A woman with dark hair in a ponytail, wearing a grey pinstriped blazer, is speaking into a microphone. She is gesturing with her right hand towards a presentation screen. The screen displays text including "Real Time", "Process cycle time improvement", and "Positive reaction".

NF Nicole Fulgham

Proposal Writing

Proposal writing is an important skill to develop, especially in non-profit organizations. Proposals present an offer to a specific audience and convince that audience that the project is worth pursuing and being funded. Proposal writing is a partnership between the organization requesting funding and the corporations or organizations that are providing funding. The process of writing a proposal involves a variety of steps and moving pieces, including meeting deadlines and finding the correct funding. Go through the lessons to learn the basics of proposal writing.

BEFORE WRITING THE PROPOSAL

- ≡ Presence and Priorities
- ≡ Finding the Right Funder
- ≡ General Guidelines

MASTER PROPOSAL

- ≡ Executive Summary & Statement of Need
- ≡ Project Description

 Evaluation

 Budget, Organization Details, and Conclusion

 Organizational Information and Conclusion

LIFE AFTER SUBMISSION

 Life After Submission

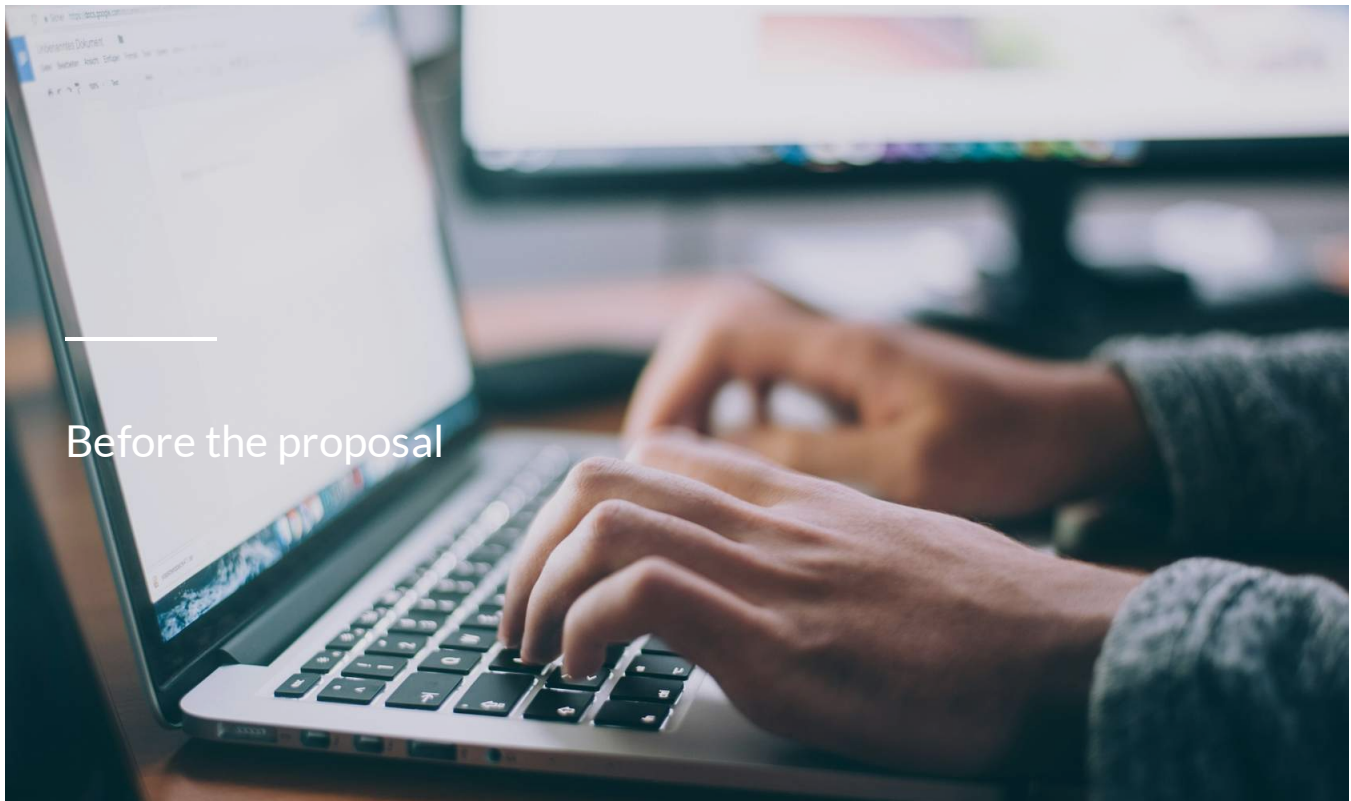
CONCLUSION

 Knowledge Check

 Summary

Presence and Priorities

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Before the proposal

Before the proposal

Before the proposal can even be written, there are three key elements that are needed first.

1. A strong mission statement-this is the vision developed by the organization that shows what that organization wishes to achieve through the proposal.

2. Nonprofit status - this is achieved through the IRS with the help of an attorney and is an organization that is not primarily out to make a profit.

3. A credible program or plan to support the organization's mission.

Mission Statement

A strong mission statement illustrates what the organization's mission, or purpose, is specifically in regards to the proposal. What is the organization hoping to achieve with this proposal?

Focus of Project

Identifying the focus of a project by asking the following questions can help narrow down the funding priorities of the project.

What is the project? Why is it important?

What problem is the project attempting to solve? What is the significance?

Who would benefit from the project?

After the grant period ends, how can longevity of the project be guaranteed?

Request for Proposal-RFP

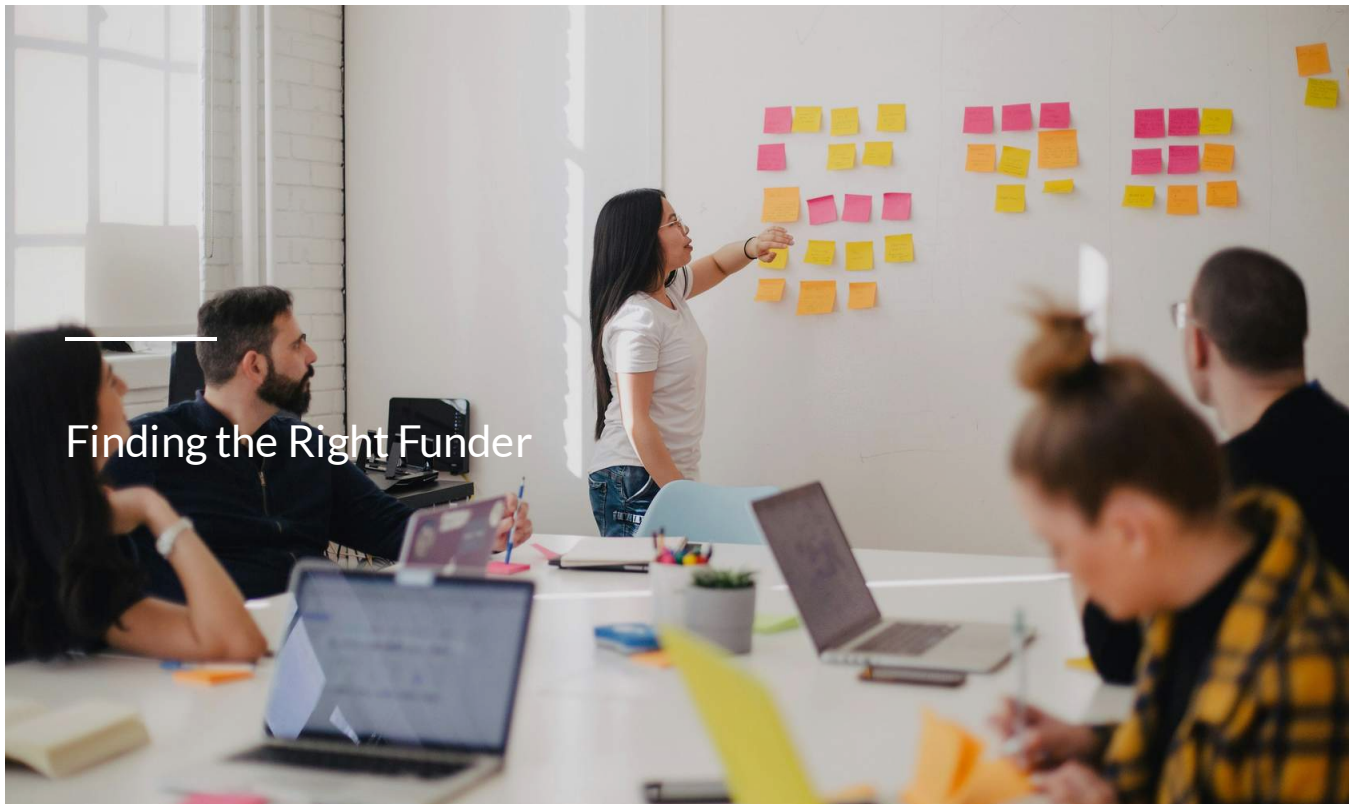
Before even writing a proposal, there may need to be a request for proposal (RFP) sent by potential funder to the foundation that is requesting funding for project. Good communication is necessary through out the proposal process.



In the next lesson, learn more about the proposal writing process.

CONTINUE

Finding the Right Funder



Finding the Right Funder

Finding the Right Funder

There is a lot of research involved in the proposal writing process. Before even writing the proposal, research must be done on what organizations, foundations, or corporations can provide the right funding. Corporations and foundations have specific requirements when it comes to providing funding to programs. Information can be found through some research online and with specific companies.

How to find the right funder

Click on the flip card to learn how to find the right funder for a proposal.

Make initial list

After doing research, make an initial list of all the potential funders that might meet the needs/requirements for the program.

Narrow it down

Go through the initial list and narrow it down to the best possible candidates. Keep in mind funding objectives and guidelines to help narrow it down.

Make contact

Once the list has been narrowed down, it is time to make contact. Be sure to research how that corporation or foundation desires to be contacted for proposals. Some may wish for an online application while others may want a letter of inquiry.

Letter of Inquiry

Send a letter of inquiry to the corporations or foundations that you may want to write a proposal too. This letter is used as a screener by the corporation and should request the desired guidelines for the proposal.

Imagine This

You are in the beginning stages of proposal writing and you have decided on a list of potential funders for your program. What is the next step in the process?

What is the next step after making the initial list of funders?

- Narrow the list
- Letter of Inquiry
- Make Contact
- Write the proposal

SUBMIT

In the next lesson, learn about ten general guidelines before writing the master proposal

CONTINUE

General Guidelines



Ten General Guidelines Prior to Proposal

Here are ten guidelines to follow before writing the actual proposal. Remember that this is a process, be prepared to revise and resubmit proposal that are not accepted the first time.

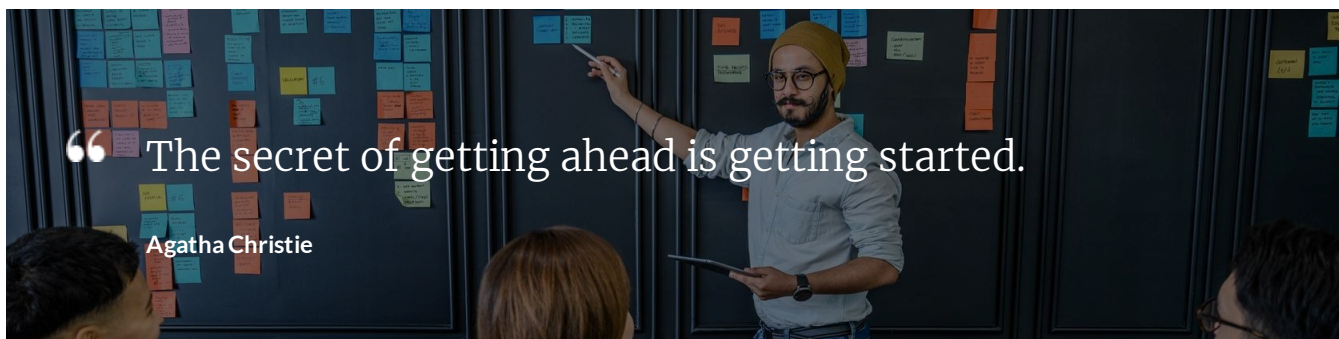
- Begin the process early.
- Apply early.
- Include a cover letter that can serve as a stand-alone document.
- Develop clear objectives for what the project hopes to achieve.
- Follow all guidelines for the specific grant proposal.
- Include specific responses.
- Take a realistic approach to the project.
- Revise and resubmit, if rejected, during the next funding cycle.



Continue to research potential funding sources.



Cultivate existing partnerships with funding organizations.



“ The secret of getting ahead is getting started.

Agatha Christie

In the next lesson, learn about how to write a Master
Proposal

CONTINUE

Executive Summary & Statement of Need

NF Nicole Fulgham



Master Proposal

Before beginning the writing process, gather all the necessary information and documents needed. Most organizations will provide you with specific guidelines for

your proposal. However, there are some general guidelines you can follow for your master proposal.

Here are some suggestions for writing the master proposal.

- Include clear objectives of the program.
- Do not assume the funder knows the subject area. Avoid jargon and other technical terms that may be confusing to the reader.
- Describe the problem the organization is attempting to resolve in factual and human interest terms.
- Be realistic about the proposed outcomes of the project.
- Discuss the target audience and the ways the audience will benefit from the project.
- Describe the change that will take place with the funding of the project.
- Review and follow guidelines for the specific funding agency. Complete all parts of the proposal as required.
- Eliminate wordiness and keep the proposal clearly written.

Executive Summary

The executive summary should give a clear synopsis of the project and convince the reader that the project deserves the requested funding. This summary should also convince the reader to continue to read the proposal through the end. There are four elements that could be included in the summary.

Problem —

This introduces the problem that the proposal is trying to fix.

Solution —

This gives the suggest solution to the problem that the proposal is meant to fix.

Funding Requirements —

This gives an explanation of the amount of money that is required to fix the problem that has been addressed.

Organization and its expertise —

This gives a description of the organization and how they can go about fixing the issue addressed in the proposal.

Statement of Need

A statement of need is used to build interest in the project or activity being addressed in the proposal. This should be concise and convincing and may include surveys,

needs assessments, research from outside agencies, demographic studies, etc. This is meant to strengthen the need for the proposed funding by providing credible sources.



Next, learn about the other elements found within a proposal, such as project descriptions and evaluations.

CONTINUE

Project Description



Project Description

A project description shows the value of the project and why it might be worth funding. The project description includes the following pieces:

- 1 Objectives.** The specific and measurable outcomes the project is meant to achieve.
 - 2 Methods.** How the project will be carried out. The goals of the project are restated in this section along with strategies for implementation.
 - 3 Staffing/Administration.** What kind of staffing or administration will be necessary for the project in order to achieve the intended goals.
 - 4 Evaluation.** How the project will be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the objectives of the proposal.
 - 5 Sustainability.** How the project can be sustained for the required time period stated in the proposal.
-

Next learn about the last two parts of a master proposal.

CONTINUE

Evaluation



What Is Data Storytelling?

Define data storytelling, and discuss how it combines data, narrative techniques, and visual aids to create actionable recommendations for an audience of decision-makers.

Describe the role of “big data” in the modern workplace and the challenges it presents for researchers and stakeholders. Outline the central functions of data storytelling, and invite the learner to review those functions on the list below:

1

Explanation. Lorem ipsum excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum. Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium.

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Benefits of Data Storytelling

Data storytelling offers a number of advantages for any presenter. Prompt the learner to click the arrows below to better understand the benefits of data storytelling.

Benefit 1

It Makes Data Digestible

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Benefit 2

It Makes Data Stickier

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Benefit 3

It Inspires Action

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Benefit 4

It Provides Evidence

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Benefit 5

It Saves Time

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“People hear statistics, but they feel stories.”

Brent Dykes

Data Storytelling Best Practices

Explore why communicating data to others inside an organization is one of the central challenges for a researcher or data scientist. In this section, offer the learner some tips and strategies for effective data storytelling.

1. Pinpoint the Most Critical Data

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2. Create a Clear Narrative Arc

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3. Add Visual Aids

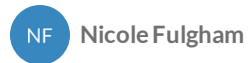
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Now that you've prepared your presentation, go to the next lesson to learn more about delivering a presentation effectively.

CONTINUE

Budget, Organization Details, and Conclusion



Designing a budget

Depending on the proposal guidelines, a budget may be a single page explanation of the projected expenses or it may be a more in-depth spreadsheet outline all the necessary financial needs. The budget includes the personnel and non-personnel needs. This includes operating costs, materials, people, etc. If the project requires more than one funder, it may include a section outlining the difference sources of funds for the project. It also may include a section on sustainability to show how the project might continue without the initial grant money. The budget section is important and allows for conversations with funders to determine financial needs.

Organizational Information

After the pertinent details of the project, it is helpful to include information about the organization seeking the funding. This information should be about the organization, including when it was started, the mission statement of the organization, how the proposal fits the organization's mission, the structure of the organization, programs, and expertise of the staff members. This should be less than two pages and may include website information, a brochure for the organization, or other materials.

Conclusion

The conclusion summarizes the important parts of the project and can act as a final appeal for the potential funders. This could be where an emotional appeal is made to get funders to really want to work with the organization with the project. The conclusion should only be one to two paragraphs at the end of the proposal.

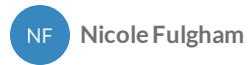
Match the term with the correct definition

SUBMIT

Now that you've prepared your proposal, you are going to learn what happens next.

CONTINUE

Organizational Information and Conclusion



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Benefit 2

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It Saves Time

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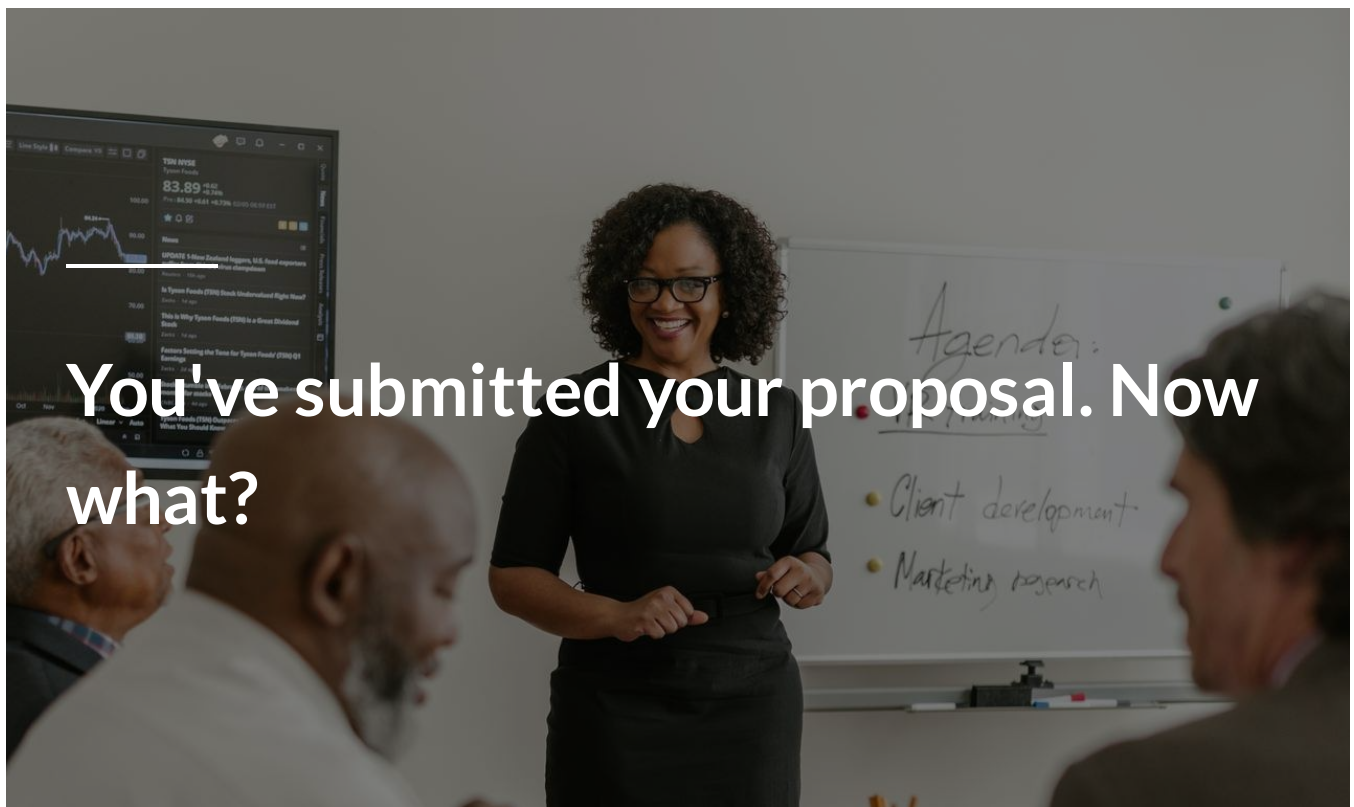
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Now that you've prepared your presentation, go to the next lesson to learn more about delivering a presentation effectively.

CONTINUE

Life After Submission



You've submitted your proposal. Now what?

Now What?

Once you've submitted your proposal by the deadline, the next step is to wait to see if the proposal will be accepted by the corporation or foundation.

Fully Funded —

If the proposal is selected to be fully funded, the organization might receive a check and a letter outlining the status reports that need to be completed throughout the course of the project. Depending on the scope of the project, there may be media attention that needs to be addressed for both the project and the funders.

Partially Funded —

If a project has been partially funded, there may need to be requests for more funds from the initial funder or a need to find other sources of funding for the project. A revision to the proposal and a resubmission might be necessary to get the other funding.

Rejected —

If a proposal is rejected, there may need to be a revision and resubmission process. Going back to look at the needs for the project and possibly looking at other sources of funding could be a beneficial endeavor.

Show what you have learned about writing proposals in the next lesson.

CONTINUE

Knowledge Check

NF Nicole Fulgham



Check your understanding of Proposal Writing

Check Your Understanding

After reading through the lessons, check that you understanding the process for proposal writing.

Drag and drop each of the following statements about **Proposal Writing** into the appropriate box: **Do** or **Don't**.

Do

Collect all the information and materials for your proposal.

Research to find the best list of potential funders for your project.

Come up with a budget that adequately reflects the needs for your project.

Don't

Submit your proposal to all possible funders in hopes to get funding.

Write a proposal before doing the necessary research.

Assume that the funders understand the needs of your project.

An Executive Summary includes an explanation of the problem, solution, organization information and...

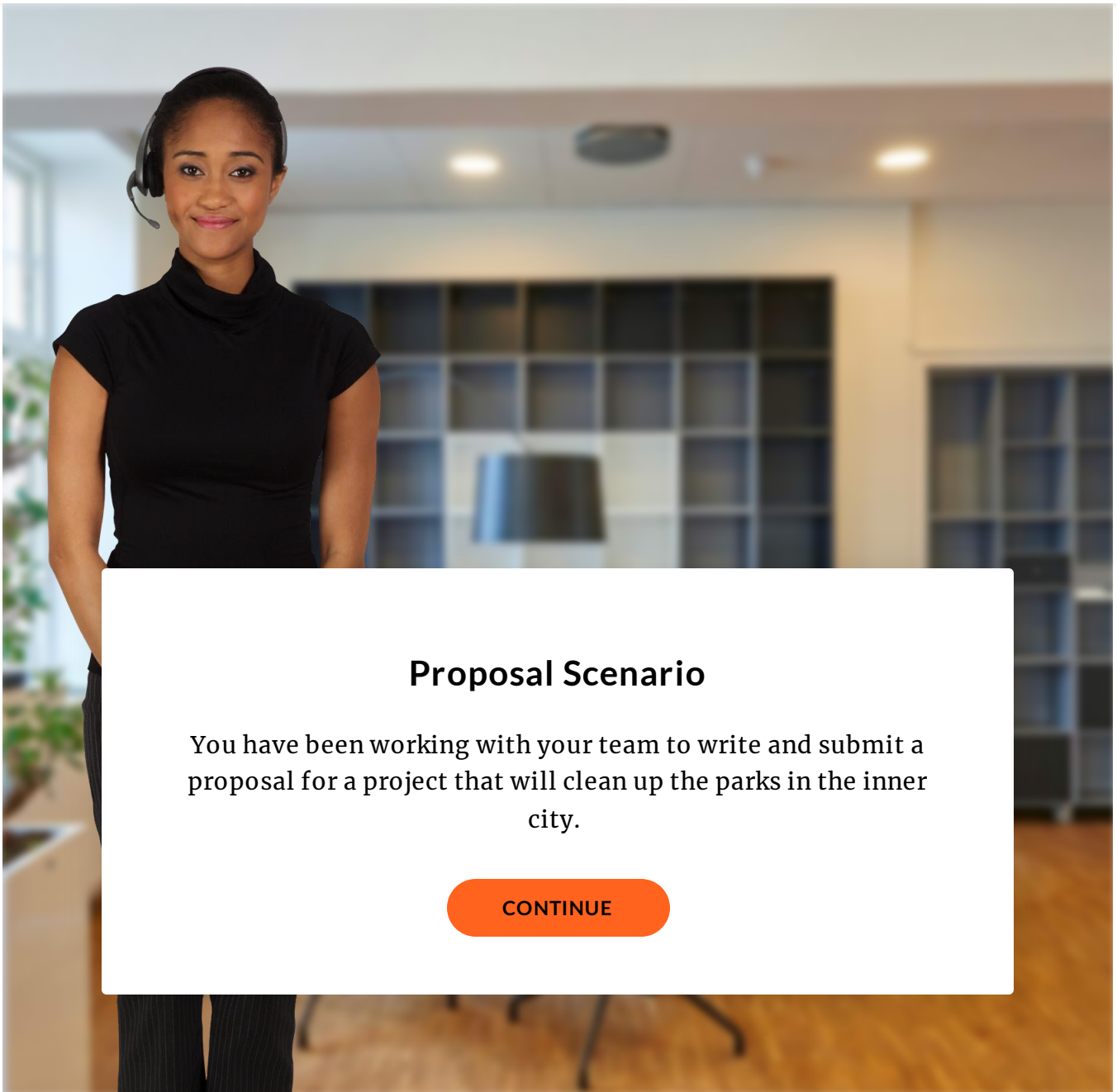
- Funding Requirements
- Methods
- Budget
- Executive Summary

SUBMIT

Select every part of a project description from below

- Problem
- Objectives
- Staffing/Admin
- Methods
- Evaluation
- Sustainability
- Conclusion

SUBMIT



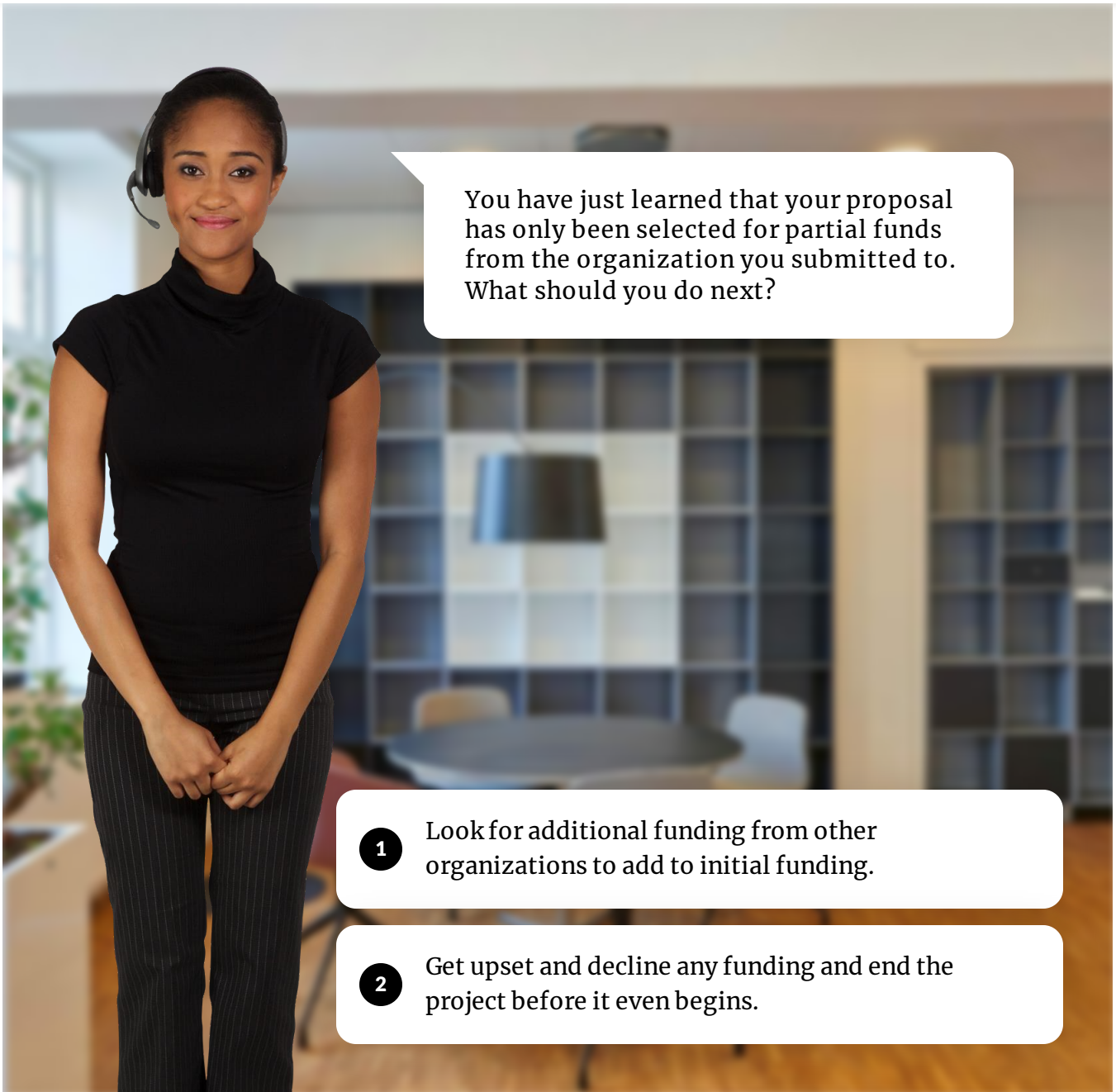
Proposal Scenario

You have been working with your team to write and submit a proposal for a project that will clean up the parks in the inner city.

[CONTINUE](#)

Scene 1 Slide 1

[Continue](#) → [Next Slide](#)



You have just learned that your proposal has only been selected for partial funds from the organization you submitted to. What should you do next?

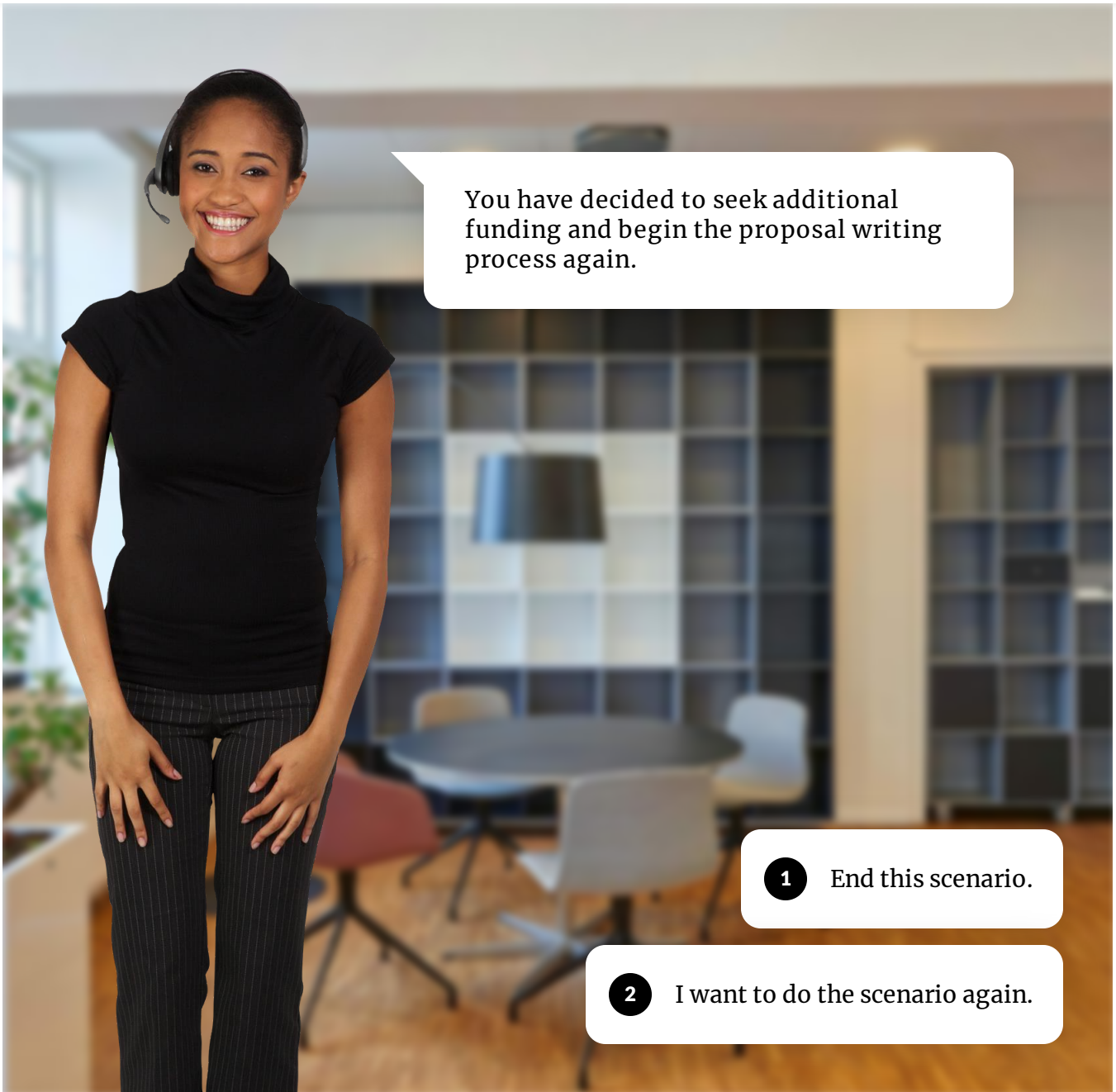
1 Look for additional funding from other organizations to add to initial funding.

2 Get upset and decline any funding and end the project before it even begins.

Scene 1 Slide 2

0 → Next Slide

1 → Next Slide



You have decided to seek additional funding and begin the proposal writing process again.

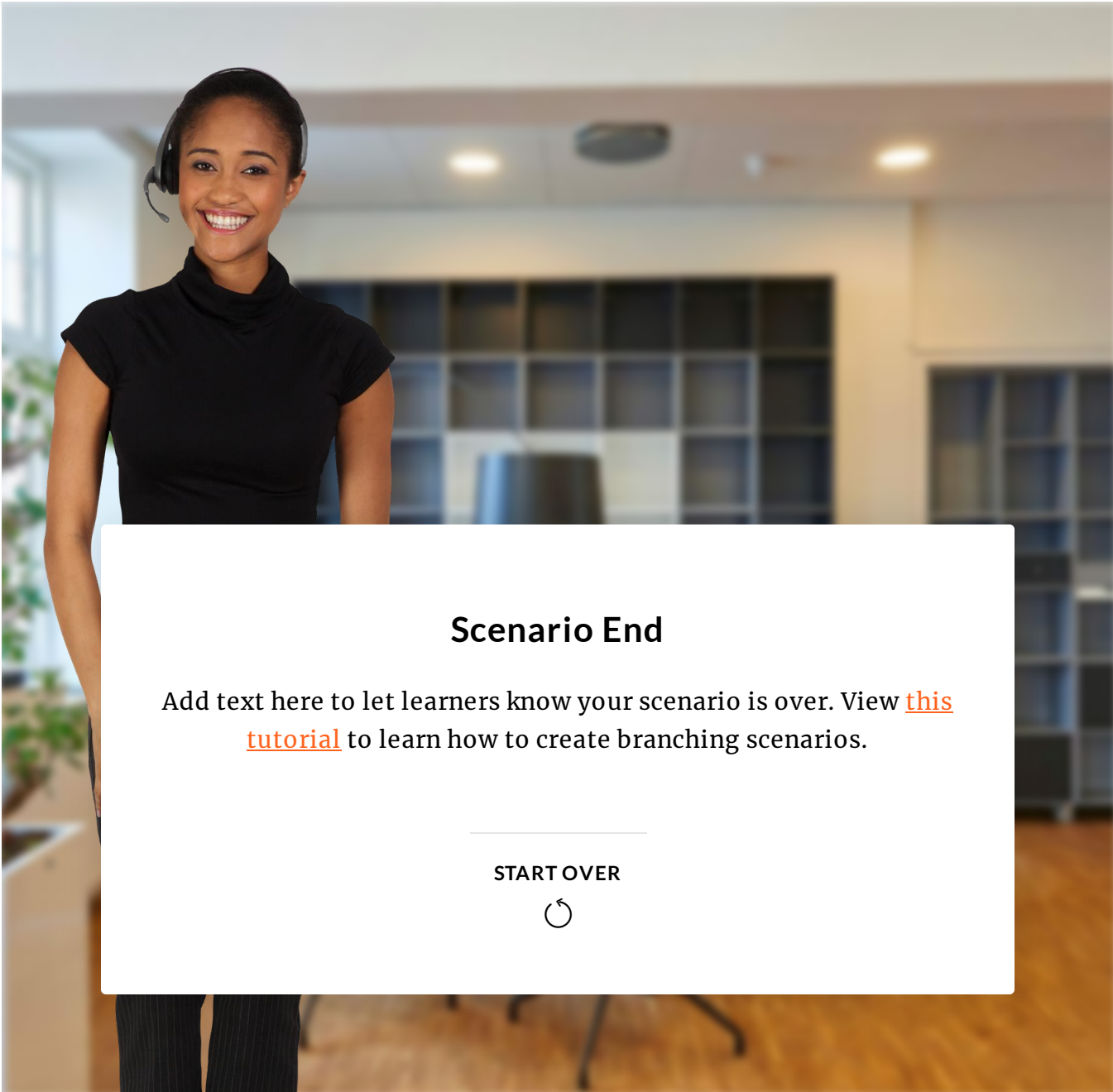
1 End this scenario.

2 I want to do the scenario again.

Scene 1 Slide 3

0 → Next Slide

1 → Scene 1 Slide 1



Scenario End

Add text here to let learners know your scenario is over. View [this tutorial](#) to learn how to create branching scenarios.

START OVER



Scene 1 Slide 4

Continue → End of Scenario



Continue to the next lesson to review a course summary and explore additional resources.

CONTINUE

Summary



Key Takeaways

Proposal writing is a process that can take time and effort, but can be extremely rewarding in the end. Here are some key takeaways from the process.

1

Before writing the proposal. Spend time doing your research and determining who will be the most appropriate funders for your

project. Learn how they want proposals submitted to their organization.

2

Master Proposal. The master proposal has several key elements that will provide information about the project. Be sure to include all the necessary pieces as given in the funder's guidelines.

3

Executive Summary. Include the problem, solution, funding requirements, and info about the organization and its expertise.

4

Project Description. Include the objectives of the project, the methods to get the project going, what staffing/admin will be needed, the evaluation that will be used to make sure the project is meeting it's needs, and how it can be sustainable after the initial proposal dates.

5

Budget. Design a budget that takes all the elements into play. This includes personnel, materials, overhead costs, etc.

6

Organizational Information. At the end of the proposal, give some information about the organization. This should include the organization's mission, expertise, staffing, and any other important information.

7

After submitting the proposal. Depending on if the proposal gets fully funded, partially funded, or rejected, take time to determine the next step. Seek for additional funding if necessary. Go back to the proposal and revise and resubmit if rejected.

Reference

Martinez, Diane, Tanya Peterson, Carrie Wells, Carrie Hannigan, and Carolyn Stevenson. 2008. *Technical Writing*. New York: Kaplan.

Thank you for completing this course!