Best Laid Plans

practical strategies for managing grant-funded projects

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#ARSC2015
**Marr Sound Archives - 2008-2012**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Scholarly Communications</th>
<th>NEH Humanities Collections &amp; Reference Resources</th>
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Donated collections of electrical transcription discs - pressings and instantaneous-cut
“The best laid schemes o' mice an' men / Gang aft agley”

“To a Mouse” On Turning up in Her Nest with the Plough, November, 1785 by Robert Burns

commonly paraphrased in English as:

“The best-laid plans of mice and men / Often go awry”
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Scholarly Communications

- Private funding: ~$502,000
- 3 years 3.2 years
- 1 librarian, 1.5 FTE staff, 1.25 FTE student
- Cataloging: ~9,500 discs
- Digital transfer: none ~800 lacquer discs

NEH Humanities Collections & Reference Resources

- Public funding: ~$127,000
- 18 months
- 1 librarian, 1.5 FTE student
- Cataloging: ~1,800 3,000 discs
- Digital transfer: all discs (cost-share)

Donated collections of electrical transcription discs - pressings and instantaneous-cut
Stakeholders

- Content producers
- Collection donors
- Funding agency
- Project partners
- Project management team
- Project staff
- Institutional staff
- Consumers
Grant-Funded Projects: What’s Different?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Securities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Scope</td>
<td>• Separate Funds</td>
<td>• Formal Reporting</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Goals and Objectives</td>
<td>• Dedicated Staffing</td>
<td>• Marketing Plan</td>
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<td>• Deadline</td>
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Mentally Prepare Yourself

• The grant funder believes in you.
• You are not alone.
• Expect some challenges.
• Learn from your mistakes.
• Forgive yourself.
Lay the Groundwork

• Orientation to institution
• Get familiar with project
• Prepare work space
  - physical space: reflective of workflow
  - online space: project communication
• Hiring and training
  - invest time in staff training
  - identify knowledge gaps
  - take note of individual strengths, skills, and expertise
Build the A-Team

• Team-oriented approach
• Goals-focused
• Open communication
• Shared success
• Build trust
• Celebrate milestones
Create a Culture of Engagement

- Identify and understand roles
- Balanced involvement in activities
- Communication and transparency
- Shared success
Monitor the Project

• Set benchmarks
• Ongoing evaluation
• Balance project priorities
• Explore creative solutions
Facing Challenges: Focus on WHY and WHO

1) Is it within the SCOPE of the project?
2) WHY should we address this?
3) WHO will be impacted?
Facing Challenges: Focus on HOW

• Can we do this within the timeline?
• Do we have the tools we need? If not, can we get them?
• Can the institution contribute to the solution (cost-share)?

Talk to your grant program officer.
Issue: Slow start

Problem
• Too much money
• Less time to complete project

Solution
• Double FTE staff from 1.5 to 3
• Increase student staff by 0.25FTE
• More money for librarian to promote project
Issue: Bottlenecking

Problem

• Twice the work coming my way
• Away from my desk to network and promote project

Solution

• Increased responsibility for career-track staff
Issue: Palmitic Acid

Problem: Palmitic acid on ~800 lacquer discs

Solution

• Advice & approval by program officer
• Purchase of additional Monks machine
• Project students cleaned discs
• Cost-share the digitization
• Use digital copy to catalog
Issue: Deadline

Problem
• Failure to meet deadline

Solution
• Written request to program officer asking for a 2-month extension
What did we learn?