NY Seafood Businesses Access to Capital and Grant Writing 101 Webinar Outline

Introduction

Terms to know

- **Funding Notice Terminology**
  - Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
  - Request for Proposals (RFP)
  - Request for Applications (RFA)
- **Matching Funds or Cost Share**
  - Many Granting entities require that applicants secure a proportion of the funds to support a project through other sources.
  - Example: 50% (2:1) match or cost share means for every $100 requested you must contribute $50 in funds from another source.
  - In-kind - in some cases in-kind services can be used to meet the match requirements
    - In-kind services are non-monetary contributions and can include things like salary/time contributed to the project but not funded through the grain, waived fees, reduced rates, and donations.

- **Indirect Costs (IDC)** - are those charged by a business or institution to cover overhead or administrative expenses.
- **No Cost Extension (NCE)** - The term for extending the deadline to utilize the awarded funds without cost or penalty.
- **Letter of Intent (LOI)** - Letter indicating your intent to apply for a specific grant, including a brief description of the project scope and budget.
- **Grant** - money awarded to a company or organization to support a specific project or effort related to the grant purpose. While grants often require additional funds to be expended on the project, grants do not need to be repaid.
- **Loan** - money lent to an individual or entity with the expectation that those funds will be repaid, typically with interest.

Grant Process - General Overview

1. Funder releases NOFO/RFP/RFA informing potential applicants that there are funds available and the requirements for applying/receiving.
2. Some proposals may request a letter of intent (LOI) indicating you plan on applying and briefly outlining the project and budget.

    a. In some cases this is just a placeholder so the funder can assess how many and the types of projects that will be submitted. In this case you are typically only eligible to submit a full proposal if a LOI was submitted prior to the LOI submission deadline.

    b. Alternatively, some may request a LOI, which is then reviewed and applicants are either encouraged or discouraged to submit a full proposal. In this case, even if discouraged you can usually still submit a full proposal should you choose.

3. Grants are submitted to funder

4. Funder facilitates the review process, this will vary by funder but typically includes at least two rounds of review internally and externally along with a review panel discussion to discuss projects and decide on which will receive funding.

    a. This process can also take into consideration other factors when making decisions such as demographics, geography, and topical area of the project. These will typically be outlined in the NOFO/RFP/RFA.

5. Applicants are informed of the decision to fund or not.

6. Funded applicants will likely be contacted at this point to work through additional requirements and paperwork necessary to process the award.

Grant Writing 101

Identify Relevant Grant Opportunities

- Confirm eligibility
- Ensure award allows sufficient funds to support the project and that total budget is within the minimum and max allowable request.
- Make sure you review the NOFO/RFP/RFA to confirm allowable expenses
  - Note that many grants don't allow purchase of equipment and building of infrastructure.
- Ensure you can meet the match/cost share requirements

Draft Outline Based on Required Proposal Elements

Some key elements requested by funders may include:
- Introduction/background
  - Set the stage for what the issue or challenge is and how it can be addressed
- Goals/Objectives/Deliverables (what)
  - This should cover what you plan to do and any specific deliverables that will result from the award if funded

- ○ Goals and objectives should be clear, concise and realistic within the award period.
  - ○ Be careful to avoid having too many goals and objectives.
- Materials and methods (How)
  - ○ Provide more specific details on how you will achieve the goals and objectives of your proposal.
  - ○ This often includes a timeline for the project and completion of the deliverables.

- Benefit/impact
  - ○ Be sure to emphasize the benefit or impact of the project if awarded. This can be covered in the introduction and background as well.
  - ○ You are trying to convince the reviewer that this is important and should be funded.
  - ○ Think more broad than impact on your own organization or business. For example, "will help protect public health and protect consumers by allowing more effective control over potential food safety hazards"
- Program Evaluation
  - ○ How are you going to measure the success of your program or project? Many funders will want to know you have identified measurable ways to determine success and measure the impact of the funds awarded.
  - ○ You will also be required to submit reports to the funder periodically with updates on the projects, progress towards achieving your goals and objectives, and challenges and changes to the project over time.

Draft a Program/Project Budget

- Be as accurate as possible, get quotes and do your research.
- Ensure all costs in the budget are allowable expenses as outlined in the NOFO/RFA/RFP.
- Once funded you may not have the flexibility to adjust the budget depending on the funding source. Even when adjustments are allowed, there is an official process to request the change of budget and additional approvals needed.
- In addition to the budget table outlining the various cost types or categories (i.e. salary, equipment meeting/conference/ travel, contractors etc.) and dollar amount allocated to each, you will also need to provide a budget justification. This should provide as much detail as possible on what each line in your budget will be used for while still allowing for some flexibility.

Submit Proposal

- Try to have your proposal ready to submit well in advance of the deadline.
- Go through the NOFO/RFP/RFA to ensure you have not missed any required elements.
- Try to start uploading your proposal/submitting it in advance to avoid any delays in delivery/receipt due to technical issues.
- Most funders are very strict with proposal deadlines and submission even 1 minute after the deadline may not even be considered.

Post-award

- Funders will typically inform applicants if they were selected or recommended for funding within 2-5 months of submission.
- If awarded you will be required to track project progress and maintain financial records of costs/expenses.
- Financial and progress reports will typically need to be submitted to the funder periodically or at the very least at the end of the award period.

Resources

[Federal Grants: Grant Writing Basics (Grants.gov)](#)

NY State Grants

[Regional Council Capital Fund Program](#)

- Empire State Development Funds

[NYS Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Grants](#)

[New York Grown and Certified ITRD Grant](#)

- Nearly $6 million available for infrastructure and technology projects, research and development, and many capital costs will be allowed.
- Grant size range: $20,000 - $250,000 with 10% match required
- You must be a member but membership is free. Sign up at NY State Grown and

[Certified](#).

USDA Funding Opportunities:

1. [USDA Agricultural Marketing Service](#)
   - Local Food Promotion Program
   - Farm and Food Worker Relief Program
   - Local Agriculture Market Program
   - Regional Food System Partnerships

2. [USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#)
   - Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs Phase 1 and Phase 2
   - Special Research Grants Program Aquaculture Research
   - Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program
   - Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Foundational and Applied Science Program

3. [USDA Farm Service Agency](#)
   - Microloan Program
   - Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Loans
   - Guaranteed Farm Loans
   - Farm Operating Loans
   - [Farm Storage Facility Loan Program](#) - this program is not listed with those above

4. [USDA Rural Development](#)
   - Business and Industry Loan Guarantees in New York
   - Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvement Guaranteed Loans and Grants in New York
   - Value-Added Producer Grants in New York

NOAA Funding Opportunities:

1. Aquaculture Specific Funding
   - Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program
2. Fisheries Specific Funding
   - Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program (also applicable to aquaculture)
3. NOAA Financial Services
   - Fisheries Finance Program (FFP)
   - Capital Construction Fund Program

General Government Grant Website

- Grants.gov is a general website that lists all federal grants offered. Many listed in this document can also be found on this website by using the various filters to identify your preferences. Since it can be overwhelming to navigate, we linked them individually.

Northeast Regional Aquaculture Center (NRAC)

- Research funding that requires collaboration with partners from at least one other northeast state

Sea Pact Grant Opportunity

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Northeast

- Farmer Grant
- Research and Education Grant
- Research for Novel Approaches to Sustainable Agriculture
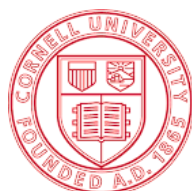
Business Planning and Loans

Stony Brook Small Business Development Center

As one of the twenty New York State Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), the **Stony Brook SBDC** operates under the auspices of the **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**, the **State of New York**, and **Stony Brook University**. We are dedicated to supporting local small business owners and entrepreneurs by offering **free, confidential, and comprehensive** business counseling and training services. Our goal is to help businesses launch, grow, enhance operations, and overcome challenges in today's competitive market.

Our **key services** include:

1. Business Counseling
2. Funding Assistance
3. Market Research
4. Training and Workshops
5. Export Assistance
6. Certification and Government Contracting
7. Disaster Recovery Support

For more information, please visit the Stony Brook Small Business Development Center. To schedule an appointment, please contact us at **631-632-9837** or email **sbdc@stonybrook.edu** for client registration instructions. You can visit nysbdc.org/locations.aspx to locate other SBDC offices throughout New York State.