Recipe for a Collaborative Grant Project

Ingredients

- Strong relationships between
    - Big picture thinkers
    - Content experts
    - Project managers
- Lots of curiosity
- 1-3 recent, relevant research articles defining a problem

- 2-3 brainstorming meetings
- 1 grant call for proposals aligned with the problem and solution
- 1-2 grant specialists
- Strong support from institutions and state/regional groups

Preparation

- Begin by building on current relationships with people diverse in their talents and perspectives.
- In a brainstorming meeting, propose an idea and begin asking questions. It's okay to go off topic! The topic may be centered around recent relevant research defining a problem or around an existing call for proposals.
- Hold enough brainstorming meetings until a possible solution is proposed that aligns with the grant call for proposal. Make sure the solution is closely tied with the grant organization's strategic plan, mission and vision.
- Take a deep breath and consider a few ways the project could go wrong. This will help you overcome the natural tendency to underestimate how much time and expense a project will require.

Now We're Cooking!

- Read the call for proposal many times. Reach out to a grant specialist or colleague who has been successful with grants.
- Keep a running list of questions and consider working in outline formats (outlining the big picture first and then working on details) to minimize the disruptions of a frequently interrupted or disjointed work schedule.
- If the call for proposals provides an outline or rubric, follow the order of the sections as they are listed as much as possible. Use the same terms that is in the call for proposals and consider using those terms as headings.
- Check and double check that you have met all the requirements of the call for proposal. Do not exceed the page limit, use the correct budget form, etc.
- If the grant offers a chance to submit early for a review before the deadline, do it!

Special notes

*IMLS indicated that they especially liked our proposal because it came from an area that does not frequently apply for grants from them (Oklahoma), it included a community college, and it was bringing something new to the OER conversation. They also liked the partnership of different types of institutions, the support from a statewide OER group (COLE) and the diversity of the student populations at each institution.

**Our preliminary proposal was written to an audience of academic librarians and did not thoroughly explain OER or why they matter. The peer-reviewers for the preliminary proposal were mostly from non-academic libraries and their comments made it clear that they needed more context on OER. Be mindful of your audience.

Provide feedback throughout the project and receive updates through our Twitter or Moodle website.

Twitter: @LifelongOpen   **Moodle website:** https://bit.ly/3k3F8or