Grant Text Modules

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The purpose of AguaClara's grant text modules is to provide a consistent template for grant proposals. Templates will allow future fundraising team members to quickly craft professional, standardized proposals that target specific aspects of a project. As of 2010, the majority of text modules are still under development, but we are planning on developing modules for the following topics:

- Cornell lab research
- Cornell design work
- Agua para el pueblo: Honduran partnership
- Plant construction

For an example of one of AguaClara's grant modules, please view this document that was written for a new pilot plant facility in Spring, 2009.

General Guidelines

A grant is typically written in the format of a formal report, which means that you may need to include many components: executive summary, table of contents, introduction, middle, closing, appendices, etc. The formatting should be professional, the content should be concretely supported, and the flow of ideas should be clear and concise. Your report will be read by evaluators who do not have much time, so you will need to surface your main points, which means to place your main topics of discussion up front. In addition, your document should be high in "skim value." That is, the formatting of the document must allow readers to skim over ideas quickly and to skip to core topics that they want to find first. You can do this by using headers, sub-headers, indented sections, bullet points, numbered lists, and clearly-delineated segments.

Also of crucial importance is the proper allocation of content to each of the sections in your grant proposal. Specifically, your sections should be mutually exclusive, functionally equivalent, and collectively exhaustive. Below, we provide a brief explanation of each of these requirements (in the context of business communication):

- Mutually exclusive: the content of each of your sections should not overlap--i.e., they should explore different topics.
- Functionally equivalent: each of your sections should address the "same kind of question."
- Collectively exhaustive: your sections should together create a sense of completeness--that you have completely addressed all issues related to your project.

The preceding guidelines created by the outreach team are neither comprehensive nor final. We are currently developing an in-depth business communication guide that will provide clear directions for all AguaClara members who are writing proposals, letters, and other formal communication. This guide will be completed in mid-2011.