

# Bidding

## FOR DUMMIES

**A Reference  
for the  
Rest of Us!**

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Recognition is  
made simple  
with  
this easy-to-use  
guide to  
bidding at  
MORHA 2012

# **How to use this guide**

This guide is here to be a guide to steer you in the right direction in your efforts to put together bids for MORHA 2012. Every school has their own way to put bids together - some have bid teams while others have the MOCCs create the bids. Some schools have their executive boards write bids on behalf of their organization. It really all depends on how you want to put your bid together. Each way is different, but this guide will help with any of them.

Because this guide supplements, but does not replace, MORHA policy, make sure that all bid writers know bid producers listed in the relevant sections of the MORHA award guidelines.

If you have any questions that may pop up as you are pouring endless hours into the bids late at night, please feel free to contact any of the MORHA board.



# **What is a bid?**

Simply put, a bid is a written report that explains why a particular student, group, program, or advisor is deserving of recognition as an “Of the Year” winner. The award bid categories and their maximum page limitations are:

1. RHA of the Year = 30 pages
2. Program of the Year = 30 pages
3. Most Improved RHA of the Year = 16 pages
4. Student of the Year = 16 pages
5. Advisor of the Year = 16 pages
6. First Year Experience Award = 16 pages
7. President of the Year = 16 pages
8. Family Member of the Year = 10 pages
9. Resident Assistant of the Year = 16 pages
10. Distinguished Service Award = 16 pages
11. Focus on Diversity Award = 10 pages
12. Commitment to Philanthropy Award = 10 pages
13. MARHH Chapter of the Year = 16 pages
14. MARHH Member of the Year = 16 pages
15. Executive Board Member of the Year = 16 pages

Bids are also written when an individual runs for a MORHA board position.

Finally, bids are written when a school wishes to host the MORHA conference or a business meeting.

# **Why write a bid?**

The short answer would be simply: to recognize!  
The bidding process begins not with the writing of the bid, but with determining who, if anyone, is worthy of recognition.

How?

- Brainstorm alone
  - Who or what have you seen around your campus this year that impressed you?
- Brainstorm with your executive board
  - Who or what have they seen in the past year that impressed them?
- Ask around campus
  - Ask fellow residents, RAs, and Hall Directors if people or programs really stuck out to them this year.
- Look at programs that won awards, whether it was an OTM (Of the Month Award) or other forms of recognition at the campus level.

From all of this, you probably will have a list of possible nominees for many of the categories. Since you are only one person, you have some decision making to do:

1. Who can help me write bids?
  2. With the help I have, which bids should I write?
  3. How should I choose between two or more deserving groups?
- Typically, the answers to 2 and 3 depend on the answer to the first. Having extra people to help not only with proofreading your bids, but with writing other bids, can be the key to recognizing even more groups and individuals.

# What's next?

You have BRAINSTORMED and AMASSED HELP and NARROWED DOWN THE BIDS so now it's time to start writing... Or is it?

The final step before you ever start writing your bid can be the most challenging and fun part of the whole process: choosing a bid theme!

A theme or central topic of the bid is very important to give a particular award bid a unique identity.

Themes do not have to be complicated - the simpler, the better!

Here are some tips for bid themes:

- Program of the Year (POY): Often the theme of this bid is simply the program itself. It's usually not necessary to theme a program bid, but rather focus on the program theme.
- Those bids that nominate specific people can include items or activities that they are interested in, topics that describe the person's style of leadership, or unique characteristics of the person.
- Past bid examples include:
  - Student: "The Perfect Fit" (fashion)
  - Advisor: "Part of Your World" (The Little Mermaid)
  - Distinguished Service: "The Recipe for Success" (baking)
- School of the Year (SOY): These bids can often be the hardest themes to think of because the bid encompasses a lot more than other bids. A good way to create a theme is to think of a slogan or topic that encompasses your schools' efforts in the past year.
- Example: "No Day but Today (the musical RENT)

(Please don't use these examples as your bid theme)

# **What's in a bid?**

You're finally ready to begin writing your bid. You have selected the bids you will write, gathered help, chosen nominees, and picked bid themes.

Now there's the whole issue of putting the bid together. The first and most important step is get out the Award/Bid Guidelines and Restrictions Document to see what they say about the specific award categories you are writing for as well as for awards and bids in general.

Get the basics out of the way first:

- What is the timeline for this bid?
- What is the maximum number of pages?
- What information is required to be in this bid?
- Go through the Guidelines and Restrictions Document point-by-point to make sure that you are including everything that is necessary for the bid.

**HINT: Don't write a bid that could get disqualified!**

Sounds simple, but make sure to double check all of the criteria before you put in the time and effort to write the bid.

If the Guidelines and Restrictions Document didn't help as much as you would have liked, then take another approach to evaluating your options. Ask yourself about the time and energy that went into the group or program or what the individual did that makes them an exceptional nominee.

# Filling the pages

Step One: Expressing the theme throughout the pages

- Take time to be creative in the titles of your pages. This will make the process more fun for you and will increase the interest of the readers.

Step Two: Writing everything you want to say

- This involves simply typing everything you would ideally like to say for each topic regardless of the space requirements.

Step Three: Sprucing up the pages

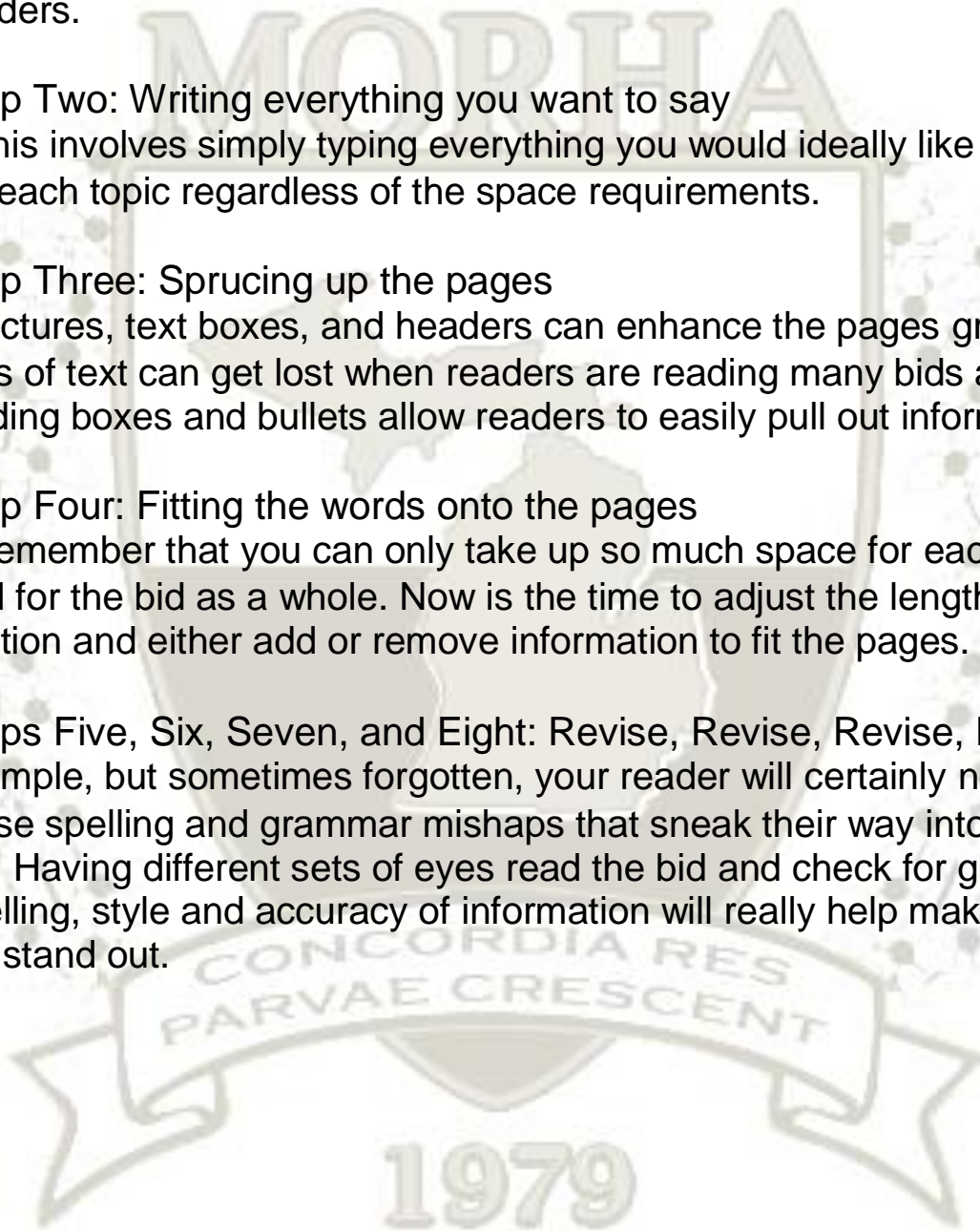
- Pictures, text boxes, and headers can enhance the pages greatly. Lots of text can get lost when readers are reading many bids at a time. Adding boxes and bullets allow readers to easily pull out information.

Step Four: Fitting the words onto the pages

- Remember that you can only take up so much space for each topic and for the bid as a whole. Now is the time to adjust the length of each section and either add or remove information to fit the pages.

Steps Five, Six, Seven, and Eight: Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise

- Simple, but sometimes forgotten, your reader will certainly notice those spelling and grammar mishaps that sneak their way into your bid. Having different sets of eyes read the bid and check for grammar, spelling, style and accuracy of information will really help make your bid stand out.



# **Letters of support**

Letters of support can be the easiest part of your bid writing experience for one simple reason: YOU DON'T HAVE TO WRITE THEM! But that is exactly the reason why they are often forgotten about until it's almost too late!

Who writes them?

- Often this is easy because the Award/Bid Requirements and Restrictions Document (don't forget to check them often!) have specific letters of support that are required for each bid. In these cases, ask those people as early as possible to write letters so that they have enough time to write strong letters. In some cases, though, you have to use your best judgment for who writes letters of support. Some people to consider are: RHA/MARHH President, supervisors, faculty and staff, etc. Think about who knows the program/individual/group best and will be able to provide the strongest letter - not necessarily whose name will impress the reader most. A strong letter of support even from a resident can sometimes be better than a weak letter of support from the President of a university.

How to request a letter

- Always give at least a week if possible for the individual to write a letter of support (but the more time, the better). If you know the person writing it needs one day, then work accordingly, but the major downfall of a letter of support is that it has been rushed, causing it to be weak.

Retrieving the letter:

- This may not need to be stated, but it is usually appropriate to give the author a thank you note or other small form of recognition for taking time to write the letter of support.

# **What's left?**

What's left are the finer points - the points that make your school's bid different from any other school's. For some, this involves adding quotes throughout the bid to spruce it up and for others it is in the formatting of the bid. Make it unique!

If you haven't already created a cover page, now would be the time to do that as well. A cover page should introduce the person/group/organization/program that you are nominating. It is also very helpful to incorporate your bid theme in the cover page. **Again remember to check the Requirements and Restrictions Document for the cover page!**

From here on, it is up to you! Go out and recognize students, programs, groups, and advisors at your school for their hard work and dedication. They will appreciate it, you will build skills and have fun, and you might even win stuff!

PDFing your bid:

All bids need to be submitted in .pdf format. This can be done using the program Adobe Acrobat or online at <http://createpdf.adobe.com/> by following the online instructions to create the .pdf file. You also should have the option to save it as a PDF when you click "save as" in Microsoft Word.

Remember: bidding is a lot of work, but it's all about recognition so have fun with it and don't get too stressed out over it. Whether it's a surprise to the nominee or you clue them in right away, just the fact that you thought to nominate them is a great honor!

# **Good Luck!**

# **Bid Checklist**

## Pre-writing

- Decide what award(s) you will bid for
- Find others to help write the bids
- Decide who/what you will nominate
- Submit intent to bid (morhabids@gmail.com)
- Outline the bid
- Interview others for their input
- Choose a theme for the bid
- Refer to the Awards/Bids Requirements and Restrictions Document often
- Make note of the bidding timeline
- Solicit letters of support

## Bid components

- Cover Page
- Introduction to person/group/program/school
- Background/history of school or program
- Description of how it met the criteria (heart of the bid)
- Letters of support

## Post-writing

- Edit, Edit, Edit
- Spruce up the bid/Make it unique
- Convert bid to .pdf format
- Submit! (morhabids@gmail.com)