

## **Tips for Writing a Good Proposal**

### **Office of Learning Technologies**

A good proposal requires more than just filling in the blanks on an application form. Here are the Office of Learning Technologies' (OLT) "top ten" hints for writing a proposal that conveys your vision and convinces a reviewer to recommend funding your project.

- **Develop your concept first.** A fully developed idea can be transformed into a proposal more easily. Review relevant documents and research to find out what others are saying and doing. Consult "Projects at a Glance" on the OLT web site to familiarize yourself with previously funded projects in your subject area. The more you know before you start writing, the better.
- **Read before you write.** Carefully read the OLT guidelines, application form and other instructions before preparing your application. Understand the OLT program mandate and the objectives of the funding initiative. Collect all the information you will need to complete your application. Knowing what is required and having the facts at your fingertips will make the writing process simpler.
- **Spend time on your application.** Gathering the information you need, establishing partnerships and writing a well-documented proposal takes time. Allow sufficient time to produce a document that showcases your project and demonstrates your management capacity.
- **Draw the big picture.** Tell us about your organization's vision. Explain why the project is important and how it could be helpful to others undertaking similar work. Describe the difference the project will make to the learners involved, and clearly link these results to other issues in the community.
- **Prove it.** Don't make a statement you can't back up. Document the need for your project with appropriate statistics on the scope of the problem and how it affects the community. Be prepared to substantiate the stated accomplishments of your organization, contributions by partners and all budget items.
- **Make the connections.** Make sure that all parts of your proposal, from the goals and objectives to the action plan, budget, expected results, evaluation framework, and the plan for disseminating results, are logically connected and leave no loose ends.
- **Keep it simple.** Write clearly and avoid using jargon that others might not understand. If a reviewer cannot understand your proposal, chances are they will not recommend it for funding. Use the application form. The form makes it simple for reviewers to find the information needed to make a positive recommendation.

- **Be complete.** The only information reviewers will have when assessing your project is your completed application form. Answer all questions in sufficient detail so that a reader unfamiliar with your project will understand your goals, plans and expected outcomes.
  - **Ask for help.** The OLT funding application, guidelines and other instructions have been designed to answer most of your questions. If after reading them, you encounter other problems or would like to discuss a concept before submitting your proposal, we welcome your email or phone call.
  - **Proofread.** If your proposal is incomplete or your calculations are incorrect, reviewers may conclude that your organization does not have the capacity to manage a project. You may want to ask a colleague, not involved in writing the proposal, for a second opinion before submitting your application.
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OLT offers an online toolkit of resources to guide you through the application process, from preparation of a funding application to managing a successful project. Many of the tools on the web site provide examples that you can use for your own project.

For more information on the Office of Learning Technologies, to view the toolkit, or to consult the “Projects at a Glance” section, visit the HRSDC web site at: [www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](http://www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca) (Key word – OLT).