

## Section 5.4: Establish Application Development Team

### PURPOSE AND POLICY

For larger, complex grant applications, a grant program manager will need to establish a grant application team, which will spend several weeks assembling the application. This section discusses the procedures for establishing an effective application development team. The grant program manager can assign tasks to team members within the eCivis system to aid with this process.

### PROCEDURE

**In-house Resources.** At a minimum, the grant application team should include in-house resources, such as the agency's financial representative who can prepare the budget and supporting documents, subject matter experts who can provide content to support the application and an editor or proofreader who can write content and/or polish the final application. This may also include "peripheral" non-staff resources, such as a board or commission member who has the clout to request a support letter from a high-level public official.

**Outside Resources.** An agency may need to rely on outside sources to assist with grant application development. For a small agency without a dedicated grant writer, this may be as simple as contracting with a grant professional to develop the application on behalf of the agency. In other cases, the agency may need to work with outside resources to prepare specific sections of the grant application (i.e., the state agency may need to work with their counsel at the Attorney General's Office to secure legal review or certification required by the grant application). Some grants require that an agency have a dedicated research partner funded via the grant. As such, the research partner will need to contribute to the grant application and should be included on the grant application team.

**Collaborative Applications.** There may be cases whereby an agency is the leader of a coalition applying for a grant. The coalition may include other government agencies (federal, state or local); community organizations or other non-profits; research partners (universities or think tanks); and any other stakeholders. In this case, the grant application also will be a collaborative effort that includes all members who will apply jointly for the funding. All collaborative partners should have a representative on the grant application development team, with the lead agency's grant program manager serving as the project manager for the grant application development.

**Kick-off Meeting.** Now that the resources have been identified, the timeline developed and the team members selected, the grant program manager will schedule a kick-off meeting. Ideally, this meeting takes place in person, but the grant program manager should allow for teleconferencing options as well to ensure maximum participation. In addition to the team members, the grant program manager should invite agency leadership to attend. Prior to the meeting, the grant program manager should develop and distribute an agenda, grant application guidelines, grant application development timeline, team contact information and any other information relevant to the meeting and the grant application development. During the meeting, the team will discuss their roles and responsibilities, identify their individual contributions to the application, and provide assurances that they can meet their commitments by the deadlines included on the timeline (the project's schedule). At this time, the grant program manager

should finalize the grant application timeline, taking into consideration the contributions of the individual team members.

**Follow-up.** The grant program manager should follow up after the meeting. He/she should share the meeting notes with the group, written documentation of the individual commitments and the application timeline (with deadlines) and share this with the group. The grant program manager should also include any additional follow-up meetings required to complete the application. At a minimum, the grant program manager should schedule weekly updates via email that will be shared with the entire team.