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# Welcome to the AIP - Pakistan Grant-Writing Workshop

UAF, Pakistan September 12, 2014

Instructors:

Professor Emeritus Thomas (**Tom**) L. Rost, PhD (University of California, Davis, CA)

Dr. Samuel (**Sammy**) Rodriguez-Flecha, PhD (Washington State University, Pullman, WA)



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## Friday, September 11, 2014 - Morning Session

9:00 - 9:15	Introductions
9:15 - 9:35	Expectations for the workshop
9:35 - 9:50	Pre-Test
9:50 - 11:00	Grant proposal theory
11:00 - 11:20	Tea Break (In Place)
11:20 - 12:30	Example of a grant RFP
12:30 - 1:30	Assignment & Working Lunch



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## Exercise:

1. Introduce yourself to everyone at your table -- your name, your home, your job.
2. Discuss for 5 minutes your expectations for this workshop.
3. Select your most important expectation.
4. Write it on an easel page and post it on the wall.
5. Select a spokesperson for your table to tell us all your expectation.



# Our expectations for the workshop:

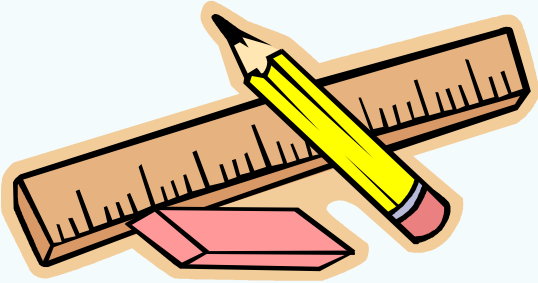
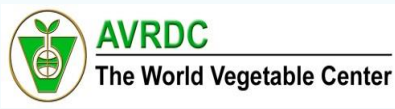
- GOAL

Participation in this workshop will improve the understanding of the grant writing process

- OBJECTIVES

Participants will have a understanding of:

- ✓ the different funding types and sources
- ✓ the elements of a great idea
- ✓ the importance of fitting the project to the agency goals and communication with program officers
- ✓ the typical components of a proposal
- ✓ the review process
- ✓ The grant budget



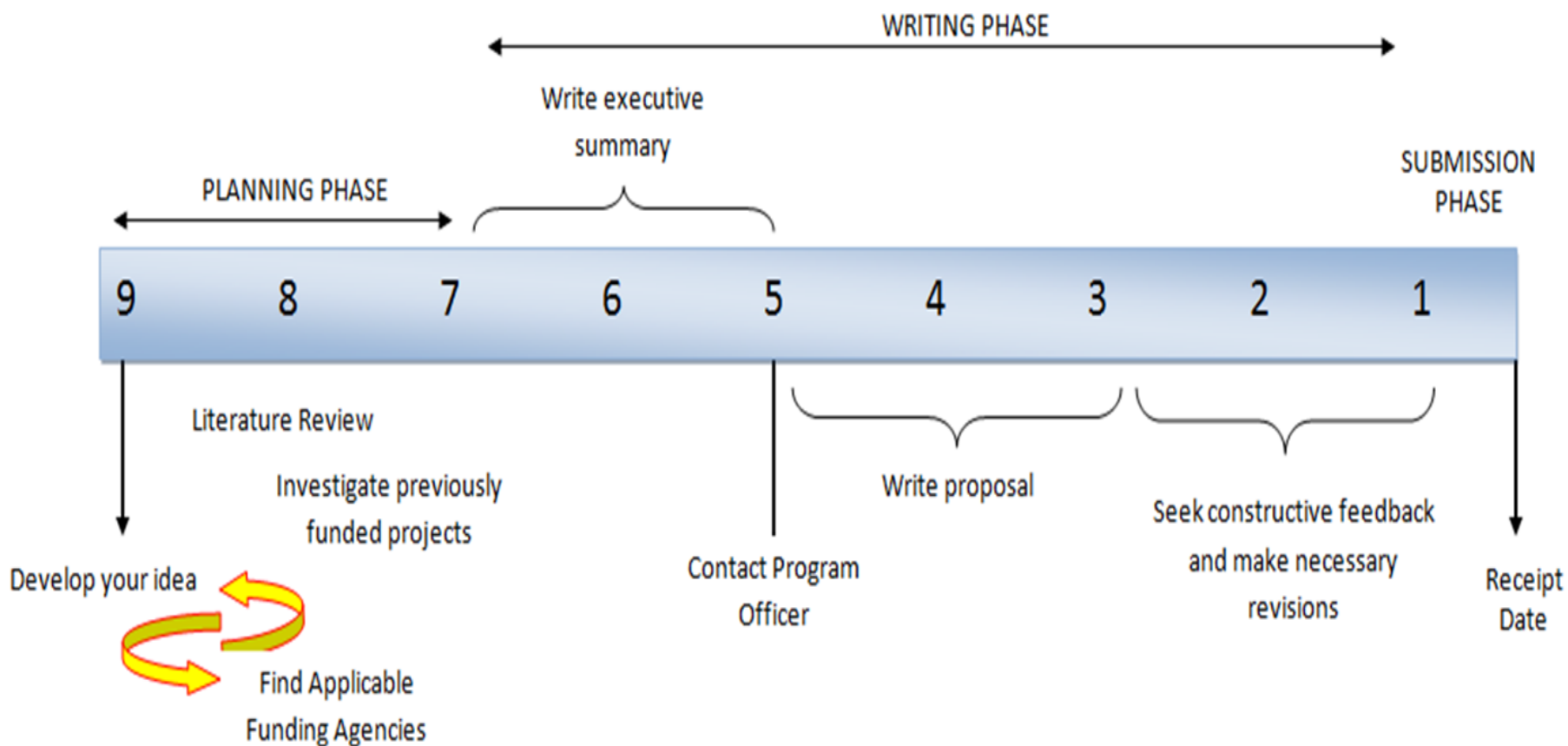
# Pre-Test

Program requirement ~ 10 minutes





# Grant Application Timeline





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# What is a grant?

- A grant is a *commitment* by a sponsor to make payments to an organization or an individual over a set period of time to further the work of one of its initiatives.
- The sponsor gives the grantee autonomy over management of the funds, but all grantees must agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the grant...



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# Why write a grant?

- Research new information
- Personnel support (e.g., graduate assistants, clerical help)
- Travel funds
- Building my reputation as a capable researcher
- More flexibility of time to do research
- Resources (e.g., specialized materials, equipment)
- Services (e.g., computing, media production support)





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# Are you committed?

- What is my level of enthusiasm?
- Am I 100% committed?
- Are you being both realistic and optimistic?
- Can you adopt and adapt your ideas and approach?
- Are you willing to reach out for assistance?



# What Does It Take?

- A Great Idea
- Partnership
- Knowing and Understanding
  - What to do
  - How to do it
  - When to do it
  - What to do when things don't go as planned
- Understanding the Review Process



# What is a Great Idea?

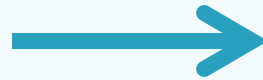
1. Solves a real problem
2. Significant— potential for impact (i.e., making a difference)
3. Innovative— novel/imaginative concepts
4. Well Timed
5. Feasible
6. Measurable Outcomes
7. Ethical
8. An idea others can understand... and would be willing to fund if they had the money
9. Makes others wish they had come up with it themselves



TEA BREAK  
In Place



# More Grant Writing Tips





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## How to create a good idea?

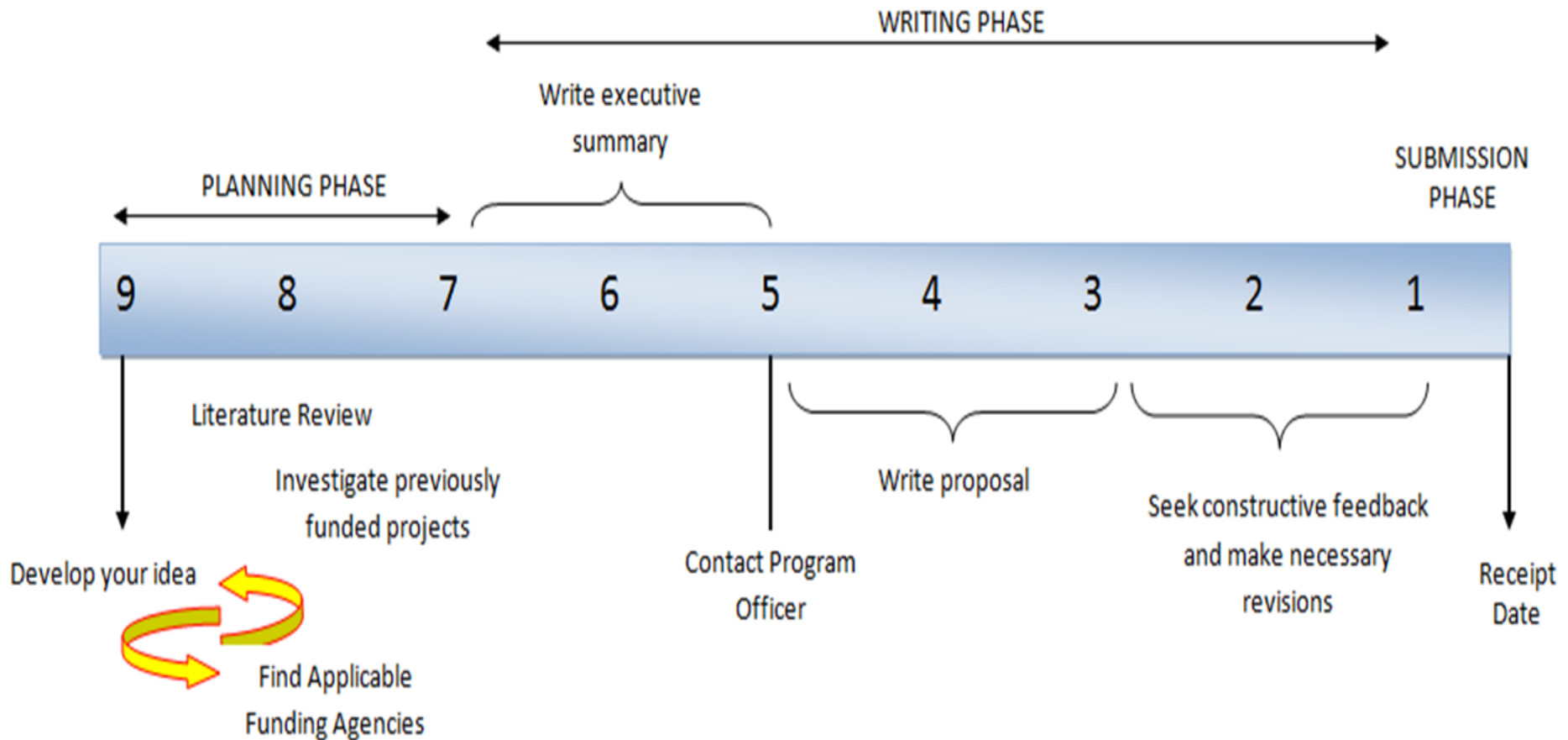
- Define the problem/need
- Stay current
  - Collect and analyze background information
- Talk to colleagues
  - Seek constructive criticism
- See what has already been funded
- Be flexible and willing to refine your idea
- Time
- Assess you idea's potential for success



# Ask yourself these two questions:

1. Will this idea significantly impact my research field? And, if so,
2. Can I convince others of this fact?

# Grant Application Timeline





# Topics

- Finding Funding
- Partnership
- Solicitations and Guidelines
- The Program Officer
- Grantsmanship
- Proposal Components
- Getting Feedback Pre-Submission
- The Review Process
- Common Pitfalls
- Post-Submission Considerations

# Finding Funding: Searching for Grant Opportunities

- Identify potential sources
  - Internal, local, regional, national, international
- Ask Colleagues
- Funding opportunities databases, websites
  - Targeted search
    - Type of Grant: Standard, Equipment, Travel, etc.
    - Research Topic: Fixed or Flexible

# Study the Solicitation

## 1<sup>st</sup> Step

- Print out the solicitation
- Read CAREFULLY
- Highlight specifics
- Use the solicitation as your proposal outline

## Pay Attention To

- Program description (to assess fit)
- Award information
- Proposal preparation instructions (AND proposal guidelines)
- Review process
- Timeline for funding decision

## Tips

- Note any special requirements
- Ensure Investigator & Institution eligibility
- Make no assumptions
- Plan your proposal months in advance



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Example of a request for proposals (RFP) and a grant template the might come from PARC or some other Pakistan or International agency.



## **HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

### *Agricultural Innovation Program (AIP) - Pakistan Competitive Grant Program Description and Guidelines*

The AIP-Pakistan program is now announcing a competitive grant program intended to fund critical research in the defined areas of the program - livestock, tree and horticulture crops, rice, wheat and maize.

- This program aims in particular at Pakistan specific issues and seeks to provide funding especially to young scientists and to scientists working in underserved regions of Pakistan.
- Women scientists are encouraged to apply for these funds



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## HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE:

- Projects of up to, for example, 5 million PKR may be applied for, but smaller projects are also encouraged.
- Full proposals of not more than, for example, 10 pages, including appendices and attachments, will be considered by the Competitive Grant program committee at the Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC).
- All proposals must be received by the end of the work day ..... 2014 at the following address:



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## HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE:

### Guidelines:

**Eligibility.** Preference will be given to young scientists with a PhD degree in a relevant subject, who work at an agricultural research or education organization. Note that although preference will be given to young scientists, that other more experienced workers may also apply.

**Project length and budget.** Projects should be designed for up to two years (24 months) with budget not exceeding , for example, Five million PKR (~\$50,000).

**Collaborators.** National Agriculture Research Centers (Federal/provincial), International research partners, private sector R&D partners and Agriculture Universities.



## HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE:

### **Budget categories.**

- Travel, Transportation,
- materials (chemicals and consumables),
- office supplies,
- Contractual Staff,
- Indirect cost,
  
- There may be budget restrictions:
  - Capital cost including permanent research equipment etc.
  - Building construction is not covered by the grant program.

**Reporting.** Progress reports will be required every six months progress report on prescribed format (Technical and Financial) with a yearly review by technical experts and the project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team.





## HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE:

### Cover page

- Title of project:
- Date submitted
- Location(s) of Activities
- Name and institute of project implementers  
List the lead collaborators (CVs) for each institution involved (including any international collaborators). Give full address, email, cell, fax, etc,
- Project summary  
3-5 sentences. Indicate the problem being addressed, why it is important, summary of proposed approach and expected outcomes.
- Proposed length of activity
- Budget total (not to exceed a defined amount)



## HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE:

Body of proposal (up to a defined number of pages)

Overview ---

Clear statement of the problem and why it is important with evidence from literature giving extent or degree of damage, gravity of problem supported with data.

Goal of your activity (a clear sentence or bullet points)

Background ---

Briefly indicate previous or other work (perhaps on-going) on the topic, why your activity adds to this, and why you (your institute and team) are well suited to work on the issue.



## HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE:

### Objectives ---

3-5 objectives that will clearly and logically show how you will be aiming to reach your goal. Think of them as steps in taking a journey.

### Outputs ---

List one output for each objective. What will be the clear end product produced as a result of each objective indicating you have been successful?

### Workplan ---

For each objective and matching output, indicate the set of activities planned.

Indicate what will be done (including techniques where relevant) to achieve the objective. It should be clear how this will lead to the targeted output. Include a timeframe or chart if useful.



## HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE:

### Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) ---

How and what will be measured or monitored to indicate progress towards reaching the desired objectives. (i.e., M&E says this is what we planned to do and achieve and this is what we did and have achieved). So each objective should have its relevant M&E section.

### Outreach ---

Indicate how results be disseminated for further impact. If possible indicate impact pathway -the route through which impact is going to be achieved and who else would be useful to make it.

### Budget detail ---

Indicate your budget based on approved categories/activities.



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# Assignment During Lunch Break

Develop a good idea:

1. What is the problem?
2. Who cares and why?
3. What am I going to do about it?

Rules:

- Two sentences each
- No more than 20 words
- Be prepared to report on your ideas after lunch.



# LUNCH BREAK





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## Friday, September 11, 2014 - *Afternoon Session*

1:30 - 1:50 Review assignment on creating an idea

1:50 - 3:00 Grant writing theory

3:00 - 3:30 Tea Break

3:30 - 5:00 Grant writing theory

5:00 - 5:15 Goals and Objectives exercise

5:15 - 6:00 Post Test, Workshop Evaluation, Certificates of Completion



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## Discuss assignment - Developing a Good Idea:

1. Work in your groups.
2. Discuss your ideas.
3. Select one idea and write it on an easel paper.
4. Post it on the wall.
5. Select a spokesperson to describe your idea.
6. Discussion.



# Guidelines

- Sponsor-specific
- Policies procedures for proposal development, submission, awards, reporting, rules and regulations...
- Other Sponsor materials
  - Proposal writing guidance
  - Sample proposals
  - tutorials

# The Program Officer: An Important Ally

- Writes the solicitation
- Ensures receipt of most programmatically relevant proposals
  - Wants to help me
- Can assist with developing my ideas
- Can usually provide feedback on Executive Summary to ensure agency fit
  - Feedback on Project Aims/Goals
- Assigns proposals for review and finds reviewers
- Send an email first to make an appointment

# Grantsmanship Considerations

- Readability
- "...Writing grant applications is like writing short stories..."
- It takes time, effort and practice to write this way. It is really hard work. There is no alternative but to make the necessary investment because poorly written applications are almost preordained to fail."

S. Russell

# Some Tips

- Be clear and concise
- Study the Sponsor's language and tone
- Volunteer to be a proposal reviewer
- Avoid these words; substitute with 'expect' instead
  - if, try, hope, believe, might, could, may
- Assertive writing style
- Always present problems from a positive perspective
- Browse successfully funded proposals

# Typical Components of a Proposal

- Title (Cover) Page
- Abstract
- Overview (Introduction)
- Problem Statement
- Goals & Objectives
- Approach (Methods / Activities)
- Evaluation
- Future Funding
- Dissemination
- Facilities & Equipment
- Budget
- Appendix

# The Overview

- Make it reviewer-friendly
- How?
  - Tell the reviewers something they don't already know
  - First sentence must clearly relate to the Sponsor's mission
  - Be precise; What is it I want to communicate?



## The Overview/Executive Summary |

- I. Introductory Paragraph
  - a. Opening Sentence(s)
  - b. Important knowns
  - c. Establish the gap in the knowledge base or critical need that must be addressed
  
- II. Second Paragraph: What is Going to be Done by Whom
  - a. Your long term goal
  - b. Objective of this proposal
  - c. Your Central Hypothesis (if hypothesis driven) or Statement of Need
  - d. Statement of Rationale
  - e. Why you are well prepared to undertake the study and how your environment and institution will be an asset
  
- III. Third Paragraph: Specific Aims, Goals, and Objectives (use short, boldface headlines)
  - a. Specific activities that you will undertake to achieve of the objective of the proposal
  
- IV. Fourth Paragraph: Payoff
  - a. Innovation
  - b. Expected Outcomes
  - c. Impact of the New Knowledge/Fulfillment of the Need

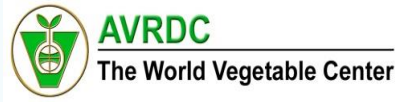
# Goals & Objectives

- Goals
  - Long-term
  - Qualitative terms
  - Unquantifiable
- Objectives
  - Project-specific
  - Specific outcomes proposed
  - Measurable



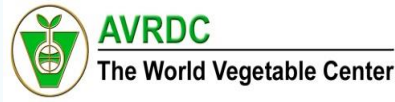
# Writing Exercise: Goal/Objectives

1. Using an idea you may have, write a goal statement.
2. Then write 2-3 objectives that, when/if accomplished, will get you closer to your goal. Remember, these objectives are to be accomplished within your proposed project's timeline.



# Brief review and discussion:

- goals
- objectives



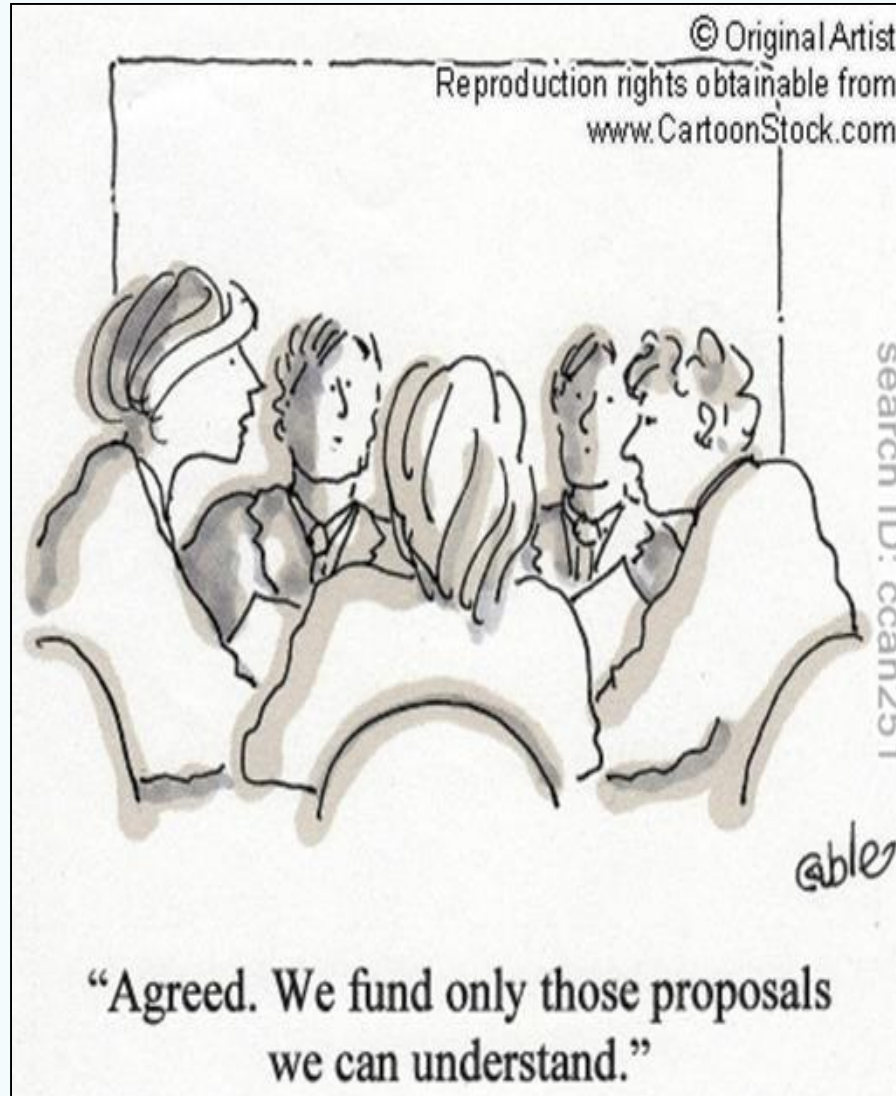
# TEA BREAK



# Other Proposal Components

- Evaluation
- Future Funding Strategy / Sustainability
- Dissemination of Results
- Personnel
- Abstract
  - Accessible language; no jargon
- Title
  - Informative, exciting, check instructions
- Budget
  - Personnel, equipment, travel...
- Appendix

# The Review Process



# A Note on Realities of Pursuing Grant Support

- Cannot communicate my enthusiasm directly to the review panel; idea conveyed in writing
- There are not enough resources to support even all of the good applications

# Importance of the Overview

**After the first two pages...**

- Reviewers should:
  - be intrigued and excited
  - have a basic understanding of my project and why it's important
  - be convinced that this research is a great idea
  - will just be looking for details to confirm I can do what I say I will do

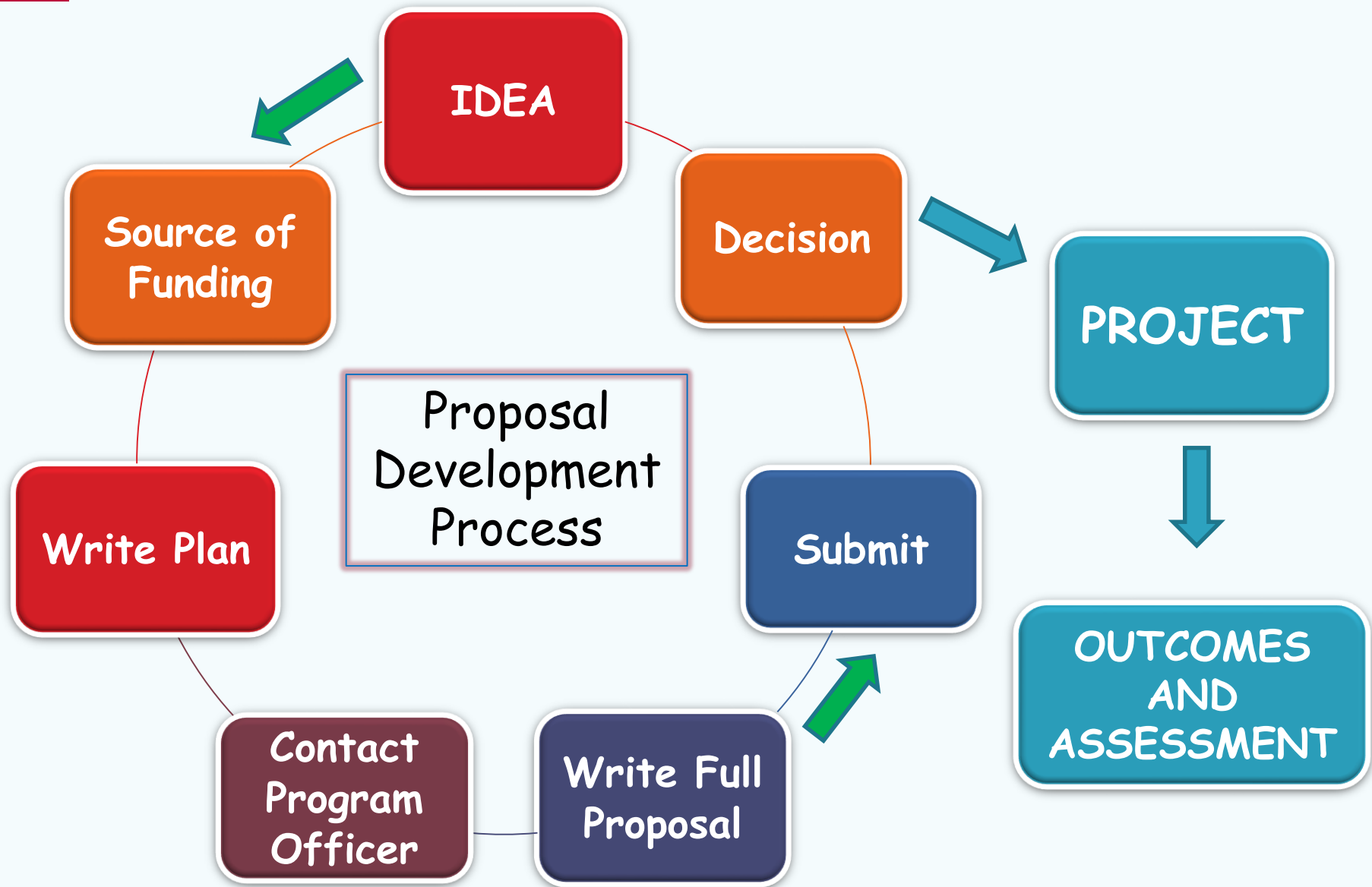
# Common Reasons for Application Failure

- Lack of a good, original idea
- Weak argument for importance of the problem
- Unfocused approach
- Uncertain outcomes
- Lack of sufficient commitment
- Too ambitious or scope too narrow
- Lack of expertise or resources



## Proposal Funded?

- Call the Program Office
  - Always say Thank You
- Work with the Sponsor and the recipient organization for the administration of the funds
- Note reporting requirements

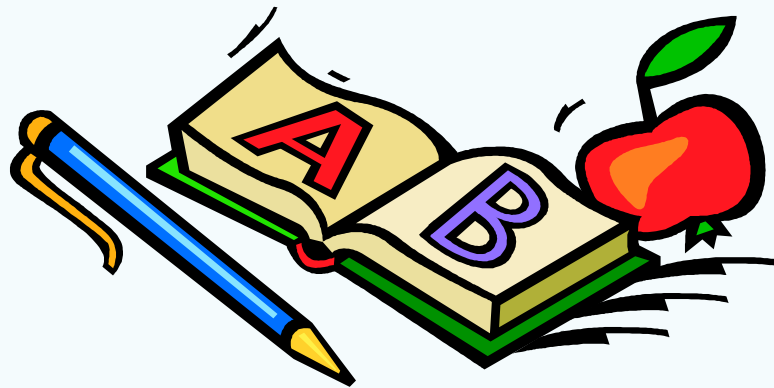


# What are you taking away from this workshop?

- Work in groups
- Make a short list of what you are taking away from this workshop.
- Write one of them on an easel paper and post it on the wall.
- Assign a spokesperson and tell us one of your 'takeaway' ideas.
- POST TEST AND WORKSHOP EVALUATION



- Post-Test (10 minutes)
- Workshop Evaluation (10 minutes)





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# Certificates

Thank you for taking part in  
the workshop.

Best wishes with your  
important work.