Grant Writing Guidelines for *Hydrorider* Products

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Welcome to ***Hydrorider!*** Obtaining funding for new aquatic programming initiatives and supporting equipment can be a major challenge. We at Hydrorider are here to help you. These guidelines can not only assist you in getting started with the grant writing process, but also provide you useful information for polishing your organization's grant proposal.

Knowing and understanding the grant writing process is your first step. In brief, the grant writing process can be summarized in the following steps:

- Decide to write a grant.
- Formulate your needs.
- Justify your needs.
- Select a target financial source.
- Write the grant proposal.
- Edit/proofread your proposal.
- Submit the proposal.
- Wait for results.

You have already taken that first step, deciding to write, by accessing these guidelines. That is really the hardest part – getting started. As you continue along your path, take each step individually. Avoid contemplating the whole project. Thinking about large projects can be very discouraging. Moving through one task at a time will lead to your end goal, a successful proposal.

Needs

You may already know what you want. You want grant money to purchase *Hydrorider* products. That's easy. More difficult is answering the questions "Do you NEED the *Hydrorider* item you want?" and "How can you tell or PROVE you actually need the *Hydrorider* product you want?"

Whether you have selected one of the *Aquabike Hydrorider Waterbikes* or one of the *Hydrorider Underwater Treadmills*, here are reasons, in no particular order, your program might NEED to add this equipment.

- You cannot meet the exercise needs of specific client populations within your existing program offerings.
- You have clients who need to be totally non-weight bearing.
- You have clients who need exercise monitoring.
- You have clients who need the structure of space specific equipment.

- You have limited space and cannot increase your participant group.
- You have limited staff availability and need an exercise format that can be client managed.
- You need to program several activities in the pool at one time and swim lessons have priority.
- You need to accommodate individuals seeking exercise on a 24/7 basis, but other programs take pool space.
- You have had requests for activities that can provide transitioning to similar land activities.
- You have a problem with client retention.
- You have individuals wishing to train for triathlon competition.
- You have clients who are seeking rehabilitation following a sports injury.
- You have the potential to add clients with disabilities who may not have standing balance and/or swim ability.
- You would like to stage special events for a variety of populations.

Adding *Hydrorider* (fill in product name) can help you meet these needs. Here is your justification for adding *Hydrorider* (fill in product name).

- *If you cannot meet the exercise needs of specific client populations within your existing program offerings*, having *Hydrorider* (fill in name of product) can expand your client participation group. *Hydrorider* (insert name of products) allow for fitness enhancing exercise within a small amount of space. Equipment is adjustable and can be configured to meet specific client needs. *Hydrorider* (insert name of specific products) do not need a specific skill or instruction, beyond equipment orientation, for individuals to use successfully.
- *If you have clients who need to be totally non-weight bearing,* Hydrorider Waterbikes enable an individual to gain leg strength through resistance pedaling without weight bearing. Core strength and balance improve without ambulation. If an individual needs assistance in getting on or off of the Aquabike, that assistance is easily given as the buoyancy of the human body negates the need for client lifting by the assisting individual
- *If you have clients who need exercise monitoring,* that monitoring can take place immediately adjacent to the equipment.
  Close monitoring is easy as the participating individual is not moving around the pool area and groups of individuals needing monitoring can be clustered together.
- *If you have clients who need the structure of space specific equipment,* both the Aquabike and the Aquatreadmill provide space anchors for

individuals who might otherwise "wander" around the pool area. All activity is at the equipment and during use the equipment remains where placed. This is particularly important for clients who may lack mental focus and/or have difficulty following more complicated directions of group activity.

- *If you have limited space and cannot increase your participant group,* adding an Aquabike or Aquatreadmill will allow you to increase your participant group without undue space allocation. *Hydrorider* equipment occupies a very small footprint. Once the individual is on the equipment, no additional space is needed.
- *If you have limited staff availability and need an exercise format that can be client managed, Hydrorider* meets that need because once the individual has received orientation to the equipment and the equipment has been adjusted to fit the client, exercise proceeds under the control of the client. Staff members are then free to work with other individuals. In addition, sometimes, limited staff availability means one person must set up and take down equipment. Hydrorider equipment is not only light in weight, but also on wheels. One person can move it with ease.
- *If you need to program several activities in the pool at one time and swim lessons have priority,* you can still open your pool to exercise. *Hydrorider* Aquabikes and Treadmills take very little space. They can be placed in the corner of the pool, easily moved from one water location to another, and clients can exercise while other pool activities are taking place. *Hydrorider* clients will not interfere with other pool activity, as their equipment is self-contained in a small area.
- *If you need to accommodate individuals seeking exercise on a 24/7 basis, but other programs take pool space*, *Hydrorider* equipment can meet this need because it can easily be put into water when needed and removed when not. One person can move the Aquabike or Aquatreadmill on deck or in water. When on deck, as Hydrorider equipment is on wheels, it can be easily placed along the wall, ready to roll to the pool edge and lowered into the water. Reversing the process when equipment is not needed is not difficult. One person can move the Aquabike or Aquatreadmill on deck or in water. Plus, it is totally ok to leave *Hydrorider* equipment in water on a 24/7 basis, either in the place it is used, or moved to the side of the pool until needed. Hydrorider equipment is made of high-grade marine stainless steel, AISI 316L, and is rust proof.
- *If you have had requests for activities that can provide transitioning to similar land activities,* both the Aquabikes and the Aquatreadmills are just the thing. Land exercise bikes and treadmills are a staple of most spas,

fitness facilities, training centers, and rehabilitation operations. *Hydrorider* equipment can be used in a variety of water depths, shallow water will more closely approximate land activity, while deeper water will allow for the assist of the body's natural buoyancy. This is particularly important from a therapeutic standpoint. Clients can wear a swimsuit or cycling gear (also available from *Hydrorider*).

- *If client retention is a problem for your facility,* take your land spinning class to the pool! This is just one example of how adding *Hydrorider* equipment can expand your land program and keep your participants coming. In-water biking and/or treadmill walking provides the variety AND great exercise.
- *If you have individuals wishing to train for triathlon competition, Hydrorider* equipment provides a unique training opportunity. Musculo-skeletal action for biking and running, whether in water or on land, is very similar, making in-water training a sweat free training enhancement, supported by exercise physiology research.
- *If you have clients who are seeking rehabilitation following a sports injury,* non-impact training is preferred. *Hydrorider* bikes and treadmills allow for customizing the workload to meet individual needs. A variety of possible equipment adjustments provide for progression in the rehabilitation process.
- *If you have the potential to add clients with disabilities who may not have standing balance and/or swim ability*, *Hydrorider* equipment can be adapted for individuals with limited physical and/or cognitive abilities. Adjustable handlebars, body security straps, seating alternatives for the bikes, along with the ability to change resistance levels make *Hydrorider* equipment appropriate for almost any person with participation challenges. No prior skill is needed.
- *If you would like to stage special events for a variety of populations,* bike and/or run for time. Stage your own in-water special events and competitions. From a sprint to a marathon, *Hydrorider* equipment can equip your team.

For many larger grants it is necessary to not only state your need and explain why *Hydrorider* equipment will meet that need, but it is also important to justify **why** you think *Hydrorider* equipment – specifically aquabikes and/or the underwater treadmill – will actually meet that need. Justifying your request means a little bit of research, but the internet makes that quite easy. You need to search for information that **proves** your *Hydrorider* solution will meet your needs. Appendix A has a sample bibliography to get you started.

Doing your own internet search will give you results closer to the specific assertions you would like to prove. You can search by *Hydrorider*, aquabike, or underwater treadmill. Then, sort your returns by the specific population and/or purpose you expect your grant to serve.

As you write your needs and justifications, you can refer to the specific research proving the problem and/or need you have can be met by adding *Hydrorider* equipment. Remember, the people who will be reading and evaluating your grant for fund raising will not be familiar with your program or *Hydrorider* equipment, so be sure to tell them everything you think important to know to encourage them to fund your grant.

Funding Sources

Once you have formulated your needs, at least in rough form, it is time to seek out potential funding sources. There is grant money available, and many times that money goes unused because no one applies for it. The secret is to find a close a match as possible between your needs and the type of programs/activities a particular company, foundation, or group supports.

Where to start looking? Begin in your own community with individuals who are likely to know best your program and the people you serve. Next, consider state groups, and finally national level funding. Here are examples of types of groups.

- Organizations serving specific populations – the same populations that will benefit from having *Hydrorider* equipment added to your program. These might be organizations serving specific age groups such as teens or seniors, or organizations serving specific populations of individuals with disabilities.
- Organizations having a specific interest in health and wellness, such a insurance companies and health care groups. Perhaps you can form a partnership to better serve their consumer groups.
- Schools. Sometimes a school and/or school system will contract for providing services to staff and/or students. Part of that contract might include funding for equipment.
- Foundations with health and wellness in their giving initiative.
- Governmental agencies. There is federal money available for health and wellness initiatives, particularly for programs formed in partnership with community groups and meeting the needs of underserved populations.

If you do an internet search for funding sources, you will have more definitive results if you use a search pattern that allows for not only including terms, but also excluding terms. For example, useful terms to search might include phrases like “grants in aid”, “health and wellness funding”, “funding rfp”, and “program support funding”. Terms to exclude from the search would be “scholarship”, “school”, and “college”.

It is also perfectly acceptable to contact a company or organization by phone and inquire if they provide funding for program initiatives. If the response is affirmative, request an “rfp” or a copy of their grant writing guidelines. It may also be useful for you to find out what types of initiatives any particular group has funded before. This could be an indicator of what they are likely to fund n the future. Also, you may want to contact prior grant recipients and ask if you can see a copy of their successful grant.

What is an “rfp”, you may wonder. An “rfp” is a Request for Proposals. Many funding sources have an established process for providing support funding, including a written guideline document called an rfp. If there is an rfp, you should obtain it. Following the guidelines in the rfp is critical.

Select a potential funding source that most closely matches the purposes of your program. You want a good match of interests and goals. Investigate websites of potential partners. Seek out potential “friends at court” – company employees and/or board members of the target group, for example. You are selling your program and your *Hydrorider* initiative. Know your market!

Writing, Editing, Proofreading

A grant proposal usually contains the following components:

- Title
- Abstract (usually no more than 1 page)
- Needs description
- Significance of the need and justification for why your grant will meet that need
- Project design, what you intend to do/how you will implement your project if funded
- Timeline, when will you undertake each aspect of your project design
- Evaluation, how you will determine if your project is successful
- Resources, in the Appendix
- Budget, in the Appendix
- Partnership and/or letters of support, in the Appendix

For example:

Title: Land/Water Fitness Connections
Abstract: A summary of what you want to do and why
Needs Description: Why you NEED to implement a program that has connections between land activities and in-water fitness activities. Include how you will meet this need with *Hydrorider* equipment and what research says in support of your plans.
Significance: If your proposal is accepted how will making land/water fitness connections meet your needs? Increase client base, expand opportunities for under-served populations? Add participation hours for your pool? How will this CHANGE your existing program circumstances?
Project Design: What are you including in the grant proposal? Staff planning time, equipment purchase, staff training, publicity, etc.
Timeline: When will you train staff, make purchases, put out publicity, evaluate program change, etc?
Evaluation: Who will evaluate the success of your grant and how will that be done? Count of new clients? Hours in activity? Use of equipment?
Resources: Bibliography, letters of support from grant partners, community groups, etc.
Budget: A breakdown of how the total amount of grant money will be spent.

Depending on the information in the rfp, there may be limits on the size of each section of your grant and/or on the total length. In addition, there may be specifications on size of margins, font size, and total pages. If there are guidelines for this YOU MUST FOLLOW THEM. Grants, especially those for the federal government, have been turned down without even a read because of margin violations!

Here are a few tips to keep in mind as you write:

- Write for the reader. They will not be familiar with your program. Help them understand WHY you need what you say you need and what the results will be.
- Tell the reader what he or she is reading. For example, start your needs section with "We need this ___ because".
- Link with other organizations whenever possible. As you write, keep a lookout for organizations that can offer partnerships and/or letters of support.

- Plan your grant to be self-sustaining. If you are going to need money every year, you probably won't be funded. Ask for everything you need at one time and then tell the reader how and why you will then be able to carry on with your program in a self-sustaining manner.
- Tie in your needs with current "hot topics". For example, reducing obesity is a current hot topic.
- Supply all information requested. This might include identifying information for your organization, contact data, financial records/tax records (especially if you are a non-profit organization).
- Organizational structure information.
- Government forms (if needed, such as a 503c3 documentation).
- PROOFREAD and EDIT!! You are not your own best proofreader. Ask someone else you know who writes well. Do not be sensitive to editing. If your proofreader does not understand something, neither will the funding source staff member. Send in a PERFECTLY WRITTEN proposal. Typos, grammar errors, etc. do not help you.

Submission

This is the easiest part – and the one many individuals do not take seriously. If a funding source has a deadline, you MUST meet the deadline. Late means your proposal may not even be read. They will not care that your computer crashed. They will just give another group the money you want. BE ON TIME!

Submit in the format the funding source desires. Many sources are now requesting electronic submission. If they do accept paper proposals, the deadline date is the date by which they must RECEIVE the document – not the date you mail it, and yes, the postmark does count.

Notify any "friends at court" that your submission has been done. Any support you can generate will be helpful.

Be sure to include contact information and indicate you will be happy to submit any additional information and/or answer any questions.

Waiting

It may take up to six months for you to learn whether or not your proposal has been funded. Be prepared to wait, which also means plan ahead for program expansion initiatives relying on funding.

If your proposal is accepted, you will be given guidelines for implementation and reporting back to your funding source. Receiving the money isn't the end of

the process. You will need to be accountable to your funding source and they will tell you how they want that to happen. It's their money, be considerate and adhere to their policies.

Also, give credit. Your equipment funding comes from the giver of the grant. Be sure appropriate recognition is given to your funding source.

If your grant is not accepted, attempt to find out why. The standard, generic response is "We had more applications than we could fund." This may be true. But, it is also acceptable to contact the funding source and ask if there were specific issues with your proposal and/or how that proposal could be improved.

Reasons for rejection may include:

- ✓ Failure to follow guidelines (length, font size, margins, etc.).
- ✓ Quality of writing.
- ✓ Continuity of the project (your needs and solutions to not coincide or cannot be justified).
- ✓ Your request is outside the parameters of the sources funding initiatives.
- ✓ Your submission is late.
- ✓ They really do have too many requests.

Then, revise your proposal if necessary, and submit again to a different group. While it is good practice to submit to only one funding source at a time, if you have a multi-part grant you can submit one section, equipment, for example, to one funding source and staff training, for example, to a different funding source. This, in effect, helps form partnerships, a critical component of a successful grant.

Hydrorider USA is here to assist you. We can provide specific information on all of our products, along with the most up to date research sources. We firmly believe we have the very best water fitness equipment on the market today. That equipment can be an asset to your program in a wide variety of ways. Need help? Just ask us!

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Appendix -- Resource Bibliography

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