

THE MONTANA LAND INFORMATION ACT (MLIA) GRANT PROGRAM



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The Montana State Library

Montana Land Information Advisory Council



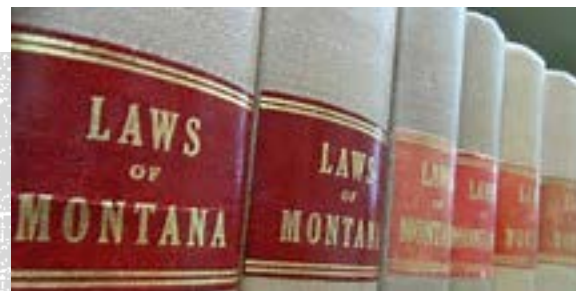
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SEMINAR OVERVIEW CHECKLIST

- ✓ Legal and Administrative Framework for the MLIA Grant Program
- ✓ The 2019 FY Montana Land Information Plan
- ✓ Applicant Eligibility and Readiness
- ✓ Evaluation Criteria
- ✓ The Nuts and Bolts of Grant Proposal Writing
- ✓ Writing for Clarity
- ✓ The MLIA Grant Application Process
- ✓ MLIA Grant Administration and Monitoring



LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE MLIA GRANT PROGRAM



MONTANA LAND INFORMATION ACT (MLIA)



- Adopted by the Montana Legislature in 2005
- Codified under 90-1-401 MCA

PURPOSE OF THE MLIA

- Collect, maintain, and disseminate digital information regarding Montana's natural and artificial land characteristics in a manner that is sustainable
- Assure that land information is consistently collected, accurately maintained, and made commonly available, in accordance with established standards

PROVISIONS OF THE MLIA



- Creates the Montana Land Information Advisory Council (MLIAC)
- Calls for the preparation of an annual land information plan that **describes the priority needs to collect, maintain, and disseminate land information**
- Establishes an MLIA account -- Funded by 75 cents of each fee collected locally for recording a standard document per §7-4-2637 MCA
- Establishes the Montana State Library as administrator, including for those duties associated with the MLIA Grant program



THE FY 2019 MONTANA LAND INFORMATION PLAN

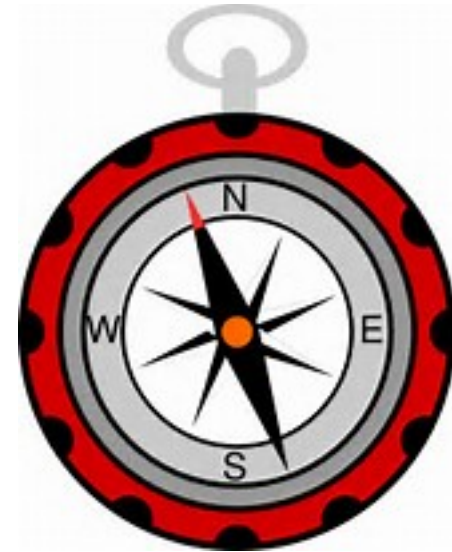
THE LAND PLAN SETS FOR PRIORITIES FOR...

- MLIAC
- The MLIA Grant Program ✓
- Development and Maintenance of the Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI)
- Overall GIS Coordination



MLIA GRANT PRIORITIES – USING GIS TO IMPROVE...

- Public Safety and Emergency Response
- Local and Tribal Government Work Flows, Business Processes and Operations
- Land Records



PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- Next Generation 911
 - Boundaries
 - Addresses
 - Road Centerlines
- Disaster and Emergency Operations and Planning
 - Wildfires
 - Earthquakes
 - Drought
 - Floods
 - Invasive Species
 - More...



LOCAL AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENT WORK FLOWS, BUSINESS PROCESSES AND OPERATIONS

- Land Use Planning
- Infrastructure and Asset Management
- GIS Data and Program Development – data layers that "federate" into the MSDI and support other programs (see next slide)
- GIS Data Development in support of U.S. Census Boundary Programs



THE MSDI FRAMEWORK DATA LAYERS

- **Stewarded by the MSL**
 - Administrative Boundaries
 - Cadastral
 - Geographic Names
 - Hydrography
 - Imagery
 - Mapping Control
 - Structures and Addresses
 - Transportation
- **Stewarded Outside the MSL**
 - Climate
 - Elevation
 - Geology
 - Hydrologic Unites
 - Land Cover
 - Soils
 - Wetlands

LAND RECORDS

- Improvements to Digital representation of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) to enhance the accuracy of the MSDI Cadastral and Administrative themes
 - New survey control data
 - Digitization and dissemination of documents related to PLSS corners and non-PLSS corners
- Development and enhancement of administrative boundaries

FY 2019 FUNDS AVAILABLE

- \$250,000 (Projected)
- Funds dependent on receipts (number of recordations)





APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY AND READINESS

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- Any division of state government
- Any city, county, or other division of local government
- A tribal government within the state
- A unit of the Montana University System



YOUR READINESS CHECKLIST

■ Purpose

- What are you trying to achieve? What is the need you intend to address?
- What are the projected outcomes of the project?
- How does your project advance the priorities for grants set forth in the FY 2019 Land Plan?
- How does your scope of work enable you to meet your objectives (outcomes)?

■ Partnerships and Collaborations

- Who are your stakeholders?
- Are there opportunities to work with other jurisdictional entities and agencies?

■ More...

READINESS (CONTINUED)

- Applicant Clarity

- Does the state, local, university, or Tribal governing body understand the project – commitments and benefits?
- **Who is the project manager? (not the consultant)**
- What is the role, if any, of a professional consultant?

- Fiscal Clarity

- Is your fiscal officer (treasurer, clerk, etc.) aware of the financial reporting requirements?
- What are your jurisdiction's procurement requirements?
 - Contracted services
 - Equipment (more)

READINESS (CONTINUED)

- Is this project being undertaken by a partnership?
 - Who are the partners and associated responsibilities?
(Remember: Your project consultant is not a partner!)
 - Have you confirmed your partners?
 - Agreements
 - MOUs
 - Letters of Support
 - Who will be the lead partner?
 - Fiscal responsibilities
 - Project management responsibilities



PROJECT PARTNERS CAN...

- Improve project efficiency
 - Contribute matching dollars
 - Assist with project management
 - Help make MLIA funds go further
- Share expertise and infrastructure
- Increase public benefit and support
 - Encompass a larger geographic area
 - Bring more stakeholders (supporters) to the table



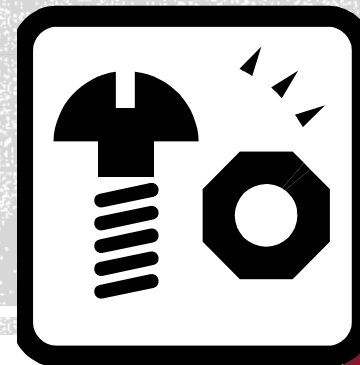


EVALUATION CRITERIA

PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SCORING

- Meets the purpose of the Montana Land Information Act
- Is tied to the grant priorities set forth in the FY2019 Land Plan
- Demonstrates public benefit (Clearly stated and emphasized)
- Clearly presents the scope of work
- Describes project management (capacity)
- Describes partnerships and collaborations
- Presents an appropriate budget

✓ THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF GRANT PROPOSAL WRITING



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WHY DO PROPOSALS FAIL?

- The proposal fails to be solution oriented.
- The proposal fails to demonstrate public benefit.
- The proposal is developed without planning ahead.
- The proposal fails to address the needs of the client – Fails to meet the purposes of the Montana Land Information Act/Plan.
- The preparer does not follow directions.
- The proposal is poorly written.

WHY DO PROPOSALS SUCCEED?

- The proposal meets the client's needs (MLIA), meeting the priorities of the 2019 land plan and demonstrating public benefit.
- The proposal demonstrates good marketing and sales skills.
- The proposal exhibits good analytical and creative skills.
- The writer demonstrates subject matter expertise.
- The proposal is well written.

ORGANIZING THE ORGANIZATION

- Defining the Mission
 - What is your agency?
 - What does the agency do?
 - What does the agency strive to achieve?
- The Mission Statement
 - Who are our stakeholders?
 - What issues are most important to us?
 - What would be lost if we did not exist?

ORGANIZING YOUR ORGANIZATION (CONTINUED)

- Periodic Planning
 - strategic planning
 - reviews and updates
- Goals and Objectives Setting in light of funding categories

IDENTIFYING PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

- Hierarchy of Approach
 - Problem Statement
 - Mission
 - Goals
 - Objectives
 - Actions
 - Guidelines and Standards

THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Key Informant
- Community Forum
- Case Studies/Examples
- Statistical Analysis
- Survey
- Articles and Professional Papers



BUILDING YOUR PROJECT

- **Based on Identified Needs**
- **In Keeping with Established Priorities and Community Based Goals and Objectives**
 - Strategic Plans
 - Growth Policies
 - Capital Improvement Plans
- **Tied specifically to the Goals and Strategies set forth in the Montana Land Information Plan**

TYPES OF GRANTS — CATEGORIES

- Operational Support
- Capital Purchase or Improvement
- Capital Campaign
- Program and/or Special Project ✓ (MLIA)

EVALUATING ALTERNATIVES

- Immediate and Long Term Costs
- Expertise Required for Implementation and Maintenance
- Associated Impacts
- Ease of Maintenance
- Partnerships Which can be Brought to the Effort

BUDGETING

- What does your program or project require to be successful?
- How does the project fit into your overall organizational budget?
- Who is responsible for managing the fiscal affairs of your organization?
- How do you demonstrate project sustainability?

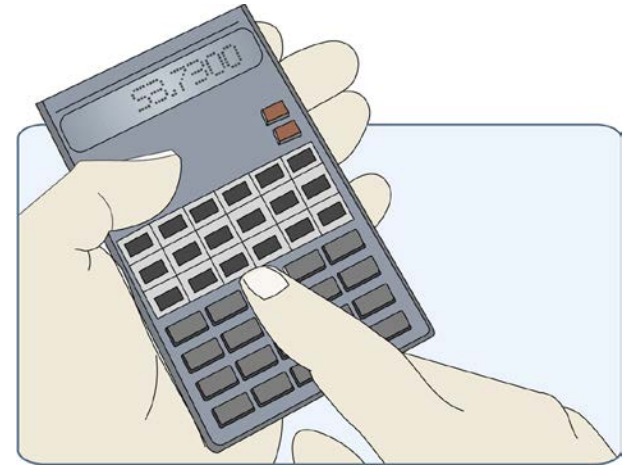
GETTING A HANDLE ON COSTS

- Seek good estimates from providers of services, manufacturers, builders, suppliers, etc.
- “Walk through a day.”
- Confer with other organizations.



DEVELOPING A FUNDING STRATEGY

- What is a good funding mix (in-kind v. cash; local match v. grant amount)?
- Can this project be phased in accordance with funding availability?
 - Multi-year projects are acceptable to the MLIA grant program but phases must be clearly articulated by year.
 - There are no guarantees.
- Does this program or project require long-term funding (beyond the grant)?
 - Sustainability is key to your funding strategy.



ORGANIZING YOUR WORK EFFORT

- Establish a time line with **reasonable** goals
 - Promising more than you can reasonably accomplish does not serve you well.
- Identify associated tasks
- Anticipate needs
- Assign responsibilities
- Write everything down (Keep a Journal)



WRITING FOR CLARITY

DON'T MUMBLE....

- **Make the organization of your writing clear.**
- **Use short paragraphs, short sentences – and short words.**
- **Make your writing active and personal.**
- **Avoid vague adjectives and adverbs (state your meaning precisely).**
- **Use down-to-earth language. (more)**

DON'T MUMBLE

- Be specific.
- Chose the right word.
- Come to the point.
- Write simply and naturally – the way (we hope) you talk.
- Strike out words you don't need.
- Make it perfect.



JANET'S RULES FOR CLEAR WRITING

- Avoid platitudes.
- Follow rules for numbers.
- Understand the differences in meaning between:
 - Affect and Effect
 - Around and About
 - Number and Amount

JANET'S RULES (CONTINUED)

- Eliminate “do” and “run” from your vocabulary .
- Rid your writing of gobbledygook.
- Resist using semi-colons.
- Embrace parallel construction.

AND...

- Avoid “never words”
- Use acronyms appropriately
- Avoid jargon
- Remember your role as a teacher.
- Write for the “Man/Woman” from Mars.

AND...



- Remember the importance of geography.
 - your location on the map
 - your location in the organization
- Understand how to use affect and effect.
- Remember that “they” refers to a plural antecedent.
- Brevity is a virtue – make each word work hard.

PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION

- Embrace parallel construction.
 - bullets
 - same verb tenses and parts of speech
- Format your document consistently.
 - outlines
 - fonts
 - paragraphs

MAKE YOUR WRITING ACCESSIBLE

- Consider your audience (s).
- Consider how the audience will use your document
- Organize the material logically from the reader's point of view.
- (more)

MAKE YOUR WRITING ACCESSIBLE (CONTINUED)

- Do a task analysis of the project or program and write down the steps in logical order.
- Put yourself in the place of your reviewers. What questions are they likely to ask?

WRITING ETHICS

- Always identify the sources of any facts, ideas, quotations and paraphrases.
- “Repurposing” (cutting and pasting) of in-house material may not require citation, but be careful!
 - Materials that have been published or submitted to an outside entity (including the MLIA Grant program) should be cited.
 - Always check underlying sources.

✓ MLIA GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS



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MLIA GRANT SCHEDULE



- January 15th – Grant Criteria and Application Materials Released
- February 15th – Applications Due
- March 1st – Corrected Applications Due
- May 1st – Determination of Qualifying Applications
- May 15th – Funding Priorities Set and Funds Distributed (based on available dollars)

✓ **MLIA GRANT PROPOSAL CONTENTS***

***Note: These may change somewhat, based on the work of the MLIAC grants subcommittee.**



SECTION 1. TITLE PAGE

- Applicant Information
- Project Participants and Partners
- Submittal Date
- Descriptive Title
- Executive Summary

WRITING AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

George Mason University Writing Center

2009

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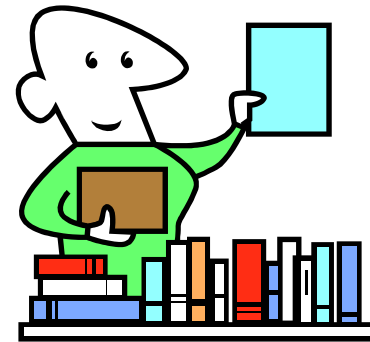
WHAT IS AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (ES)?



- An ES is a short informative or descriptive summary of a longer report.
- It is written after the report is completed, although it is intended to be read first.

THERE ARE TWO DISTINCT TYPES

- Descriptive ES
- Informative ES



DESCRIPTIVE ES

A DESCRIPTIVE ES merely identifies the areas to be covered in the report. It is an extended statement of purpose or scope. It is primarily useful for a very long report, because it demonstrates only the paper's organization, not its content.



✓ INFORMATIVE ES

An INFORMATIVE ES summarizes the entire report and gives the reader an overview of the facts that will be laid out in detail in the paper itself.



HOW TO WRITE AN INFORMATIVE ES

- Remember: There is a word limit!
- In the first draft, note key facts, statistics, etc. that you need to include.
- Do not include a statement of scope; a sentence like "this project will look at...." is inappropriate in an informative abstract.
(more)

HOW TO WRITE AN INFORMATIVE ES (CONT.):

- Be sure to omit or condense lengthy examples, tables, and other supporting detail.
- Revise the draft into smooth, stand-alone prose; the ES itself should be a mini-essay.
- Edit the revision. Be sure that the ES is complete and accurate. Double check that the ES is written in the same voice as is the proposal.

SECTION 2. RELEVANCE

- Summarize the problem to be solved/need to be addressed and predicted outcomes in relation to the defined grant category priority set forth in the the 2019 Land Information Plan.
- ***Evaluation criteria 1 – Proposal meets the purpose of the Montana Land Information Act (Relevance):***
 - *To develop a standardized, sustainable method to collect, maintain, and disseminate information*

SHARING A COMMON PURPOSE: FUNDER AND GRANTEE

- Detail how your project will further the goals set forth in the Montana Land Information Plan.
- Make specific references to the Land Plan priorities.

SECTION 3 – PUBLIC BENEFIT

- When appropriate, be as specific as possible with respect to the MSDI theme and agencies that will benefit. (Theme steward must be a defined partner in the application.)
- Discuss the public benefit with respect to the need/problem you are addressing, for example:
 - Next Generation 911
 - Infrastructure information needs
 - Jurisdictional boundaries and annexation
- ***Evaluation criteria #2 – the proposal demonstrates how the project will benefit an MSDI theme, multiple agencies and/or the public.***

SECTION 4 – SCOPE OF WORK

- Goals and Objectives
- Tasks and Activities
- Project Schedule

Evaluation criteria #3 – the proposal demonstrates adequate research and preparation, knowledge of standards, practices and data models

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Each project goal should have at least one measurable outcome or objective
- Goals and objectives are *ends*, not means and should not be confused with methods.
- Goals and objectives should be reasonable and achievable within available resources.
- Goals and objectives should be highlighted, not buried in the narrative.

PROJECT OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)

- Actual products
- Benefits and Beneficiaries
- Long and Short Range Benefits
- Degree to which the outcomes are projected to address the need over time

TASKS OR ACTIVITIES

- This section presents the strategies that will enable you to reach your objectives, in support of your goals.
- Highlights the significance, timeliness, appropriateness and/or the innovative aspects of your approach
- Demonstrates the feasibility of your approach (manageable steps)
- Demonstrates knowledge of potential obstacles and how they will be addressed.

TASKS OR ACTIVITIES – PRESENTATION

- Presented in chronological order for each objective
- Includes how project partners will be involved
- Demonstrates technical feasibility
- Explains interdependencies
- Delineates Outcomes – when and what
 - (note: Equipment purchases should be listed as tasks or activities and justifications should be included in the narrative.)

PROJECT SCHEDULE

- Detailed
- All-inclusive – EVERY STEP INCLUDED
- Remember – Your proposed schedule, in combination with your scope of work will help you monitor your project (if funded) and provide a framework for your periodic reports.

TIME LINES AND OTHER GRAPHIC REPRESENTATIONS

- Graphics build reader confidence and save space.
- Graphics lend authority to the proposal.
- Graphics should be placed as close as possible to the text that relates to it.
- Oversized graphics may be placed in the appendix.

SECTION 5 — PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

- Organizational capacity
 - Financial
 - Technical
 - Experience in similar projects
- Project Staff Qualifications
 - Employees
 - Applicant Project Manager
 - Sub-Contractors
 - Project partners
- ***Evaluation criteria #4 – the proposal demonstrates the applicant's ability to complete the project, based on the applicant's record of performance***

**Note: These may change somewhat, based on the work of the MLIAC grants subcommittee.

QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS (QS)

- Start from a strong position
 - Who are you
 - What is your expertise (rather than your academic history -- that comes later)
- The QS allows you to personalize your expertise -- it is not a resume
- Don't include personal information
- (more)

QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

- Items to Include
 - Description of your field of expertise
 - Formal Education and Academic Record
 - Experience in similar projects
 - Other Career or Project History (relevant to this project or program)
 - Honors, awards, publications, affiliations
- The QS allows you to *personalize* your expertise

SECTION 6 – BUDGET JUSTIFICATION AND BUDGET TABLE

- Identify the proposed sources of funds for each element of the proposal
 - Applicant
 - Partner (s)
 - MLIA Grant
- Identify the in-kind matching resources to be utilized

Evaluation criteria #5 – the proposal demonstrates the applicant's ability to complete the project within the proposed budget

THE BUDGET PROPOSAL

- Separate capital purchases and real property from the rest of the budget
- Separate administrative and overhead costs from project costs
- Limit grant administration costs to 5% of the MLIA grant award
- Provide documentation for all other sources of funds committed
- Identify other funders to whom you have applied for funds
- Check and re-check your math

BUDGET NARRATIVE

- Methodology in determining costs
 - Sources of cost estimates
 - Assumptions made
- Information about all funding sources
- A summary description of each budget item
- Contractual agreements with project partners
- Project maintenance – future funding

FUTURE FUNDING POTENTIAL – IDEAS AND STRATEGIES



MLIA GRANT BUDGET SUMMARY

	MLIA Summary	Applicant Summary			Funding Partner Summary*			Total:
Category	MLIA Share	Applicant Cash	Applicant In-kind	Applicant Subtotal	Funding Partner 1	Funding Partner 2	Partner Subtotal	(MLIA Share, Applicant Subtotal, Partner Subtotal)
a. Personnel				\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
a. 1. Fringe Benefits				\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
b. Travel				\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
c. Equipment				\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
d. Supplies & Materials				\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
e. Contractual				\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
f. Other				\$ -			\$ -	\$ -
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
					<i>*Add or remove funding partners columns as needed</i>			

SECTION 7 — STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FROM FUNDING PARTNERS

- Required for each party listed as a funding partner (not your contractor/consultant)
- Statements of support should be empowered to sign on the partner's behalf
 - Local governing body approval
 - Agency approval
 - Board approval for non-governmental entities

SECTION 8 — RENEWABLE GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY

Renewable Grant Accountability Report - If you received an FY2017 MLIA Grant you must file a report documenting the progress you have made toward meeting the requirements of that grant.

SIGNATURE

- Sign the application
 - Preparer/Project manager
 - Authorized representative

CHECKLIST

- Check application completeness
- Proof read every section
 - Read aloud for errors.
 - Don't rely on spell check!

SENDING IT OFF

- Allow time for all team members (project manager, staff and **partners**) and others to review for content and formatting errors, as well as typographical errors.
- Check and re-check that the application is complete.
- Re-read instructions for submittal.



WHAT IF YOU DON'T GET THE GRANT?

- Make an effort to learn why your proposal failed.
- Ask why? There is nothing to prevent you from making the same mistakes if you aren't provided with answers.
- Try to incorporate suggestions and concerns in future proposals (why do proposals fail? -- refer to earlier notes)

WHY DO PROPOSALS FAIL?

- Poor presentation
- Failure to address the criteria
- Lack of innovation in approach
- Lack of sensitivity to funder's issues and concerns
- Aggressiveness of time line (unrealistic)
- No demonstrated sustainability strategy

WHY DO PROPOSALS FAIL? (CONTINUED)

- Prior negative experience
 - With your organization
 - With project type
 - Failed time line
 - Project did not meet its goals



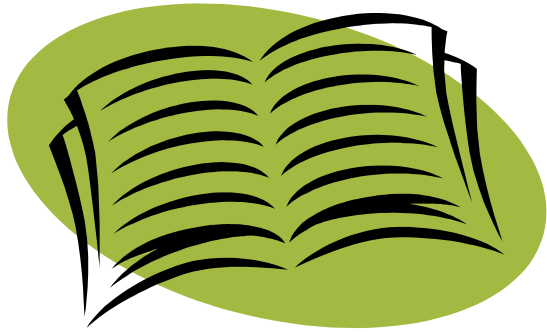
✓ PROJECT MANAGEMENT



ACCEPTANCE OF A GRANT IS A CONTRACT

- In accepting grant funding, you are committing to undertake and complete your project.
- The grant recipient should be engaged in the project, monitoring its progress and addressing challenges and issues.
- Even if you have a consultant/contractor, it is the local or tribal government, the university, or the state agency that is the **RESPONSIBLE PARTY** for reporting to the MLIA grant program.
- Funds are limited. Dollars that you don't spend or that are not spent appropriately could have been directed to another project.

MANAGING SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS



- Keep a journal of activities
- Maintain flawless financial records
- Stay in regular contact with the funder
- Submit all reports on a timely basis





GRANT MONITORING AND REPORTING

ERIN

✓ QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

