

## Webinar Chats - Selected Q&A

### Session 1

Johanna Ramos: **What are some ways of collecting qualitative results?**

Mae Anne Hale: Testimonials from participants / surveys where they can leave feedback has been powerful for us.

Geoffrey Benn: We like doing post-event google surveys for qualitative feedback

Amy Dale: **If given a chance to provide optional attachments, how many would you provide and which would you prioritize? Seems like providing all of these would overwhelm them.**

Aurora Heying: So true Amy, less is often more. I'd focus on the attachments that are most relevant to that funder and the ones that make you look the best. For example, if the funder cares a lot about environmental justice then your DEI statement would be good to highlight. If you have a really good piece of news coverage, then that might be good

Adam Malle: **whenever they restrict supplemental information, I will put several links into one PDF file so they can have access to a lot of information and articles**

Alice Sung: ^ yes, but I wonder: How to weigh overwhelm with less relevant stuff may weaken the proposal?

Adam Malle: the intent isn't necessarily to get them to read all of it is to present a strong track record and a positive message that is recognized by the community. Even if they only read one or two of the links, they will start making assumptions about the other ones based on the ones they did read and it will help to give that idea that your project is successful, your team is organized and your work is having results. At least in my experience with this strategy it has generally resulted with more positive grant results than one I don't include it

Timothy Bell: When I'm reviewing proposals. I will read an executive summary and MIGHT follow one link on some research or something interesting but definitely won't follow many links.

Commelita McKee: **You may cover this in a future session, but how important is your social media footprint? What are dos and don't's leading up to applying?**

Timothy Bell: As always, we think very important! However, for some groups that's more true than others. For example, smaller orgs don't always have websites that can be kept up to date. Funders will usually look for a social media presence if that is the case. It tells us what you have going on presently, if your proposal fits with that, etc.

Adam Malle: for our budget, I use a Google worksheet extension called "NP Budgeting" that is an engine that sets up Google worksheets as a class-based fund accounting system for nonprofits. It is really good for a free program

Gina Manders: **Is there a way to research whether or not an RFP is from a trustworthy organization?**

Dalya: Someone asked about how to tell if an RFP is from a reputable organization. You definitely want to avoid scams! [Candid.org](https://candid.org) has a vast database of funders that you can check out if you suspect an RFP is not legitimate. By the way, that website is also a great

place to list your organization for funders to find! They also have a vast library of free resources and you can even ask their online librarian questions.

### Session 3

Julie Hirsch: **We are a program with a non-profit fiscal sponsor. Is this a barrier?**

Liv, Regulatory Assistance Project: fiscal sponsorship has really grown, but you may want to prepare additional one-pagers that explain the relationship to your fiscal sponsor. not necessarily a barrier, but have prepared additional documentation that explains/prove the relationship.

Shruti Kaul: **If there isn't a lot of existing surveys, data collection, or program evaluation already, what is the most efficient and impactful data to start collecting?**

Liv, Regulatory Assistance Project: data points off the top of the dome: how many bikes you service annually, how many people you've trained, how has the training impacted their lives, can you assign quantities to the impact you make -- reduced tonnage of emissions, dollars added back into community, etc. But yeah, Dalya has it right: it depends on your program

Shruti Kaul: Awesome. Thank you

Julie Hirsch: **Is it better to ask for general support or for specific tasks?**

Aurora Heying (she/her): Hi Julie, it really depends on the specific funder. If they don't tell you upfront on their website or guidelines, it's a good idea to ask. Usually project support is most common, but that is definitely changing.

Juan Orozco: **What are the red flags that Fnd Officers note when reviewing a budget?**

Timothy Bell: Agreed with others. V good question. I'd say, as a PO at Rose, I'm looking for orgs to strike a balance in both their org budgets and project budgets. There should be a demonstrated need or place for Rose funding (i.e. we would be much less inclined to fund a project that is already fully funded). At the same time, I'm looking for realism and financial health (i.e. the project is not 100% reliant on one funding source). In other words, we are looking for a sweet spot between need and sustainability of funding

Xochitl Cortez: **Reserve Fund: Do funders support asking for their funds to go into reserve funds for organizational sustainability?**

Liv, Regulatory Assistance Project: I've never seen a funder agree to directly support a reserve fund, but have seen in grant agreements something like, 'any interest gained by these funds must be used for charitable purpose or the purposes outlined in this agreement.' I doubt there are many funders that'd directly support a reserve because of higher priorities

Timothy Bell: It depends on the funder and is something you'd definitely want to clarify with them. For example, Rose Foundation primarily supports project-based work. We would not be able to, based on the restrictions on the type of funding we generally have, support a rainy day fund for an org. But others would

Aurora Heying: Agreed, I think this would be unlikely. But this is an area you could use general

support grants for or other unrestricted donations

Adam Malle: <https://npbudgeting.com/> **this extension for Google sheets has been really great and it is very simple and intuitive.** Takes a little getting used to the mechanics of it but it's totally transformed how we budget given can't afford books some other significant accounting/ bookkeeping program

Ruth Blyther: be careful when making a plan b that you don't under budget your project. it is often better to not take funding reduction if you are feeling really squeezed

Adam Malle: **does the grant budget need to match the categories in your actual organizational budget?** Or should we make the grant budget more language precise instead of saying salaries listings out as they are in this document for example.

Liv, Regulatory Assistance Project: grant budget should match the categories funder wants to see. they often have their own templates. often the cost categories are similar across funders

Elizabeth Milos-Spanish Interpreter: Recordatorio sobre cuanto se debe solicitar: La presentadora había dicho que había que considerar dos cosas: Primero investigar cual es el promedio de monto de subvención que cada fundación otorga y segundo, mira cuanto seria un monto que haría un impacto para su programa y solo escoge una monto que sea el 50% de esa cifra. Como regla general.

Shruti Kaul: **How does a 20% G&A / indirect cost fee look ?**

Liv, Regulatory Assistance Project: 20% for indirect feels high, Shruti. For what it's worth, my org has a 15% rate and that percentage has always fallen within funder constraints

Edith Thacher: **Would the funder rather have entire items (ie food, youth stipend) or a portion of many items?**

Timothy Bell: This is another "it depends". Some funders don't mind contributing to whole line items to support a project broadly. But others may need to take a bit of everything to get enough qualifying work to justify making the grant. For example, I oversee Rose's water quality grants. If you submit a water quality project with a budget that only has us buying food, there isn't enough water quality improvement happening for me to make the grant. But if its food and supplies for riparian restoration, then I would be able to make the grant

Edith Thacher: Timothy - response is helpful. Match what I am asking for to the funder more than asking funder to cover everything.

Rose Lynn Abesamis-Bell: **How are fiscal sponsor fees categorized? Indirect or Direct?**

Aurora Heying: Indirect!

## Session 4

Adam Malle: our organization reoriented our budget into a fund accounting system with program class that are fairly broad to encompass several projects under three separate program in the budget. We modeled it around IRS chart of accounts even though we're sponsored And not technically required to. **Is it better to have a more functionally derived budget for grants rather than the more formal Style?**

Timothy Bell: I think it is best to tailor budgets to each grant request so I don't think there's a better per se. That said, I think a more "functional budget", as you put it, helps tell the story of the proposal better than a very formal, 1000 ft view budget.

LaDon Love: **Is there a suggestion of the order of stating the problem/need vs mission/impact**

Timothy Bell: In terms of telling your story, I think it makes sense to tell us who you are before you get to why you care about the problem and why you're uniquely positioned to deal with it.

Elizabeth Dougherty: **I'm also curious about the best way to show the inkind work of 50 interns a year**, that can seem like a crazy amount of inkind "\$\$" compared to our other income.

Richard Hull: In a previous session of this series someone mentioned that <https://independentsector.org/research/value-of-volunteer-time/> provides values for different kinds of in-kind support. Is it helpful to use that website to provide estimates of the value of an organization's in-kind support?

Adam Malle: when we were expanding and transitioning our organization and organization I was previously employed with, we had a lot of leaning into the transition period and house just transition is vital for the integrity of our work and to keep up with the change in the environment. That organization went from 17,000 to \$350,000 budget over the course of about five years. Granted that was during the pandemic and funding was a lot easier to come by

Adam: **How do we find funding for areas that are not racially diverse when so many funders are focused on diversity and equity?**

Liv, Regulatory Assistance Project: i'd highlight socioeconomic diversity, including age

SYLVIA BROWN: diversity is geographic diversity, gender diversity; i'm in rural south Arkansas and funding has not been equitable to rural communities. Adam consider the history of your coal area. I've learned that there were historic black and Asian mining communities. connect with the history and try to bridge the legacy of resilience with happenings now.