Agenda

- What are the elements of a grant proposal?
- Tips for developing a successful grant application strategy
- Grant opportunities for dairy farmers
- How do I get or renew a UEI?

What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Request for Proposal (RFP) Request for Application (RFA)

- This is the grant user guide, and it should tell you:
  - Who is eligible
  - What can be funded
  - Cap/minimum awards
  - What amount needs to be matched
  - How the money will be distributed
  - Important dates (when the application will open, when an info session will happen, when the deadline is)
  - How to apply
- Read it carefully, follow the rules, mirror its language, stay solidly within its funding priorities

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What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Grant Narrative

– This is the story you are telling for why you MUST get this grant

– The narrative is written in response to questions that will request information such as:

- What is your project (e.g., what are you building, buying, installing, creating, etc.)?
- How does it fit the grant guidelines?
- How will it impact your business/who will benefit?
- What will happen if you don't get the grant?
- What are your objectives? (Use SMART goals)
- Why are you qualified to carry out this project/how do you know if will be a success?

| Specific | Measurable | Attainable | Relevant | Time-bound |

What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Grant Narrative

– When you are writing your narrative it should be:

- Written formally with no spelling or grammar errors (use software or a proofreader to ensure that this is the case)

- Be grounded firmly in reality

- Be interesting and engaging to read (a narrative is a STORY)

- Drive home the point that this grant is "the bridge to a greener pasture"
  - You may want to use phrases such as "This project is the missing link between x and y"

What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Grant Narrative

– Workplan

- This is one of the most important parts of the narrative

- It should not be a block of written text but rather a detailed list of tasks

- It should include steps that build on one another and are associated with dates of completion
  - For instance: If you are requesting equipment, you should work closely with vendors to establish when items will be delivered, installed, and when training will occur
  - Ask questions of the vendors or partners that are doing the work on your grant to get estimates of when work will be completed if the grant is successful

What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Budget

– Your budget and narrative work together to tell the story of your project

– Your budget should be as detailed as possible including:
  - Each item or service you are purchasing with grant funds
  - Other items that you will need to purchase as part of the project that are not eligible for grant funding ("skin in the game")
  - Installation costs
  - Labor costs from your team
  - Matching funds that add up to the proper percent match required (and then some)

EXAMPLE - SDBII Budget Calculation Tool

Equipment Purchases, Supplies, Materials, Installation, etc.

Item Description	# of Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Match Amount	Amount from this Grant
Automatic Milking System Unit (Balance After Down Payment)	1	$175,000.00	$175,000.00	$0.00	$175,000.00
Down Payment for AMS Unit (Paid 5/22/23)	1	$50,000.00	$50,000.00	$50,000.00	$0.00
Installation of AMS Unit by Vendor	1	$100,000.00	$100,000.00	$83,000.00	$17,000.00
Shipping and Delivery of AMS Unit	1	$5,000.00	$5,000.00	$0.00	$5,000.00

Note: Down payments for project equipment made outside of the grant period CAN be used as matching funds as long as the balance is paid and reimbursed within the grant period.

Consultant Services/Contractors

Service Professional	# of Hours	Hourly Rate	Total Cost	Match Amount	Amount from this Grant
Training and Installation from AMS Vendor	30	100	3000	$0.00	3000

Facility Renovation and Building Supplies

Activity Description	# of Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Match Amount	Amount from this Grant
AMS Barn Contruction	1	$500,000.00	$500,000.00	$0.00	$0.00

Note: Construction is not an eligible expense and therefore is not eligible as a source of matching funds. However, it is useful to show expenses that are not eligible for reimbursement or match to reflect the overall investment that the applicant is making to complete the project

Employee Labor

Position or Title	# Hrs./Week	Hourly Rate	Total Cost	Match Amount	Amount from this Grant
Demolition in Preparation for Barn Construction	50hrs (2 weeks)	15	$1,500.00	$0.00	$0.00

Note: Labor from employees of the applicant entity is not eligible for reimbursement or match

Other (i.e. permits, registrations, licensing, fees, etc.)

Activity Description	# of Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Match Amount	Amount from this Grant

Total Costs

Non-Grant Expenditures		Total Cost	Match Amount	Amount from this Grant
$634,500.00		$834,500.00	$133,000.00	$200,000.00

Match Percent (Must Be at Least 25%)
66.5%

Note: Match percentage will be automatically calculated based on the Match Amount cells and Amount from this Grant cells

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What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Quotes

– Your budget costs should be supported with quotes

– Professional looking quotes that are detailed are preferred

– Include as much information as possible (shipping, installation, etc.)

– Make sure quotes are up-to-date so (if there is inflation and you don't account for it, you will pay the price)

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What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Letters of Support (LOS) & Letters of Commitment (LOC)

– LOS: Similar to a letter of recommendation from a trusted authority

– LOC: A letter from a partner on the grant that will help to carry out the work

– LOS/LOC show that other stakeholders are invested in your project

– They show that others trust you to carry out the project and see it though to the end

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What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Letters of Support (LOS) & Letters of Commitment (LOC)

– A good writer of an LOS/LOC
  - Knows your business
  - Is familiar with your project
  - Extension Agent/Specialist
  - TDA personnel (inspector, business development officer, etc.)
  - Co-op or processor representative/liaison
  - Specialist who has briefed you on the feasibility of the proposed project
  - Consultant
  - Other technical assistance provider/expert in the relevant field

What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Letters of Support (LOS) & Letters of Commitment (LOC)

– If you want someone to write a letter for you, provide a template that:

- Gives them clear instructions of the latest you need it by (ideally a week before the grant is due)
- Hits on the key points in your narrative
- Is different from other templates that you have provided to other letter writers
- Uses their area of specialty/knowledge to build up the parts of your project where it is relevant

What are the elements of a grant proposal?

Business Plan

– Should be recently updated (ideally with a section detailing your plans for this project)

– Written professionally with no spelling or grammatical errors

– Written using standard business plan layout

- AgPlan https://agplan.umn.edu/

– Include financial projections or pro forma (potentially with and without the proposed improvements)

Find a useful presentation on net present value here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4MxalY1CWw

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Tips for Developing a Successful Grant Application Strategy

- **Planning Stage (Don't Go it Alone!):**

  - Put a team together
    - Take grant opportunities seriously and make it a priority of your business strategy and communicate that to the other members of your team

    - Recruit helpers that are suited to the task and find it exciting

    - One person isn't likely to have all of the qualities needed to put together a good grant; collaboration is key

    - If you don't feel you have time or someone on your team that can undertake grant writing, then hire a grant writer to help

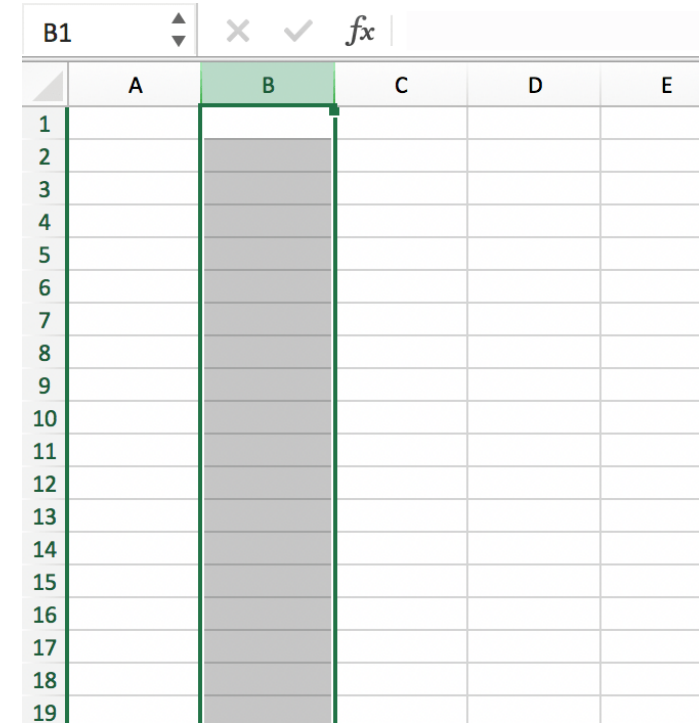# Tips for Developing a Successful Grant Application Strategy

- **Planning Stage:**

  - Do Your Research!
    - Get on Google and do a search
    - Ask your county agent or someone from TDA
    - Talk to other farmers

  - Keep a Grant Calendar
    - Record what you find in a spreadsheet with categories like this one:

Grant	Info Meeting Date/Link	Due Date	Cap	Match	Point Person	Submission Date	Funded (Y/N)	Amount Awarded

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Tips for Developing a Successful Grant Application Strategy

More Planning…

– Develop a list of improvements that need to be made on your farm

– Match needed improvements with grant RFP/funding priorities

– When a grant is announced read the RFP and watch or participate in the info session (if there is one)

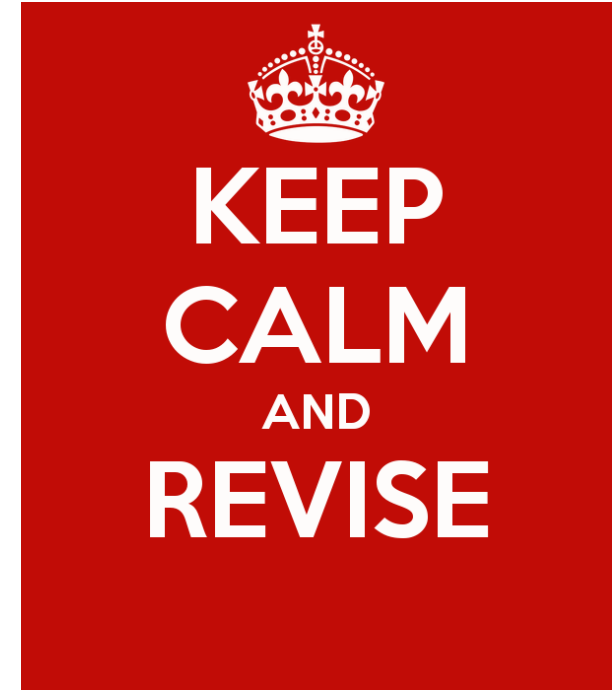# Tips for Developing a Successful Grant Application Strategy

Make Contact:

– Contact the grant coordinator by email or over the phone

- • Prepare questions ahead of time such as:
  - – What projects have been successful in the past (assuming the grant has been offered before)?
  - – Can you give an example of a project that would be a great fit for this project?
  - – How many applications were received for this grant call last year? Of those how many were successful?
  - – How many grants do you expect to award this year?
  - – How can I make my application stand out?
  - – What mistakes do applicants make that prevents them from being successful?
  - – Would x project be a good fit for what this grant is intended for?

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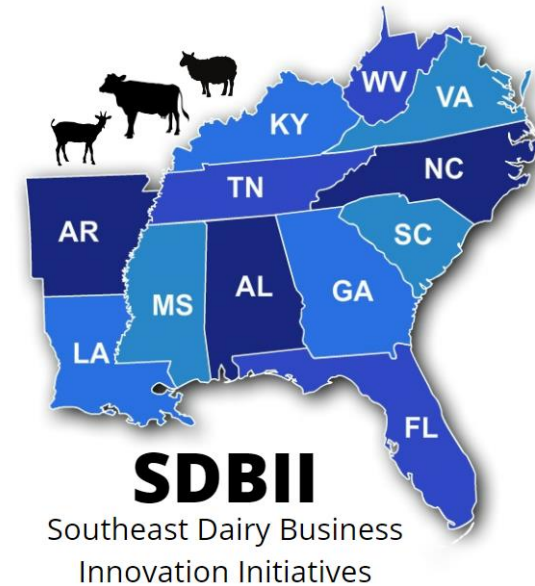# Tips for Developing a Successful Grant Application Strategy

Draft, Edit, Submit

– Have someone you know is a good writer AND someone who is a good businessperson read your application before you submit

- Get comments and make changes based on feedback

– Don't get discouraged if you aren't successful the first time around

- Reach out for feedback and scoring information

- If you plan on applying again, make sure that you incorporate the changes

- If at first you don't succeed, try, try again!

KEEP CALM AND REVISE

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Grant Opportunities for Dairy Farmers

SDBII Grants

– Farm Infrastructure Improvement Grant (Due June 2)

https://sdbii.tennessee.edu/farm-infrastructure-improvement-grant/

– Precision Technology and Management Grant (Due June 2)

https://sdbii.tennessee.edu/precision-technology-and-management-grant/

– New Processor Grant (Opening in July)

https://sdbii.tennessee.edu/beginning-processor-grant/

– Specialty Processing Equipment Investment Grant (Opening in July)

https://sdbii.tennessee.edu/specialty-equipment-processing-grant/

Grant Opportunities for Dairy Farmers

Tennessee Department of Agriculture Grants

– TAEP Grants (Due in October)

https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/farms/taep.html

– FARM Cost Share program (Round 2 due November 2022; Round 3 March 2024)

https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/topic/farm.html

Grant Opportunities for Dairy Farmers

USDA Grants

– Value-Added Producer Grant

https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/value-added-producer-grants

Informational video series by Center for Profitable Agriculture:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1FHPJRjEIzvNwIctLQCeF4sBsQdDQRJq

– Rural Energy Access Program (REAP) Grant

https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/energy-programs/rural-energy-america-program-renewable-energy-systems-energy-efficiency-improvement-guaranteed-loans

https://utextensionced.tennessee.edu/rural-energy-for-america-program-workshop-2023/

– NRCS https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives

Grant Opportunities for Dairy Farmers

Other Opportunities

– SARE (Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education)

https://southern.sare.org/grants/apply-for-a-grant/producer-grants/

– American Farmland Trust

https://farmland.org/brighter-future/

– SDBII Other Grants Page

https://sdbii.tennessee.edu/opportunities/

Unique Entity Identifier

Written Guide:

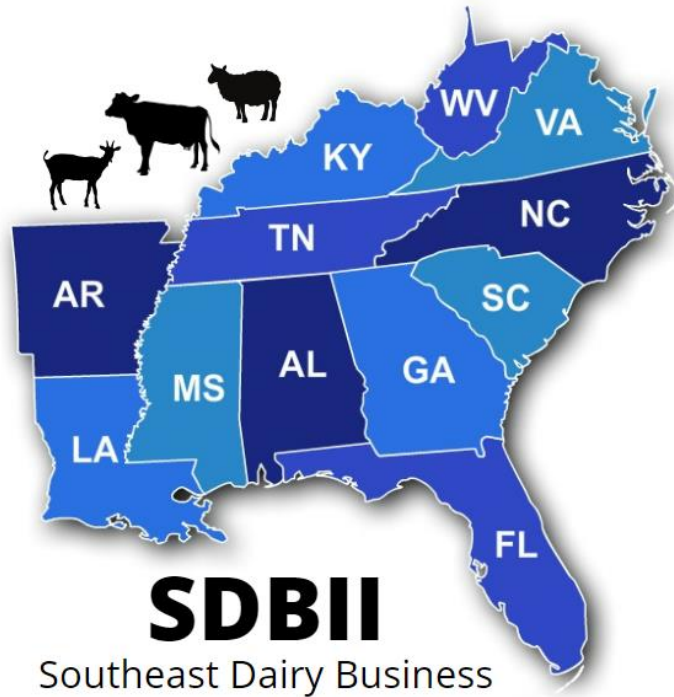For nearly all of the opportunities discussed today you will need a UEI from SAM.GOV

Written Guide:
Click tab above the video: https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/topic/farm.html

Video Guide:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uv1YNAsINk

Thank you! Questions?

Shep Stearns

sstearn1@utk.edu

(860) 595-6053

https://valueaddeddairy.tennessee.edu

Southeast Value-Added Discussion Group

SDBII
Southeast Dairy Business
Innovation Initiatives