

## Attributes of Winning GWB Proposals

Based on a look at proposals that have been awarded GWB projects in recent years and the issues that have led to acceptance or rejection of proposals, the following is a list of attributes that characterize the “ideal” GWB project.

- 1) Human benefit. The GWB charter specifies that projects should benefit communities in need, where applying geoscience is critical to improving conditions of poverty or where dangerous conditions and hazards can be mitigated or removed through use of applied geosciences technology. The greater the need, the more clearly that a need can be described, and the more obvious it is that geoscience can address the need, the more likely it is that the project will be supported.
- 2) Scientific merit. It must be clear that the methods selected are an appropriate choice (presumably the best choice) for addressing the problem and that the proposers can demonstrate an ability to execute the work. GWB is not a research organization, so proposals (however exciting and worthy) for developing new methodologies are not likely to find strong support among reviewers. Recently-developed technologies can be proposed, but they should have demonstrable effectiveness in directly meeting the needs of the target community.
- 3) Teaming. Teams that include in-country participants are viewed very positively by the review committee. If the appropriate expertise can be found in-country, there is no need for the team to include members from outside the country in need. Where in-country expertise is not strong, international partnerships composed of foreign and domestic participants are viewed favorably. Foreign participation can be as simple as playing an advisory role or can involve joint execution in all phases of the project (data acquisition, analysis, interpretation).
- 4) Sustainability. It is a primary goal of the GWB program that every project have a lasting impact. Projects that are designed to provide partial answers, or even those that provide a solution without including a plan for executing the solution (e.g. finding optimal well locations without having a partner who agrees to drill the wells) are open ended, and may end up having no impact at all. The best projects are those which demonstrate a complete plan for meeting a need (even if some components are conducted outside of the GWB project), AND for training persons in-country who can replicate the success at other sites in the country or region where similar needs can be found.
- 5) Student involvement. GWB has a clear goal of providing educational opportunities for students. When students participate in GWB projects, they develop a deeper awareness of the world around them and become better citizens and better scientists. Student involvement can enable more work to be done with the limited funding that GWB can offer.
- 6) Financial transparency. Budgets need to be readily understood and consistent. Equipment purchase is allowed, and some past successful proposals have included significant equipment costs. If this is done, a long-term benefit should be shown by leaving the equipment with trained users in-country. Many equipment manufacturers or leasing firms are willing to loan equipment to GWB projects at little or no cost, and some may even provide shipping costs. Budgets which are dominated by out-of-country salaries and expenses are subject to greater scrutiny.

### Attributes to be avoided

- **Missing details on the lead organization-** No online presence, no website, no physical address, no social media presence. Address on the application does not match the address on the lead organization's website.
- **Missing details on the applicant-** No background on who is applying for the project. No mention of their current affiliation or association with the project. Using a general email address (Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc.) on the application and not applying via their official email address (if one is available to them).
- **Lack of information on project performers-** Details missing on the project performers, especially project lead(s) such as relevant past experiences, project management competencies, and in-country partnerships.
- **No focus-** The applicant does not make clear what is proposed, and how it will benefit the humanitarian need.
- **Students' involvement-** Very little or no (especially in-country/local) students' involvement
- **No plan for sustainability-** Relying entirely on partners such as local governments or nonprofit organizations or local participants for the long-term sustainability of the project without any clear plan
- **No knowledge transfer-** How is the knowledge going to be transferred? Will there be a course, a training program, or a workshop during the project? How will the community and local participants benefit from the project in terms of their personal knowledge/education?
- **Budget-** Budget is going mainly towards salaries and or travel plans and conference attendance. Cost-sharing plans and in-kind contributions are highly encouraged to be added in the Phase I Lol.
- **No UN-SDGs-** There is no mention or links of the project to any of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs). More info. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- **Lack of geoscientific/geophysical techniques' application-** Only touching upon or naming a few techniques. However, there is no information on plan of utilizing the technique, data collection, analysis, and results. Mentioning vague/generic techniques, such as 'using drone, GPS, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, etc.' Copying and pasting underlying theories of different techniques from textbooks i.e. simply padding the proposal.
- **No mention of a particular community-** Lack of past work experience or connections in the project location. No direct humanitarian benefit to a local at-risk community.
- **Purely research-based proposals-** There is an explanation of the problem, yet no connection to short or long term geosciences applications to solve a humanitarian challenge.