

What is considered an effective proposal?

Your best chance of receiving a grant is to have a good project. A good project, badly written, may or may not be funded. A bad project, even with a well-written proposal, probably won't be funded. Working through these questions will help you ensure that your project is "the right project, in the right place, at the right time."

A good project:

- Is grounded in evidence and integrates best practices, both in outcome (implementation of effective population-based policies) and in process (implementation of strategies and activities, including training and capacity building, that lead to the achievement of effective policies);
- Fits well with the political realities and opportunities where it will be carried out (including the realities of infrastructure in government and civil society);
- Involves organizations and individuals with experience to implement and capability to influence the desired outcomes;
- Has activities that can be expected to lead to the desired outcomes;
- Is adequately financed; and
- Have indicators (of both process and outcome) that can be measured.

Is your project evidence based?

- Does it focus on one of the Bloomberg priorities of smoke-free environments, tobacco taxes, advertising bans, implementing other effective policy measures?
- Does it address these policies on a scale that will have a significant impact on your country or community?
- Does it use evidence-based methods to achieve these policies, such as mobilization of key community leaders, direct contact with policy makers, working with the media (press), and strategic communications media and messages known to positively impact public opinion?

Is your project a good fit for the political realities in your country/area?

- Does it address an issue for which there has been some previous sensitization among the public and politicians?
- If it is a brand new issue, does the project have a strategy to substantially raise awareness of the issue and make it politically salient?
- Is there potentially political will to implement the desired policy outcome?
- If political will to achieve the desired policy is lacking, does your project propose to carry out activities that will increase the political will?
- If the project may run into obstacles outside of your control (for example, tobacco industry activities or changes in the political environment), do you have a plan to counter these obstacles?

Are you the right organization to carry out your project, and if not, do you have experienced individuals and partner organizations that you can involve?

- Does your organization have the experience to properly plan and carry out the project that you are proposing?
- If not, what other organizations and individuals can you involve who have the skills, experience and qualities needed to carry out the project?
- Are you involving partners just to have more organizations involved, or are they partners who can substantially contribute to the goals of the project?
- Do you have organizations or individuals involved who are familiar with the policy-making process in your country?
- Do you have organizations or individuals involved who “have the ear” and respect of the targeted decision makers?

Are your activities directly linked to the outcome of the project?

- Are educational and mobilization activities directed toward the decision makers (or those that influence the decision makers who can change policies)?
- If the project outcome is ambitious, are your activities sufficiently diverse, effective and wide-reaching to significantly influence the outcome?
- Are your activities too narrow or far-removed from the outcome to have a likely impact?

Is your budget adequate for what you need to do to achieve the desired outcome?

- Have you included funds that will be needed to hire expertise outside of your organization?
- Have you taken into account administrative expenses, including phone calls and equipment purchase?
- Have you ensured that you have a reliable high speed internet connection and up-to-date hardware and software?
- Have you allotted enough for salaries to ensure that at least one professional is able to work full-time on your project?
- Have you included funds for travel if needed?

How will you measure the success of your project goals?

- How will you measure the success of the progress of your project and the achievement of its goals?

What are the key criteria considered during the Full Proposal stage?

PART A.1 PROJECT SUMMARY

A.1.1 Provide a concise summary of your proposal. (200 words maximum)

This summary will allow the reviewer to quickly get an idea of the project's focus, scope, and, most likely, whether or not the project looks promising. Therefore, although the summary itself is not evaluated, it is the first thing the reviewer will read, and may predispose him or her to look at your proposal favorably or unfavorably. Make sure your summary contains enough context to clearly justify its purpose, include enough specific information to give the reviewer confidence that you know that you're doing, and clearly state the anticipated outcome of the project. (Note: the text above is about 100 words, so your summary should be only a little longer!)

PART A.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A.2.1 Purpose of the project and measurable objectives (250 words maximum)

Explain the overall purpose and measurable objectives of your project.

You should draw this directly from the corresponding sections in your Project Idea form. Unless your letter of invitation specifically requested that you should make changes to this part of your project, you should not have to revise your purpose and objectives.

A.2.2 Context, available resources and partners (800 words maximum)

Describe the context in which the project will take place, the resources you already have available and any recent action taken on the issue/s that the project will address. Include brief details of the contribution of any confirmed partners in the project.

For this section you can draw partly on the "issues and/or policies" part of your Project Idea form. Specifically, you should describe any political or other context relevant to the reason for your project. For example: the state of tobacco control in your country, existence of NGO coalitions, extent of government political commitment, or opportunities that make your project timely.

When describing available resources, describe both financial and in-kind (administration, offices, staff time) resources that your organization and your project partners will bring to the project.

You should also count coalitions and knowledge as resources, even though you will also mention them under your organizational experience. For example, you could mention that your organization's staff "will bring extensive individual knowledge about tobacco control policies, respected by government authorities and media, to the project." Or, perhaps, "the partners involved in the project comprise the most important tobacco control players in government and civil society and have worked as an active coalition in the past two years promoting the policies addressed in the proposal."

In short, you want to convince the reviewer that you have viable resources to make the project successful and relevant in the context in which you are carrying it out.

A.2.3. Project strategies and activities ([2400 words maximum](#))

Provide details of the strategies and activities that the project will engage in to achieve its objectives.

As the length guideline for this section suggests, this is the “bread and butter” section of your proposal. This is where you need to provide enough specific details about what you plan to do that the reviewers are convinced that your words will translate into effective action.

Your strategies and activities must be logically linked to each of the objectives that you include. You should also ensure that your strategies and activities represent best practices. That is, they are strategies and activities that have been shown to be effective in the past, and can reasonably be expected to achieve the result your project is seeking. There is no “right” number of strategies or actions to have. You just need to make sure that your strategies and actions are sufficient and appropriate to achieve your objectives.

Even though you are allowed 2400 words, it is important to keep the description focused and consistent with the rest of the proposal, addressing the key aspects. Avoid lengthy sentences and over-elaborate phrases and be careful not to use up too much space with introductions or descriptions.

It may be helpful to begin with a short introductory paragraph justifying why you chose the specific strategies and activities that you are proposing, particularly if you think there is important clarifying or contextual information that was not addressed in the “Context” section above. For example, using the examples below, you may wish to explain that “One of the critical obstacles in gaining the interest of the Ministry of Finance in the issue of tobacco is the lack of data on trends in tobacco taxes and prices corresponding with tax revenue, and a corresponding fear that if tax increases lead to reduced tobacco consumption, they will also lead to decreased revenue. Therefore, a critical strategy is to gather and present evidence relevant to our country that will counter this myth and address this fear.”

Strategies: These should be general areas of work comprised of individual actions. You may have only one strategy or you may have several. For example, if the goal of your project is to “Build political will among the Minister of Finance and senior finance officials to increase tobacco taxes as an ongoing policy measure,” appropriate strategies may be to “Build the revenue and health evidence base for increasing tobacco taxes” and to “Raise awareness among decision makers through direct lobbying and working with the media.”

Activities: These are the major specific actions that you will take under each strategy. Using the example above, “building the evidence base”, an activity may be “development and distribution of fact sheets targeted at policy makers showing the correlation between increased tobacco taxes and increased revenue.”

Be careful of being overly specific in your activities, especially to try to make one activity seem like several. While too much specificity may not seriously harm your proposal, it can make the proposal harder to read and may distract the reviewer from focusing on the more important actions. For example, an adequate description of an activity is to “Regularly meet with financial reporters to present to them evidence on the link between increased taxes and decreased tobacco use and on positive relevant international developments in tobacco tax policy.” You do not need to say that you will “Compile a list of phone and fax numbers of all finance reporters, program the fax machine to send each of them a one-page fax briefing every month, call them to arrange a follow-up appointment, and meet with them to explain the fax.”

Quality, not quantity, of activities is what counts here.

A.2.4 Evaluation (800 words maximum)

Explain how you will evaluate the effectiveness of your strategies and activities in order to check on progress and make any necessary mid-course changes.

This section is often one of the most challenging, particularly for projects addressing policy change. Unless a law is passed or a tax increase is achieved – neither of which are certainties in the political world in a short time frame – it can be difficult to think of objective measures of success. However, there are plenty of indirect ways of measuring the impact that your project is having.

First, make sure that your evaluation indicators and factors are somehow linked to your goal and objectives. You may not achieve a tax increase, but if your goal was to raise the awareness level of the Finance Minister, and you can show that your project achieved 15 prominent news stories in major media outlets about tobacco tax increases in a certain time period, it is logical to assume that this will have raised the Finance Minister’s awareness of tobacco tax issues.

Other examples of valid measures include the following:

Goal: *Achieve smooth implementation of a new smoke-free law.*

Measures: *Percentage of establishments that display the signage required by the law; percentage of establishments complying with the law (enforcing no smoking) in random spot checks*

Goal: *Increase involvement of civil society in smoke-free advocacy*

Measure: *Number of active members in coalition; number of staff and volunteer hours devoted to smoke-free advocacy*

Note that the evaluation is not just to measure the ultimate success of your project, but to measure its ongoing success so changes can be made if necessary. Therefore you should include ways to measure that your specific activities are being carried out throughout the project period and that they are having the intended impact.

A.2.5 Identifiable obstacles ([400 words maximum](#))

Explain obstacles that might prevent you from achieving your objectives and explain how you intend to address them.

A common obstacle in efforts to achieve effective tobacco control policies is the tobacco industry. In this section you should describe what type of opposition you anticipate from the tobacco industry or others, and how you propose to counter these tactics when/if they arise.

Other obstacles, such as political uncertainties, conflicting priorities in the health sector or friction between potential coalition members, should also be discussed if they are relevant.

A.2.6 Sustainability ([400 words maximum](#))

Indicate how the activities described might be sustained after this project comes to an end.

The Bloomberg Initiative seeks lasting changes in tobacco control. You should discuss how the activities of your project will continue or how the outcomes of the project will have a lasting impact. Sustainability could be:

- *the continued involvement of your organization in the issue after the project ends*
- *existence of a long-standing coalition that will ensure continued action*
- *the passage of a smoke-free law popular with the public and businesses so that it is self-enforcing and unlikely to be rolled back*