

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

Time

Consortium?

Co-funding requirements

Unclear scope

Who writes what?

New Donor?

New rules

Competition

Budgets

Changed situation on the ground

Proving impact

Go/NoGo ?

New Programme design

What is important to succeed?

What do you find challenging when writing a proposal?

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.

Prep before you move ahead

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

Prior

Proper

Preparation

Prevents

Poor

Performance

Chicken or the Egg



Which comes first?

Your project idea

OR

Project fiche from the donor

Every Proposal needs a

decision maker

-
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 everyone know who is in charge and who is responsible from which part of the proposal?
- Does information flow between team members and is it accessible to all?
- Alignment with organisational objectives: does the proposal take you **one step closer to your long-term goals?** *If not, why do it?*

We call it a

directed team effort .



*Inspire and be **VERY** clear*

There is a lot of technical language and complexity in international development. Especially when you are writing on technical subjects.

However, your **impact route needs to be understandable to a ten year old.**

KEEP IT SIMPLE!

Imagine a single page and use the STAR approach:

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



It's a marathon

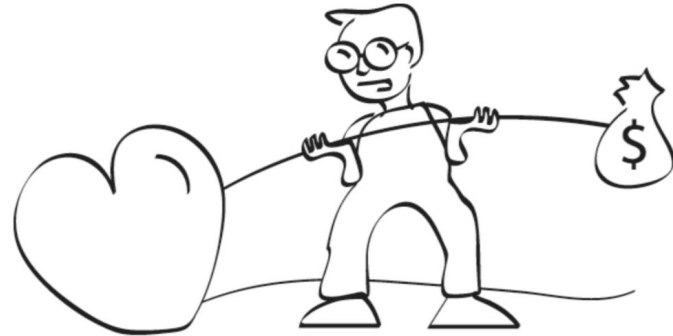
The effort shouldn't leave you broken or depleted of precious resources!

- Remember you can make use of previous proposals and not necessarily start from scratch.
- Write a **realistic and sustainable budget**: don't over-promise BUT also do not sell under market prices.
- Have a clear VfM rationale: explaining clearly your unit costs and highlighting costs savings - highlighting why your proposal is good value for money.
- Be ready to **negotiate and know what NOT to agree on**: unrealistic donors expectations and stringent overhead conditions are not mandatory conditions.



Don't leave budget to last minute...

- **Budget early, budget clearly, budget well!**
- 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 your proposal clearly answer these 10 questions?

1

Are the target groups, direct and final beneficiaries clearly identified with clear explanation of their needs?

6

What are the key activities & timeline?

2

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

7

How much funding is required, for what (the inputs)?

3

How does your project fit in with the context (other organisations, gov. Strategies, existing programmes)?

8

How will you monitor the project so that you have valuable data for the Evaluation Process?

4

What is the relevance of the project to the funding criteria and policies?

9

What is your added value? Cross-cutting issues and innovative approach?

5

What are the aims of the project and are the outcome SMART?

10

What happens when the funding ends? How will the results make a lasting impact?

Additional Tips

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



KEEP
CALM
AND
BE
PREPARED

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](#).

BRAND NEW Online 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.

This course is tailored to empower NGOs like yours with the following skills: crafting winning proposals, mastering proposal management and budgeting, negotiating to secure grants and donor contracts, engaging in real-world exercises and case studies and collaborating effectively in small groups.



Financial Health and Resilience for Non-profit organisations

This course covers all key principles of sustaining funding for non-profit organizations. You will explore the appropriateness of various income sources for different organizational needs, and learn to strategically set targets to achieve a well-balanced income portfolio. You will discover strategies for covering administrative costs, mix income streams, effectively find unrestricted funding, and build sustained financial success by engaging stakeholders differently.

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In-Person 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.



Grants & Beyond; Diversifying Income & Building Reserves

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?



Getting Project Budgeting & Reporting Right

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/mzn-training/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.

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Upcoming webinars: mzninternational.com/mzn-insights/#webinars

2024 WEBINAR SERIES

GETTING YOUR FUNDING STRATEGY RIGHT

During this session, we will explore why a funding strategy is crucial for your organisation's financial sustainability and how it will help you with effective fundraising. We will take you through the various elements of a funding strategy and provide you with 10 steps on how to get to a funding strategy that works for you.

DATE
8 MAY 2024

TIME
3 - 4 PM CET
9 - 10 AM EST

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Thank you for listening.

Any Questions?

