



Full Proposal Information Session Handout

Helpful Hints for Writing a Successful Big Ideas@Berkeley Full Proposal

Needs Statement

1. Decide which facts or statistics best support the project.
 - Be sure the data you present are accurate.
 - Don't use information that is too generic or broad. **Instead, discuss the specific community or market you're hoping to serve.** (*Use this as an opportunity to show the judges that you are familiar with the community you're hoping to serve!*)
2. Show the judges that there is a possibility for intervention.
 - The picture you paint should not be so grim that the solution appears hopeless. (The logic of your needs statement should go something like this: "Breast cancer kills. But statistics prove that regular check-ups catch most breast cancer in the early stages, reducing the likelihood of death. Hence, a program to encourage preventive check-ups will reduce the risk of death due to breast cancer.")
 - Strike a balance between connecting the judges to the community and overly emotional appeals.
3. Demonstrate that other projects have failed to address this problem effectively.
 - Demonstrate that you know what other products/projects currently exist that aim at solve the problem of interest, and explain how your product/project improves upon what currently exists.
 - If relevant, make it clear that you are cognizant of, and on good terms with, others doing work in your field. Describe how your work complements, but does not duplicate, the work of others.

Project Description

1. Explain your goals and objectives.
 - Don't confuse objectives with goals.
 - Goals are conceptual and more abstract.
 - Objectives are the measurable outcomes of the program. Your objectives should be tangible, specific, concrete, measurable, and achievable between March 2014 and June 2015.
 - For example: a project goal might be to develop an after-school program to help children read better. A project objective might be to assist 50 children in improving their reading scores by one grade level as demonstrated by standardized reading tests administered after participating in the program for six months.
2. Explain your methods for achieving your goals and objectives.
 - Explain **all of** the specific activities that need take place to achieve the objectives.



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- Allow the judges to visualize the implementation of the project in full.
- **This is where many applications fall into trouble – the judges have to believe that your project is viable, and in order to evaluate this, they need as many details as possible about how your project will look.**
 - Consider staffing/volunteers/team members that you will need to implement the project. Consider their qualifications, how you will recruit them, etc., if relevant.
 - Consider marketing strategies and materials, if relevant.
 - Discuss partnerships that you've developed that will support the success of your project, if relevant.

3. Consider challenges to implementation, and how you will address those challenges.

4. Consider ethical, cultural, or legal matters.

- For example: If applicable, consider to what extent the cultural norms, politics and history of the country where you'll work, and the relationships between men and women or adults and children in the country where you'll work might influence your project.
- For example: Consider the level of community buy-in that you expect, and/or how you will assess community buy-in.

5. Have friends, family, mentors, advisors, etc. read your project description many times to make sure that your project ideas **are clear** to people who are unfamiliar with them.

Timeline

- Review your objectives list and the list of specific activities to achieve your objectives, and assign each a start and end date.
- Timelines can take on any form (bulleted list or graphic).
- Convince the judges that you have a realistic expectation for how long each objective/task will take.

Team Member Biographies

- There is no minimum or maximum number of allowable team members, but we recommend only including biographies for key team members (no more than eight team members total).
- Your team members may have changed from your pre-proposal submission, and that's okay!
- Explain the capabilities of your team to accomplish your project (e.g., team members relevant skills and accomplishments).
- If key team members are graduating in May 2014, discuss how you will recruit new leadership for your project.



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Budget

- Use the budget spreadsheet provided at <http://bigideas.berkeley.edu/contest/>
- As you prepare to assemble the budget, go back through the proposal narrative and make a list of **all** personnel and non-personnel items related to the operation of the project.
- Explain how you calculated **all** costs in the “Cost Details” column of the budget spreadsheet.
- Remember that the average prize is \$5000, and teams should not request more than \$10,000.
- If your total project expenses total more than \$10,000, consider other sources of revenue (other grant competitions, contests, crowdfunding, etc.), and list those potential revenue sources in the “Project Revenue” section of the budget. Note in the details section the status of each revenue line item (e.g., note if you are planning on applying to a grant, have applied and won, in the process of organizing a crowdfunding campaign, etc.).