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Then go on to give details, including:

- **Who is the target audience, and how will you involve them in the activity? How many people do you intend to serve?** Some projects have two audiences: the *direct participants* (the musicians in the community band, the kids doing summer clean-up in the parks) and the *indirect beneficiaries* (the music lovers in the audience, the people who use the parks). If so, describe both. How will you ensure that people actually participate in the program?
- **What are you going to do?** Describe the activities. Tell the funder about the project's "output," or how many "units of service" you intend to deliver over a specific time period: how many hours of nutrition counseling to how many pregnant women; how many HIV/AIDS hot-line calls answered by how many volunteers. Be sure you don't promise an unrealistic level of service.
- **What project planning has already taken place?** If you have already done research, secured the commitment of participants or done other initial work, describe it so the funder can see that you are well-prepared.
- **Who is going to do the work and what are their credentials?** (Attach résumés of key people.) Some funders ask for the name of a *project director*: the person most responsible for the project, whether volunteer or paid. Demonstrate that the staff or volunteers have the expertise to do a good job.
- **When will the project take place?** Some funders ask for the *project start date* and *project end date*. In general, a project can be said to start when you start spending money on it. If the project is long, consider including a timeline.
- **Where will the project take place?**

You may not know the answers to all these questions when you submit your proposal. But the more you know, the better the proposal will look. Apply the "mind's eye test" to your description. After reading it, could the reader close his eyes and imagine what he would see if he came into the room where your project is happening? Many project descriptions are too vague.

Remember: You can continue to submit updated information to foundation staff almost until the date the board actually reviews the proposal.

### Outcomes/Impact of Activities

Tell the funder what impact your project will have — what will change about the situation as a result of your project. For example, your pregnancy nutrition counseling program intends to increase the birth weights of your clients' babies.

The impact of a project is sometimes hard to define. What is the intended impact of a performance of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, for example?

Impact can be difficult to measure. The desired impact of a smoking cessation program is clear, but the desired impact of a leadership program for teenagers may be ambiguous and difficult to quantify.

To add to the difficulty, few nonprofits can prove conclusively that a given impact was caused directly by their project. Your clients' babies may weigh more, but the cause may not be your nutrition program. Nevertheless, you must do the best job you can to define your intended impacts.

*what other money do you have*  
**Other Funding** *(you can go over the budget)*  
 Here the funder wants to know if other organizations have committed funds to the project or been asked to do so. Few funders want to be the sole support of a project. (This may not be true if the project cost is very small — less than \$5,000 for instance — or if a corporation is seeking public visibility by sponsoring the project.) Funders generally expect you to ask for support from more than one source. In this section, you can also describe the in-kind contributions (goods or services instead of cash) that people are giving to the project.

### Future Funding

If you continue this project in the future, how will it be supported? Most funders don't want to support the same set of projects forever. Many funders see their niche as funding innovation: supporting new approaches to old problems or finding solutions to new problems.

What the funder really wants to see is that you have a long-term vision and funding plan for the project, that the project is "sustainable," especially if it is a new activity. If you don't have such a plan, start thinking about it — if not for your funders then for the success of your project or organization.

*has to be something substantial*  
**Evaluation** *be possible if you can make it*  
*you can continue the project*  
 How will you know whether you achieved the desired impacts? If you have done a good job of defining them (see above), all you need to do here is describe the information you will gather to tell you how close you came. Will you keep records of incoming hot-line calls? Will you call your counseling clients six months after they leave the program to ask how they are doing? Explain who will gather the evaluation information and how you will use it. Be sure your evaluation plan is achievable given your resources. If the evaluation will cost money, be sure to put that cost in the project budget.

### Budget

How much will the project cost? Attach a one- or two-page budget showing expected expenses and income for the project. Or you can use the budget format in the Minnesota Common Grant Application Form.

#### Expenses

Divide the expense side into three sections:

- Personnel Expenses.
- Direct Project Expenses.
- Administrative or Overhead Expenses.

*simple*  
*some thing achievable*  
**Personnel Expenses** include the expenses for all the people who will work on the project. They may be employees of your organization or independent contractors. If they are



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