

HOUSING FIRST SOLANO GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS: TIPS FOR WRITING YOUR NARRATIVE

- 1. Read the question carefully.** What are you being asked to answer? Make sure you answer every part of the question. Cut out any excessive details that the question doesn't ask for.
- 2. Make sure your writing is easy to follow.** Answer the question in the same order as the question is laid out. Stay concise: omit needless words. Favor simple sentences over long, compound ones.
- 3. Be specific.** Provide concrete data points. Make use of relevant current, local statistics to demonstrate your knowledge of your community. Be precise in identifying any goals, objectives, and outcomes and quantifying them with numbers as appropriate.
- 4. Emphasize key terms.** If a question includes key topics or terms, repeat those topics and terms in your answer. If appropriate, you can draw attention to those terms by using all capitals or bold; for example, VETERANS, CAPACITY, COMMUNITY NEED.
- 5. In longer narratives, stay organized.** Cover one topic only per paragraph. Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence; end it in conformity with the beginning.
- 6. Keep an eye out for the basics.** Mistakes can be distracting. Use Spell Check. Make sure each sentence has a subject and a verb. Stick to the same verb tense in summaries. If you use a succession of phrases, make sure each phrase is constructed identically. Have a fresh pair of eyes proofread each draft. Submit the correct draft. Submit ON TIME as late applications are not considered.

Helpful References

HomeBase TA Handbooks for the Continuum of Care Program Application (we do our best to walk you through tricky application instructions!)

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. "Tips and Tricks for Writing a Winning Grant Submission." As visited on Nov. 16, 2016:

<https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/states/florida/working/farmworker/tipstricks>

Strunk, William. *The Elements of Style*. Ithaca, NY: Private printing, 1918.

HomeBase | *Advancing Solutions to Homelessness* | solano@homebaseccc.org

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PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS: PRACTICE

Read the instructions below and compare the two sample answers.

Instructions: Provide a descriptive overview of the proposed project. At a minimum, provide the following information: 1) Project name/title; 2) Project type (PSH, RRH, TH, SSO); 3) Description of how the project is either a new program OR an expansion of/new component to an existing program; 4) Overall goal(s) and/or mission of the project; 5) Overview of services and activities; 6) Identification of how these services and activities address an urgent community need; and 7) Description of agency capacity to effectively administer, manage, and execute proposed project.

SAMPLE 1

The mission of House Solano First (HSF), a 501(c)3 eligible organization based in Dixon, California, is to restore the dignity, safety, and financial stability of homeless individuals diagnosed with HIV/AIDS through Rapid Re-Housing services and case management. HSF was founded by a core group of experienced caretakers who worked with two local HIV patients who had lost their jobs and housing due to the complications of their illness. Those caretakers were able to help the patients identify available housing, pay rent for the first six months, and build financial literacy skills that would enable them to remain in permanent housing to this day. Their scaled efforts became HSF. HIV and AIDs are devastating diseases that impair an individual's ability to work and live independently and without stigma because of the extreme physical and emotional toll they impose. Our proposed project, Rapid Re-Housing II (RRH2), gives five adults with HIV or AIDS the chance to reclaim those freedoms by placing them in Housing First and providing wrap-around case management services to help them remain stably housed. We have been working with this population for over 12 years and have received several awards for being a pioneer in our field. Without the continued support of federal funding, it would be impossible for HSF to serve this vulnerable population.

Instructions: Provide a descriptive overview of the proposed project. At a minimum, provide the following information: 1) Project name/title; 2) Project type (PSH, RRH, TH, SSO); 3) Description of how the project is either a new program OR an expansion of/new component to an existing program; 4) Overall goal(s) and/or mission of the project; 5) Overview of services and activities; 6) Identification of how these services and activities address an urgent community need; and 7) Description of agency capacity to effectively administer, manage, and execute proposed project.

SAMPLE 2

Rapid Re-Housing II (RRH2), an expansion of an existing affordable housing development site, is a Rapid Re-Housing project serving 5 homeless adults with HIV/AIDS through scattered site SROs in Dixon, California. Through RRH2, consumers are rapidly connected to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include housing navigation, short-term rental assistance, and case management to help overcome barriers to (re)acquiring and maintaining permanent housing. Between 2014 and 2016, the number of unsheltered individuals increased from 10 to 15, according to the Point-In-Time Counts for each year. Our organization, House Solano First (HSF), targets this subpopulation, for which there are few dedicated service providers in our community. Having built its capacity over the last 12 years with a clean record of continued federal funding, HSF relies upon the expertise of its HIV/AIDS specialists, case managers, housing navigators, and administrative staff to ensure that all activities are administered, managed, and executed against annually published performance benchmarks.

HOUSING FIRST SOLANO GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS: COMPARING SAMPLE NARRATIVES

Read through the sample instructions and answer the following questions based on your program.

Instructions: Provide a descriptive overview of the proposed project. At a minimum, provide the following information: 1) Project name/title; 2) Project type (PSH, RRH, TH, SSO); 3) Description of how the project is either a new program OR an expansion of/new component to an existing program; 4) Overall goal(s) and/or mission of the project; 5) Overview of services and activities; 6) Identification of how these services and activities address an urgent community need; and 7) Description of agency capacity to effectively administer, manage, and execute proposed project.

What answers does the question ask for?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Name the main result(s) of your project in one sentence addressed to a ten-year old:

Use two words to name each service your project provides:

What community need are you addressing?

What data points prove that this community need is urgent?

How is your agency good at administration?

How is your agency good at management?

How is your agency good at execution?

Put all your answers together in order and assemble your paragraph:

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for the student to write their assembled paragraph.

Did you answer everything the original instructions ask for? Y / N

HOUSING FIRST SOLANO GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP

PROJECT BUDGETS: REVIEWING A SAMPLE

Fill out a Project Budget and Project Budget Detail based off the following fact pattern. Reference the enclosed CSD Budget General Guide for instructions.

House Solano First (HSF) is a year-round operating nonprofit headquartered in Dixon, California. It has put together a \$200,000 total project budget to expand an existing Rapid Re-Housing project. The new project, Rapid Re-Housing II (RRH2), would serve five homeless adults with HIV/AIDS through scattered site SROs in Dixon. Services offered by RRH2 include housing navigation, short-term rental assistance at FY 2017 FMR (\$803/month) up to six months per consumer, and case management. The program serves 10 consumers throughout the course of the year.

HSF has three staffers working on this project: an Executive Director paid \$100,000/year (15% RRH2), a Case Manager paid \$56,000/year (100% RRH2), and a Housing Navigator paid \$46,000/year (50% RRH2). The Case Manager also gets \$10,000 in benefits, which HSF hopes to cover through CSBG funding. These three staff use phone and Internet services at \$80/month; printing at \$100/month; three laptops worth \$1,000 each; consumable supplies budgeted at \$300/month; and groceries for the staff kitchen at \$125/month. The Case Manager drives her own 2010 Toyota Camry (a 22 miles-per-gallon car) approximately 176 miles/month at \$2.50/gallon to visit clients throughout Dixon. She always attends the annual, three-night Las Vegas Case Managers' Conference (\$400 round-trip airfare, \$250/night hotel, \$500 registration fee) for training purposes.

HSF reports its performance benchmarks to its six-member Board at an annual Board Appreciation Luncheon, for which it budgets \$40/person. In a nod to its mission "to restore the dignity, safety, and financial stability of homeless individuals diagnosed with HIV/AIDS through Rapid Re-Housing services and case management," HSF staff collectively contribute \$2,000/year to the Human Rights Foundation. In return, The Foundation provides pro-bono counseling throughout the year, valued at \$40,170/year, to RRH2 enrollees to address HIV/AIDS specific matters.

PROJECT BUDGET

1. Administrative Costs (up to 10% total budget)

Line Item	Funding Requested
Salaries & Wages	
Fringe Benefits	
Operating Expenses	
Equipment	
Out-of-State Travel	
Contract/Consultant Services	
Other Costs	
Total	

2. Program Costs

Line Item	Funding Requested
Salaries & Wages	
Fringe Benefits	
Operating Expenses	
Equipment	
Out-of-State Travel	
Contract/Consultant Services	
Other Costs	
Total	

3. Total Costs

Total CSBG Funding Requested (Admin + Program Costs)	
Other Agency Operating Funds used to Support Project (Leverage)	
Total Project Budget	

PROJECT BUDGET DETAIL

1. Personnel Costs

Administrative

Position Title	Annual Salary	% Time Allocated to Project	# of Months Allocated to Project	Total Project Funding Budgeted

Program

Position Title	Annual Salary	% Time Allocated to Project	# of Months Allocated to Project	Total Project Funding Budgeted

2. Non-Personnel Costs

Line Item	Administrative Costs	Program Costs
List all Operating Expenses:		
List all Equipment Expenses:		
List all Out-of-State Travel: <i>(Name of Conference, location, cost/trip)</i>		

List all Contract/Consultant Services:		
List all Subcontractor/Consultant Services:		

ATTACHMENT I

General Guide for Budget Preparation

Use this guide to assist with completing the Budget Summary (425 S), Personnel Costs (425 1.1), Non Personnel Costs (425 1.2), Other Agency Operating Funds (425 1.3), and Budget Narrative (425 1.4).

Administrative Costs

Administrative costs consist of expenses directly related to functions that do not directly support a specific program or service. Administrative costs relate to the general management of the agency such as executive director functions, accounting, budgeting, personnel and legal services.

Program Costs

Program costs relate directly to the operation of the program services or activities intended to achieve the program goal(s). Direct program costs include items such as salaries and benefits of program staff, equipment, training, conferences and subcontractor services needed to meet the program goal(s).

CSBG Contract Budget (425 S)

Reimbursement - Select the applicable reimbursement option either bimonthly or monthly. This option cannot be changed and will be in effect throughout the term of the agreement.

Each summary line item on the CSBG Contract Budget Summary (425 S) for Administrative (Section 10) and Program costs (Section 20) must match the totals listed on the Personnel (425 1.1), Non Personnel (425 1.2), and the Other Agency Operating Funds (425 1.3) budget support forms.

CSBG Budget Support – Personnel Costs (425 1.1)

Salaries and Wages

Include all costs for permanent or temporary staff including regular and overtime pay.

Administrative positions may include executive director, accounting, personnel, or positions that relate to the general management of the agency.

Program positions may include program staff and managers or positions related to the direct program services or activities.

ATTACHMENT I

Fringe Benefits

Include costs in accordance with approved payroll benefit programs. This includes retirement/pension plans and various other forms of insurances related to employee compensation such as disability, life, health and unemployment, workers' compensation, disability insurance, sick leave and accrued vacation.

CSBG Budget Support – Non Personnel Cost (425 1.2)

Operating Expenses

Include the cost related to carrying out an organization's day-to-day activities such as (but not limited to) building rent/lease, utilities, office supplies, consumable supplies, printing, phone, internet, staff training, membership dues, postage, and in-state travel costs.

Note: Consumable supplies are defined as any article costing less than \$5,000 per unit and have a useful life of less than one year such as printer toner, paper goods, cleaning supplies, etc.

Equipment

Equipment is defined as nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a unit cost exceeding \$5,000 and a useful life of more than one year (i.e., vehicle, printer).

Note: The listed equipment items must comply with the applicable procurement policies and procedures. Refer to CSD Program Notice (CPN) Administrative A-12-01.

Out of State Travel

Out of state travel must include expenses incurred specifically to carry out the program goal. Travel costs are the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence and related items incurred by staff traveling on official business for the agency.

Contract/Consultant Services (Administrative Cost Only)

Agreement with a contractor to perform services such as payroll, auditor, consultant, legal services, janitorial, or landscape services to support the agency.

Note: A consultant is a professional or subject matter expert who advises the organization on strategies (i.e., strategic planning, board recruitment, staff training) to fulfill its administrative functions.

Subcontractor/Consultant Services (Program Cost Only)

Agreement with a subcontractor to perform part or all of the program services or activities directly related to meeting the program goals.

ATTACHMENT I

Note: A consultant is a professional or subject matter expert who provides a specific program related service or activity (i.e., train clients on income management) to meet the program goals.

Other Costs

Include costs that do not fit in the above line items such as indirect costs, and costs directly benefitting the client such as food and housing vouchers, blankets, clothing, etc.

Note: The indirect cost rate is defined as the dollar value of the negotiated federal rate and the entire amount can be claimed as long as it is not reimbursed by another funding source. A copy of the approval letter from the cognizant agency, which includes the date of the approval and amount of rate, must be submitted with the budget.

Unallowable costs

Unallowable costs include, but are not limited to:

- Alcoholic Beverages
- Bad debts, including any related collection and legal costs
- Charitable contributions and donations by the organization to others
- Contingency reserves
- Entertainment costs, unless associated with employee morale or meetings related to a specific cost objective
- Fines and penalties resulting from violations by the organization or employees of Federal, State and Local laws and regulations
- Fund-raising costs incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions
- Goods and services for personal use of employees
- Idle facilities, unless necessary due to fluctuations in workload
- Insurance of lives of trustees, officers or employees when the organization is a beneficiary
- Lobbying costs as identified in OMB circular A-122

Other Agency Operating Funds (425 1.3)

The other agency operating funds is a detailed list of funding source(s) and amounts funded by each source and used to support the CSBG program administered by the tripartite board. For public entities, all funds under the administration of the advisory or administrative tripartite board should be considered as community action program operating funds.

Budget Narrative (425 1.4)

The budget narrative is a detailed written description which supports each projected budget line item reported in 425 1.1 and 425 1.2. The budget narrative is required and must be submitted with the budget.

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PROJECT BUDGETS: REVIEWING A SAMPLE

Fill out a Project Budget and Project Budget Detail based off the following fact pattern. Reference the enclosed CSD Budget General Guide for instructions.

House Solano First (HSF) is a year-round operating nonprofit headquartered in Dixon, California. It has put together a \$200,000 total project budget to expand an existing Rapid Re-Housing project. The new project, Rapid Re-Housing II (RRH2), would serve five homeless adults with HIV/AIDS through scattered site SROs in Dixon. Services offered by RRH2 include housing navigation, short-term rental assistance at FY 2017 FMR (\$803/month) up to six months per consumer, and case management [**\$24,090 PROGRAM OTHER COSTS**]. The program serves 10 consumers throughout the course of the year.

HSF has three staffers working on this project: an Executive Director paid \$100,000/year (15% RRH2) [**\$15,000 ADMINISTRATIVE SALARY/WAGES**], a Case Manager paid \$56,000/year (100% RRH2) [**\$56,000 PROGRAM SALARY/WAGES**], and a Housing Navigator paid \$46,000/year (50% RRH2) [**\$23,000 PROGRAM SALARY/WAGES**]. The Case Manager also gets \$10,000 in benefits, which HSF hopes to cover through CSBG funding [**\$10,000 PROGRAM FRINGE BENEFITS**]. These three staff use phone and Internet services at \$80/month [**\$960 PROGRAM OPERATING EXPENSES**]; printing at \$100/month [**\$1,200 PROGRAM OPERATING EXPENSES**]; three laptops worth \$1,000 each [**INELIGIBLE COST – EQUIPMENT UNDER \$5,000**]; consumable supplies budgeted at \$300/month [**\$3,600 PROGRAM OPERATING EXPENSES**]; and groceries for the staff kitchen at \$125/month [**INELIGIBLE COST – SUPPLIES FOR PERSONAL USE**]. The Case Manager drives her own 2010 Toyota Camry (a 22 miles-per-gallon car) approximately 176 miles/month at \$2.50/gallon to visit clients throughout Dixon [**\$240 PROGRAM OPERATING EXPENSES**]. She always attends the annual, three-night Las Vegas Case Managers' Conference (\$400 round-trip airfare, \$250/night hotel, \$500 registration fee) for training purposes [**\$1,650 PROGRAM OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL**].

HSF reports its performance benchmarks to its six-member Board at an annual Board Appreciation Luncheon, for which it budgets \$40/person [**INELIGIBLE COST – ENTERTAINMENT COSTS**]. In a nod to its mission “to restore the dignity, safety, and financial stability of homeless individuals diagnosed with HIV/AIDS through Rapid Re-Housing services and case management,” HSF staff collectively contribute \$2,000/year to the Human Rights Foundation [**INELIGIBLE COST – CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION**]. The Foundation also provides pro-bono counseling throughout the year, valued at \$40,170/year, to RRH2 enrollees to address HIV/AIDS specific matters [**\$40,170 LEVERAGE**].

PROJECT BUDGET

1. Administrative Costs (up to 10% total budget)

Line Item	Funding Requested
Salaries & Wages	\$15,000
Fringe Benefits	
Operating Expenses	
Equipment	
Out-of-State Travel	
Contract/Consultant Services	
Other Costs	
Total	\$15,000 (note that this is <10% of the total budget)

2. Program Costs

Line Item	Funding Requested
Salaries & Wages	$\$56,000 + \$23,000 =$ \$79,000
Fringe Benefits	\$10,000
Operating Expenses	$12 * (\$80 + \$100 + (\$2.50 * (176/22))) =$ \$6,000
Equipment	
Out-of-State Travel	$\$400 + (\$250 * 3) + \$500 =$ \$1,650
Contract/Consultant Services	
Other Costs	$\$803 * 5 * 6 =$ \$24,090
Total	\$120,740

3. Total Costs

Total CSBG Funding Requested (Admin + Program Costs)	$\$15,000 + \$144,830 =$ \$159,830
Other Agency Operating Funds used to Support Project (Leverage)	\$40,170
Total Project Budget	\$200,000

PROJECT BUDGET DETAIL

1. Personnel Costs

Administrative

Position Title	Annual Salary	% Time Allocated to Project	# of Months Allocated to Project	Total Project Funding Budgeted
Executive Director	\$100,000	15%	12	\$15,000

Program

Position Title	Annual Salary	% Time Allocated to Project	# of Months Allocated to Project	Total Project Funding Budgeted
Case Manager	\$56,000	100%	12	\$56,000
Housing Navigator	\$46,000	50%	12	\$23,000

2. Non-Personnel Costs

Line Item	Administrative Costs	Program Costs
List all Operating Expenses:	N/A	Phone + Internet; Printing; Consumable Supplies; Mileage
List all Equipment Expenses:	N/A	N/A
List all Out-of-State Travel: <i>(Name of Conference, location, cost/trip)</i>	N/A	Las Vegas Case Managers' Conference; Las Vegas, NV; \$1,650
List all Contract/Consultant Services:	N/A	N/A
List all Subcontractor/Consultant Services:	N/A	N/A