

Write better **PROPOSALS**
to secure better **FUNDING**

About us

- ✓ We help NGOs to be better funded, operate better and deploy smarter strategies
- ✓ A social enterprise with many services subsidised. Training is already free for partners.
In-person training is back!



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The challenge



What is important to succeed?

What do you find challenging when writing a proposal?

The challenge

The **worst**
proposal is
always the one
you didn't know
about before
publication!

Prior

Proper

Preparation

Prevents

Poor

Performance

MzN's TOP tips

1. Know about the call before release and **PREPARE**
2. Proactive funding portfolios are based on **RESEARCH & ENGAGEMENT**
3. Make good & fast **Go/ No go decision.**
4. It's **a team effort.** “Whole-of-organization”+ “single lead” approach to proposal writing
5. Have a **realistic/ sustainable budget.**
6. A good budget is half the battle.
7. Invest in Templates EARLY.

Every Proposal needs a

decision maker

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1. Overall leadership & strategic direction
 2. Appoints proposal creation resources & roles
 3. Makes final decision on design & budget
 4. Accountable for quality & on time delivery

“Whole-of-organization” approach to proposal writing

- Does information flow between team members? Does everyone know who is in charge here?
- Alignment with organisational objectives: does the proposal take you **one step closer to your long-term goals?** *If not, why do it?*
- **Budget early, budget clearly, budget well!**

We call it a

directed team effort .



*Inspire and be **VERY** clear*

There is a lot of technical language and complexity in International development. But at the start, your **impact route needs to be understandable to a ten year old.** KEEP IT SIMPLE!

Imagine a single page! Use it like this:

- 25%: **Situation** / problem
- 25%: **Target** you will aim for
- 25%: **Action** you will do
- 25%: **Results** you will generate



It's a marathon

The effort shouldn't leave you broken or depleted of precious resources

- Never write 1 proposal when you can write 10 on the same topic.
- Write a **realistic and sustainable budget**: don't over-promise BUT....
- Have a clear VfM rationale for example explaining clearly your unit costs and highlighting costs savings.
- Be ready to **negotiate and know what NOT to agree on**: unrealistic donors expectations and stringent overhead conditions (ex: max. 7%) only perpetuate NGOs **starvation cycle**.

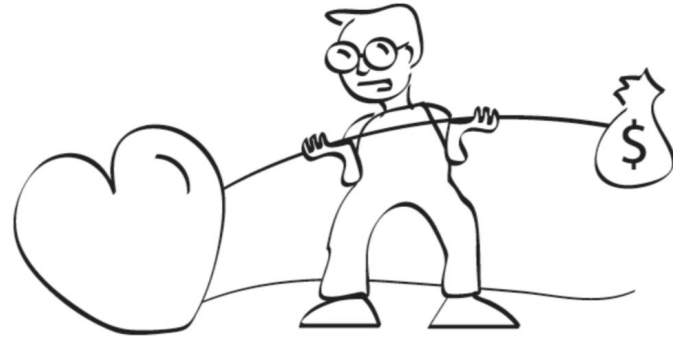
A strong Proposal Management Process strengthens your VfM argument





Don't leave budget to last minute...

- Plan enough time! To avoid beginners mistakes: incorrect calculations, donor template not used, budget exceeds ToR
- Not enough details...or too much
- Ensure balance between budget and impact



Does our proposal clearly answer these 10 questions?

Beneficiaries

1. How many (primary and secondary) and which type of people will benefit from the project (demographics, need)?

Organisational Context

2. What are the overall aims of your organisation and how does it fit in with the context of the project?

Relevance of external environment

3. How does your project fit in with the context (other organisations, gov. Strategies, existing programmes)?
Complementary actions are often well received.
4. What is the relevance of the project to the funding criteria and policies?

Does our proposal clearly answer these 10 questions?

Project Details

5. What are the aims of the project (SMART outcomes required)?
6. What are the key activities & timeline?

Cost/Budget

7. How much funding is required, for what (the inputs)?
8. What type of budget best illustrates your project (line or activity)?

Monitoring & Evaluation (Accountability & Learning)

9. How will you monitor the project (in terms of outcomes and/or processes) so that you have valuable data for the Evaluation Process?

Sustainability

10. What happens when the funding ends? How will the results/benefit make a lasting impact? Continuation?

Appendix

Go / No Go Decision

- Does it fit your organizational and funding strategy
- Read the fine print - now
- Ask important questions
 - Probability to get the grant
 - Is your project/ organization a good match?
 - Are you able to handle the grant?
 - What resources and time are required for the proposal?
 - Deadline?
 - Do you know the donor / have similar proposal experience?
 - Does the organisation have the capacity to deliver the project if successful?
- Once you have the answers, evaluate and make a decision.
- If it is a go captured it on your systems and move to the next step

Behind the scenes, get ready

- Move to proactive management of the funding portfolio
 - Better Pipeline Manageable
 - Not at mercy of donors
 - Links to strategy (not donors)
- Pipeline management: breaking news - start writing a proposal **BEFORE** an opportunity opens up.

Proactive funding portfolios are based on RESEARCH

- Research your existing donor agencies, partners and foundations.
- Research your competitors and peers' sources of funds.
- Explore the NGO-donor organization common portals and databases. Eg devex, fundforngos, reliefweb

Training for our partner NGOs is now free of charge



The MzN Funding Support

identifies new Opportunities

and helps apply for them.

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

Training Courses



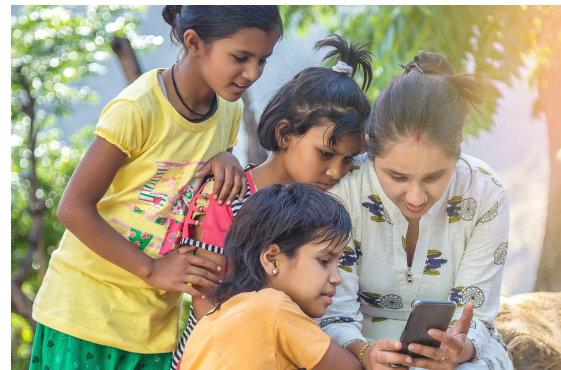
Write Winning Proposals

In this course you will learn how to write, manage and negotiate a winning proposal. You will improve your proposal writing skills through exercises on real proposals, case-studies from the world's leading donors and learn together in small groups. Before and after the course, you can benefit from our online learning offers.



NGO Financial Sustainability

Successful NGOs need the right funding mix to create impact and build a better world. But with donor funds severely restricted, and constantly changing priorities and demands, the key question is how can we build a financially sustainable NGO?



Write winning proposal budgets and monitor project budgets

The budget is the most frequent reason why proposals fail to win funds. And many projects are limiting their impact due to budget management issues. Let's fix that!

<https://mzninternational.com/training-courses/>

Stay in touch!

We are here to make doing good better. We help non-profit organisations secure more funding, drive innovation and develop smarter strategies.

By 2030, most of our services to NGOs will be free of charge or subsidised. Training already is.

Hande Akpınar

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New blog, podcast and upcoming events
www.mzninternational.com



Upcoming webinars:



The NGO of the Future is Agile, Entrepreneurial and Digital

18 October 2023

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm CEST



5 Ways to Build and Lead an NGO in the New Normal; How to Manage Yourself Better

6 November 2023

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm CET



Thank you for listening.

Any Questions?

