



Grants Writing

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5 Star Seminars

AGENDA

- Who Gives Money – Typical Grant
- Private Foundations
- Corporate Foundations
- Government on all Levels
- All-Purpose Template
- Elements of Successful Application
- Heart of the Application
- Keep Trying – Numbers Game

Wide Range of Grantor Organizations

- Private Foundations
- Corporate Foundations
- Federal Government
- State Government
- Local Government

Research Grant Opportunities

- Private & Corporate Foundations
- Foundation Center (located in NYC) but with branches around the country provides most comprehensive source for information on both types
- On-line service & Hard copy Books Available for purchase from Foundation Center
- Save money search at local public library

Using The Foundation Center Database

- Search Grantmakers
 - Type of Grantmakers
 - Community Foundation
 - Company sponsored Foundation
 - Corporate Giving program
 - Independent Foundation
 - Operating Foundation
 - Public Charity

How to Search The Foundation Center Database

- Grantmaker Name
- EIN
- Grantmaker Location
- Fields of Interest
- Types of Support
- Geographic Focus
- Trustees, Officers & Donors (search for a specific name)
- Type of Grantmaker
- Keyword Search

Searching NO Unsolicited or Pre-Select Foundations

- Half of the Foundations do not have an open competitive application process
- Should I avoid viewing those foundations?
- Yes initially do not search for these foundations
- How do I avoid searching for these foundations
 - Check box: Exclude grantmakers not accepting applications

“At A Glance” Computer Screen

- Contact Info: address, contact name, email, phone #, URL
- EIN
- Form 990
- Background: when and where established
- Limitations: restrictions on what grantor funds
- Purpose & Activities
- Program areas
- Fields of Interest
- Geographic Focus
- Application Info
- Officers/Directors/Board of Trustees
- Total giving: # grants, amounts from high to low
- Selected Grants: past examples

Not Necessarily Match Between Funded Organizations and Interests

- Foundations are run by people
- Sometimes People You Know
- “It’s not what you know but who you Know”
- Second Level Search of all those foundations which do not accept unsolicited grants in your geographic area by reviewing the list of Officers/Directors/Board of Trustees

Start with Geography

- Easiest first level search via The Foundation Center Database is by Grantmaker Location and/or Geographic Focus
- Most Private Foundations do not offer grants nation-wide
- Most Small & Medium Size Private Foundations limit their funding to specific geographic areas usually close to their headquarters

Start Your Organization's Own Database

- Use something as simple as Excel spreadsheet to record your information
 - Foundation Contact Info
 - Mutual Areas of Interest
 - Deadlines
- Circulate among your own staff, volunteers and board members lists of the Trustees/Officers/Directors of foundations in your community (within 15 miles)

Ease of Applying

- Private Foundations moving towards on-line applications
- Use drop-down menus
- Process simple although highly competitive
- Can be a tiered process - May require an initial on-line application followed by a more detailed application to be mailed for those under serious consideration

Typical Recipients – Private Foundations

- Non-Profits 501(3)(c) of all types usually in existence for at least 3 years
- Public & Private Schools including Charter Schools
- Units of Local Government (not too common but health departments can be recipients if they offer unique services to a disadvantaged population or Historical Commissions/Tourism Boards)

Corporate Foundation Grants

- Major Corporations provide grants to organizations in communities where they maintain operations/branches
- Typical recipient non-profits of all types & schools (primarily public but also charter)
- All Corporate Foundations have certain areas of interest that must align with your organization's mission or scope of activities

Common Corporate Foundations

- All Major Retailers operate Corporate Foundations (i.e., Target, Wal-Mart, Home Depot)
- Major Retailers no longer in existence still maintain foundations (Gimbel's, Altman)
- Media companies operate foundations (i.e., Tribune, Hearst, Time-Warner)
- Financial services companies (i.e., banks, insurance, investment)
- Grant awards are usually relatively small (\$5,000 or less)
- Corporation Foundations good place to start for an organization inexperienced with grants and may result with in-kind donations or sponsorships rather than cash

Establish Relationship with Corporation

- Usually three criteria determines Corporate Foundation giving:
 - Area of Interest (which can change over time)
 - Location of Corporation & organization seeking funds
 - Existing Relationship with Corporation
 - Organization is known to the Charitable Giving staff of the Corporation
 - Organization is an approved recipient of corporate giving campaign
 - Corporate Staff volunteers at the organization

Government Grants

- Federal Government largest grantor organization in the country
 - Primary recipient state and local government
 - Eligible recipients include every type of non-profit, business, individuals, colleges/universities
- State Governments
 - Start here unless the organization has first rate computer systems and successful grant writing experience
- Local Government – large cities provide funding to local agencies

Advantages of Government Grants

- Dependable – funds available in good times and bad times
- Multiple years (typically 3 – 5 years in duration with opportunities for renewal)
- Do not have to demonstrate sustainability after the grant funds expire
- Prestigious accomplishment leading to more funding from public and private sources

Disadvantages of Government Grants

- Requires very tight and controlled budget processes
- Every penny, every paper clip paid by government funds must be accounted for (it's in the taxpayer's interest to maintain such strict scrutiny)
- Assume a government audit during the grant period

Federal Government On-Line Process

- Research grant opportunities
- Register with www.grants.gov to receive grant announcements
- It's quite simple and absolutely necessary of one is to actively pursue federal grant opportunities

Federal Government Grant Restrictions

- Determine eligibility – information provided indicates who is eligible to apply
- Organizations less than 3 years old largely ineligible
- Must demonstrate fiscal accountability
 - Outside financial auditing firm
 - Ability to track all expenditures – separate the federal funding from other expenses/revenues
 - Likely to be audited by federal government

Federal Government Requirements

- Most federal government agencies moving towards an on-line application process
- On-line applications require sophisticated computer systems & purchase of appropriate software
- Process seems intimidating but once accomplished can be repeated without re-doing the entire registration process

Federal Government Grant Registration Process

- Start www.grants.gov go to “Get Registered”
- Must have a DUNS number which is simple to obtain (call 1-866-705-5711)
- Go to “Organization Registration” and Register with SAM (System for Award Management)
- Specific individual AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) needs to be registered (person is responsible for actually submitting the grants)

Start Federal Registration Process Early

- If one is not registered it takes time to complete the process (1 – 2 weeks)
- Most federal grant application windows of opportunity exist for usually 60 days
- Quickly Determine if the Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Application (RFA) or Program Announcement (PA) is something the organization wants to pursue

Forms To Complete

- Even Private Foundations may require the completion of grant forms
- Federal Government requires a host of various forms which must be completed
 - SF 424 “Application for Federal Assistance”
 - Actually Series of Forms
 - Includes Contact Information
 - Specific Grant Information
 - Budgetary Information

State Government Grants

- Most state government grants are funded by the federal government
- Lack of sophistication by most state governments in the granting process
- Good news for small agencies is there is usually not an on-line application process with its technical requirements
- Bad news is that grant announcements are diffuse so looking for them requires a commitment to do some serious searching

Research State Government Sources

- Start by reviewing the state official web site
- Think globally and seek out state agencies that are most likely to have responsibilities that align with the organization's scope of services
- Also Consider State Boards and Commissions
- Many state agencies maintain e-mail newsletters and other informational resources – sign up
- State agencies sometimes provide grant information conferences prior to the actual application deadline - attend
 - Use this opportunity to Meet with state agency officials – introduce your organization & yourself

State Government Forms

- State Government May Require the Completion of Forms
 - Cover Page
 - Signatory Page
 - Detailed Budget Forms (often more complex than the federal forms)
 - Workplan Sheets detailing specific activities and actions that correspond with the application narrative

All-Purpose Template for Public and Private Grant Applications

- Compelling Message
- Why should any grantor give your organization funding?
- Application is not a Pulitzer-Prize piece of writing
- Grammatically correct and no spelling errors
- Follow Directions Precisely

Elements of a Successful Application

- Deadlines are Crucial – Date & Time
- Instructions for format are usually very specific
 - Font Size
 - Page Limitations
 - Margins
 - Numbering
 - Put Organization's Name on each page – Or Don't (blind applications)

Criteria

- An application is like a book with chapters
- Almost all applications – public or private assign a point system to sections of the application
- Not all the chapters are considered by grant reviewers to be worth the same number of points
- Carefully review the points assigned to each section and pay the most attention to those sections with the most points
- Similar to a school essay – applicants can receive partial points for each section

Heart of the Application

- Mission Statement
- Statement of Need
- Organization's History & Accomplishments
- Project Description
- Management Plan
- Goals and Objectives
- Evaluation
- Budget

Mission Statement

- Most applications even government ones request an organization's mission statement
 - Should be succinct
 - Most likely word count maximum – 250 words
 - May not have any criteria points assigned to this section
 - If it's a faith-based organization attempt to separate the religious mission from the project/program mission since government funders will require such a separation

Statement of Need

- Most applications require such a description
- Some applications have a specifically titled “Statement of Need” section and assign some points (usually not more than 10 out of a possible 100 points)
- Basis of the “needs” are usually addressed in the grantor’s description of why they support certain types of programs/projects (usually defined as a problem and a specific target population is identified). Examples are:
 - increase adult literacy
 - increase high school graduation rate
 - decrease teen pregnancy
 - increase job skills of chronically unemployed
 - Increase economic development opportunities

Organization's History & Accomplishments

- Every grantor wants to know why your particular organization should be funded
- What's in the organization's history and previous accomplishments that would lead reviewers to believe your organization is capable
- If the organization has previously received grant funding do highlight it (date, amount, purpose, grantor agency)
- May not be a separate section but the information is important to be weaved into the application possibly in the Project Narrative

Project Description – Project Narrative

- Project Narrative – usually worth the most points
- Typically, includes a series of questions or issues to be answered
- Here is where you must convince reviewers your program/project is:
 - Feasible (within the organization's capacity)
 - Reasonable (within acceptable norms – not too innovative or cutting edge yet with a unique approach)
 - Will address the problem(s) described in the “Statement of Need”
 - Targets the appropriate population
 - Can be completed on time and within budget

Management Plan

- Covers the staff's expertise and experience
- Can be a separate section or part of the Project Narrative
- Specific points may be assigned (typically between 10 -20 points)
- Usually requires resume or job description of all staff to be covered by the grant
- Certain grants requiring specific educational requirements (licensure/certification/educational degree) must be noted

Goals & Objectives

- Integrally linked to the Program Narrative
- May be a separate section with specific points assigned
- May require the completion of designated forms (especially true for state government grants)
- The greater the detail the more likely of the success and should include
 - Overall Goal which is a General Statement
 - Specific & Measurable Objectives under the Goal
 - Specific Actions to be taken to achieve objectives and ultimately the Goal
 - Who is responsible (specific staff usually listed by title) for achieving the objectives
 - How will success be measured (evaluation)

Evaluation as a Separate Section

- Can be part of Program Narrative or a Separate Section
- Most applications require measures to evaluate its success
- Behavioral changes vs. process outputs
- More specific the better
- Outside Evaluator may be required or participation in a large scale evaluation process often conducted by university or federal research institute

Budget

- Personnel Services (salary + fringe) vs. Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS)
- Typical Budget categories (i.e., personnel, travel, equipment, supplies, contractors)
- Always some type of restrictions
- May include In-kind or matching requirements

Harriet Grayson Author

- Under Pen Name Anastasia Goodman – Sasha Perlov Mystery Series
 - “Loose Ends” & Terror in Brooklyn”
 - anastasiagoodman.weebly.com – check reviews
- Harriet Grayson’s Reference Books
 - “Guide to Grants Writing for Non-Profits”
 - “Guide to Government Grants & Vendor Opportunities”
 - “Special Events Planning for Non-Profits”
 - All Available via amazon.com

Harriet Grayson TV Host/Producer

- Tune in to Harriet Grayson Host/Producer of Community Culture Showcase
 - Public Access TV in Southeast CT on Comcast Channel 12 (Tuesday evenings at 8 PM) & Southern RI on Cox Channel 18 & Fios Channel 29 (Wednesday nights at 6 PM)
 - Better still catch the shows via YouTube anytime & anywhere:
(communitycultureshowcase.weebly.com)