Planning

A little planning can go a long way in preparing your proposal. Get organized before you start writing. This is a good time to review the proposal route on page three. Depending on the scope of your project, development of a competitive proposal may take anywhere from three to twelve months. Here are some planning suggestions:

- **Start early.** Many people make the mistake of waiting until a couple of weeks before the proposal is due; do it now.
- **Read the guidelines and FOLLOW THEM.** Talk to the program officer or the Director of Grants if you have questions or concerns.
- **Use a checklist and/or timeline as a guide to writing your proposal.** List all the tasks to be accomplished. What information will you need to gather/research? Estimate how long it will take you to finish each task and set internal deadlines for completing them.
- **Get a draft of your budget and proposal abstract** to the Grants Office at least 7 to 10 days PRIOR to the deadline.
- **Start working on your internal approval form at least** one week prior to the deadline. It can take several days to get all the signatures of approval necessary.
- **Begin collecting and organizing supporting materials early.** This includes figures, tables, photographs, references, and letters of support.