21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies and Tips #1 (01/31/13)

Strategies

1. Become familiar with the 21st CCLC application and scoring rubric by reviewing the attached FY12 application and rubric.

2. Create a steering committee that:

    a. Forms two grant writing teams. Team one is to write the application and incorporate team two's feedback into the final document. Team two (*Review Team*) is to read and score the draft application using the current year's scoring rubric and forward suggested edits to team one.

    b. Identifies an independent project evaluator to assist with the writing of the *goals, objectives and milestones* and *evaluation* components of the 21st CCLC application.

    c. Identifies financial strategies to sustain the program at the conclusion of 21st CCLC funding and cover the 15% reduction of grant funds in year three of the project.

    d. As soon as the 21st CCLC application is issued by the Maryland State Department of Education, creates a timeline that lists contributors and their responsibilities.

Tip

1. Commence the needs assessment prior to the issuance of the FY13 21st CCLC application using the information in the FY12 application and scoring rubric to guide the needs assessment. Be sure to:

    a. Gather both quantitative (e.g., test scores, absentee rates, and parents' educational levels) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups, etc.) data.

    b. Use multiple data sources (teachers, students, parents, school, census, economic, etc.).

    c. Gather national or state data to establish the problem's existence outside of the local area and confirm the likelihood that in similar situations, programming beyond the school day has helped to improve the situation.

    d. Use local data to document the problem in the local area and include relevant demographics and other statistics from the *Maryland School Performance Report* and/or your local management board's needs assessment for each and every population you intend to serve.

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies and Tips #2 (02/07/13)

1. Use needs assessment results to:

   a. Identify the target populations and their needs.

   b. Solicit additional partners and stakeholders, including educators from the targeted school(s), who have: 1) missions aligned with the purpose of the 21st CCLC grant; 2) expertise working with the proposed target populations; 3) resources needed by the target populations and/or grant applicants; and 4) a history of working collaboratively with other agencies.

      Notes: A 21st CCLC grant partner is an organization/agency that is actively engaged in the planning and implementation of the project and has a long-term commitment of resources (e.g., fiscal and human capital). A vendor providing a product or service, such as a series of dance lessons, with no other input or responsibility for the 21st CCLC project is not a partner.

   c. Establish project goals, objectives, and milestones.

      Notes:
      Goals, objectives, and milestones are measurable, realistic, and outcome-oriented, referencing state, local or school-defined data or standards and identify the target population. **Every goal, objective, and milestone** is to describe a change in a target population. Statements that describe strategies or management issues are not proper **goals, objectives, or milestones**.

   d. Form a subcommittee that includes educators from the targeted school(s) to review educational research and evaluation studies to identify potential research-based strategies/programs that meet the identified needs of the target populations.

1. Designate one person on the first grant writing team to be the lead writer and others as contributors so the application is written in one voice.

2. Include the project evaluator as a member of the second grant writing team (review team).

3. Have the first grant writing team write a draft of the *extent of need* and *goals, objectives, and milestones* components of the 21st CCLC application prior to the issuance of the FY13 request for proposals.

4. Have the *Grant Writing Review Team* read and score the aforementioned draft using the FY12 scoring rubric and provide feedback to team one.

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies & Tips #3 (02/14/13)

Strategies

1. Survey students at the targeted school(s) to identify potential enrichment and service-learning activities. Visit the proposed 21st CCLC project site(s) to ascertain which of the identified enrichment activities can be accommodated.

2. Survey the parents at the targeted school(s) to identify the types of services and resources they may need. Based upon survey results identify potential partners who have: 1) missions aligned with the purpose of the 21st CCLC grant; 2) expertise providing the identified services; 3) the identified resources; and 4) a history of working collaboratively with other agencies.

Tip

1. Prior to issuance of the 21st CCLC RFP, go to the following websites and review the information on:

   a. Service-learning at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/servicelearning/?WBCMODE=Presen%0d.

   b. Character education at http://www.msde.maryland.gov/NR/rdonlyres/22DF6F65-9763-44EF-B086-B91687EE39A2/31685/CharacterEducation_ServiceLearning_2012_.pdf.

   c. Free meals and snack for school-year 21st CCLC projects at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/22DF6F65-9763-44EF-B086-B91687EE39A2/34228/IncorporatingMeals_Snacks_21stCCLCProgrom_Nov2012_.pdf.

   d. Free meals for summer 21st CCLC projects at http://www.summerfood.usda.gov.

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies & Tips #4 (02/21/13)

Strategies

1. **Thoroughly read the entire *FY13 21st CCLC RFP* and *Scoring Rubric*** by March 14, 2013, and be prepared to ask any clarifying questions regarding the application at one of the ***Pre-Proposal Conferences*** *listed below or* at the ***Technical Assistance Webinar*** on Thursday, March 28, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

   Pre-Proposal Conferences will be held from 9:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in:

   a. Prince George's County on Thursday, March 14, 2013;
   b. Allegany County on Tuesday, March 19, 2013; and
   c. Kent County on Tuesday, March 26, 2013.

2. Have both the grant writing team and the grant writing review team peruse the *FY13 21st CCLC RFP* and *Scoring Rubric* **as soon as possible since there are salient changes to these documents**.

Tips

1. Email the *FY13 21st CCLC RFP* and *Scoring Rubric* to your potential partners.

2. Review the *Summary of Dates* on page one of the 21st CCLC RFP.

3. Peruse and become familiar with the *Priorities* (pages 2-3) and *Funding and Length of Grant* (page 3) components of the 21st CCLC RFP.

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies & Tips #5 (02/28/13)

The FY13 21st CCLC RFP states that grantees will be funded at 100% the first year, 100% the second year, 85% the third year, 75% the fourth year, and 50% the fifth year depending on availability of funding.

Strategy

1. Form a supplemental funding subcommittee that includes partners and educators from the targeted school(s) to seek supplemental funds to augment 21st CCLC funding.

Note: Grantees receiving 21st CCLC funding may need supplemental funding for two reasons. First, they may need funds to cover the reduction of 21st CCLC funding in years three through five. Lastly, they may need funding to sustain their projects at the end of the five year 21st CCLC funding cycle.

For a list of potential supplemental funding sources, go to http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/21centurycommunity and click on *Potential Funding Sources*. Grantees may seek these funds to meet the two aforementioned funding needs as well as to assist them in the implementation of their service learning projects. Applicants not awarded 21st CCLC funds may seek these funds for extended learning opportunities.

Tips

1. Keep a copy of the latest draft of your application on at least two different devices (e.g., a computer hard drive and an USB flash drive or on two different USB flash drives).

2. Save your work every 15 minutes to both devices.

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies & Tips #6 (03/07/13)

The FY13 21st CCLC RFP states that a compelling proposal will have a clearly defined problem supported by a needs assessment. A needs assessment is a systematic review of information collected from a variety of referenced sources and prioritized for action in the proposal.

Strategies

1. Attend at least one of the following 21st CCLC Pre-Proposal conferences from 9:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. on:

   a. **Thursday, March 14, 2013** at Prince George's County Board of Education Auditorium, Sasscer Administration Building, 14201 School Lane, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772;
   b. **Tuesday, March 19, 2013** at Frostburg State University, 101 Braddock Road, Lane University Center, Atkinson Room, Frostburg, Maryland 21532; and
   c. **Tuesday, March 26, 2013** at Kent County Public Schools, Board of Education Office, 5608 Boundary Avenue, Rock Hall, Maryland 21661.

   Note: Thoroughly read the entire 21st CCLC RFP and *Scoring Rubric* by March 14, 2013, and be prepared to ask any clarifying questions regarding the application and rubric at one of the pre-proposal conferences.

2. Very strongly encourage the lead grant writer and a member of the grant review team to attend one of the 21st CCLC pre-proposal conferences.

Tip

1. **Apply to be a 21st CCLC reviewer**

   Note: After reading and scoring several 21st CCLC proposals, each reviewer gains insights on how to write a better application. For more detailed information regarding the reviewer application process, go to http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/21centurycommunity .

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies & Tips #7 (03/13/13)

Strategy

1. Form two grant writing teams. Team one is to write the application.   Team two (*Review Team*) is to read and score the draft application using the new FY13 scoring rubric and forward suggested edits to team one.   Team one then incorporates the review team's feedback into the final document.

Tips

1. Follow meticulously the RFP guidelines and directions and: 1) use tables or charts to illustrate information or display data; 2) define all acronyms; 3) cite data and other sources; and 4) document the need for the proposed project with data.

2. Solicit input frequently from partners, key stakeholders, educators from the targeted school(s), and the target populations.

Grant Writing Resources (located at
http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/21centurycommunity)

1. Partner selection

2. Research-based programs

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies & Tips #8 (03/21/13)

 Strategies

1. Thoroughly read the entire 21st CCLC RFP and *Scoring Rubric* by Wednesday, March 27, 2013, and be prepared to participate in the **21st CCLC Technical Assistance Webinar** on Thursday, March 28, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

   For login information, go to
   http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/21centurycommunity .

2. Strongly encourage the principal or his/her designee from each targeted school to attend all planning and steering committee meetings. Principals/designees need to be actively involved in the planning of the proposed programs. Principals'/designees' expertise are needed in establishing major program policies, reviewing quarterly milestones and annual evaluation reports, and making recommendations for programmatic change.

Tips

1. After developing project goals, objectives, and milestones, have your evaluator and the grant writing review team use the new scoring rubric to verify that these outcomes contain all required elements.

2. Get the required signatures and letters of commitment from all project partners and principals of participating schools prior to Friday, April 19, 2013.

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies & Tips #9 (03/27/13)

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategy Highlight
Thoroughly read the entire 21st CCLC RFP and *Scoring Rubric* by Wednesday, March 27, 2013, and be prepared to participate in the **21st CCLC Technical Assistance Webinar** on Thursday, March 28, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Click on the link below for login information.

http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/21centurycommunity/webinar_2013.htm

Strategies

1. Identify potential partners who have: 1) missions aligned with the applicants; 2) expertise working with the target population(s); 3) resources needed by the target population(s) and/or applicants; and 4) **a history of working collaboratively with other agencies**.

2. Invite potential partners to a grant overview informational session where: 1) the purpose and requirements of the 21st CCLC grant and needs assessment results are shared; 2) their questions are answered; and 3) and as appropriate, they are invited to form a partnership with the applicants.

Tips

1. If possible, submit your 21st CCLC application at least one day prior to the Tuesday, April 30, 2013 deadline.

2. Have the budget calculations verified by at least one individual not involved with the development of the grant.

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategies & Tips #10 (04/04/13)

21st CCLC Grant Writing Strategy Highlight

Meaningful support and input from partners only enhance a 21st CCLC application. The selection of appropriate 21st CCLC project partners is crucial to the development of a high quality 21st CCLC application.

Strategies

1. Have at least two individuals not on either the grant writing team or the grant writing review team peruse the 21st CCLC application for readability, thoroughness, completeness, accuracy, typographical errors, and grammatical structure.

2. Have at least two individuals not on either the grant writing team or the grant writing review team ensure that the final 21st CCLC application meets assembling and submission requirements.

3. Allow partners and stakeholders to review the FY13 21st CCLC RFP prior to submission.

Tips

1. Commence implementing financial strategies to sustain the program at the conclusion of 21st CCLC funding and cover the reduction of grant funds in years three through five of the project.

2. Have the project evaluator assist with the writing of the *goals, objectives and milestones* and *evaluation* components of the 21st CCLC application.