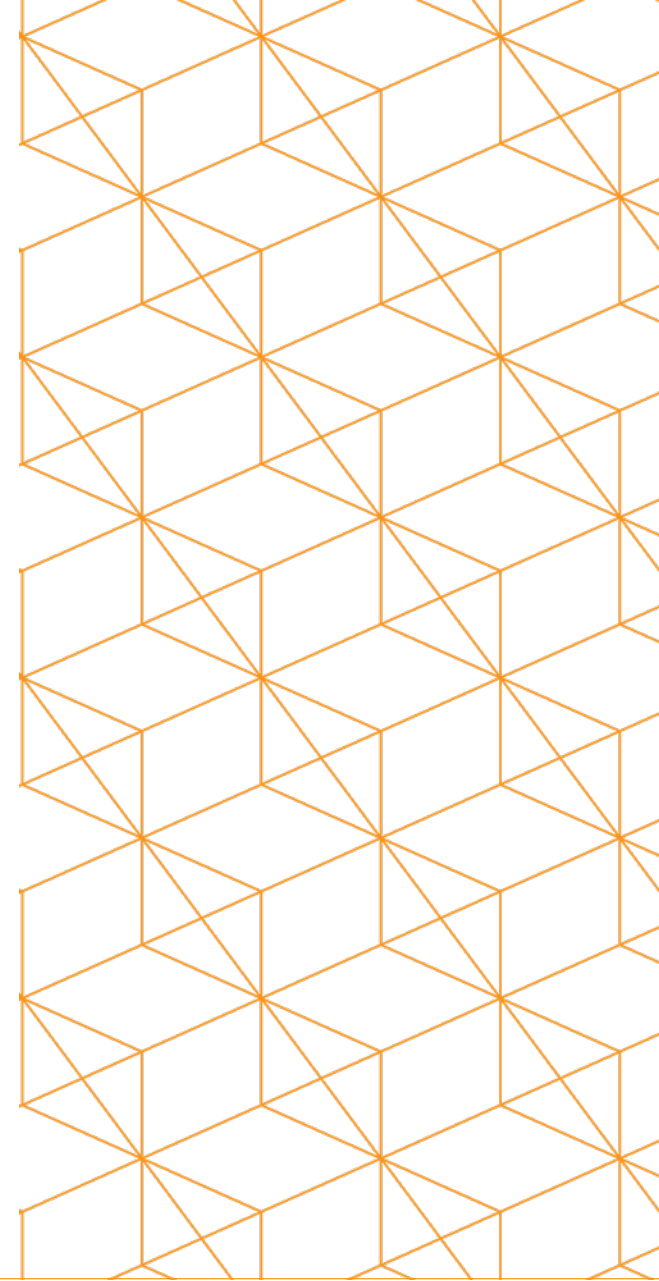
How do I reduce everything to one page?



Supporting materials

- Follow the funder's guidelines
- Include everything they ask for (and very little of anything else)
- For online applications, it's ok to add links where possible

How to follow up



Follow up: If the answer is yes

- Keep the funder informed
- Be responsive
- Do what you said you were going to do



Follow up: If the answer is no

- It's not personal
- Find out why
- Ask about future funding
- Move on; seek other prospects

Key takeaways

- Start with an outline
- Keep the language clear and concise
- Focus on the funders' interests
- Follow the funders' guidelines
- Revise and edit before submitting



Exercise

Create a project outline

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Proposal project outline worksheet

Organization name:

Project name:

Project time period:

Need

(Explaining why your project is necessary)

Project Description

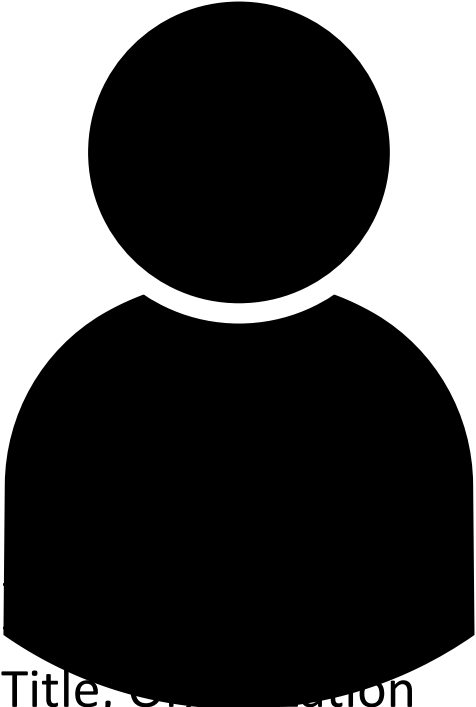
The Project Description includes information from Goals, Objectives, Methods, Staffing, Partnerships, Evaluation, and Sustainability.

Goals

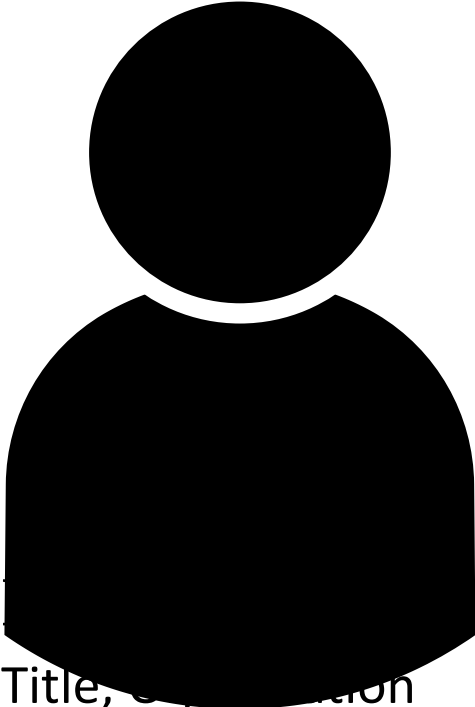
Objectives

Questions?

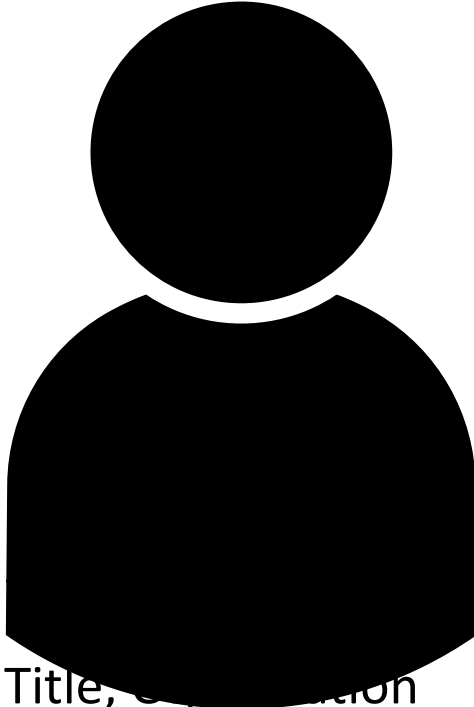
Speaker and moderators



Title, organization
Pronouns: List pronouns



Title, organization
Pronouns: List pronouns



Title, organization
Pronouns: List pronouns

What's next

Live, in-person and online

Introduction to Project Budgets

bit.ly/IntroProjectBudgets

Self-paced eLearning

Online Proposal Writing Course

bit.ly/OnlineProposalWritingCourse

How did we do?

Your feedback is important to us!
Please take a moment to fill out
our course survey:

bit.ly/-----



Thank you

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bit.ly/CandidLearningNewsletter



Introduction to proposal writing

The proposal writing process

Plan: What do you need the money for?

Research: Who will you approach?

Write: How will you put it all together?

Follow up: What will you do once the decision has been made?

Research

Find the right fit with Foundation Directory Online (FDO)

Visit [fdo.org](https://www.fdo.org) to learn more!

Many proposals focus on what's in it for the organization.

Few pay attention to what's in it for the funder. A grant proposal should be viewed as a win/win proposition.

Typical proposal elements include a blueprint with:

- Executive summary
- Narrative
 - Statement of need
 - Project description
 - Organization information
 - Conclusion
- Budget
- Supporting materials

Executive summary

The executive summary is one of the most important parts of the proposal. The reviewer will often read it first to determine if they want to continue reading the rest of the proposal.

- Statement of need
- Goals and objectives
- Background on your organization
- Costs of the project and amount requested

Key takeaways

- Start with an outline
- Keep the language clear and concise
- Focus on the funders' interests
- Follow the funders' guidelines
- Revise and edit before submitting



How does what you do fit with the funder's interests?

Even though the executive summary comes first, you should write it last.

What do funders really want to know?

What specific need are you addressing?

- What audience and community are you serving?
- What evidence do you have to support your need?

What are you trying to achieve?

- What are your goals and objectives? (think S.M.A.R.T.)

What is your strategy for making this happen?

- What is your specific plan of action?

How will you know if you are successful?

- Specify program objectives in measurable terms
- Identify key indicators of success
- Outline data collection and analysis activities
- Develop a timeline to monitor the success of the program on an ongoing basis

Why are you the best organization to do this work?

- Mission and History
- Programs
- Leadership
- Accomplishments

How will this project sustain itself in the long run?

- How will your project move toward self-sufficiency in the future?
- How will this project sustain itself without foundation support?

Conclusion:

The final appeal for your project

Make it compelling. Tailor it to speak to THIS particular funder's guidelines and interests.



Next steps

Check out these other Candid Learning classes:

- Introduction to Fundraising Planning
- Introduction to Finding Grants
- Introduction to Project Budgets
- Proposal Writing Workshop
- Proposal Writing Boot Camp

Follow up

If the answer is YES

- Send a thank you letter
- Keep the funder informed
- Be responsive
- Do what you said you were going to do

If the answer is NO

- It's not personal
- Find out why
- Ask about future funding
- Move on; seek other prospects

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Find out more at learning.candid.org. Connect with us @Candid_Learning.

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Proposal project outline sample

<p>Organization name: After School Central Project name: Wisdom Exchange Program Project time period: September–June</p>	
<p>Need (Explaining why your project is necessary)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students are reading below grade level at PS 111 • Supporting Facts or Statistics: Standardized test results for reading in our district. Comparison with surrounding schools demonstrating that the reading scores at PS 111 are low. • Senior citizens are in need of meaningful volunteer work opportunities • Supporting Facts or Statistics: Quote from Surgeon General regarding correlation with seniors who volunteer and higher quality of life.
<p>Project description</p>	<p>The Project description includes information from Goals, Objectives, Methods, Staffing, Partnerships, Evaluation, and Sustainability.</p>
<p>Goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase reading levels for students • Provide meaningful, rewarding, volunteer work for seniors
<p>Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit 20 students, grades 3 thru 6, who are below grade level in reading • Increase reading levels of at least 75% of student participants to their grade level • Recruit, train, and retain at least 20 seniors as tutors for one year
<p>Methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One senior citizen will tutor one student for 2 days a week for one year • Tutors are trained volunteers from Madison Community Center and Centro Senior Center; students are from PS 111
<p>Staffing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Coordinator to oversee project • Reading Instructor (consultant) to provide training for seniors. Remains available as a resource throughout the project. Assists in the evaluation of the program.
<p>Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Madison Community Center • Centro Senior Center • PS 111 School administration • PS 111 PTA
<p>Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pre- and post-test to determine reading skills • Student folders with progressive work samples • Volunteers and staff meeting logs to evaluate and record the successful procedures and the obstacles encountered • A survey for volunteering seniors regarding their learning experience, satisfaction, etc.
<p>Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations will be solicited from individuals in the community • Future support will be sought from United Way and from local government agencies

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Proposal project outline worksheet

Organization name:	
Project name:	
Project time period:	
Need (Explaining why your project is necessary)	
Project description	The Project description includes information from Goals, Objectives, Methods, Staffing, Partnerships, Evaluation, and Sustainability.
Goals	
Objectives	

Methods	
Staffing	
Partnerships	
Evaluation	
Sustainability	