GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE, YET MANAGEABLE PROGRAMS

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ACADEMIC ABSTRACT

This workshop will leverage the Kauffman Campus Initiative as a unique learning opportunity for other entrepreneurially-minded university members looking to expand their program toward a more campus-wide scope. The workshop will utilize and build upon different perspectives from the actual experience: grant writer (Ibarreche, S.), grant reviewer (Mendes, T.), and grant administrator (Post, C.). Discussions will focus on best practices and lessons learned for proposing, launching, managing, and sustaining entrepreneurship programs supported by a broad population of the university population.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This workshop will leverage the Kauffman Campus Initiative as a unique learning opportunity for other entrepreneurially-minded university members seeking to build their program to a campus-wide scope. This nationwide $50M initiative, the inaugural Kauffman Campuses now in their fourth year of operation, provides an opportunity for the inaugural group to reflect on the experience, compare notes, and share lessons learned.

The workshop will utilize and build upon three different perspectives from the actual experience: grant writer (Ibarreche, S., University of Texas at El Paso), grant reviewer (Mendes, T., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and previously director for the Kauffman Foundation), and grant administrator (Post, C., Florida International University).

The workshop will focus on building the foundations necessary to prepare a university for a new campus-wide grant award. This includes strategies for achieving buy-in from other individuals and entities on campus and forging partnerships that create sustainable models for projects. The portion of the workshop focusing on the grant reviewer will give participants an insight as to what foundations look for in grant proposals and what types of strategies will give applicants an edge over other applicants. The final portion will deliver forward thinking methods of designing grants and programs. The actual management of the program should be considered during the concept and design phase. Specific tactics for predicting the types of problems that may occur and how to avoid them from beginning on the grant process will be covered. Participants will learn how to write grants that have a higher probability of being supported by the university and getting funded from an external source.
INTRODUCTION

In December 2003, the Kauffman Foundation launched its Kauffman Campuses initiative – a $25 million grant program charging universities to make entrepreneurship education a campus-wide effort. Out of over 400 universities that were considered only 30 were invited to submit a preliminary proposal. Fifteen were then awarded planning grants of $50,000 each and were given six months to develop a final proposal for becoming a Kauffman Campus. At the end of the process, eight universities were awarded up to $5 million each:

Inaugural Kauffman Campuses
- Florida International University*
- Howard University
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- University of Rochester
- University of Texas-El Paso*
- Wake Forest University
- Washington University in St. Louis

In December of 2006, a second set of universities were selected to receive grants and make entrepreneurship a pan-campus experience. The second round of the Kauffman Campuses initiative features a total of $25.5 million in grants to nine U.S. universities.

Kauffman Campuses II Schools
- Arizona State University
- Brown University
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Georgetown University
- New York University
- Purdue University
- Syracuse University
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- University of Maryland-Baltimore County
- Northeast Ohio Schools (in partnership with the Burton D. Morgan Foundation)
  - Baldwin-Wallace College
  - College of Wooster
  - Hiram College
  - Lake Erie College
  - Oberlin College

The Kauffman Campus Initiative (KCI), one of the nation’s largest grant programs advancing entrepreneurship education at the university level, was launched only after a grant application process proving to be taxing and grueling for all of the schools involved. A unique perspective from one of the program directors of KCI will be presented in this workshop. Anthony Mendes, currently at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, served as program director at the
Kauffman Foundation during the design, approval process, and launch of KCI. He will speak about the following issues for approximately 20 minutes:

- The initial process in launching the Kauffman Campuses program
- How was this process different from other collegiate programs offered by Kauffman
- What was Kauffman attempting to do in launching Kauffman Campuses
- How were the 15 finalists selected
- What was involved in the 5 month period in leading up to the final proposals
- What was considered to be the key elements in selecting the Kauffman Campuses (8 winners)
- How universities can stand out in submitting proposals to foundations
- What metrics should be considered in attempting to create culture change on campuses
- How proposals can be modified (flexible) in allowing for "opportunity" in program development while adhering to the requirements stated in proposals
- How universities can leverage resources and collaborate on proposals to gain competitive advantage over others.

A second perspective will be presented in this workshop from the position of grant writer. Santiago Ibarreche, a director of entrepreneurship programs at the University of Texas at El Paso. He was involved in the design of the proposal, obtaining the buy-in from various key players within the university, and the overall vision of the grant proposal. He will speak about the following issues for approximately 20 minutes:

- Motivation and location of potential sources
  - Centers for Entrepreneurial Development, Advancement, Research and Support (CEDARS) – improvement, administration, integration
  - Existing program – complementary vs. new initiatives
  - Highlighting internal strengths – Hispanic serving, first generation, academic dean support, departmental champions, research oriented, doctoral programs
- Obtaining cooperation within and outside the institution
  - President and Dean support
  - CEDARS Board of Advisors
  - Other related programs
    - Family Business Forum
    - Small Business Executive Education Program (SBEEP)
    - Chambers of Commerce
    - Small Business Consortium
    - Government entities
- Obtaining the grant and implementing it
  - Writing process – collaborative in nature
  - Emphasizing main attractive features
    - Centre for Hispanic Entrepreneurship
    - Urban Student Entrepreneur Corps
- Entering student programs
  - Discovering flexibility for matching funds criteria
  - Obtaining internal support
  - Promotional efforts once grant was awarded

The third perspective to be presented in this workshop is from the position of program and grant administrator. Colleen Post, founding associate director of entrepreneurship center at the Florida International University, has managed the grant and new programs since its inception. She will speak about the following issues for approximately 20 minutes:

  - Cross-listing of courses and inter-departmental communication
  - Greenfield operation challenges and lessons learned
  - Tracking successes and reporting outcomes
  - Self-assessment models
  - Efficient staffing designs
  - Engagement strategies
  - Satellite Leaders

**CONCLUSION**

It can be useful to other programs to learn how the final eight schools from the first group reached that point and what factors aided the reviewers in deciding who the final eight would be. Perhaps even more importantly, the KCI was a founding grant for some of the universities and not only were they expected to build a program, but they were expected to sustain it. As the first group of the KCI schools begins their fourth year of operations, a great deal of learning regarding the construction of entrepreneurship education has taken place. Partnerships and collaborations between the first eight universities are beginning to form and create valuable methods for other schools to consider when building their own programs. This workshop represents a grant writing workshop partnered between the University of Texas at El Paso, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Florida International University. Each of these three schools manage programs that have reached a stage of maturity that allows the schools to compare notes and develop best practices for building programs, specifically in the area of developing, writing, and managing grant related programs.