

# Congressional Earmarks

## Proposal Guide



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One of the crucial steps in securing a Congressional Earmark is submitting a well-formed proposal. Below is a short guide to help create a funds-generating proposal.

### Coverpage:

- Project Title
- "Request for Earmark Funding"
- "Presented to: Congressperson \_\_\_\_\_"
- Name of your organization and address
- Project Lead Contact and his/her phone number, email address and fax number
- Organization's Tax Identification Number and tax (or tax exempt) status
- Organization's DUNS number
- Budget Summary: total amount requested from the federal government, total matching funds, total project cost (sum of requested funds and matching funds)
- Name of authorizing official for the organization (executive giving and allowed to give approval for a federal funding request)
- *Signed* statement of the validity of the information contained in the proposal and the executive's expressed approval (a sentence or two will suffice)

### Detailed Budget:

- The following generally accepted categories should be used to break down your funding request in terms of total by category: **Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Indirect, Other**. If the organization can provide a match/local contribution of any sort (*highly* advisable), please include a "second" detailed budget explaining just your match. Always include a budget summary that states the following: total amount requested from the federal government, total amount of your match, total project cost. (the sum of the requested amount and the match amount).

### Budget Narrative:

- This section should provide a detailed breakdown of each and every itemized cost the project is expected to incur, including specific equipment needs and their prices, employing the same categories used for the Detailed Budget. This section should include all applicable calculations used and any explanations needed to make clear to the unfamiliar reader how each item requested in the budget is necessary for the project as described in the narrative. You should divide your budget narrative into two major parts: federal request and match.

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## *Proposal Guide (continued)*



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### Narrative:

- **Executive Summary/Abstract:** Provide a one- to two-page overview of the project.
- **Brief Introduction of the Agency:** Explain its mission, its purpose, its recent and/or relevant accomplishments, etc. Limit this section to one to two pages.
- **Explanation of Need for the Project:** Discuss the problems, gaps, weaknesses, etc., that currently exist. Use as many statistics and specifics as you can.
- **Significance:** How and why will your proposed project effectively solve the problems discussed above? This is a good place to address the various populations that will be positively affected by this project and defend that reasoning. If applicable, discuss your proposed use of technology and/or other significant pieces of equipment. Will you be utilizing "state of the market" technologies and/or how will your use of technologies be unique, cutting edge, etc. Also, is this project expected to produce a model that could be replicable in other regions of the country? If you believe so, why is this particular project a good model for replication--what about it makes it versatile enough to be applied in a variety of regions/areas around the country? Is it a model applicable only to large- or small-scale replication? If so, why or why not?
- **Project Design:** What will your project specifically entail? Be sure to include a fully detailed project description, a timeline with applicable milestones, long- and short-term objectives, and a concise description of the project team and/or project leadership.
- **Evaluation:** How will the project's success be evaluated? Discuss measurable outcomes and how each will be assessed and measured. Discuss the "standards" by which you will be evaluating the project's success and make a statement about why those standards are applicable and appropriate for such a project. Be sure to include both qualitative and quantitative evaluation techniques to the extent that is possible. In addition to government-mandated reporting (a result of receiving funding), who will you disseminate the results of your project to and how?