Proposal Writing

TIPS FOR WRITING A WINNING PROPOSAL WITH EXAMPLES
What is a proposal?

- **An argument** used to convince an individual or organization to approve one or more activities
  - often written, sometimes oral
  - often to secure funding

- *What do you get out if it? A chance to:*
  - map out/define goals.
  - understand how activity will enhance: major studies, general education, or life knowledge.
  - discover/respond to opportunities: to carry out activities meaningful to you and/or a project sponsor
Proposal Elements

- Introductory statement
- Project Narrative
- Methodology (for research proposals) – including Institutional Review Board submission if working with human subjects or review for working with animals
- The So What – for me, the project, the organization
- Outcomes/Evaluation
- Dissemination
- Budget and Budget Narrative
- Letters of Recommendation
Before Writing

- Think about what you know (content, skills) and what you want to know

- Research possibilities for advancing your knowledge and skills

- Outline a plan that connects to opportunities

- If you think there is a match, develop a feasible, detailed plan

- Whatever you want to do, consider the ethical implications
Introductory Statement

The who, what, where, why and how: the elevator speech

Try again! “I am a museum studies major and I need practical experience. So, I want to go to the Smithsonian. I understand it’s a great museum.”

On target. “I am seeking funding to be able to participate in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History’s 2012 summer internship program in Washington D.C. to gain experience doing curatorial research for exhibit planning in one of the major public museums of the United States.”
Try again. “I have applied for an internship at X Company; however, there are many areas in the company and I’m not sure which ones I’m most interested in, maybe HR, maybe marketing. So I completed a general application and don’t know what my responsibilities would be. They sent me an e-mail thanking me for my application. I hope to hear from them soon. I think it would be good for me to live in a big city and work in a big company because I’ve never done that before. I am prepared to do whatever they ask and more. I don’t know if they might be able to pay me”
On target. “I am a history major at Beloit College with a museum studies minor. Thus far I have concentrated in history of the American experience, including doing archival work at Beloit College to understand the lives of early 20th century Beloit students. This research formed the basis for the exhibit I curated for a museum studies course in Exhibit Design and Development. By participating in the Smithsonian internship, to which I have already been accepted, I will expand my repertoire of research skills, become familiar with the holdings of a major public museum, and enter into a community of established and aspiring museum practitioners. The experience will help me to determine the further course of my studies as well as my post-graduation path.”
**Methodology**

**The how**

**Try again!** “I would like to compare gang violence in two major US cities. I am not sure which cities, but probably L.A., New York or Miami because of the high incidence of gang violence there. I would start by locating gang leaders to interview. This opportunity would help me gain experience for applying to graduate school in social work.”
On target. “I am interested in the relationship between gangs and the communities in which they operate and focused on this topic in a sociology course this past semester, but need first hand experience. Therefore, I am proposing to return to the city where I was raised, Los Angeles, to volunteer with A Better Los Angeles, an organization that tries to help youth avoid gang membership by empowering them and their communities. As a volunteer, I will spend part of my time tutoring children, which will both help me understand their lives and enable me to share some of the education I’ve been privileged to receive. I will also help the organization with their fundraising efforts, chiefly by writing publicity materials for them, but also doing office work and other tasks. These activities will give me insight into both how such organizations operate and how the knowledge and skills I have gained so far can be applied to improve the lives of communities.”
The markers of the project’s success

Try again. Couch surfing is going to be a great way to travel around and meet people, and I’m sure I’ll have a lot of great stories to tell when I get back.
Outcomes/Evaluation

On target. I will be trained and work along professional community organizers conducting one-on-one interviews with teens, community leaders and law enforcement officers. The final product will be a report with an analysis of the problem and recommendations to be presented to the city council. This opportunity will give me an opportunity to use the theories I have learned in my sociology and psychology courses, as well to explore community organizing, social work or research as possible paths for my professional and academic future. I plan to do follow-up research on teen violence for my senior capstone project.
Dissemination

- How will others learn from your project?

**Try again.** I’ve not yet been to one of the symposiums the College puts on, but I imagine that would be a cool way to present what I did.
How will others learn from your project?

On target. I plan to present my findings in the November international symposium. More than that, however, I want to bring what I learn back to benefit both the college and the city of Beloit community. I’m thus working with my advisor on a plan to work with other health and society students to hold a series of focus groups on questions related to perceptions of health as well as access to health in Rock County. At the end of the project, we’ll invite the focus group participants to a session in which we’ll present our findings.
Budget

What will I need to accomplish my project?

Try again.

- $300 - to get from the airport to my project site and for transportation while there
- $500 - for room and board
- $200 - for other expenses that may come up
## Budget

**On target.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sub-Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RT public bus from airport to city bus terminal</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RT bus to project site</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room and 14 meals/week w. host family</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 lunches/week @ $3 = $21</td>
<td>$21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 wks. health insurance with med. evacuation vac/repatriation</td>
<td>$64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$569</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* I will not need local transportation as I will be able to walk from my host family to my project site.
Letters of Recommendation

- Request letters well in advance

- Choose referees who can speak to
  - the validity and feasibility of your project
  - your ability to carry it out

- Give a copy of the proposal to the referee and discuss it as well
To Keep in Mind

- Align your proposal with any guidelines specified by the call for proposals
  - alternatively, align your proposal with the organization’s mission and activities
- Speak to the audience
  - who may not know you or Beloit College
- Be detailed but also precise
  - avoid meaningless generalities
- Focus on value and feasibility
  - the project needs to be worthwhile, doable (by you), and lead somewhere
Institutional Review Board

Schedules and Policies

The IRB reviews proposals for research involving human participants on campus. If you will be conducting such research please review the Beloit College IRB Procedures.

The Review Process

Proposals submitted to the IRB will likely be of two varieties, those that require standard review and those that require expedited review. Proposals requiring standard review will need to be evaluated by the entire committee that usually meets once a month. Expedited review requires only the evaluation of the chair of the IRB, and as a result, is often completed more quickly. If you are not sure how to characterize your proposal please select the appropriate links above, or contact the chair of the IRB.

Submitting Proposals

The committee requires that proposals be submitted using the on-line submittal form. Most proposals will require an acknowledgement and consent form. Please use the standard form provided here.

Deadlines

Submit proposals for standard review at least one month prior to the meeting time. Proposals submitted for expedited review should allow up to two months of processing time.
Funding Opportunities

Pay close attention to all application and deadline requirements before submitting any fellowship application. Schedule an appointment at the Liberal Arts in Practice Center for assistance in identifying appropriate funding opportunities and developing your funding proposal.

- **Beloit-Only Opportunities**
- **National Fellowships and Scholarships**
Common Grant Application Criteria and Instructions

The Initiatives Program, Office of International Education, and the Liberal Arts in Practice Center Grants and Fellowships

Complete descriptions of funds can be found at the Initiatives and International Education sites.

Award criteria

- The strength and feasibility of the proposed project
- Connection between the proposed project and the student’s prior and projected educational experiences and other activities
- The strength of the student’s academic record, as reflected in the student’s transcript and recommendation
- Consistency of the project with the aims of the specific grant

Scope of activities supported by student grants

First and second year students applying for project grants are generally positioned well to work for an organization as volunteers or interns. Any research they will do either in conjunction with work for an organization or independent of it, however, will need to be confined to participant/observation activities and/or informal conversations. Students more advanced in their studies may also apply for funding to work as volunteers or interns.
### How can I use Beloit College grant funds?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airfare</td>
<td>Faculty-led projects/courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research expenses</td>
<td>Airfare to home country, study abroad site, or country under travel warning/ban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room/board</td>
<td>Risky activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference fees</td>
<td>Borrowable equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition for a specialized course (not offered by Beloit)</td>
<td>Personal expenses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How and When do I apply?

- Use common grant application
- Indicate which funds you want to be considered for
  - LAPC, Venture, Intl Ed/Weissberg
- Submit to lapc@beloit.edu
- Deadlines:
  - Monday after spring break for summer
  - Monday after fall break for winter (International Education and Weissberg Grants)
Application Components

1. Project/Internship Description
2. Rationale
3. Methodology (research projects only)
4. Status/Contingency Plan
5. Academic and Personal Development
6. Outcome/Dissemination
7. Budget
Grants for Students

Grants during winter and summer breaks (click below for details):

International Education Grants
Weissberg International Human Rights Grants

Grants during study abroad:

Study Abroad Enhancement Grants

Intern at the International Rescue Committee in Washington, D.C. Study the Cirque Nouveau in Paris. Conduct field research on economic reform in India. Purchase art supplies to use with street children in Quito. Travel to rural farms to conduct research on organic farming methods.

All are examples of projects undertaken by Beloit College students, some during a study abroad semester, some over the winter or summer break. In each case, the projects allowed the students to get hands-on experience related to their studies. Funding from Beloit College's grant programs for international education made each a reality.

Tips for Writing a Successful Proposal
Internship Opportunities in Human Rights

Note: This list is not exhaustive. An asterisk (*) indicates organizations that have hosted a Beloit College student in the past.

Africa Center for Strategic Studies* (Arlington, VA)

“The Africa Center is the pre-eminent Department of Defense institution for strategic security studies, research, and outreach in Africa. The Africa Center engages African partner states and institutions through rigorous academic and outreach programs that build strategic capacity and foster long-term, collaborative relationships.”

African American Planning Commission, Inc (New York, NY)

“The African American Planning Commission (AAPCI) Inc. is a New York City-based 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization committed to addressing homelessness and the related issues of domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, housing shortage, and unemployment within the communities in which we live and serve.”

aidha (Singapore)

“aidha is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to 'enriching lives through financial education.' Inspired by UNIFEM's National Committee, Singapore, aidha serves women migrant workers. We provide confidence-building, money management, and entrepreneurship training. We also offer the micro-credit services necessary to launch small businesses back home.”

American Civil Liberties Union (New York, NY)

“The ACLU is our nation’s guardian of liberty, working daily in courts, legislatures and
Thank you and good luck!