

**VALLEY NONPROFIT RESOURCES**

Building Stronger Nonprofits in the San Fernando Valley

Writing Successful Proposals:  
A First Course for Young Nonprofit Leadership

*September 3, 2008*

Volunteer Center of Los Angeles

**RESOURCE GUIDE**

*Workshop Leader*

Dr. Jerry Seliger  
California State University Northridge

*Agenda*

**WRITING SUCCESSFUL PROPOSALS:  
A FIRST COURSE FOR YOUNG NONPROFIT LEADERS**

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|----------|---|
| 11:00 AM | Welcome and review of workshop objectives; round-robin introductions  |
| 11:20 AM | Elements of proposal writing  |
| 11:30 AM | Funding systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government sector: grants, contracts</li><li>• Private sector: grants, loans, contracts</li></ul> |
| 12:00 PM | Break (box lunches will be provided for working lunch)  |
| 12:15 PM | Working lunch – review proposal types - project, program, capital, capacity building, research, “seed,” evaluation grants                                 |
| 1:00 PM  | How proposal writing applies to participant organizations   |
| 2:15 PM  | Proposal writing as a career-enhancement skill  |
| 2:45 PM  | Review of learning resources  |
| 3:00 PM  | Adjourn   |

# LEARNING RESOURCES

## Books

***Grant Proposal Makeover: Transform Your Request from No to Yes*, by Cheryl A. Clarke and Susan P. Fox. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006.**

Nine out of ten grant proposals are rejected. Grant Proposal Makeover shows how to transform lackluster proposals into excellent ones—that have the potential to be funded. This book stands out from other traditional grantwriting books because it illustrates common flaws and problems in proposals and shows exactly how to fix them. It also includes helpful tips and quotes from foundation program officers and funding community insiders taken from an international survey of foundation professionals.

***Storytelling for Grant Seekers: A Guide to Creative Nonprofit Fundraising, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, by Cheryl A. Clarke. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008.**

Grantwriters often have little or no training in the practical task of grantseeking. Many feel intimidated by the act of writing, and some don't enjoy writing. In *Storytelling for Grantseekers, Second Edition*, Cheryl Clarke presents an organic approach to grantseeking, one that views the process through the lens of the pleasures and rewards of crafting a good story. Grantseekers who approach the process as one in which they are connecting with an audience (grantmakers) and writing a narrative (complete with settings, characters, antagonists and resolutions) find greater success with funders. The writing process becomes a rewarding way to tell the organization's tale, rather than a chore, and their passion and creativity lead to winning proposals.

This book walks readers through all the main phases of the proposal, highlighting the creative elements that link components to each other and unify the entire proposal. The book contains resources on crafting an effective synopsis, overcoming grantwriter's block, packaging the story, and the best ways to approach the "short stories" (inquiry and cover letters) that support the larger proposal.

***The Ask: How to Ask Anyone for Any Amount for Any Purpose*, by Laura Fredricks. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006.**

The Ask is a complete resource for teaching anyone—experienced in fundraising or not—how to ask individuals, in person, for a contribution to for a local nonprofit or a special event or community project, an enhanced annual gift, a major or planned gift, or a challenging capital campaign gift. Written by fundraising expert Laura Fredricks, *The Ask* shows what it takes to prepare yourself and others to make an effective ask and includes over one hundred sample dialogues you can use and adapt. Step by step, the book reveals how to listen, what to say, and how to follow up on each and every ask until you receive a solid and definitive answer. In addition, *The Ask* covers such topics as how to:

- Examine your views on money before making an ask
- Learn the ins and outs of asking for money
- Work with others to make an ask
- Determine if you should or should not ask a friend, colleague, or peer for money
- Figure out how many asks you can do given your time constraints
- Deal effectively with all the responses you will get to an ask

## Articles

*Grant Proposals Must Promote Funders Goals Not Yours*

by Alan Sharpe. December 3, 2007. <http://www.charityvillage.com/cv/research/rprop7.html>

*Selling Your Ideas to Funders*

by Blair Witzel. September 6, 2005. <http://www.charityvillage.com/cv/research/rprop6.html>

*Researcher Behavior that Leads to Success in Obtaining Grant Funding: A Model for Success*  
Research Management Review, Vol. 15, Number 2. Fall/Winter 2006.

[http://www.ncura.edu/content/news/rmr/docs/research\\_behavior.pdf](http://www.ncura.edu/content/news/rmr/docs/research_behavior.pdf)

*Nonprofit Fundraising in Competitive Donor Markets*

by Jeremy Thornton. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly. 2006. Pgs. 204-224.

<http://nvs.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/35/2/204>

*Writing A Successful Grant Proposal* by Barbara Davis. Connecticut Council of Philanthropy.  
Minnesota Council of Foundations Reprint Series. 2003.

[http://www.ctphilanthropy.org/o/documents/2004\\_write-successful-grant-proposal.pdf](http://www.ctphilanthropy.org/o/documents/2004_write-successful-grant-proposal.pdf)

*Fundraising 101: Why Seek Private Funding?: THE MANAGEMENT MOMENT* by Gregory Phillip  
Duyck. Journal of Public Health Management & Practice. 14(2):199-201, March/April 2008.

## Training and Technical Assistance

**Center for Nonprofit Management** The Center for Nonprofit Management periodically offers courses on grantwriting at its downtown Los Angeles location. For more information: [www.cnmsocal.org](http://www.cnmsocal.org).

**The Grantsmanship Center** The Center's basic training program is designed both for the novice and the experience grantseeker. The intensive five-day workshop combines expert instruction with practical exercises through all stages of planning programs, locating funding sources and writing grant proposals. For more information contact Joan Sullivan at 213/482-9860 or [joan@tgci.com](mailto:joan@tgci.com). [www.tgci.com](http://www.tgci.com)

**Nonprofit Guides: Grant Writing Tools for Nonprofit Organizations** Nonprofit Guides are free web-based grant-writing tools for non-profit organizations, charitable, educational, public organizations, and other community-minded groups. The guides are designed to assist established US-based non-profits through the grant-writing process. [www.npguides.org](http://www.npguides.org)

**Valley Nonprofit Resources** VNR offers training and technical assistance on grantwriting on an individual basis to nonprofits in the San Fernando Valley, as well as grantwriting workshops like this one. Contact the VNR Concierge at 818/990-0176 or [infnow@valleynonprofitresources.org](mailto:infnow@valleynonprofitresources.org). [www.valleynonprofitresources.org](http://www.valleynonprofitresources.org)

# CONTENT OUTLINE

The workshop addresses seven themes:

- Health and human services system
- Private Philanthropic system
- Government grant/contract systems
- Community and organization needs, program/project planning
- Proposal writing elements, do's and don'ts
- Development function in community-based nonprofit organizations;
- Grants/Contract Management

## **Government funding systems**

Opportunities  
Solicitations  
Grants/contracts  
Eligibility

## **Getting ready to write**

Approvals  
Case Statement  
Project description  
LOI/Project/program elements  
Community/organization needs/challenges

## **Private funding systems**

Philanthropic/Charitable  
Interests  
Opportunities  
Eligibility

## **Projects vs. programs**

Project vs. Program funding  
Capital funding  
Expansion funding  
Seed funding  
Capacity building funding  
Endowment

## **Sources**

Foundations/Trusts grant making, operating foundations  
Community Foundations  
Business Corporations  
Individual sponsors  
Organization constituents

## **Proposal writing essentials**

Required paperwork/boilerplate  
Overview/Abstract of Project/Program proposal  
Purpose  
Need  
Data sources & referencing  
Literature referencing  
Goal/Objectives  
Project/Program description  
How Project/Program meets needs/challenges  
Project/Program timeline  
Applicant Organization description  
Key personnel referencing  
Organization chart showing links to Project/Program  
Collaborator description(s)  
Budget and budget narrative  
Attachments  
Do's and Don'ts