

June 30, 2008

Kristine Templin  
American Red Cross  
Director of Corporate Partnerships and Cause Marketing  
2025 E Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Ms. Templin:

I am pleased to present my proposal for your consideration, *First Responders and Grant Writing: Providing Solutions Through Technology*.

Volunteer Emergency Medical Service (EMS) organizations are in critical need of equipment, supplies and operational funding. Unfortunately, due to inexperience, members of these organizations often don't know how to research, write, and apply for grant money. These first responders, important to local communities and the American Red Cross, need these funds to survive and serve their communities.

We can bring solutions to EMS organizations by developing an interactive learning website that instructs EMS workers about grant writing. To reinforce this learning effort, an online community forum will be a component of this website, providing ongoing advice from volunteer grant writers and others in the EMS community. We can build a lasting and useful global online community that supports local communities in a meaningful way.

The goal of this proposal is to obtain a \$20,000 grant, which will provide funding for a grant writer, web designer, equipment, and marketing materials to make this project a success and provide much-needed grant writing assistance to a community in need; a community that supports many of the same goals of the American Red Cross.

I will contact you the week of July 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss this proposal. If you have any questions or would like to discuss sooner, please contact me via phone or e-mail.

Sincerely,

Catherine Racette

Technical Writer and Project Coordinator



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## **Executive Summary**

This proposal provides a solution for the problem Emergency Medical Service (EMS) organizations face, in that they do not have the experience or know-how to write grant proposals to get the funding they need. I propose that an interactive website be created to instruct EMS workers how to create and submit grant proposals for much-needed funding. The goal of this site is both to instruct EMS workers about grant proposal writing, as well as to connect EMS workers to each other and to volunteer grant writers through an online community, to exchange ideas and get advice about writing proposals.

This proposal seeks a \$20,000 grant from the American Red Cross for costs associated with the development of this website and proposes that it be linked with the American Red Cross website. A grant writer and web developer will be hired to create this website structure and content to educate EMS organizations about how to develop and submit grant proposals. This website will also connect these EMS organizations with each other to facilitate peer assistance in the emergency services community at large. Additionally, this proposal includes equipment costs and marketing costs as well.

This development would provide assistance to local services in a global way and would include:

- Online forum for first aid volunteers to post questions about grant writing.  
This offers the opportunity to connect different first aid organizations to help each other. In addition, an effort would be made to recruit grant writers

on a volunteer basis to monitor the forum and respond to questions and consult as needed.

- Podcasts on various grant proposal topics (e.g., Researching and Identifying Funding Organizations, Organization of a Grant Proposal, and Determining and Outlining Budgets.)
- Links to foundations for the EMS community.
- Text-based printable guidelines on organization and tips for writing and submitting grant proposals.

Hosting this content on the American Red Cross website will lend credibility to the material as the American Red Cross is an established nationally-recognized organization. This central location will provide much-needed guidance for local American Red Cross chapters and EMS organizations they partner with. Additionally, recruiting efforts will be made to organizations such as the Society of Technical Communications, Grant Writers Association and the American Grant Writers Association to find volunteer writers to become members of the forum to advise and respond to others in the online community forum. In this way, the site will connect grant writers throughout the country who want to volunteer their expertise, with EMS workers in need of their guidance. In turn, EMS organizations will be in a better position to help their community if they can earn competitive proposals.

Through usage tracking of the website and follow-up meetings with the appointed American Red Cross staff who may work on this effort, we can continue to improve and enhance this website to make it as effective as possible.

## **Background**

Volunteer EMS organizations in local communities are often in need of basic necessities such as defibrillators, vehicles, general supplies, recruiting costs and operating expenses. Although some costs are covered by town subsidies and fund raisers, they are still in need of funding and are often in a position to write grant proposals. Unfortunately, most local volunteer organizations have neither the expertise nor the guidance needed to put together a viable proposal and either they do not submit proposals or they are often denied much-needed grant money as a result of their inexperience. In our experience, even those EMS workers who have taken proposal writing courses have stated that a lack of guidance to reinforce what they have learned, prevented them from moving forward and applying their new knowledge. Because of this feedback, I propose including an online forum with grant writers and EMS community members to reinforce their learning and provide ongoing guidance.

The American Red Cross was chosen for this proposal as they are a nationally recognized organization that has a vested interest in the health of local community emergency response teams. The American Red Cross relies on the services of first responders in emergencies, and has a vested interest in supporting these local EMS organizations. Without EMS, emergency situations cannot often be managed appropriately until the larger American Red Cross services arrive. In addition, local organizations help their communities immensely by providing critical services on an ongoing basis.

Hosting this content on the American Red Cross website will lend credibility to the material. This central location will provide much-needed guidance for local American Red Cross chapters and EMS organizations they partner with.

While reaching out to the larger community of grant writers throughout the country, I also seek to make the connection between writers who want to volunteer, and those in need of their services. Volunteer grant writers will be members of the online forum to respond to first aid personnel questions in the forum. In this way, the site will connect the needs of EMS organizations and grant writers all over the country who want to volunteer their expertise. In turn, EMS organizations will be in a better position to help their community if they can win proposals.

## **Objectives**

This proposed interactive website will assist Emergency Medical Service (EMS) personnel with creating and submitting grant proposals. Through this website, EMS personnel will learn about grant writing through instruction and connection to a community of other EMS workers and grant writers who will offer their assistance to this community. EMS personnel in need of funding and equipment will have a better chance of winning grants with well constructed proposals.

Through the following development efforts, we can make this happen:

- Hire a grant writer and web developer to build the content and structure of this website
- Interactive learning tools to teach EMS personnel about grant writing
- Podcasts to provide an alternative format for learning about specific tips and tricks for grant writing. This format can be taken on-the-go by using an iPod or similar device
- Online community forum that enables EMS personnel to help answer each other's questions and provide guidance from their experience. Volunteer grant writers will also be a part of this community to provide the expertise to reinforce what the EMS personnel have learned from the interactive learning tools

## **Plan**

### **Recruitment & Development**

This project will first require the hiring of a grant writer and a web developer. Recruiting efforts will include using freelance websites (e.g., [www.elance.com](http://www.elance.com), [www.dice.com](http://www.dice.com)) and/or use of recommendations from the American Red Cross.

The grant writer will write “How to write and submit grant proposals” content for the following deliverables. (See Appendix A for proposed content outline.)

- Printable Text Format: Guidelines and instruction about how to write and submit grants
- Interactive Learning Module in Flash format (created in Adobe Captivate or similar software): Guidelines and instruction about how to write and submit grants
- Three Podcast Scripts on the topics: Researching and Identifying Funding Organizations, Organization of a Grant Proposal, and Determining and Outlining Budgets (*topics subject to change*)

The web developer will design and develop a website and facilitate the upload of all content. The web developer, who will work with appropriate American Red Cross staff, will publish all pages and content to the American Red Cross servers or a separate web server if desired. In addition, the web developer will set up the online user forum and user account management. All content and user management will be discussed and reviewed with the American Red Cross’ webmaster for continued management. The American Red Cross’ webmaster would act as forum moderator, removing inappropriate

posts or users as needed. (See Appendix B for proposed forum *Terms of Service* language.)

The success of the online forum, which will focus on questions, concerns, advice, and tips about writing grant proposals, will be maximized if grant writers are involved to assist. Through the Society of Technical Communications, Grant Writers Association, and the American Grant Writers Association, we will appeal to grant writers to take advantage of this volunteer opportunity. We will attempt to get at least one or two writers to become dedicated grant writing advisors, who answer questions and provide advice as needed on the forum. We will ask for a commitment of 6 months, pending a decision at that time to continue if they desire.

### **Marketing Efforts**

The link to this grant writing website will be placed on the American Red Cross website (<http://www.redcross.org>). Information about this new resource will be communicated from the American Red Cross to its local chapters.

Postcard mailers will also be sent to EMS organizations to notify them of this new resource, how to get to the website, and suggestion to include this as a topic in their next newsletter. I propose mailing the postcards when the website is first completed, and again approximately six months later, to serve as a reminder.

### **Ongoing Maintenance**

Although instruction about how to write grant proposals may not change over time, hyperlinks to websites may need to be updated from time to time; the online moderator must monitor the forum regularly for abuses; and volunteer grant writers must

be encouraged to participate in user threads in the forum. All of these responsibilities are not overly time-consuming, but are important roles in the success of this effort. If agreeable, I suggest that either the American Red Cross webmaster or other appropriate marketing staff oversee and execute these responsibilities. Recruiting efforts will be made to locate and hire a dedicated resource if desired.

## **Assessment**

Usage data (*e.g., number of unique hits, which pages are navigated to, which links are clicked, and number of unique users*) will be tracked to determine trends and assess how this site is being used. I expect that website usage will increase with marketing efforts. We will continue to monitor forum activity and website usage data, along with the American Red Cross webmaster to continually assess where we can make improvements.

To solicit feedback from website users, I suggest including a feedback mechanism on both the website's home page and an online forum topic that encourages users to post/send their thoughts, suggestions, and comments about the website and its content. This feedback should be responded to by our team as well as the forum moderator. All feedback should be acknowledged.

I propose the project team (*i.e., project manager, grant writer, web developer*) meet with American Red Cross stakeholders, including the webmaster once per month for the first six months after the website launches to assess usage trends, review and address feedback, and determine necessary content modifications. In addition, discussions about any issues with the monitoring process should be addressed among team members.

## **Personnel**

The web developer and grant writer will be recruited upon proposal approval. Catherine Racette will serve as project manager. (See Appendix C for project manager's resume.)

## Budget

<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>COST</i>
Online forum software (Lussomo Vanilla <a href="http://getvanilla.com/">http://getvanilla.com/</a> )	\$0.00
Web server (if content can be hosted on existing American Red Cross servers – no cost)	\$2,500.00
Grant Writer	\$7,500.00
Web Developer	\$10,000.00
Marketing Materials	\$1,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$20,000.00</b>

The online forum software I am proposing, Lussomo Vanilla, is an established community forum software that provides a format for discussion threads that is easy to use and provides a simple way for community members to create and respond to postings. The server administration of Vanilla also has advantageous features such as spam control and autonomous user & role management to make it self-managing without regular webmaster intervention. Vanilla is also a no-cost investment, which makes it particularly attractive.

Vanilla can run on any web server along with the web pages for this website. If these items can be hosted on the American Red Cross' web servers, there will not be any cost for a web server. If it is preferred to run this website on a separate server, this will cost approximately \$2500.

The cost of content and web site development is estimated at \$17,500. It is expected that both the grant writer and web developer will already have the development tools (e.g., MS Word, MS PowerPoint, Adobe Professional, and Dreamweaver) to complete the job.

Once the site is complete, we will develop a postcard mailer that can be sent to EMS Organizations at the start of this program, and again six months later to remind them of the site and notify new EMS members of the site.

## Timeline

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<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>DURATION</i>
Recruiting efforts for Grant Writer and Web Developer	3 months
Coordination of efforts and familiarization of online forum software	3 months
Recruit Volunteer Grant Writer to contribute to online forum	3 months
Grant writing content development	3 months
Web design/development (including podcasts and QA testing)	6 months
Development and production of marketing materials	2 months

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Many of the efforts in this timeline can occur simultaneously, but they are listed in general order of when each task needs to begin in. For example, recruiting and hiring of a grant writer must happen before grant writing content development begins. Although no task should take longer than 2-6 months, I would expect the entire process could take as much as 8-12 months in total from beginning to end. A more specific project plan will be constructed when the project is given approval to move forward.

## **Conclusion**

EMS organizations are the first responders for our communities and are most in need of assistance to obtain the funding they require to sustain healthy organizations and healthy communities. We all rely on these organizations' efforts and the American Red Cross relies on these first responders to advance their own mission to help those victims of disasters in need.

There are approximately 600,000 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), 142,000 paramedics, and 1,009,000 firefighters (many who are cross-trained in EMS) in the United States (NAEMT). By providing these informative and interactive web tools to the EMS community, we will be providing critical assistance for these organizations to obtain grant money. Funding isn't keeping up with need. The needs of these communities to also focus on emergency preparedness, particularly after the events of September 11, 2001, have increased. Unfortunately, even Homeland Security grants, which may be used, in part, by these organizations are facing cuts despite their needs (CNN). Action is needed for these organizations to not only survive, but thrive and every community in America depends on it.

These organizations, often made up of young volunteers, needs guidance and the help of others in the community to acquire what is needed to continue their life-saving efforts. These goals are attainable with the help of the American Red Cross.

## Appendix A

### Proposed Instructional Content Outline

<i>TOPIC</i>	<i>OBJECTIVE</i>
Conducting Research	To understand the importance of good research and how to go about conducting it
Finding Funding sources	To gain knowledge about where and how to locate organizations and foundations that are interested in funding or providing equipment for EMS organizations.
Components of a Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Executive Summary</li><li>▪ Table of Contents</li><li>▪ Background</li><li>▪ Objectives</li><li>▪ Plan</li><li>▪ Assessment</li><li>▪ Personnel</li><li>▪ Budget</li><li>▪ Timeline</li><li>▪ Conclusion</li><li>▪ Appendices</li></ul>	Understand the purpose of each section to be able to write and organize a proposal.
Budgets and Timelines	Learn how to make good, realistic estimates for costs and time needed.
Tips and Tricks	Get the inside edge to writing a winning proposal
Sample grant proposals	Review provided samples for general guidance

This represents some of the basic components of writing grants, but the content will be finalized with the grant writer. The objectives of the learning is to learn not only how to write each section of the proposal, but also how to approach a proposal – e.g., defining goals, evaluating funding sources, and thinking comprehensively about justifying the proposal.

## **Appendix B**

### **Proposed Online Forum Terms of Service**

The following is proposed online forum *Terms of Service* language. This can be modified as needed. The intent of establishing *Terms of Service* for the online forum is to alleviate any ambiguity on the part of users as to what is acceptable behavior and what will and will not be tolerated. The language also provides explicit permission on the part of the community moderator to delete posts or a user account if the user has broken the rules. The tone of the language is intentionally firm.

Considering the real-time nature of this community, it is impossible for us to review messages or confirm the validity of information posted. We do not actively monitor the contents of and are not responsible for any content posted. We do not vouch for or warrant the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of any message, and are not responsible for the contents of any data posted by members. The messages express the views of the author of the message, not necessarily the views of this community or any entity associated with this community. Any user who feels that a posted message is objectionable is encouraged to contact us immediately by using the Report Post feature. We have the ability to remove objectionable messages and we will make every effort to do so, within a reasonable time frame, if we determine that removal is necessary. This is a manual process, however, so please realize that we may not be able to remove or edit particular messages immediately.

You agree, through your use of this service, that you will not use this community to post any material which is knowingly false and/or defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, vulgar, hateful, harassing, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, invasive of a person's privacy, or otherwise in violation of any law. You agree not to post any copyrighted material unless the copyright is owned by you.

Although this community does not and cannot review the messages posted and is not responsible for the content of any of these messages, we at this community reserve the right to delete any message for any or no reason at all. You remain solely responsible for the content of your messages, and you agree to indemnify and hold harmless this community, Lussumo (the makers of the discussion software), and their agents with respect to any claim based upon transmission of your message(s).

We at this community also reserve the right to reveal your identity (or whatever information we know about you) in the event of a complaint or

legal action arising from any message posted by you. We log all internet protocol addresses accessing this web site.

Please note that advertisements, chain letters, pyramid schemes, and solicitations are inappropriate on this community.

We reserve the right to terminate any membership for any reason.

## Appendix C

### Project Manager Resume

CATHERINE R. RACETTE

racettecr@comcast.net

#### SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

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- Excellent writing and communication skills.
- Expertise in writing and editing documentation and help systems for both technical staff and end-users, including standard operating procedures, policies, marketing communications, newsletters, training courses, and quick reference materials.
- Project manager of technical rollouts and evaluations for firm of over 2200 employees and 20 offices.
- Designed and implemented firm-wide learning resource intranet site for employees.
- Experienced in Online Learning development and initiatives (asynchronous & synchronous).
- Ten years of experience in the training/learning field, with 6 years of management/supervisory experience.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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7/97 –

PRESENT

Weil, Gotshal & Manges, LLP  
*Information Services Department*

New York, NY

Senior Technical Writer

(11/04 – Present)

- Draft, edit and maintain test plans, technical and functional specifications, system and process flows, business continuity plans, policies, technical instructions, and other documentation.
- Develop help systems for web-based applications.
- Responsible for creation and maintenance of corporate technical writing style guide used by technical writing and training staff.
- Design communication plans and write marketing communications for technical initiatives.
- Develop and maintain standard templates and forms for the Information Services department.
- Provide writing, editing and proofing services to members of the Information Services department.
- Participate in technical rollout project teams.
- Perform usability and technical quality assurance procedures for firm web applications.

## **Supervisor of Training**

**(7/98 – 10/04)**

- Managed staff of seven, including supervision of day-to-day activities, user support, projects, and development and delivery of documentation and training programs.
- Created end-user documentation for systems, software, policy, and procedures.
- Wrote articles for and oversaw publication of IS Department newsletter and other departmental communications.
- Developed informational presentations to communicate upcoming initiatives.
- Project Managed technology evaluations and initiatives, including Windows XP, Office XP; DOCS Open & Office 97, Lotus Notes R5, wireless devices (RIM/Blackberry), iNotes (web-based e-mail), and Lotus Sametime for approximately 2200 employees.
- Developed and conducted classroom and online synchronous learning sessions for New York and regional offices.
- Implemented firm-wide learning management system to distribute online learning initiatives.
- Developed online asynchronous learning modules with TutorPro courseware.
- Led development efforts of the firm's intranet Learning site (a resource for learning and course registration at the firm) with the application development team.
- Developed and advised others in development of modular training programs, which provide shorter, more focused and effective learning events.

## **PC Trainer**

**(7/97 – 6/98)**

- Conducted classroom and individual training sessions.
- Provided user assistance through desk-side visits and general consultation.
- Developed training curricula and supporting documentation for software, hardware, and operating system training programs.
- Managed application testing project team for firm-wide DOCS Open/Office 97 rollout.
- Developed and delivered informational marketing presentations to users in all levels of the organization to prepare the firm for technology rollouts.

**12/93 – 7/97**

**Health Management Systems, Inc.  
*Corporate Communications Department***

**New York, NY**

**Associate Trainer**

**(12/94 – 7/97)**

- Managed corporate PC and mainframe technology implementations, including development and delivery of training and internal communications.
- Wrote and designed documentation for PC and mainframe systems and software, including system manuals, process work flow, self-study manuals, quick reference materials, and user guides.
- Developed programs of instruction for PC and mainframe classes for employees, including Lotus Notes, Windows 95, OS/2 Warp, and SAS.
- Developed business skills and product knowledge training programs for Account Management team.
- Conducted end-user training classes, workshops, and one-on-one training sessions to support operating system rollouts, software and database implementations, and new employee PC training.
- Scripted and produced training video to disseminate new software and business information for new and existing employees.
- Contributed software and database design improvements with developers as a member of technical implementation teams.

**Training Assistant**

**(12/93-11/94)**

- Developed job-specific training programs to integrate and train all new employees.
- Performed needs analysis to execute individual and departmental training requests.

**7/91-11/93**

**The Associated Press  
*Human Resources Department***

**New York, NY**

**Personnel Assistant**

**(7/92-11/93)**

- Calculated cost-of-living differentials for overseas staff.
- Assisted employees with Human Resources inquiries and matters.

**Administrative Assistant**

**(7/91-6/92)**

- Supported Director of Human Resources in general office functions.

**TECHNICAL  
EXPERIENCE**

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Adobe RoboHelp 7, Adobe Captivate 3, HTML, MS Windows XP/Me/98/95, MS Office XP/2000/97, MS Project 2000, Lotus Notes 4.6/R5/6, Outlook 2003, DOCS Open, DTE, LearningSpace 5.01, IBM Workplace Collaborative Learning, Centra, Interwise, TutorPro

**EDUCATION**

**New Jersey Institute of Technology** **Newark, NJ**

- Currently enrolled in MS program in Professional & Technical Communication

**New York University** **New York, NY**

- Certificate in Corporate Online Instruction, December 2002

**Marist College** **Poughkeepsie, NY**

- B.A. in Psychology, May 1991

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