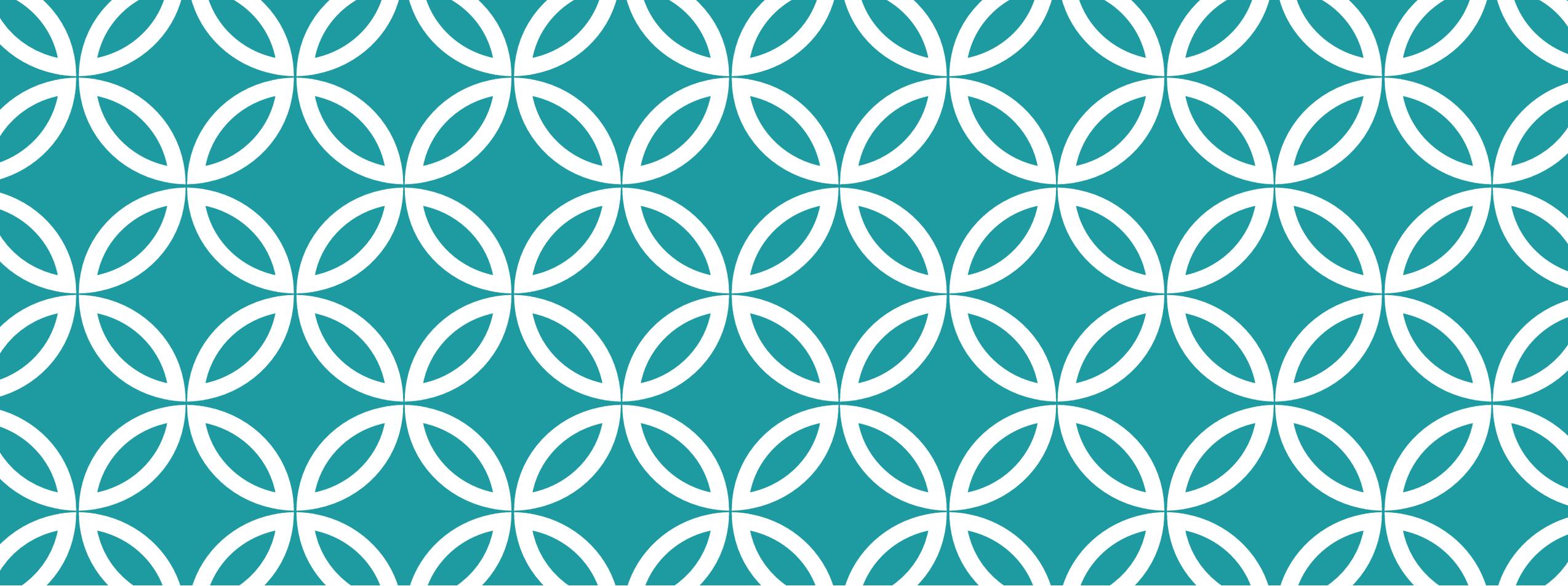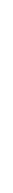# GRANT WRITING 101

PLANNING TO APPLY FOR GRANTS

PLANNING NEEDED TO BE A SUCCESSFUL GRANT WRITER

Your organization will need either:

❖ An approved fundraising plan

❖ A strategic plan with fund development efforts identified

❖ A prioritized listing of programs which need additional support

And you will need the support & collaboration of…

❖ your Board of Directors

❖ the Staff who will be implementing the program or changes

❖ your Partners

❖ your Director

➢ Low-hanging fruit can sometimes be the best place to start…to get your feet wet with application and implementation.
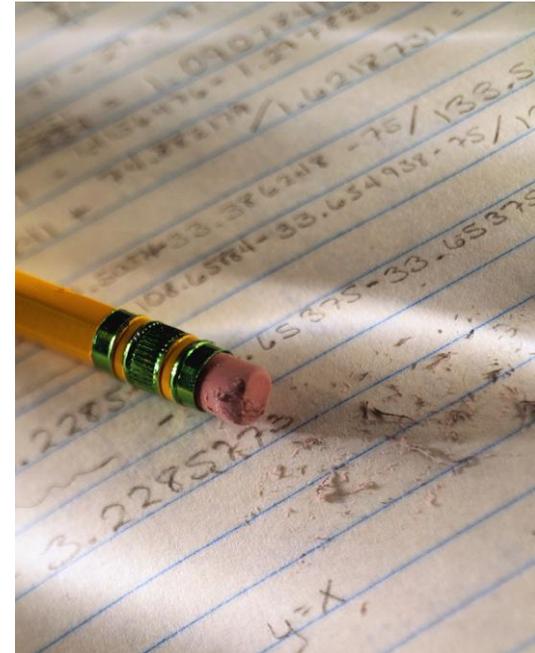
GATHERING EXISTING INFO — NOT RE-CREATING THE WHEEL!

Begin by gathering useful information to use in your grant proposals from existing materials or sources:

o Program brochures

o Web pages

o Previous grant proposals

o Strategic plans

o Co-workers knowledge

o Staff interviews/discussions

501(C) 3 STATUS — OR IRS DETERMINATION LETTER

If you do not have an IRS determination letter (i.e. 501(C)3 status) you may have difficulty obtaining a grant or you will find that you're ineligible for many funds. Don't despair, you can still find partners including future IdahoSTARS improvement grants and private funders that support your work.

For early childhood providers, if you can show that a large portion of your families access the Idaho Child Care Program (ICCP) you may have a solid proposal that may allow grantors to consider funding a program for those families alone.

An example might be for extra curricular activities for children whose families cannot afford to send them to swim lessons or to gymnastics. Some funders, especially individual donors, may fund projects such as this as long as there are very clear roles and responsibilities for collecting data, dispersing funds and measuring the impact.

PROGRAM VS. ORGANIZATION…

What is a Program?

A <u>program grant</u> is given to support a specific, connected set of activities with a beginning, an end, explicit objectives and a predetermined cost. When a funder gives a grant for a specific program it is generally a restricted grant and must be used only for the program. Programs (also called Projects) are related to the mission of the organization receiving the money.

EX: Curriculum to prevent child abuse.

What is an Organization?

The organization encompasses your entire budget and all programs. When a grant maker gives your organization an <u>operating grant,</u> you can use it to support the general expenses needed to operate your organization, from a specific program to the heating bill. An operating grant means the funder supports your entire organization's overall mission and trusts you to make good use of the money.
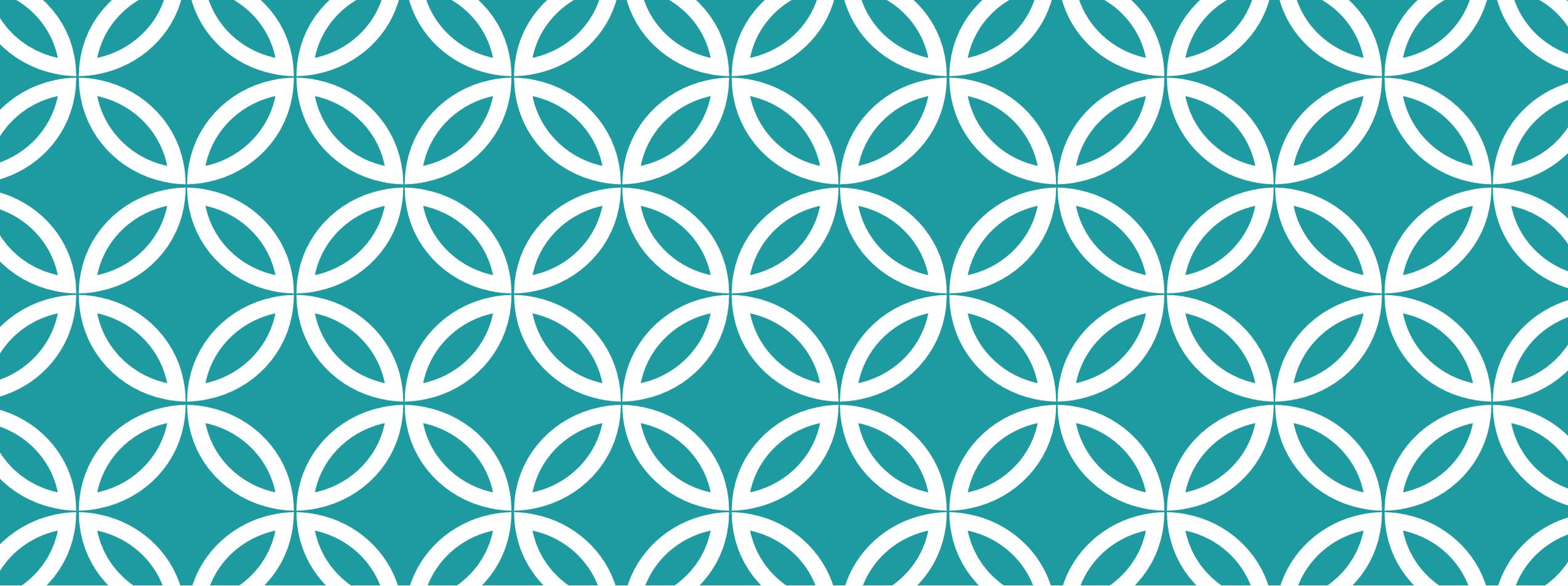
BASIC COMPONENTS OF GRANT PROPOSALS

MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS

What is a Vision?

Vision definition

Defines the optimal desired future state - the mental picture - of what an organization wants to achieve over time; Provides guidance and inspiration as to what an organization is focused on achieving in five, ten, or more years;

Vision sample

Giraffe Laugh envisions a future where every child in the Treasure Valley has access to quality early childhood education and their parents have the support they need to strengthen their families in ways that improve our community for many lifetimes.

What is a Mission?

Mission definition

A formal summary of the aims and values of a company, organization, or individual

Mission sample

We provide early childhood education and nurturing by ensuring school readiness, empowering families and building strong futures.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The who, what, when, where, and why.

Definition: "An umbrella statement of your case and summary of the entire proposal" (Foundation Center Tutorial: *Proposal Writing Short Course*)

Can include:

➢ Organizational mission statement and <u>brief</u> org. history

➢ Brief description of the project

➢ Outcomes you plan to achieve

➢ Who the project serves and why it is important

➢ Why your organization should receive the funds to implement the project and how the funds will be spent.

➢ ALWAYS write as if the reader doesn't know anything about your program. Don't assume otherwise.

GIRAFFE LAUGH'S EXECUTIVE STATEMENT

Giraffe Laugh Childcare & Preschool is an early childhood school caring for and teaching children ages 0-6 since 1988. 55% of the children we serve come from economically disadvantaged homes and 88% of these families are females heading their own households. It is our mission to provide a quality environment for children to grow and develop to their full potential while parents are able to seek necessary resources to become self-sufficient. We do this by providing parents with scholarships, giving them access to our infant/toddler and preschool program designed to help children flourish and prepare for kindergarten. This provides the children with a foundation of learning that will take them through their school years at the same rate as their regular income peers. We have three sites, 2 full year and one school year serving pregnant and parenting teens and their infants. Giraffe Laugh serves approximately 130 children daily and has been in operation since 1988 providing care and education to thousands of Treasure Valley children, making it possible for Boise's most vulnerable citizen, children living in poverty, to grow and prosper.

(This can be tailored to include any proposal, therefore it is always our starting point)

NEEDS STATEMENT (A.K.A. PROBLEM STATEMENT)

Definition: Why this project is necessary.

RESEARCH why it's necessary. With a compelling argument you are more likely to convince the reader it is necessary. This should have two parts:

1) Statistics that support the need and paint a clear picture of the WHY you are asking.

2) A compelling emotional hook that provides an emotional reason to make a rational decision to give.

Needs Statement sample:

People often think that hunger is not an issue in our community however, according to Idaho Kids Count and the Idaho Foodbank, one in three children in Idaho go to bed hungry every night. Tyler, 3 and his mother were "couch surfing" in Boise and a bag of chips were often their only source of food for the evening. When Tyler's mom enrolled him at Giraffe Laugh she was thrilled to find out that she had access to a Food Pantry every evening. A person who is homeless does not have a place to store food, especially fresh food. Access to the Food Pantry allowed her to bring "home" a meal every evening no matter where they were staying that night. Tyler's behavior began to improve, he was thriving from meals at the center and access to healthy dinners and his mom's hope began to rise.

Expanding our Food Pantries with the addition of shelving units, the purchase of a garden share and another freezer will allow us to serve 30 more families like Tyler's every year.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES (MEASURABLE!)
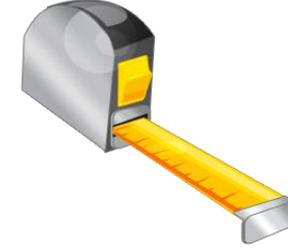
Objective description:

Objectives are what you will accomplish with the program to meet your goals.

Objectives speak to the need but also give more detail on who, what and when activities related to the program will occur.

Focus on measurable objectives and explain them clearly. All objectives should be both quantitative and qualitative. Measureable in numbers but also describes qualities that will occur. Classes will be taken which will increase quality.

Objective sample:

Weak Sample: We will improve training for teachers to enhance quality in our childcare/preschool program. (This is more of a goal).

Stronger Sample In year one, 20 of 25 teachers will have completed the Essential Trainings I (ET1) through IdahoSTARS and up to15 will have completed the ET2 Trainings in year two. It will be a requirement for all staff by year three to complete each set within a one year period in order to increase quality.

METHODOLOGY
(A.K.A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION)
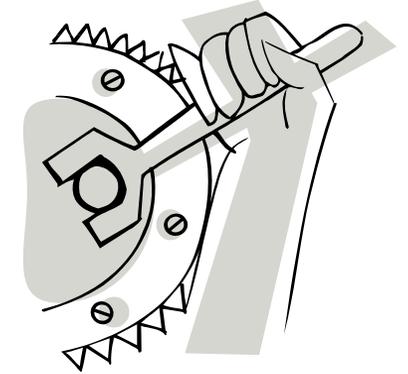
<u>Definition:</u> "The nuts and bolts of how the project will be implemented."

This section of your proposal should have five subsections: objectives, methods, staffing/administration, evaluation, and sustainability. Together, objectives and methods dictate staffing and administrative requirements. They then become the focus of the evaluation to assess the results of the project. The project's sustainability flows directly from its success, hence its ability to attract other support. Taken together, the five subsections present an interlocking picture of the total project.

Many of these items will be broken down for you and asked for separately in the grant process.

EVALUATION PLAN (A.K.A. ASSESSMENT)

"Program evaluation is the process of collecting information about a program in order to make decisions about it. Including an evaluation plan in your program shows that you take your objectives seriously and want to know how well you have achieved them." (Grant Space, www.grantspace.org)

More and more foundations expect to see an evaluation component in the programs they fund. It is important to design your evaluation plans and process at the outset and begin to collect data from the beginning of the program. Ensure that all players involved in evaluation know the plan and their individual tasks – possibly help with the design as well.

One example – a survey:

Qualitative Data:

Parents will be provided with a Survey Monkey link to determine their understanding of toddler's behavior before taking the proposed training.

Upon completion, parents will do a follow up survey to assess if their level of understanding has increased as a result of the training.

Quantitative Data: 25 parents will participate in a class to ….

FINANCIAL PLAN - TELLING THE STORY THROUGH DOLLARS AND CENTS!

(A.K.A. YOUR BUDGET)

Definition: Financial description of anticipated expenses and revenue (as applies) plus explanatory notes

Distinguish between Personnel and Non-Personnel expenses:

Personnel includes: Salary and fringe benefits to be charged to the grant.

Non-Personnel can include:
- Rent/mortgage or portion of rent/mortgage
- Utilities & Telecommunications
- Travel/Professional Development
- Postage
- Printing & Copying
- Equipment Costs
- Program Supplies
- Indirect % - be sure to check on what is allowed!
- Other – be careful with this line item – should stay low

A Budget Narrative…if required, can include:

- A list of assumptions on which the budget was based.

- An explanation of any unusual budget items.

- The percentage of overhead applied to the project.

- should precede the itemized listing, if applicable.

- In-kind expenses and donations or matching funds should also be described.

OTHER ESSENTIAL DOCS...

The following docs <u>may</u> be requested in your application package as attachments or supporting material:

❖ Board of Directors List (and contact info)

❖ IRS Determination Letter (501(c)3 letter)

❖ Organizational Strategic Plan

❖ Cover Letter

❖ Program or Organization Director Bio

❖ Program or Organization Brochure

❖ Feasibility Study

❖ Partner Letters of Support

❖ Audited Financial Statement or Form 990 (recent tax return)

❖ List of current supporters & other funding sources
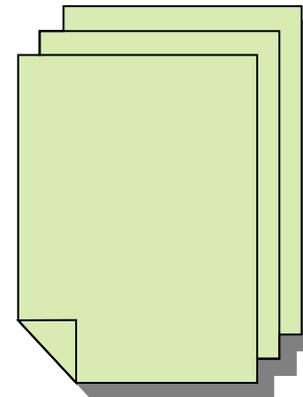
❖ Annual Report   Have these docs handy and ready to go!

CREATING & UTILIZING TEMPLATES & CGA'S (COMMON GRANT APPLICATIONS)

"The common grant application format has been adopted by groups of grantmakers to allow grant applicants to produce a single proposal for a specific community of funders, thereby saving time…" (Foundation Center, http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/cga.html)

See some examples of Common Grant Application (CGA) or Common Proposal Form (CPF):

1) Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania use a Common Grant Application for 44 grantors in that region: http://www.gwpa.org/s_gwp/sec.asp?CID=4684&DID=9918

2) Associated Grant Makers (in MA) use a Common Proposal Form for 120 grantors in that region: http://www.agmconnect.org/cpf/

Idaho does not use a CGA, but Idaho Community Foundation comes close with their state-wide funding priorities and their Competitive Grant Application used for all regions – see at: http://www.idcomfdn.org/Regional_Cycle

➢ Idea: Make your own Template or own Common Grant App format…

CREATING AN ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE (OR PROGRAM PROFILE)

Organizational Profile Elements:

❖ Mission, Vision, Values

❖ Overview of all programs offered & target audiences served

❖ Needs Statement for the Organization's existence

❖ Approach/Method of Addressing All Needs by the Organization

❖ Organizational Evaluation Plan/Summary

❖ General Operating Budget

❖ Organization's Strategic Plan

Program Profile Elements:

❖ Executive Summary (includes Mission, Vision, Values)

❖ Summary of program you are creating or improving

❖ Need for this particular program or change in existing program

❖ Approach/Method of Addressing THIS Need by the Organization

❖ Program Evaluation Plan

❖ Program Budget

❖ Organization's Strategic Plan, highlighting where this new program or change in program addresses an identified need in the Strategic Plan
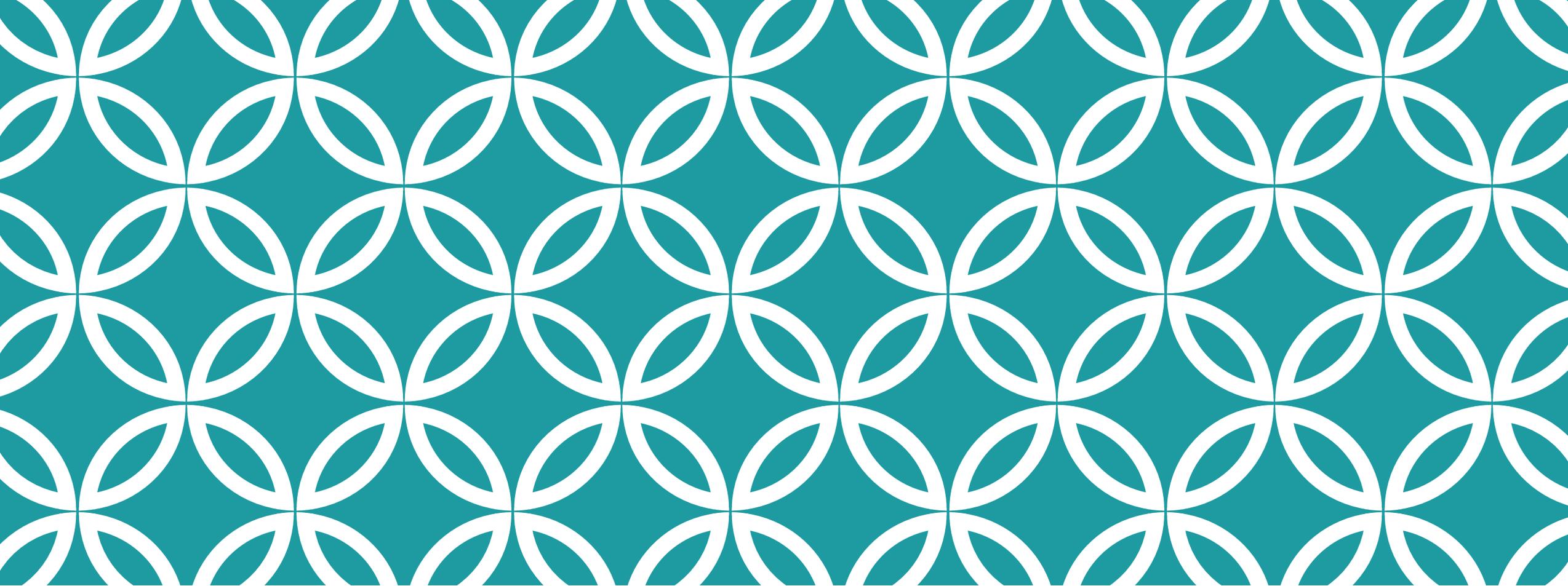
RESEARCHING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

RESOURCES FOR GRANT RESEARCH

FREE RESOURCES

The Foundation Center resources:

➢ The Foundation Directory Online Free & 990 Finder at: http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/

➢ Funding Information Center at Boise Public Library – this is free access to the Foundation Online Directory – Level 5!: http://www.boisepubliclibrary.org/research/nonprofits/

➢ Philanthropy News Digest Newsletter – with daily announcements of RFP's – sign up at: http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/fundingsources/rfp.html or Browse RFP's online at: http://www.philanthropynewsdigest.org/rfps

Other free resources:

➢ Grant Space – a service of Foundation Center at: http://grantspace.org/

➢ Associated Grant Makers - info on Common Proposal Form and a good budget template in Excel at: http://www.agmconnect.org/GrantSeekers/

➢ Weekly *GrantStation Insider* e-newsletter at: http://www.grantstation.com/public/about.asp

➢ Guide Star at: http://www.guidestar.org/

RESOURCES FOR GRANT RESEARCH

FEE-BASED RESOURCES

➢ The Foundation Directory (online) – five levels of subscription — see their website at: https://secure3.foundationcenter.org/fdo/signup

➢ Grant Station searchable database – requires membership: http://www.grantstation.com/public/about.asp

FUNDERS' CRITERIA & ELIGIBILITY QUIZZES (& OTHER ODD QUESTIONS)

❖ What is an Eligibility Quiz?

❖ What happens if the quiz says "No, you don't qualify" ?!?

❖ When do I need to do a Letter of Inquiry?

❖ How do we respond when asked, "If you don't get funding, will the program still run?" (Sustainability questions)

❖ Do not submit handwritten grant applications – no matter how informal process is…

❖ Top red flags from proposal reviewers – any guesses?

TYPES OF FUNDING…SOURCES OF FUNDING…

1) <u>Corporate Support</u>: cash support from businesses, corporations, or corporate foundations.

Local example: Wells Fargo Bank - Idaho Guidelines at:
https://www.wellsfargo.com/about/charitable/id_guidelines

2) <u>Foundation Support</u>: funding from a foundation: A foundation is a non-governmental entity that is established as a nonprofit corporation or a charitable trust, with a principal purpose of making grants to unrelated organizations, institutions, or individuals for scientific, educational, cultural, religious, or other charitable purposes. This broad definition encompasses two foundation types: private foundations and grantmaking public charities.

Local example: Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation: http://lauramoorecunningham.org/Home_Page.html

3) <u>Government Support</u>:

Local example: Idaho Community Development Block Grants (ICDBG) from the Idaho Department of Commerce:
http://commerce.idaho.gov/communities/community-grants/grant-resources

Federal Government resource with guide: Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance https://www.cfda.gov/
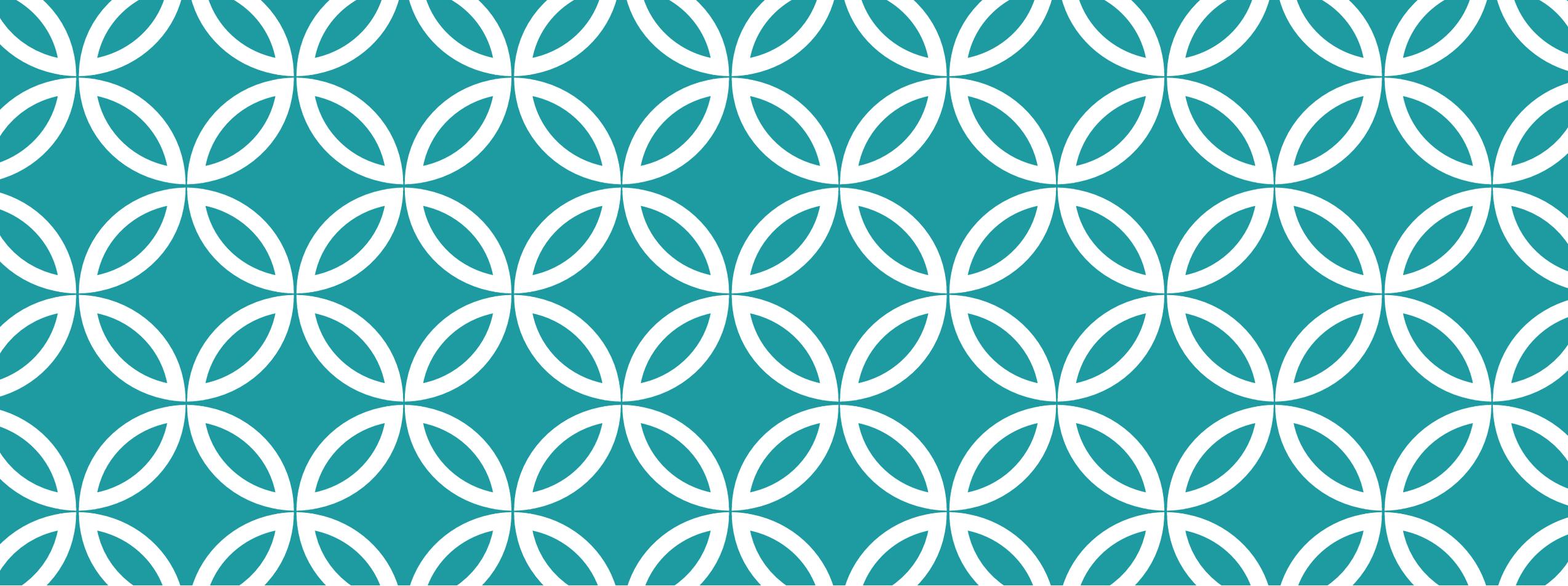
MEETING THE DEADLINE — "PLAN OF ATTACK"

USING A GRANTS CALENDAR — CREATING A REALISTIC PLAN OF ATTACK

✓ Using a grants calendar…working backwards

✓ Divide and conquer… the team approach

✓ Mining your org or program profiles…cutting & pasting from templates

✓ On-line application tips

✓ Reporting….plan for this too (& don't do it alone!)
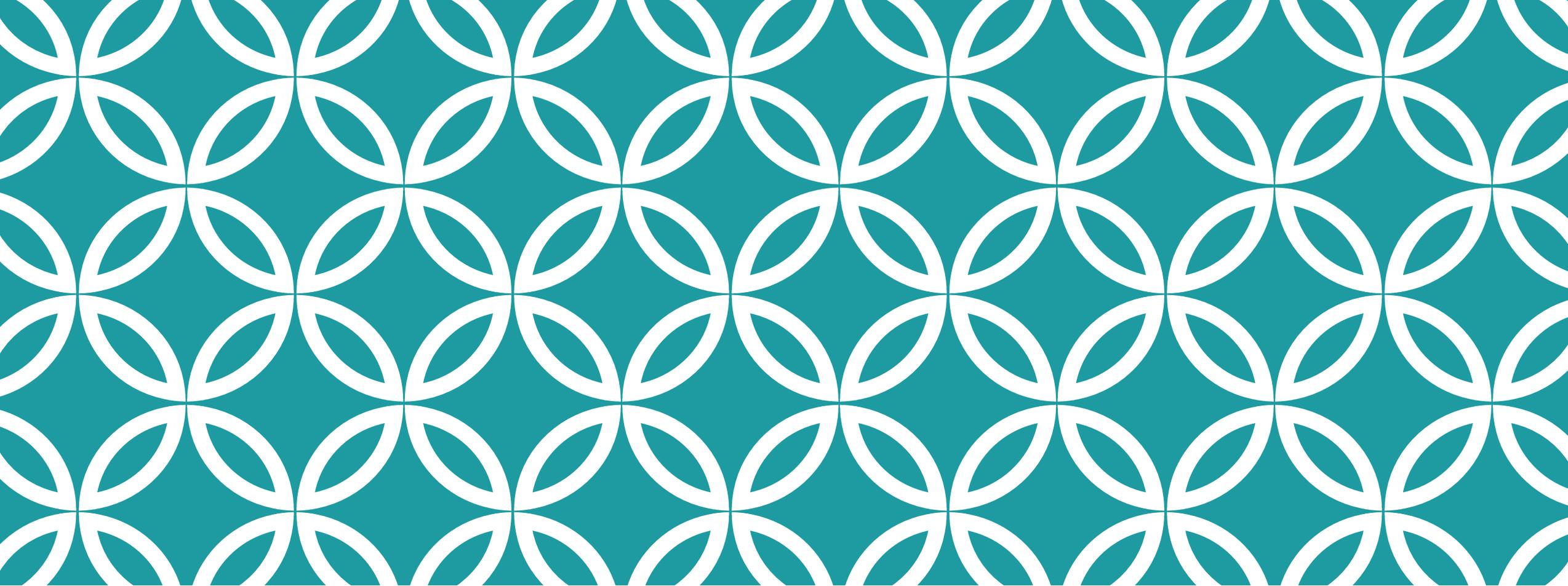
WRITING GRANTS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

GRANT SOURCES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Some granting sources you should consider:

➢ Idaho STARS – Quality Rating Improvement System

➢ Idaho Commission for Libraries – Books to Go Program

➢ Target

➢ Idaho Community Foundation

➢ Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation

➢ local Rotary Clubs
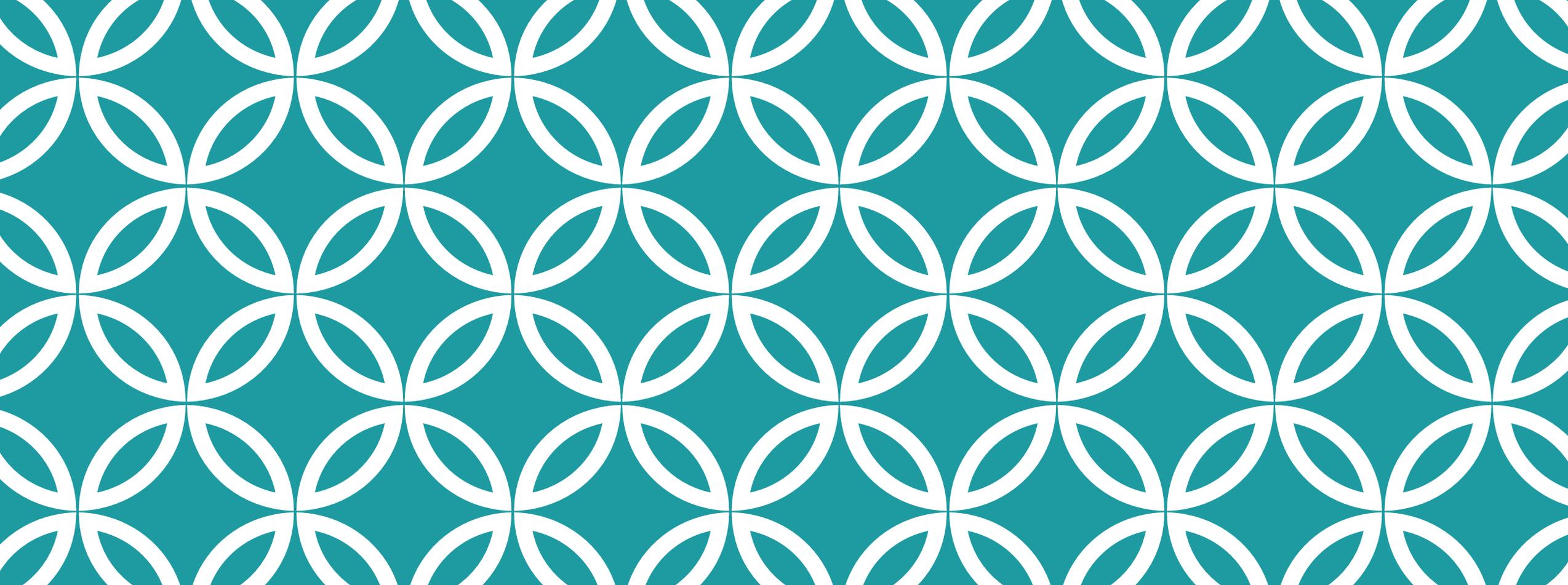
PRACTICE TIME!

Option 1: Writing an Executive Summary

Option 2:   Drafting a Project Budget

Option 3:   Letter of Inquiry

Option 4: Drafting a Needs Statement

❖ Choose 1 option. Work in small groups or individually for 20 min.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Resources for additional grant writing/managing training:

❖Take online or live courses on grant writing from:

▪ Grant Writing USA: http://grantwritingusa.com/

▪ The Foundation Center (FC). FC has a free online, self-paced courses on basic proposal writing and budgeting basics (also available in Spanish and other languages) as well as fee-based courses at: http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/learnabout/tools.html

▪ Idaho Nonprofit Center webinars – some are free and some are low-cost at: http://www.idahononprofits.org/

❖ Resource Thursdays at Boise Public Library – a new topic each month, some on grants and fundraising – see more at: http://www.idahononprofits.org/nonprofit-resource-thursdays

❖ Various trainings & annual conference by the Idaho Nonprofit Center: http://www.idahononprofits.org

❖The Foundation Center's Tools and Resources for Assessing Social Impact (TRASI) is a searchable database for finding different approaches to impact assessment, guidelines for creating and conducting an assessment, and ready-to-use tools for measuring social change.
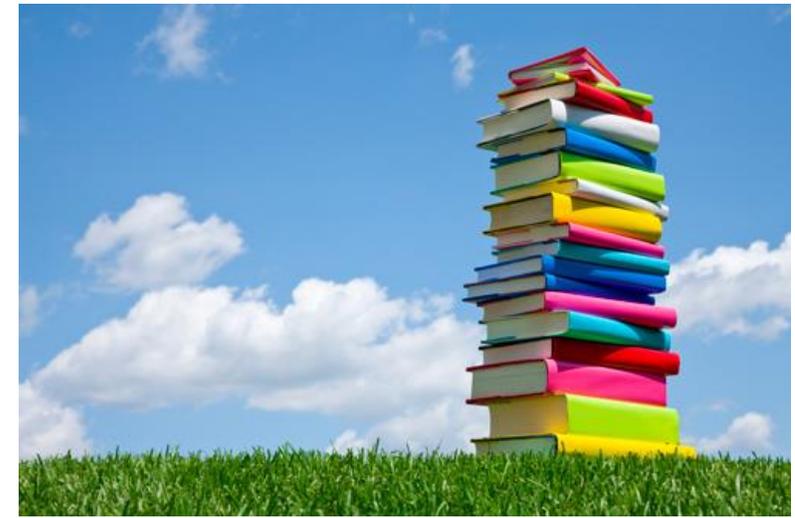
CONTACT INFORMATION

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Thank you for coming!