

Iowa's Approach: Writing an Exchange Network Grant

National Exchange Network Meeting

Denver – April 2011

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- Process—through the year
- Writing the Project Narrative

Process

- Find out what EPA wants – Spring
 - Find out what your group needs – Summer
 - Put EPA's wants & your needs together – Fall
-

Find out what EPA wants

- At National & Regional workshops
- Priorities:
 - Matrix of National Flows
 - What else are leaders talking about?
- Problems
 - Will an EPA program be ready to receive your data?
- Use last year's grant guidance to list potential flows/projects

Find out what your group needs

- Talk to each program
 - *Current data flow method*
 - *Status of their database*
 - *Program trends, priorities & needs*
- Develop relationships
 - *Are some folks interested in trying something new? Willing to cooperate?*
 - *You may be investing time for a future year.*
- Start checking ideas with EPA program staff before the guidance is out in the fall
- Update your *Network Implementation Plan*

Network Implementation Plan Example

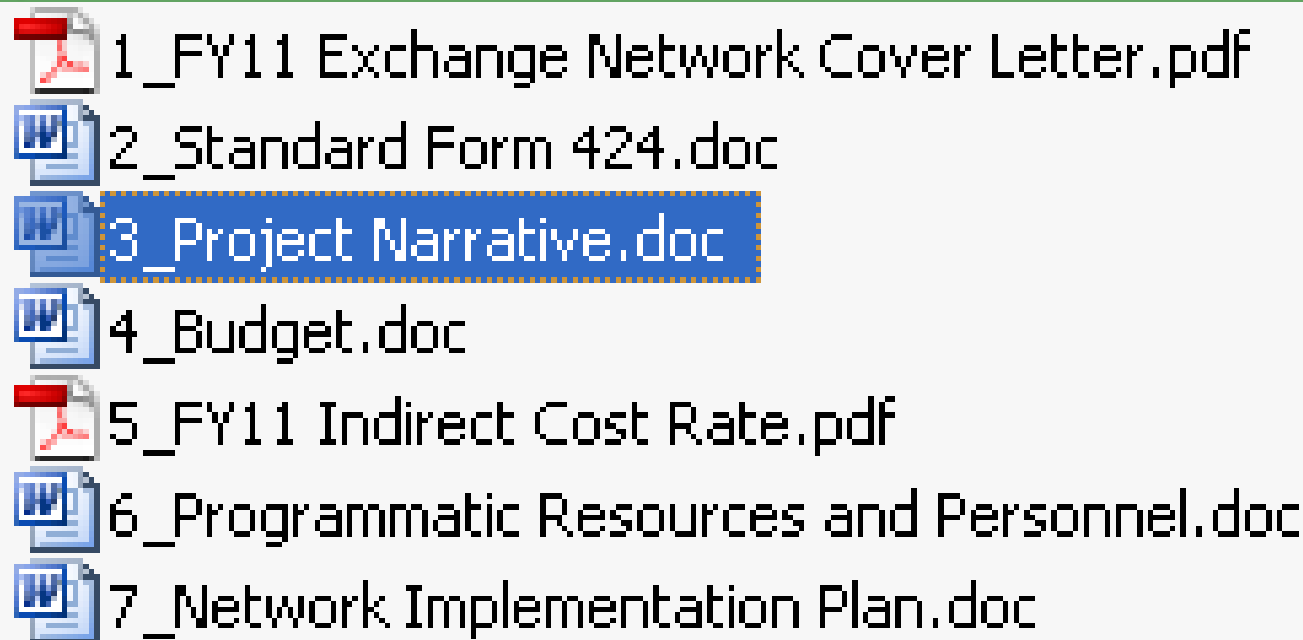
Data Set	Status	Last Flow Date	Anticipated Completion	Notes
Air				
Air Quality System (AQS)	Planned		Q4 2011	Waiting for EPA to complete CDX Node Client & error messaging. See More Notes below.
Emission Inventory System (EIS)	Flowing	5/30/2010	Complete	
Electronic Greenhouse Gas Reporting Tool (eGRET)	Developing		2011	Waiting for IPT completion of schema. See More Notes below
OECA				
ICIS-NPDES	Planned		2013	Waiting for EPA to complete ICIS-NPDES schema for full batch states. Currently to Interim Data Exchange Format (IDEF).

Put EPA's wants & your needs together

- Read draft guidance immediately
- Start with a flow & see where you can build on it to meet your needs
 - i.e. related GIS or database improvement
- Outline proposals immediately & get program feedback with each version
- Draft a schedule for each piece to submit
 - Which forms can your Grants office do?
 - Allow time for approvals

Writing the Project Narrative

- Give them what they want
- Make it easy to find
- Be concise



Use EPA's outline from guidance

- Use their numbering system & labels
- Make a list of every required item/phrase
 - Find a place for it in the outline
 - Label it
 - If something does not apply—
 - Try to find some angle that does apply
 - If not, explain why. Do NOT leave it blank.
- Put the outline in a Table of Contents with page numbers

Make it Easy to Skim

- Bold key phrases
- Use a style sheet for headings & paragraph spacing

The screenshot displays a word processing application's interface. At the top, a rich text toolbar includes options for font face (set to Arial), size (14), bold (B), italic (I), underline (U), bulleted list, numbered list, decrease indent, increase indent, decrease spacing, increase spacing, and a spell checker icon. Below the toolbar is a horizontal ruler with markings from 1 to 5. The main content area shows a document with a Table of Contents. The title 'Table of Contents' is in a large, bold, black serif font. To its right, the text 'Plain Font for headings' is in a smaller, teal, sans-serif font. The table of contents entries are in a black serif font, with page numbers aligned to the right. The entries are: Goal (1), Background (1), Tasks/Outputs (2), Target Dates, Outcomes and Environmental Results (5), Project Approach (6), Exchange Network Priorities (6), Budget, Resources and Key Personnel (6), and Past Performance (7). The text 'Serif Font for narrative' is in a teal, sans-serif font, positioned between the title and the first entry.

Heading 2 Arial 14 B I U [List Icons] [Spell Check]

1 2 3 4 5

→ **Table of Contents** Plain Font for headings

Goal → Serif Font for narrative 1

Background → 1

Tasks/Outputs → 2

Target Dates, Outcomes and Environmental Results → 5

Project Approach → 6

Exchange Network Priorities → 6

Budget, Resources and Key Personnel → 6

Past Performance → 7

Tie together Goals, Tasks & Dates

■ Goals & Tasks:

- Number each & use a key phrase
- Write details in the Output/Task section of the narrative

Goal	Output (<i>Task</i>)	Target Date	Outcome
1. AA Data Flow	1.1 Map to AA Schema	Date	Phrase
	1.2 Implement AA Flow		
	1.3 Improve GIS locations for AA		
2. BB Data Flow	2.1 Map to BB Schema		
	2.2 Implement BB Flow		
	2.3 Publish web service		

Past Performance & Audience

- Past Performance
 - Use updated tables from your latest 6-month status report
 - If completion date not met, explain current efforts & why deadlines missed.
- Keep your audience in mind—Grant reviewers may not be familiar with a program or Exchange Network lingo.

Be Concise

- Shorter sentences

- Cut prepositional phrases where possible
- Poor: “The goal of this grant is to develop a flow of data to...”
- Better: “Goal: Develop a data flow to...”

- Fewer syllables

- “Use”, not “utilize”

<i>Instead of writing</i>	<i>Write</i>
in order to	to
in case of	if
at this point in time	now
as opposed to	instead
the method by which	how
the majority of	most
it is our recommendation that	we recommend

Edit

- Make outline match grant requirements
- Allow yourself a messy first draft
- Shorten & clarify
- Have someone else review (Program)
- Edit again
- Submit!