

## Extreme Proposal Makeover

Presented by  
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## What are the most common flaws in proposal writing?

- Those affecting substance
- Those concerning format



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## Grant Reviewers “Pet Peeves”

- Projects that don’t match their guidelines – 63%
- Incomplete applications – 60%
- Bad budgets – 54%
- Poorly written proposals – 49%



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Workshop Outline –  
*5 F's will equal an "A"*

- Funders
- Flaws
- Fit
- Flow – writing style
- Financial - budgets



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Workshop Outcomes

At the conclusion of the workshop, you will:

- Know some of the proposal flaws cited most frequently by grantmakers.
- Understand the importance of, and know how to show a good fit with a funder.
- Know how to correct abstract, vague, pontificating language in your proposals.
- Recognize common budget flaws in proposals and how to avoid them.



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The Funders: Who was surveyed?

- 70 Grantmakers: community foundations, family foundations, corporate foundations
- 1 to 30 years of experience as grant reviewers
- 78% have worked for grant-seeking organizations
- 91% have written proposals



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### Demonstrating a ‘Good Fit’: What the Funders Say

- Say *why* you think it is a good fit – 69%
- Specify the funding category where the project fits – 57%



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### Example: Demonstrating “Fit”

**The foundation guidelines say:**

The Anderson Family Foundation is a . . . family foundation . . . Our values . . . *Emphasize enlightenment of the mind, empowerment of the individual, nurturing of creativity and expression, and respect for appreciation of nature and wildlife. . . .*



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### Example (cont’d)

We are dedicated to the well being of *children and youth* with special interest in programs that cultivate *a better understanding of the natural world and foster creativity . . . We believe that each individual can make a difference and while society’s problems can appear overwhelming, we see great hope in . . . young people.*



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### Example (cont'd)

The Foundation seeks opportunities where small and medium-sized grants can have a ***deep and lasting impact***.

The Foundation makes grants in the range of \$10,000 to \$50,000.



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### The “ugly duckling” LOI

I am writing this letter of inquiry to the Anderson Family Foundation to tell you about Bridges to Nature . . . a wildlife sanctuary . . . We believe that Bridges to Nature is a good fit with the Foundation because our programs ***enlighten the mind, empower the individual, nurture creativity and expression*** . . .



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### “Ugly duckling” (cont'd)

***and teach respect for nature and wildlife*** . . . If invited to submit a full proposal, ***we would request grant funding of between \$10,000 and \$50,000*** . . .



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## “Ugly duckling” – (cont’d)

These funds *will have a deep and lasting impact* on the at-risk and disenfranchised youth we serve . . . We believe that *each individual child can make a difference . . . We see great hope in . . . young people.*



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## Funders’ Comments

- “The more mirroring of language there is, the less actual fit there is.”
- “Write as if you have read our guidelines, but without parroting what we have said.”

**Tip:** Don’t just *say* your project fits, *show* that it fits!



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## The “Beautiful Swan”

Dear Ms. Smyth:

Many low-income and at-risk children living in Urban City have never seen a deer in the wild or fresh bobcat tracks in the soft dirt. At Bridges to Nature, a wildlife sanctuary . . . We give these *young people an opportunity to experience nature – up close and personal!*



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“Beautiful Swan” – (cont’d)

After viewing your current guidelines, I believe that our agency is a good fit with the Foundation’s funding priorities . . .

The majority of our programs are daylong visits to our sanctuary that *combine hands-on nature experiences with classroom learning* . . .



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“Beautiful Swan” – Cont’d

. . . Schools can no longer afford to participate due to severe budget cuts that eliminated costs such as bus rentals . . . *Hardest hit were schools in low-income communities* . . . where children were the least likely to have opportunities for excursions outside the city or even outside their immediate neighborhoods.



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“Beautiful Swan” – Cont’d

Without Bridges to Nature, these students would miss the *chance to experience and learn about the natural world* that exists just outside the city limits . . . *A grant of \$15,000* would enable us to *underwrite school visits by ten classrooms.*



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## Key Improvements

- Stronger opening & ending
- Vivid images – ‘a deer in the wild’, ‘fresh bobcat tracks’, ‘wild male turkey in full plumage’
- More relevant details demonstrate fit
- Specific grant amount



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## Flow: What Grantmakers Say About Annoying Writing Styles

- Academic/abstract/vague/pontificating writing – 78%
- Florid writing – 62%
- Poor grammar, bad spelling – 60%



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## Example: abstract, vague language

“Superior Institution supports an educational process to increase problem visibility through group interaction. By channeling the latent capacities for strength among group members, we expect to harness the power to create a shift toward a sustainable economy.”

- *What does this mean???*



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2<sup>nd</sup> Example: abstract, vague language

“Bridge to Maturity helps youth with complex challenges discover their full potential through an array of integrated services by synthesizing our program to offer a unique opportunity for our students to learn, grow and succeed.”

*Huh?*



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What’s wrong in these examples?

- Vague goals, objectives
- Unclear program components
- Noble-sounding but meaningless
- Lofty words and abstract concepts cannot disguise fuzzy thinking and poor planning



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Example: the “ugly duckling”

We are deeply committed to utilizing local intellectual and creative capital to achieve systemic change and plan to address fundamentals that will provide students with currency in the world of responsible adults.



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## “Ugly ducking” (cont’d)

This will metamorphose to accountability for enforced outcomes for each student and for each cohort. By drawing on local resources, the program will reinforce cultural and social assets in the students’ community and re-integrate them to the values of their heritage.



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## Ugly duckling, cont’d.

### New Horizons Initiative Goals

- To expand students horizons for future success.
- To increase students critical thinking and leadership skills.
- To provide ingress for students to local intellectual and cultural capital.

(No objectives listed.)



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## Ugly duckling, cont’d.

### •Ugly Duckling Methodology

Activities will be designed to interface with the rigorous academic curriculum ... tailored to meet the unique needs of each individual participant, but focused on group dynamics and group outcomes. ... demonstrating the correlation between success in school and success in life.



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## Ugly duckling, cont'd.

### •Ugly Duckling Evaluation

Evaluation will be ongoing. We will seek feedback from students, peers, teachers, parents and members of the collaborative.

The [project] will incorporate an *innovative* ... evaluation method. This *quasi-experimental design* addresses process, outcome, and impact evaluation questions, and provides a *self-correcting feedback mechanism* for program participants and managers to monitor and adjust the program during implementation.



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## Funders' Comments

- “Jargon is annoying; big words when little will do is annoying.”
- “The most common bad writing style is vague, overblown, indirect language.”



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## Funders' comments, cont'd.

### *Pet peeve:*

“Proposals that are full of jargon and don't explain, in plain language, what the organization would do with proposed funds.”



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**The Makeover:**

**Vague/Abstract to Specific/Vivid**

We have worked with the Private Industry Council (PIC) and others to develop a careful plan and budget for the initiative. The participants . . . are listed in Attachment 3 and include local cultural organizations representing various ethnic groups in our community in addition to the PIC.

(instead of 'local intellectual and creative capital')



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**The Makeover, cont'd.**

The **Goal** of the New Horizons Initiative is to expand students' horizons for future success by increasing their critical thinking and leadership skills and strengthening their connections within their own community and culture.



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**The Makeover, cont'd.**

The **Objectives** for the first year are:

- Improve academic performance of 150 HS students as measured by GPAs.
- Broaden expectations of possible future careers.
- Strengthen identification with culture of origin & appreciation/respect for other cultures.
- Instill expectation of "giving back" as part of value system.



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## The Makeover, cont'd.

•In the revised proposal, the **Methodology** includes clear, detailed descriptions of the following program components:

*Academic*

*Career*

*Community Service*

*Cultural*

*Group Projects*



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## The Makeover, cont'd.

**Evaluation** will be ongoing. *Program activity, enrollment and attendance records will provide data* on whether the program is meeting process objectives (i.e., Did enrollment meet expectations? Did activities take place as planned? How many attended?) By *monitoring students' grades* we can measure academic outcomes. We will also seek feedback via *online questionnaires* ... and will tabulate and share results with all parties. This is meant to provide *positive reinforcement for desired outcomes* and an opportunity to adjust the program when expectations are not met.



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## The Makeover, cont'd.

### •Evaluation, cont'd.

*Survey questions* will address

- Outcome: What was learned?
- Impact: What has changed?
- Quality: Did it meet your needs/expectations? What would you change or add?



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## Key Improvements

- Objectives are specific and measurable
- Clear description of program components
- Evaluation methods described




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## Financial: What Grantmakers Say About Common Budget Flaws

### *Pet Peeves:*

- Large, unexplained budget line items – 69%
- Inconsistent with narrative – 66%
- Numbers don't add up – 50%




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## Identifying Financial Flaws

<b>Revenue from Grants:</b>		How much is secured to date? Funders want to know.
Foundations	\$175,000	
Government	\$ 22,000	
Corporations	\$155,000	
Individuals	\$ 50,000	
Event (net)	\$ 15,000	
In-Kind	\$ 18,000	What's this?
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$435,000</b>	Differs from amount in narrative!




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### Identifying Financial Flaws, cont'd.

Salaries & Benefits	\$ 98,700	
Contract Personnel	\$ 70,000	Needs explanation.
Shipping & Postage	\$ 20,000	
Insurance	\$ 60,000	Needs explanation.
Materials & Supplies	\$125,000	Needs explanation.
Computer Equipment	\$ 23,000	
Contingency	\$ 38,000	Provide detail.
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$435,000</b>	Does not compute!

### Fixing Financial Flaws

- Double-check to be sure the budget agrees with the proposal narrative!
- No large (more than 10% of total), unexplained budget items.
- Include budget notes/narrative.
- Give status for other funding.
- Re-check the math!!

### The Financial Makeover

<b>Revenue from Grants:</b>	
Foundations	\$175,000
Government	\$ 22,000
Corporations	\$155,000
Individuals	\$ 50,000
Event (net)	\$ 15,000
In-Kind	\$ 18,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$435,000</b>

Proposal revised to reflect correct amount.

### The Financial Makeover, cont'd.

Salaries & Benefits	\$ 98,700	
Contract Personnel	\$ 70,000	
Insurance	\$ 60,000	
Shipping & Postage	\$ 20,000	
Materials & Supplies	\$125,000	
Computer Equipment	\$ 21,000	Rate added
Contingency @ 10%	\$ 38,000	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$449,950</b>	Total is correct.




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### The Financial Makeover, cont'd.

<b>Notes:</b>	Notes added to explains various items.	
<b>1 Grant Status:</b>	Status of grant revenue clarified.	
Noel Norton Foundation	Requested	\$50,000
Tranquil County Community Foundation	Committed	\$34,000
Greater Taupe Chamber of Commerce Fund	Requested	\$10,000




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### The Financial Makeover, cont'd.

<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>2 In-Kind Contributions:</b>	Explanation of in-kind contributions.	
Wittman's Fine Carpets & Restoration	Donated supplies included in exhibit materials.	\$ 8,000
	Donated services included in contract services	\$10,000




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## The Financial Makeover, cont'd.

<b>Notes:</b>	
3 <b>Contract Personnel</b>	For construction, installation of display fixtures.

Note added to explain contract personnel expense



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## The Financial Makeover, cont'd.

<b>Notes:</b>	
4 <b>Insurance</b>	Required by owners of exhibit art; estimated for 100 pieces.

Note added to explain insurance costs.



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## The Financial Makeover, cont'd.

<b>Notes:</b>	
5 <b>Equipment</b>	For interactive exhibit collaterals.

Note added to explain contract equipment expense.



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**Funders' Comments**

- “Foundation support should be provided in detail with name of foundation and amounts (received and pending).”
- “We ask for a budget narrative ... to explain the details of each line item.”
- “Some think a budget does not include income. We expect to have a clear picture where all funds are received and disbursed.”



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**Contact Us:**

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## **Anderson Family Foundation Guidelines for Applicants**

### **Who We Are**

The Anderson Family Foundation is a small but growing family foundation that strives to make a difference in the local community, which has been home to four generations of Andersons. Our values are expressed in our grantmaking, which emphasizes enlightenment of the mind, empowerment of the individual, nurturing of creativity and expression, and respect for and appreciation of nature and wildlife. To this end, we are dedicated to the well being of children and youth, with special interest in programs that cultivate a better understanding of the natural world and foster creativity. The Foundation takes an avid interest in safeguarding our environment for future generations. Environmental education is critical if society is to preserve and protect natural resources. We believe that each individual can make a difference and while society's problems can appear overwhelming, we see great hope in the enthusiasm, creativity and intelligence of young people. The Foundation seeks opportunities where small and medium-sized grants can have a deep and lasting impact.

### **What We Fund**

- Nonprofit agencies and their programs that: (1) benefit children and youth, particularly young people from low-income households and those at-risk within the Greater Urban City four-county area (Forest, Hill, Marsh and River Counties) and (2) provide environmental education to children and youth.
- General operating, program, and project support.
- Grants in the range of \$10,000 to \$50,000.
- Agencies that do not discriminate against any person or group on the basis of age, race, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, national origin, political affiliation or sexual orientation.
- 501(c)(3) organizations or those with a fiscal sponsor.

### **What We Do Not Fund**

- Capital campaigns, endowments, scholarships, individuals, films, videos, conferences, or fundraising events.
- Multi-year funding requests.

### **What Is Our Process**

- The Foundation accepts two-page letters of inquiry throughout the year. Those selected will be invited to submit a formal application.

- Send letters to:       Judi Smyth  
                                  Grants Manager  
                                  Anderson Family Foundation  
                                  100 Main Street  
                                  Suburbia, CA 90000-0001

## ***“Before” Letter of Inquiry to the Anderson Family Foundation***

January 30, 2006

Ms. Judy Smith, Grants Manager  
Anderson Family Foundation  
100 Main Street  
Suburbia, CA 90000-0001

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am writing this letter of inquiry to the Anderson Family Foundation to tell you about Bridges to Nature, a unique and innovative 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that serves the Greater Urban City four-county area. Bridges to Nature is a wildlife sanctuary with year-round programming that educates children and youth about our natural world and fosters their creativity. We believe that Bridges to Nature is a good fit with the Anderson Family Foundation because our programs enlighten the mind, empower the individual, nurture creativity and expression, and teach respect for nature and wildlife. If invited to submit a full proposal, we would request grant funding of between \$10,000 and \$50,000. These funds will have a deep and lasting impact on the at-risk and disenfranchised youth we serve.

At Bridges to Nature, we seek to safeguard nature and wildlife from suburban development, and inspire future generations to preserve and protect our natural resources. Founded in 1985, Bridges to Nature is celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of providing young people with a better understanding of the natural world. We believe that each individual child can make a difference. While problems such as suburban encroachment and rampant development, and the accompanying loss of wildlife habitat and wildlife itself, can appear overwhelming, we see great hope in the enthusiasm, creativity and intelligence of young people.

Bridges to Nature needs grant support to underwrite the costs of our educational programs for low-income and at-risk youth. Since our founding, we have opened our sanctuary gates to hundreds of school groups. Schoolchildren visit our beautiful 350-acre site located in forested hills that are populated by dozens of varieties of birds, deer, raccoons, skunks, bobcats, and the occasional mountain lion. Though Bridges to Nature is only a 30-minute drive from Urban City, the majority of low-income and at-risk youth have never experienced. We introduce these young people to a whole new world that is beyond their daily experience. Our short-term goal is to provide children with an understanding of, and appreciation for, nature that they will cherish all their lives. Our long-term goal is to develop citizens who will help safeguard our environment for future generations.

Severe cuts have had a negative affect on school district budgets, causing many schools to eliminate field trips because bus transportation and related expenses cost too much. Bridges to Nature seeks grant funding so school children in poor and under funded school districts continue to have opportunities to visit nature. We have to raise at least \$10,000 in support to sustain this program in the coming year as current grant funding is about to run out.

We hope that the Anderson Family Foundation will want to learn more about Bridges to Nature. Please advise us as to whether we should submit a formal grant proposal. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrea Porter  
Executive Director

### ***“After” Letter of Inquiry to the Anderson Family Foundation***

January 30, 2006

Ms. Judi Smyth  
Grants Manager  
Anderson Family Foundation  
100 Main Street  
Suburbia, CA 90000-0001

Dear Ms. Smyth:

Many low-income and at-risk children living in Urban City have never seen a deer in the wild or fresh bobcat tracks in the soft dirt. At Bridges to Nature, a wildlife sanctuary and education center located a mere 30-minutes from Urban City, we give these young people an opportunity to experience nature – up close and personal!

I am writing to the Anderson Family Foundation to tell you about Bridges to Nature and our outstanding education programs. After reviewing your current guidelines, I believe that our agency is a good fit with the Foundation’s funding priorities. If invited to submit a full proposal, we will ask the Foundation for a grant of \$15,000 to help support our “Busloads to Bridges” program. This program enables under funded schools and school districts in the Greater Urban City four-county area, though primarily in Urban City, to send school groups to Bridges to Nature.

Bridges to Nature is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization founded in 1985 when the Fisher family donated 350 acres to the new agency with the stipulation that the land be held in perpetuity as a wildlife sanctuary and environmental educational center. (Our educational center and small wildlife museum is housed in what was formerly the Fisher estate home. Agency offices are found in several small outbuildings near the main center.)

For 20 years, Bridges to Nature has offered a variety of environmental education programs geared to elementary and high school students. We estimate that Bridges to Nature has served more than 60,000 students in the past 20 years, or an average of about 3,000 students per year.

Approximately 40% of the visiting students come from low-income households. The majority of our programs are daylong visits to our sanctuary that combine hands-on nature experiences with classroom learning. We also provide teachers with pre- and post-visit curriculum materials that enhance the student's visit. In addition to our one-day program, Natures to Bridges also offers several multi-day and weeklong options.

Several schools have brought their students each year since our educational programs were first offered. However, in recent years, we started hearing from principals and teachers that schools could no longer afford to participate due to severe budget cuts that eliminated costs such as bus rentals and even modest participation fees. Hardest hit were schools in low-income communities, especially those in Urban City, where children were the least likely to have opportunities for excursions outside the city or even outside their immediate neighborhoods. Without Bridges to Nature, these students would miss the chance to experience and learn about the natural world that exists just outside the city borders.

To meet this need, Busloads to Bridges was created three years ago with a three-year \$100,000 seed grant from the Urban City Community Foundation. This funding enabled Bridges to Nature to underwrite the cost of bus transportation and group participation fees for those schools otherwise unable to bring student groups out to the sanctuary. The program has been a huge success as all underwritten spots filled within a few weeks after notices were mailed to local schools. However, Bridges to Nature is now in the third year of the three-year grant from the Community Foundation and we must secure new grant funding if we are to continue this worthwhile program, which is why I am writing to the Anderson Family Foundation. A grant of \$15,000 would enable us to underwrite school visits by ten classrooms. (The average daily bus rental rate is \$500 and our full-day student group rate is \$500. Student groups average between 20 and 30 children.)

For a child who has never before seen a wild male turkey in full plumage, a visit to Bridges to Nature can be an eye-opening experience. I hope you will want to learn more about Bridges to Nature and will invite us to submit a full proposal. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to call me. Thank you very much for considering our letter of inquiry.

Sincerely,

Andrea Porter  
Executive Director

## ***'Before' Proposal to the Too Good to Be True Foundation***

The High School of Hard Knocks (HSoHK) in Urban City offers a profoundly superior but affordable educational alternative to inner-city youth ages 14 to 18. Our aim is to provide students who have been low-performing with an array of educational services integrated with a unique curriculum to help them attain the qualities and skills they need for successful adult life and realize their full potential. The school opened three years ago with our first class of 50 freshmen. Our enrollment is now 250 and in June the first class of 41 students will graduate.

We are seeking funding for a new academic component to further our mission of "preparing tomorrow's Urban City citizens". The total cost for the "New Horizons Initiative" is \$75,000 for the first year and I am writing today to ask the Too Good to Be True Foundation to consider a grant for this amount. I believe you will find the benefits to be worth the investment of your funding.

### **The Need**

At HSoHK we believe that our youth are our future and we are determined to invest them with the skills and attributes they need for a bright future. The youth we serve face multiple challenges to their future success. Nearly all reside in the southeast sector of Urban City – an area marked by high rates of indigence. Most attended local public schools prior to their enrollment at HSoHK. Unfortunately, as with many of the schools in Urban City, these schools are notable for their crumbling infrastructure, the mismanagement of their scant resources and the resulting poor performance of their students on standardized tests.

In fact, two of the local elementary schools were closed recently because of fiscal mismanagement and the junior high has been threatened with closure unless student performance improves. As a result many students are being bussed to other neighborhoods to attend school and are losing touch with their community and their culture. If the junior high school also closes, all teens attending public schools will be bussed outside the community.

For the most part our students come to us unprepared for the challenging academic and social environment of high school. Most are three to four years behind their grade level in verbal skills and lag two or more years in math/science.

At the same time the community has several notable assets. Family structures are sound and parents share a strong commitment to their children's education. While most adults are employed in low-paying jobs, there is a strong work ethic and many work several jobs to support their families.

Our goal at HSoHK is to bring students up to grade level by their junior year and provide them with marketable skills so they will have real choices for employment or continuing their education at graduation. We accomplish this through a rigorous academic program. Our students attend classes seven and a half hours every weekday and half days every other Saturday. Support for improvement in academic outcomes is available for students who need it.

We have been successful in meeting our objectives thus far. But we find that our students' vision for their future is limited – by unfamiliarity with viable careers and by a lack of appropriate role models. At the same time, parents continue to be concerned that students are losing touch with their own culture and are not motivated to give back to their community.

### **New Horizons Initiative: Goals**

Working collaboratively with the local Private Industry Council (PIC) and local social and cultural groups, we have designed the New Horizons Initiative to address these issues. Our goals are:

1. To expand students horizons for future success.
2. To increase students critical thinking and leadership skills.
3. To provide ingress for students to local intellectual and cultural capital.

### **Methodology**

We have worked with the PIC and others to develop a careful plan and budget for the initiative. (The participants in this collaborative effort are listed in Attachment 3.) By harnessing the dynamism of relevant cultural icons we can crystallize the values we seek. Students will be enrolled in the initiative in the second semester of their sophomore year. This is about the time when most HSoHK students are catching up academically and ready for new challenges. It also allows students to participate in two summer sessions – one following their sophomore year and the second after their junior year. The program will run year-round and will serve 150 students – 75 from HSoHK and 75 from the local community through a balanced “outreach and in-reach” technological marketing methodology. This will allow us to create the nexus for arming emerging community leaders with the facility to be powerful motivators for the social good.

We will hire a full-time project coordinator for the project and plan to recruit a young adult from the local community for this position. Working with an advisory council made up of the collaboration members, the coordinator will design the specific project activities. Activities will be designed to interface with the rigorous academic curriculum, aimed at achieving the goals stated above and reflective of our high standards of excellence in pedagogy and tutelage. The syllabus will be tailored to meet the unique needs of each individual participant, but it will also focus on group dynamics and group outcomes. By demonstrating the correlation between success in school and success in life, the New Horizons Initiative will encompass a new vision for Urban City's future – one that nurtures excellence and rewards future development efforts.

We are deeply committed to utilizing local intellectual and creative capital to achieve systemic change and plan to address fundamentals that will provide students with currency in the world of responsible adults. This will metamorphose to accountability for enforced outcomes – for each student and for each cohort. By drawing on local resources, the program will reinforce cultural and social assets in the students' community and re-integrate them to the values of their heritage. In this way, students will reclaim the strengths and values of their culture and give voice to their unique and shared talents.

Aside from the project coordinator, all other staffing will be by volunteers.

## **Expected Outcomes and Evaluation**

Our primary expected outcome is systemic change in the local cultural milieu; specifically, the entire community will be empowered to encourage the success of our students. Evaluation will be ongoing. We will seek feedback from students, peers, teachers, parents and members of the collaborative.

Further, the New Horizons Initiative will incorporate an innovative, comprehensive evaluation method. This quasi-experimental evaluation design addresses process, outcome, and impact evaluation questions, and provides a self-correcting feedback mechanism for program participants and managers to use in monitoring and adjusting the program during its implementation.

## **Future Funding**

The local PIC has made a significant in-kind contribution to this project as have local cultural and social agencies. Once success has been demonstrated we will launch an extensive fundraising campaign aimed at our major donors and at local businesses.

## **Conclusion**

A review of the guidelines and annual report of the Too Good to be True Foundation has convinced us that your trustees share our commitment to youth as the future of our community. The New Horizons Initiative matches the goals of the Foundation's Educational Innovations funding category. New Horizons will be a significant enhancement to the curriculum at HSoHK. Our school is already recognized as an institutional treasure in our community. We invite your eleemosynary investment in our efforts to prepare youth to take their place as contributing adult citizens in Urban City.

## ***'After' Proposal to the Too Good to Be True Foundation***

### **Introduction**

The High School of Hard Knocks (HsoHK) in Urban City offers a superior but affordable educational alternative to inner-city youth ages 14 to 18. Our aim is to provide students who have been low-performing with a well-rounded education to help them attain the qualities and skills they need for successful adult life. The school opened three years ago with our first class of 50 freshmen. Our enrollment is now 250 and in June the first class of 41 students will graduate.

We are seeking funding for a new academic component to further our mission of "preparing tomorrow's Urban City citizens". The total cost for the "New Horizons Initiative" is \$75,000 for the first year and I am writing today to ask the Too Good to Be True Foundation to consider a grant for this amount.

## **The Need**

At HSoHK we believe that our youth are our future. The young people we serve face multiple challenges to their future success. Nearly all reside in the southeast sector of Urban City – an area marked by high poverty rates. Most attended local public schools prior to their enrollment at HSoHK. Unfortunately, as with many of the schools in Urban City, these schools are notable for their crumbling infrastructure, the mismanagement of their scant resources and the resulting poor performance of their students on standardized tests.

In fact, two of the local elementary schools were closed recently because of fiscal mismanagement and the junior high has been threatened with closure unless student performance improves. As a result many students are being bussed to other neighborhoods to attend school and are losing touch with their community and their culture. If the junior high school also closes, all teens attending public schools will be bussed outside the community.

For the most part our students come to us unprepared for the challenging academic and social environment of high school. Most are three to four years behind their grade level in verbal skills and lag two or more years in math/science.

At the same time the community has several notable assets. Family structures are generally sound and parents share a strong commitment to their children's education. While most adults are employed in low-paying jobs, there is a strong work ethic and many work several jobs to support their families.

Our goal at HSoHK is to bring students up to grade level by their junior year and provide them with marketable skills so they will have real choices for employment or continuing their education at graduation. We accomplish this through a rigorous academic program. Our students attend classes seven and a half hours every weekday and half days every other Saturday. Extra tutorial help is also available for students who need it.

We have been successful in meeting our objectives thus far. But we find that our students' vision for their future is limited – by unfamiliarity with viable careers and by a lack of appropriate role models. At the same time, parents are concerned that students are losing touch with their own culture and its values.

### **New Horizons Initiative: Goals**

Working collaboratively with the local Private Industry Council (PIC) and local social and cultural groups, we have designed the New Horizons Initiative to address these issues. Our goal is to expand students horizons for future success by increasing their critical thinking and leadership skills and strengthening their connections within their own community and culture.

Our objectives for the New Horizons Initiative for the first year are:

- To improve the academic performance of 150 participating high school students as measured by grade point averages.

- To broaden their expectations of possible future careers.
- To strengthen their identification with their culture of origin and to create an appreciation and respect for other cultures.
- To instill the expectation of “giving back to community” as part of their value system.

## Methodology

We have worked with the PIC and others to develop a careful plan and budget for the initiative. The participants in this collaborative effort are listed in Attachment 3 and include local cultural organizations representing the various ethnic groups in our community in addition to the PIC. By partnering with these groups, New Horizons will offer culturally appropriate programming and role models for participants.

Students will be enrolled in the initiative in the second semester of their sophomore year. This is about the time when most HSoHK students are catching up academically and ready for new challenges. It also allows students to participate in two summer sessions – one following their sophomore year and the second after their junior year. In addition to an intensive nine-week core program during the summer, the program will run year-round with twice monthly Saturday group sessions and individual work and will serve 150 students – 75 from HSoHK and 75 from the local community. HSoHK students will be recruited through our website, through presentations to students and our parent group and through e-mails sent through our school-wide network. Non-HSoHK students will be recruited by our partner community cultural organizations. Balancing participation by HSoHK students with students from other high schools will forge strong community alliances and build community leadership.

We will hire a full-time project coordinator for the project and plan to recruit a young adult from the local community for this position. Working with an advisory council made up of the collaboration members, the coordinator will design the specific project activities to include:

- an **Academic Component** – remedial math, English, communications, etc. through the formation of peer study groups. This component will feature cooperative learning.
- a **Career Component** – exploration of career options through presentations by successful adults from the local community engaged in skilled labor and white collar industries and through internships with local businesses and organizations. This component will stress the correlation between success in school and success in life and will provide role models to emulate.
- a **Service Component** – volunteer opportunities and internships with local agencies. This component will demonstrate the value of “giving back”.
- a **Cultural Component** – presentations by partner cultural organizations and visits to local cultural institutions. This component will teach both the value of each student’s culture or origin and respect for other cultures.
- a **Group Project Component** – in small groups students will work on a career, service or cultural project of their choosing. This component will teach group dynamics, consensus building and teamwork.

Aside from the project coordinator, all other staffing will be by volunteers. The PIC will recruit and train adult role models for the Career Component. Cultural organizations and nonprofit

agencies will staff the Cultural and Service Components. HSoHK teachers will act as moderators for the Academic Component and advisors to student groups in the Group Project Component.

### **Expected Outcomes and Evaluation**

Rather than conduct evaluation only at the end of the year, evaluation will be ongoing. Program activity, enrollment and attendance records will provide data on whether the program is meeting process objectives (i.e., Did enrollment meet expectations? Did activities take place as planned? How many attended?) By monitoring students' grades we can measure academic outcomes. We will also seek feedback via online questionnaires from students, peers, teachers, parents and members of the collaborative at least every other month and will tabulate and share results with all parties. This "continuous feedback loop" is meant to provide positive reinforcement for desired outcomes and an opportunity to adjust the program when expectations are not met.

By using online survey instruments we can easily automate tabulation of results. Survey questions will address outcome (What was learned?), impact (What has changed?), and quality (Did it meet your needs/expectations? What would you change or add?) evaluation questions.

### **Future Funding**

The local PIC has made a significant in-kind contribution to this project as have local cultural and social agencies. Once success has been demonstrated we will launch an extensive fundraising campaign aimed at our major donors and at local businesses.

### **Conclusion**

A review of the guidelines and annual report of the Too Good to be True Foundation has convinced us that your trustees share our commitment to youth as the future of our community. The New Horizons Initiative matches the goals of the Foundation's Educational Innovations funding category. Our school is already recognized as an institutional treasure in our community. New Horizons will be a significant enhancement to the curriculum at HsoHK as well as a substantial new resource for other youth in our community. We invite your investment in our efforts to prepare youth to take their place as contributing adult citizens in Urban City.

<b>Tactile Textiles: A Sensory Experience</b>			
Presented by			
Community Art & Literacy Museum (CALM)			
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Grants			
Foundations		\$ 175,000	
Government		\$ 22,000	
Corporations		\$ 155,000	
Individual Contributions		\$ 50,000	
Special event (net)		\$ 15,000	
In-Kind donations		\$ 18,000	
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$ 435,000</b>	
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<b>Salaries</b>			
Chief Curator	100% FTE for 6 months	\$ 45,000	
Exhibit Coordinator	75% FTE for 6 months	\$ 20,000	
Exhibit Technicians	2 @ 50% FTE for 2 months	\$ 3,500	
Promotion Coordinator	50% FTE for 6 months	\$ 13,750	
Subtotal Salaries		\$ 82,250	
Benefits	@ 20% of salaries	\$ 16,450	
Contract personnel		\$ 70,000	
Shipping & postage		\$ 20,000	
Insurance		\$ 60,000	
<b>Materials &amp; Supplies</b>			
Exhibit & Interpretive		\$ 75,000	
Promotion & Printing		\$ 50,000	
Computer Equipment		\$ 23,000	
Contingency		\$ 38,000	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>\$ 435,000</b>	

How much grant revenue is secured?

What is this?

Differs from amount in proposal narrative.

Explain role of contractors.

Needs explanation.

Needs explanation.

Provide more information.

Does not compute!

<b>Tactile Textiles: A Sensory Experience</b>		
Community Art & Literacy Museum (CALM)		
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Grants		
Foundations (Note 1)		\$ 175,000
Government (Note 1)		\$ 22,000
Corporations (Note 1)		\$ 155,000
Individual Contributions		\$ 50,000
Special event (net)		\$ 15,000
Local Merchants	In-Kind (Note 2)	\$ 18,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$ 435,000</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Salaries		
Chief Curator	50% FTE for 6 months	\$ 45,000
Exhibit Coordinator	75% FTE for 6 months	\$ 20,000
Exhibit Technicians	2 @ 50% FTE for 2 months	\$ 3,500
Promotion Coordinator	50% FTE for 6 months	\$ 13,750
Subtotal Salaries		\$ 82,250
Benefits	@ 20% of salaries	\$ 16,450
Contract personnel (Note 2 & Note 3)		\$ 70,000
Insurance	See Note 4.	\$ 60,000
Shipping & Postage		\$ 20,000
Materials & Supplies		
Exhibit & Interpretive		\$ 75,000
Promotion & Printing		\$ 50,000
Computer Equipment	Server & three terminals. (Note 5)	\$ 23,000
Contingency @ approx. 10%		\$ 38,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>\$ 434,700</b>
<b>Notes</b>		
<b>1 Grant Status</b>		
Foundation:		
Noel Norton Foundation	Requested	\$ 50,000
Tranquil County Community Fund	Committed	\$ 34,000
P. Moneybags Foundation	Committed	\$ 50,000
Greater Taupe Chamber of Commerce Fund	Requested	\$ 10,000
Michel Ward Artisans Fund	Requested	\$ 7,500
Tactile Pleasures Foundation	Request planned	\$ 20,000
Hannah Schwalbe Foundation	Request planned	\$ 5,000
Government:		
Taupe Town Grants for the Arts	Committed	\$ 22,000
Corporate:		
Taupe Town Textile Techs Fund	Committed	\$ 20,000
Guinasso's Fine Furnishings	Committed	\$ 20,000
Bank of Tranquil County	Committed	\$ 35,000
Other corporate sponsors (to be solicited)	5 @ \$10,000; 4 @ \$5,000; 10 @ \$1,000	\$ 80,000
<b>2 In-Kind Contributions</b>		
Wittman's Fine Carpets & Restorations	Donated supplies included in exhibit materials expense,	\$ 8,000
	Donated services included in contract services expense.	\$ 10,000
<b>3 Contract Personnel</b>		
	For construction, installation of display fixtures.	
<b>4 Insurance</b>		
	As required by owners of exhibit art. Estimated for 100 pieces.	
<b>5 Equipment</b>		
	For interactive exhibit collaterals.	

Proposal narrative revised to reflect correct total.

Detail regarding equipment added.

Contingency % rate added.

Budget Notes added to show status of grants and explain in-kind donations, contractors, equipment, insurance.

Total is correct.