CD Publications'

Grant Tips

Fifth Edition

A comprehensive guide to finding, writing, and winning private and federal grants.

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader,

At CD Publications, we understand how tough fundraising can be, and are committed to assisting nonprofits in securing crucial funding in these uncertain financial times. This special report, with its insider tips from federal and private program officials and grant experts, provides numerous insights on improving chances when applying for funding.

Ask any funding expert what the most important components of grant seeking are and they will say devising a diverse plan of potential funders and understanding the inner-workings of the funding process.

This special report can help you do both devise a winning plan and ensure proper outreach. We provide guidance for nonprofits on building diverse funding plans, finding the right partners and submitting top-notch funding proposals. It includes contributions from us, the editors of CD Publications' *Community Health Funding Report (CHF)*, *Children & Youth Funding Report (CYF)*, *Federal & Foundation Assistance Monitor (FAM)* and *Substance Abuse & Disability Services Report (SDR)*. For those of you familiar with our *Private Grant Alert* (PGA) publication, pertinent Grant Guru columns are included, as well. We have years of experience covering the federal and private funding streams, as well as helping nonprofits like you seek and succeed in your grant seeking.

As you use this special report, please feel free to contact us for additional assistance. Contact information is as follows: *CHF*, chf@cdpublications.com; *CYF*, cyf@cdpublications.com; *FAM*, fam@cdpublications.com; *SDR*, saf@cdpublications.com.

Thank you,
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PART I: FEDERAL GRANTS

GRANT TIP 1: How to Prepare Your Federal Grant Application

While federal funding priorities are usually clearly spelled out and it's hard to think some priorities aren't more important than others, while there is no sure way to tell if an agenda exists, there are ways to improve your chance of funding.

If you do nothing else, remember when preparing an application to "read the instructions." Obvious, right? Not so, say the experts: Officials at the Administration for Children and Families say close to half of all applications are rejected because applicants do not carefully read the instructions.

Federal grant competitions live by two rules: 1) the agency is always right, and 2) when in doubt, go back to rule 1. Therefore, read the instructions carefully to determine whether you're eligible for the award and whether any special restrictions apply, such as limiting a narrative to 20 pages.

If after reading the announcement you decide to proceed, look at the application package itself. Most federal grant applications include a cover sheet (usually Standard Form 424) that includes space for your address, a contact person, your grant request, a project title and brief summary of the project (usually written on the back). Prepare your summary last, despite the fact the agency asks for a summary on the SF 424. Only after completing the application will you have enough information to summarize your project.

Summarize in a summary: You don't simply list goals and activities.

Also give some care to your project title. It should be descriptive, express the end result of the project (not the methods), describe benefits to clients, and be short and easy to remember. Don't include a title which is long on generalities but short on facts—"Cost-Effective Means To Lift Teen Mothers In (Your Specific) Community From Welfare to Self-Sufficiency" is better than "Making America Stronger."

The Narrative: Daddy, Tell Us a Story

The bulk of most applications are the narrative, which usually includes an introduction and problem statement. Assume the review committee knows nothing about your organization, even if you've talked to agency officials on an informal basis.

Federal applications don't always include a space for an introduction. If not, see if you can add it as a cover letter to the application; grant experts feel it is that important.

Need Or Problem Statement: Why Are We Bothering You For This Money?

The problem statement contains data or information substantiating the need for a proposed project. In it, you must document a real need and show why your organization should be chosen to deal with the problem. Remember your needs should mirror the agency's needs! How to show a problem exists? The best rule of thumb is "don't just say it, prove it." This can involve:

- Statistics and other measurable data.
- Testimony from experts in the field.
- Case studies.
- Using local problems as a reflection of national priorities, such as AIDS.
- Statements by community leaders.

Don't use just one source—demonstrate the severity of the problem several different ways. Despite all the numbers, statistics and other cold facts you will present, the needs statement should create a feeling of immediacy or urgency in the reviewer. If you don't appear to be excited by the problem, the agency certainly won't be.

There should be a clear transition from establishing a need to demonstrating you're the right organization to meet the need. Show why do your staff, facilities and expertise make you best-suited for the job. Try to show you are unique and your project can accomplish what others cannot. When proving expertise, show:

- The problem and why you should tackle it.
- Objectives and how they mesh with your nonprofit's work.
- Your methods for successfully meeting the objectives.

Biggest problems? At a workshop on fundraising/grantsmanship, most grant experts agreed the biggest narrative problems are:

- Blurring the line between objectives and methods.
- Failure to demonstrate your project meets the agency's priorities.

Info: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/

GRANT TIP 2: Expert Tips On What to Include In Your Application

Grant writing is like baseball—it looks easy from the stands, but up close there's so much stuff being thrown at you it's hard to keep up. To help out, the following provides information from both federal and private grantmakers on what they are looking for in an application.

A Justice Dept. (DOJ) official says a top-notch proposal is a combination of sticking to the basics but also knowing some of the inside agendas that most grant reviewers live by.

Attitude Is Important

The official stresses the need to present the right "attitude" to those reviewing your proposal. No, that's not a question of talking back to the program reviewer. Instead, it refers to the fact program managers can usually spot self-interest in proposals—those designed simply to increase an organization's budget or provide continuing work for its staff. It's a problem that's increased as funding has become tight, and many applicants try to "hide" requests for general operating funds behind some special project.

Don't do it, he says. These proposals are usually spotted and eliminated from contention. Without sounding too sappy, you must show a sincere desire to solve the problem or issue involved. Demonstrate confidence that your group or agency can do the job. It's these projects that are among the relatively few that receive funds. "If you are going to develop a project, do it for the right reasons," he contends.

The Importance of Clarity In Writing

He maintains it's important that a skilled writer be responsible for putting the proposal into words. "A good idea will never shine if its explanation is presented poorly," he says. Unless proposals are being submitted to scholarly or scientific funders, he advises that they be conversational and easy to read.

"Remember, it is not the sophistication or complexity of your works or thickness of your proposal that will attract funding," he says. "What will attract funding is the power of your ideas and your agency's qualifications for carrying out the work necessary to complete the project and achieve its anticipated goals and objectives." Things to remember when writing a proposal, the DOJ official says, include:

- Maintain a balance between conciseness and sufficient detail to explain the project effectively. A large number of charts and drawings are not likely to increase a proposal's chance of winning funding.
- Make the most important parts of the proposal stand out by using

subheadings. The thrust of the project should be up front.

- Organize the document so it flows from one section to the next.
- Avoid abbreviations and acronyms.
- Get the document properly edited and reviewed by others before submission. Don't be afraid to get outsiders to review proposals—like local colleges or agencies. They often bring a fresh outlook.

Despite the preceding recommendations, just as the key to real estate is "location, location, location," the top priority of writing grants is "follow instructions, follow instructions, follow instructions."

Identify the Issues

Find out what the federal agency you are targeting has funded in your area and whether or not it has worked. You can then demonstrate familiarity with results of federally funded research and obtain information on developing programs similar to successful ones funded previously. This is the type of cutting-edge information reviewers often seek.

How do you find out what an agency has funded and is currently studying in your area? Go to its Website. See Part IV for a list of agencies and where to find grant information on their Websites. You will be able to contact the researchers and ask for advice on how the researchers' results can be developed into a local program. As long as you acknowledge the researchers' time constraints and any other circumstances, they should be willing to talk. They like to see their research being used. Some researchers of ongoing projects may be reluctant, however, to pass along their information. Be persistent, but polite.

It's easy to do a mediocre job identifying the issue to be addressed in your proposal and difficult to do the task properly. If your focus is on money rather than a specific project, your program is likely to "end up being judged a hodgepodge of ideas and activities." If proposals are "global" in perspective, they may get weighed down with ideas or lofty goals. You can be too vague. Concentrate on what can be realistically accomplished, he says.

The official has often seen proposals that have potential, but are simply too broad or nebulous to carry out. "If you try to solve every problem in the book, the funder may consider your objective to be unrealistic and therefore not fundable," he says. Also, if expert facts and statistics don't back up your statements, you are better off leaving them out.

Goals and Objectives: The Basics

Perhaps the hardest thing for many applicants to do is differentiate between goals and objectives. Both must be explained clearly and precisely, and must relate with, and logically tie into, the project methods, the DOJ official says. But it's vital to remember there is a difference between goals and objectives when developing your application, the official says. For example, project goals are usually long and explain the desired result of the initiative, such as a reduction in teen pregnancy.

Most projects have only one or two goal statements and describe aims that can reasonably be achieved by project completion. Keep in mind that goals are "usually abstract in content, broader in scope, less subject to direct measurement and focused on long-term perspectives," the DOJ official says.

Objectives, on the other hand, are more quantitatively defined and have levels of accomplishment, such as a 90% reduction in teen pregnancy over two years. "Objectives are subgoals which when put together should reach the major goal of the project," he says. Objectives should be clear and be accompanied by specific activities to carry them out.

"Many projects fail to meet their goals because project staff engages in activity unrelated to the achievement of the project's goals and objectives," the official says. Each action should be measurable from start to finish, he says. A time line could be used by the funder and staff to monitor this progress.

Also, distinguish between behavioral and performance objectives. Behavioral objectives are outcome statements that deal with human performance and should answer the following four questions:

1. Who is going to perform the specified behavior?
2. What behavior is expected to occur?
3. Under what circumstances will the behavior are observed?
4. How is the behavior to be measured?

Performance objectives must answer the same four questions, but in addition, address the following:

What amount of time is necessary to bring about the specific behavior? What is the expected proficiency level?

Products and Research: What's being Produced?

Depending on the proposal, one of your objectives may be the development of program materials, research results or other products. These items may include training manuals, course books or handouts for the community. If you plan to develop products, the DOJ official says, your application must answer the following questions:

- Who will produce the product?

- What product will be developed?
- When will it be available?
- How will it be evaluated?

An example of a product objective: “Within 90 days of grant award, project staff should provide five copies of a strategy for combating graffiti vandalism in suburban communities which shall have been reviewed and approved by the Law Enforcement Coordinating Council.”

A research objective must answer a question or test a hypothesis. It should be specific and provide clear-cut criteria against which the rest of the project can be judged. The bjective should be:

Kept short.

Explicit rather than implicit and not part of a running narrative.

Achievable.

Listed in priority order if more than one.

Addressing Your Objectives

Whatever your objectives, the key to developing a strategy for meeting them is to make sure that all activities are tied to specific objectives. “Many projects fail to meet their goals because project staff engages in activities unrelated to the achievement of the project’s goals and objectives,” the DOJ official says.

For example, if murals are painted on high-risk surfaces to protect against repeat graffiti vandalism as part of a project, it is a misuse of resources and a lack of understanding of objectives to start painting murals on surfaces not affected by graffiti vandalism simply to beautify the community.

People are often tempted to throw in everything, hoping the project’s ambitious nature will win favor. Such an approach is more likely to indicate the project is poorly organized with objectives that fail to conform to the agency’s priorities or the planned activities.

The Budget

Grantseekers must include a realistic budget that adequately predicts expected costs. A grant proposal is not “an opportunity take the funder for all its worth,” the DOJ official says, reminding grantseekers to keep budgets realistic, accurate and closely tied to project activities and staffing levels. Adequately budget your activity, he adds, as grantors rarely provide additional funding in the middle of the project.

A project needs an evaluation plan that will show the funder the program will ultimately be successful. "Evaluation is the acid test of your project's success," the official emphasizes. "The evaluation should determine the project's success and measure the goals used to achieve it."

Grantseekers should keep in mind there is not enough money to go around for everyone, so take time to get the basic components right and make it worth submitting, reading—and funding.

Info: http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/funding/index.html

GRANT TIP 3: Training Materials Offer Insight Into Grant Review Process

No one is born knowing how to review a grant proposal, so the Department of Health and Human Services provides training for all its outside reviewers. The following are comments made by reviewers as they analyzed sample applications as part of their training process. They include the type of comments you want the reviewer to be able to make about your proposal as well as those that deliver the decisions

What the Reviewer Should Be Able To Say about Your Proposal

"The stated objective is well-integrated into all aspects of the proposal." Your program must always lead back to your stated objectives. Don't include any program element unless it serves your basic goals. Don't assume that just because you've shown B follows that you've proved A caused B. For example, if your request includes funds for increased training, make sure you clearly demonstrate how the training will increase the level of service. This is one of the most important features an application can have. In fact, the issue is addressed in all sample applications reviewers receive as part of their training package.

"The implementation table is present and precise." Putting in a timetable or timeline for implementation of specific tasks is the easiest way for the reviewer to keep track of what's going on. In many programs it's required, but even if it's not, include it.

"The agencies are experienced working with the target population." If you don't have a background in providing certain services or working with a particular population, hook up with someone who does and make sure it's reflected in your proposal. If your project depends on others to provide services, make sure areas such as transportation are included. Support must be specific and strong. General letters of intentions won't cut it. Make sure you include facts about how the different agencies will communicate, with possibilities ranging from formal meetings among executive directors to key staffers brainstorming over bag lunches once each month. Reviewers want to see a good cross-section of service providers.

"The application clearly identifies the precise location of the program and program participants." Surprisingly, officials say this is an area often overlooked. Use both a map and physical description to locate your project. Demonstrate how the location meshes with available resources such as transportation services.

What the Reviewer Should NOT Be Able To Say about Your Proposal

"The applicant makes claims of an anticipated impact without including specifics of how this result will occur." There's an old saying: when you assume, you make an ass out of you and me. That's not a bad description of what to avoid in your proposal. If you indicate that certain results will occur, you have to show how your activities logically lead to that conclusion.

"Factors that might increase or slow down development aren't listed" and "practical aspects of implementing the program lack detail. Factors that could cause problems are overlooked, giving an unrealistic picture of the project's chance of success." Be realistic. When you interview for a job and you're asked what your weak points are, it doesn't pay to say, "I don't have any." In the same vein, show that you realize there may be certain difficulties in implementing a plan. Of course, your proposal also should show how you'll address the problems.

"The applicant does not provide any analysis of key issues involving the target population." Don't just focus on the obvious or present a problem through a particular ideological focus. For example, if you're developing a homelessness-prevention program, it pays to show you're aware of the various factors and theories concerning the causes of homelessness, even if you're going to address only one.

"The results are not stated in measurable and quantifiable terms." This is one of the biggies. All objectives must be listed in such a way they can be reviewed objectively and within a specific timeframe.

"At least two staffers need to be hired." While this doesn't disqualify an applicant, reviewers will often assume the process could take up to several months, resulting in a delay in program implementation. If you need to hire personnel, describe what the position will entail and how you will go about quickly hiring such a person.

"The proposal is hard to read and follow." Applications should:

- Use a consistent style of headings to help the reader scan the narrative. During training, reviewers are urged to skim over nonessential information.
- Use charts and graphics when appropriate to organize ideas.
- Accentuate key points by using underlining, bullets and bolding but stick to a standard font size.

"The applicant fails to draw a clear relationship between the quantity and quality of services within the community and the need for more and better services." The ability to show a connection between what you're trying to do and the situation you're trying to address is crucial.

"The methodology does not describe how the applicant proposes to conduct the survey, including sampling techniques and analysis results, and fails to provide assurance errors are within acceptable limits." Don't just say you'll conduct an evaluation or develop a survey. If you're going to use a tool, provide the details of what the tool will do and how you'll develop it.

"Methodology needs to state the approach for bringing community resources into the gap that now exists between services required and services offered." Don't just say there's a problem—show how your program will solve it.

GRANT TIP 4: If You Don't Get A Grant: Get Reasons And Try, Try Again

One key tip about applying for grants: If you don't get one, ask the reasons why not. Then try again. It's almost foolish not to do so. This applies above all in the federal agencies, which run competitive grant programs. By law, most are required to provide some reason for turning down an application. And some will provide detailed accounts in what insiders term "why-not letters."

Reapplication Is Good For You

Grant makers do not necessarily look with disfavor on reapplication. Some federal agencies specifically say that reapplications are welcome and declare no bias against them.

A former federal official running a highly competitive education grant program tells CD Publications that reapplications are common. Many are successful because applicants ask for a "why-not" and improve their proposals on the basis of the review comments.

One individual applicant, he said, tried seven times before winning. Each application was progressively better and finally beat the six to one funding odds.

None of this means, federal officials stress, that every request for comments will lead to improvement in a proposal, or that every reapplicant, however persistent, will eventually win. However, federal officials say, there is no harm in trying, unless the labor involved in reapplication is excessive.

"Why Not" Requests

Some federal agencies such as Health and Human Services will inform all applicants automatically about why they are not recommended for a competitive grant.
The Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education will normally explain why a grant was not recommended in generous detail and without prompting.

Some agencies, such as National Endowment for the Humanities, respond to simple letters from educators or schools that request "why not" as a matter of courtesy and a matter of course.

The letter does not have to be complex, say federal staffers. A simple short request in writing will do. Identify yourself and indicate your application number.

The main rule: Such a request has to be in writing, federal officials say, because the information is private. Government agencies can't tell anyone but you that you have applied for a grant, and they can't be sure who might be calling.

FYI: FoIA!

Some agencies or offices respond only if an applicant cites the Freedom of Information Act, or FoIA. Again, the letter citing FoIA does not have to be complex. Some FOIA letters are handwritten.

Agencies are supposed to respond to FoIAs in 10 days. Some might acknowledge the request in a form letter and cite staffing cuts as a reason for delaying a full answer.

> Applicants can also ask for lists or samples of winning applications (depending on their length) by citing FoIA. A copy of a winning application often—though not always—helps reapplicants analyze their own proposal better.
>
> Agencies can legally limit the size and number of pages sent back to an applicant without

charge. At one agency, an applicant asked for copies of all 200 winning proposals in one competition, but legally could only be given five free.

Know Your Rights

Applicants should know that, while some may delay, no agency can completely ignore a legitimate FoIA request. The best strategy to use with a federal agency staff member is to ask politely but immediately for everything related to an application that is yours by right.

Staffers are often trained not to advertise openly everything that a citizen can request. Still, if asked, a federal staffer must respond truthfully to a request for any and all legal information related to a grant application. And if you cite FOIA, they normally have to jump.

Not covered by FOIA: Information about other applicants, and internal agency memoranda or review materials. Agencies blot out private or internal material, making the review comments resemble a memo on "Sixty Minutes." The material an applicant can get is huge. Why be surprised? It is, at last, your government, and you pay its bills. In truth, an applicant has far more power over a federal agency than with a private foundation.

Info: For information on becoming a grant reviewer, please visit http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/grantreview/reviewing/before_you_begin.html and http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/list/fbci/reviewer.html

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GRANT TIP 5: Expert Guides 'First-Timers' Through Grantwriting Experience

The keys to writing a successful grant proposal are careful organization, time management and clarity, says Ray Jaksa of the Mansfield, Texas, Independent School District.

Before even looking for a grant, have specific goals in mind, he advises participants at the eSchool Grants and Funding for School Technology Conference.

Jaksa recommends each school district have a grant committee monitoring upcoming grants and writing 4-5 abstracts based on those opportunities. He says the committee should spend a couple of months writing abstracts before seriously looking for grants.

During those months you need to ask yourself, "What is it we really need?" and "Why do we need it?" he says.

"You have to be prepared to answer all the right questions," says Jaksa. The answers to the "hows" and "whys" will eventually become the basis of the proposal.

When you start writing the formal proposal, remember you're looking for dollars, so you must clearly explain your plan to gain the funder's confidence. Answer succinctly and thoroughly all the questions you've been asking yourself, but make sure to focus the proposal on the people you're trying to help—the students, he says.

"If you don't use the word 'student' four times in the first paragraph, you're not targeting the right people," says Jaksa. And explain in your proposal where you want the students to be in five years and how the funding helps achieve that goal, he adds.

He points out several "buzz" project ideas that greatly increase your funding chances. These include school-within-a-school; programs for women or minorities; distance learning; identifying at-risk students to get into looping projects; alternative at-risk education; K-12/higher-education partnerships; teacher prep through technology; and digital content.

Jaksa reminds grantseekers of the difference between federal and corporate grants. Corporate proposals are typically only 3-5 pages long, and if you win a grant, they'll offer you money again; federal grants take more time to complete but often are larger than corporate grants.

Info: http://www.mansfieldisd.org/

GRANT TIP 6: There is No FREE Government Money

Dear Grant Guru: I keep seeing advertisements on the Web for "free government money." Working in the development field as I do, I know this isn't true. Can you give me some perspective?

Grant Guru: Alas, there is no pot of gold at the end of the "free money" rainbow. That's a good question and one that seems to keep popping up. We see the same ads on the Internet all the time. This month, let's go to a grant-writing expert who has also reviewed grants—Donna Fernandez, of Dallas, who runs the www.schoolgrants.org Web site.

> "There is a common fallacy, fueled by unscrupulous folks out to make a buck, that there are grants available for anything and everything," Fernandez says. "You'll see advertisements everywhere about how there are billions and billions of dollars available, just waiting on you to ask for them. It is true that there are billions of grant dollars available every single year." What is not true is that there are lots of funds available for every conceivable notion under the sun. It is also not true that grants are easy to get or that just anyone can write a successful proposal, Fernandez says.

Grant Basics

Much of the money that is available in grants from the federal government is formula-driven. Title I is the biggest federal program for education.

The funds are distributed to states based on a formula that takes into account how many disadvantaged students are served in public schools. States redistribute the money to the local school district (or local education agency), Fernandez says

This money is not actually free because school districts must commit to perform a number of very specific functions with it.

If they fail to spend the money the way they say they will, they will be required to return the funds that were spent in inappropriate ways, Fernandez says.

Worst Case Scenario

"In a worst case scenario, prison sentences are handed down," Fernandez says. "I worked at a school district where the superintendent decided to use federal Title I grant funds to purchase new furniture for her office and for an apartment she maintained."

Ultimately, she was stripped of her licenses and remanded to federal prison. In addition, the district was required to return the money that was spent in ways that were not allowable under the terms of the grant, Fernandez says.

"You can imagine the public relations nightmare that accompanied the investigation into the misuse of the grant" Fernandez says.

"That school district is not the only one in the nation that has made the news in such a scandal," she says. "Sadly, almost weekly, I see at least one article in the news about a school district that has mismanaged federal grant funds and is being required to find the funds in their local budget to repay the grantor."

It is embarrassing for the district, causes the local community to lose confidence in their public schools—and, worst of all—it means that students were denied access to programs that should have been available to them, Fernandez says.

Grantee/Grantor Partnership

When a grant is awarded, a contractual agreement is established between the grantee—the one who is awarded the grant—and the grantor—the one who makes the grant. The proposal that was submitted, along with any supplemental requirements the grantor ay have, become the basis for the contract, Fernandez says.

In other words, when a grant is awarded, you are required to perform as stated in your proposal. You are also required to spend the money according to the budget that was accepted by the grantor, Fernandez says.

The grantee and the grantor become partners when a grant is awarded. In others, the grantor works closely with the grantee, providing not only money, but expertise and personnel, Fernandez says.

"The relationship between grantee and grantor should never be viewed as adversarial. The grantor wants your program to succeed every bit as much as you do!" Fernandez says.

"The more open the lines of communication between grantee and grantor, the more likely it is that your program will be successful."

Info: Fernandez, 469/235-7257, Fax, 972/438-8281, email: donna@k12grants.org or www.schoolgrants.org

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GRANT TIP 7: New FoIA Law Could be Boon for Grants Seekers

Dear Grant Guru: We've heard there's a new law about government records that could apply to grants' seekers. Is this true?

Grant Guru: Yes. President Bush on Dec. 31 signed into law an updated version of the Freedom of Information Act (FoIA), which could prove to be a boon for savvy grants seekers looking for copies of winning grants applications.

The law, the "Openness Promotes Effectiveness in our National (OPEN) Government Act, S. 2488, makes several constructive procedural changes in the FOIA to encourage faster agency response times, to enable requesters to track the status of their requests, to expand the basis for fee waivers and more.

As *Private Grants Alert's* readers may be aware, we have long encouraged them to embrace the FoIA process and seek winning grants applications from the federal government. Grantseekers can obtain copies of these funded grant applications, as well as the reviewers' comments, if they file federal open records petitions via the FOIA. Frank Klimko, editor of *Private Grants Alert* (PGA), conducted an audioconference—*From FOIA to Funding: How To Use The Federal Freedom of Information Act*—that offered step-by-step instructions on how to file such FoIA requests. More information on that audioconference and a link to get a copy of the seminar, is available below. FoIA is a federal law establishing the public's right to obtain information from federal government agencies.

Signed by the grudging hand of President Lyndon Johnson 38 years ago on July 4, 1966, it was revolutionary for its time—carrying with it the presumption of disclosure.

Although it applies to federal grants, most states follow the lead of the federal government on open records. Exceptions are Texas and California, which generally are more generous with their open records laws than the feds. Further, if a private corporation or foundation receives any federal money, a requestor can make a case under the new law that it qualifies as a "contractor," and must follow the same FOIA regulations as the federal government.

The new law updates and improves the process. One thing it does not do, however, is alter the criteria for secrecy and disclosure. Whatever records that a government agency was legally entitled to withhold before enactment of the "OPEN Government Act" can still be withheld now that the president has signed it.

But *PGA* readers are unlikely to face refusals over government claims to national security. See the ***Nine Fatal FoIA Exemptions*** for a list of items to NOT include on your FoIA requests. Most of the complaints we have fielded over the years on FOIA have nothing to do with the exemptions. Generally, the agencies don't respond to the request or it takes so long to get a federal government response that it is irrelevant by the time it arrives, readers said.

The new law should change all that. The legislation creates a system for the media and public to track the status of their FOIA requests. It establishes a hot line service for all federal agencies to deal with problems and an ombudsman to provide an alternative to litigation in disclosure disputes. Agencies are required to meet a 20-day deadline for responding to FOIA requests. Nonproprietary information held by government contractors also would be subject to the law.

Nine Fatal FoIA Exemptions

A federal agency can refuse to release certain types of information. Nine legal categories are exempted from FoIA under section 552(b) of the law:

1. National Security.
2. Internal agency rules.
3. Information governed by other statutes.
4. Business Information: trade secrets, commercial or financial information.
5. Internal government memos.
6. Private matters: personnel files.
7. Law enforcement investigations.
8. Regulation of financial institutions.
9. Location of oil wells.

"Journalists and citizens everywhere can be a little more secure in the health of their democracy knowing the federal government can be held to a higher standard of accountability under this new law," Society of Professional Journalists President Clint

Brewer said.

Any problems with requests would be referred to the Office of Government Information Services within the National Archives and Records Administration. The office would mediate any disputes between requesters and agencies as an effort to avoid legal wrangling. They would be overseen by the Government Accountability Office. The measure also extends fee waivers to nontraditional and nonaffiliated journalists, including bloggers and freelance journalists. Agencies currently must have a chief FOIA officer to handle FOIA-related issues and requests, as stipulated by an executive order issued early in 2006.

Getting a winning grants proposal should be on the top of any grants writer's list, we believe. One reader credits reviewing successful proposals as the reason the group was able to write a winning mentoring proposal, she says. The reader said he believed reviewing successful proposals and talking at length with the people who wrote them is what set his winning proposal apart.

Info: For a summary of the bill and a cache of links, www.grantsandfunding.net/docs/4914.

GRANT TIP 8: Navigating the Deep Waters of Key Federal Web Sites

Let's say you're a grant seeker on a mission to unearth federal funding for a local endeavor, but find yourself overwhelmed with the intricacies of the U.S. government's system for making grants and the rules for distribution.

CD Publications editors rely on a number of federal government-sponsored Web sites, publications and other public resources to help analyze and locate information related to legislation, regulations, programs and services. Navigating these sites, however, is not always easy. In fact, it can give you a headache.

Part of our duty to readers is to sift through the government's haystack of information and deliver the needle-sized nuggets of data that you can use. But, readers may want to explore issues in greater depth than presented on the pages of CD's publications. In that vein, we have developed instructions for readers who wish to navigate the Web sites for the *Federal Register*, Thomas and the Education Dept.'s funding forecasting page.

The Federal Register

The Federal Register is the U.S. government's official daily publication for rules, proposed rules and notices of federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents. It's a good spot to start seeking grants as well as to look for new rules that an agency may want to impose on the distribution of federal money.

To access the *Federal Register*, visit this link: www.archives.gov/federal-register. Look for the heading *Government Actions* on the right side of the screen then click on *Today's Federal Register*. Scroll down the "Contents" page and or read the items in either "Text" or "PDF." Under this heading, readers also can preview the next day's *Federal Register* by visiting the home page and clicking on the link for *Tomorrow's Federal Register*.

To locate *Federal Register* issues dating back to 1998, click on "Indexes & Tables of Contents" under the "*Government Actions*" heading and locate the year, and then the date of the publication. On this page, go to a very useful link called the *Daily Tables of Contents.* This lists the tables of contents for 2008 and previous years. If you click on 2008, you will see all the tables for this year lined up chronologically.

You will need to go to this page if you are trying to find a *Federal Register* reference in a CD Publications product.

Thomas

Thomas (http://thomas.loc.gov) is a Web site that contains legislative information from the Library of Congress. CD Publications readers can use Thomas to review bills, resolutions and other legislative information (vote tallies, bill summaries, appropriations information or public laws), House and Senate activities, the *Congressional Record*, Congressional schedules and calendars, committee information, Presidential nominations and treaties.

One of the primary functions of the Thomas Web site is to locate bills, resolutions and other legislative information. Visitors can search the Web site using keywords, the bill's number and/or the House member's or senator's name.

One of Thomas' most useful functions is the tracking of current appropriations bills. Go to Thomas, click on the Appropriations Bills link in the middle of the page and it will produce a table noting the status of the various funding bills. Most useful in the table are direct links to the appropriation committees markup documents that spell out which programs will be getting money and which ones won't.

Education Dept. Forecast Of Funding

This document lists virtually all programs and competitions under which the Education Dept. has invited or expects to invite applications for new awards for FY 2006 and provides actual or estimated deadline dates for the transmittal of applications under these programs.

The lists are in the form of charts and include previously scheduled programs and competitions, as well as those planned for announcement at a later date.

For example, if you read the Web page, you would know that the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) was planning to launch a Training and Advisory Services

Equity Assistance Centers grants competition this week with a deadline of June 25. The 10 grants would be worth about $700,000, according to the DoEd funding forecast.

Please note: The document is advisory only and is not an official DoEd application notice. DoEd makes regular updates to this document, particularly around the time of a new fiscal year. Check regularly in the fall on the DoEd Web site for the FY 2009 funding list.

Info: www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html

GRANT TIP 9: Nonprofits Can Take Advantage of Congressional Recess

Nonprofits shouldn't forget the importance of outreach to state and federal legislators as they seek funding, says CD Publications Editor Ray Sweeney.

Sweeney, a grant seeking expert with years of federal, state and foundation experience, says summer is the perfect time to reach out to legislators.

At the federal level, Congress is on break for the entire month of August, meaning legislators are in their home districts. Nonprofits can arrange meetings with the legislators or invite them to a scheduled gathering, such as a board meeting, social fundraising event or training session.

Nonprofits often times are timid to contact legislators, but they shouldn't be. Congressional staffers are happy to hear from nonprofits, and generally are more than willing to aid them in their endeavors.

Here are some tips to reach out to federal legislators:

Keep a tally of the issues your senators or representative promote on Capitol Hill. This information is crucial, because one legislator may be better than the other to pursue. For instance, an education nonprofit in Massachusetts is better off pursuing Sen. Edward Kennedy than Sen. John Kerry, because Kennedy is the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee, which is the panel that guides education decision making in the chamber.

Call as soon as possible to get on the legislator's schedule. This will provide nonprofits with a better chance to get face-to-face time with him or her. Early contact shows nonprofits are aware of the congressional schedule and respect that the legislator is busy, thus advanced scheduling is required.

Devise a list of talking points in preparation for the meeting or the legislator's attendance at an event. This is crucial, because the nonprofit will only have so much time to relay its message to the legislator. Nonprofits should make sure all bases a covered, such as a succinct message on their mission, partnerships and programs. Nonprofits shouldn't forget to mention grant applications that have been submitted, denied or are in the planning stage.

Make sure to divvy up the talking points based on personality. Nonprofits should pinpoint their best talkers to relay the biggest portions of the talking points. For instance, say a nonprofit has an executive director who isn't much of a talker. This can be overcome by him basically providing a minute- or two-minute synopsis of the nonprofit's mission, with him finishing his portion and introducing the more dynamic speakers to talk about programs, funding, etc.

Always try to end the meeting with a link to more interaction with the legislator's staff. Many times a staffer will offer to contact someone on the nonprofit's behalf or to send additional information about a program or person they mentioned. Nonprofits shouldn't count on this, however. They should work into their talking points something that requires them to provide additional information for the staffer. This includes additional information on partners for a particular programs, etc. This helps, because it gives the nonprofit the chance to offer their thanks for the meeting and to provide additional information.

Maintain the interaction with the congressional staffers. Once a nonprofit meets with a legislator, it should maintain the contact. This is easily done by including the staffer on its listserv and contacting them periodically about an upcoming event or a new program in the works.

All of these tips work for local and state legislators as well. The contact should be more constant, however.

Outreach to state and local legislators should be easier for nonprofits. Nonprofits should think of creative ways to keep these legislators involved in their efforts.

This can be accomplished by a nonprofit asking a local legislator to join their board or co-chair an event.

Local and state legislators generally are not full-time officials, so getting a hold of them on the home-turf should be a cinch.

Summer is a great time to reach out to state officials, because the majority of state legislatures aren't in session. Nonprofits can visit their state legislature Web sites for more details and contact information.

Info: To find contact information for U.S. senators and representatives, please visit www.grantsandfunding.net/docs/6251 (Senate) and www.grantsandfunding.net/docs/6252 (House) and click on the links provided

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GRANT TIP 10: Contact Grants Officials for Insights

As the FY 2007 grants process winds down, nonprofits should take advantage the lull to get to know program officials for the various funding programs important to them, a Homeland Security Dept. (DHS) staffer says.

The number of grant solicitations virtually dries up in August through October as the funding cycle for the current fiscal year ends, and preparations are made for the new fiscal year.

The DHS staffer says program contacts have time to talk now, because most FY07 funding has been awarded or will be shortly, and everyone is awaiting the final totals for FY 2008 grant programs.

This is the time nonprofits should be contacting program officials for guidance on improving previous submissions or to receive feedback on a new funding proposal. Face-to-face meetings are a possibility during this time, too.

The staffer says contacts for grant programs remain fairly constant, with little yearly change. She suggests nonprofits locate the FY07 grant solicitations, which generally are maintained on agency Web sites.

The contacts listed on FY07 applications usually will remain accurate for the FY08 process, she says. On the off chance there will be a change in program administration, the odds are the person being replaced is still at the agency and can provide more details, the staffer says.

She says getting to know these people can lead to advance info on the upcoming grant process, too. While the contacts usually can't provide all the specifics, they can provide info such as whether there will be criteria changes in the upcoming process or when to expect the grant guidance for an FY08 program.

While most of the big grant programs have been awarded, program contacts can answer questions about some of the smaller FY07 funding efforts still to come. This includes DHS' Fire Prevention & Safety Grant Program (FP&S), which funds projects to enhance the safety of the public and firefighters from fire and related hazards. The primary goal is to target high-risk populations (children, seniors and first responders) to mitigate high incidences of death and injury.

Nonprofits can apply for a portion of around $30 million for fire prevention and public safety education campaigns, juvenile firesetter interventions, media campaigns and arson prevention/awareness programs.

Info: For more on FP&S, please visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3815 and click on the link provided.

GRANT TIP 11: Applicants Can Improve Chances of Success

CD Publications Editor Ray Sweeney, who has years of experience in helping groups secure federal and private funding, says nonprofits can do several things to help improve their chances of funding.

A major change this year is that all of the grant applications will be submitted online. However, nonprofits shouldn't panic about this change, says Sweeney.

He suggests the following to help the process go smoothly:

Make sure to keep a file of pertinent information. This includes a DUNS number, checking account number and employer ID number. Having this information readily available will keep a nonprofit from running around at the last minute to secure it.

Make sure you have an online profile to submit a grant. Online profiles can generally be secured quickly, but go ahead and get one ahead of time, so this task can be taken off the list.

When writing the narrative, remember it will be stripped of all formatting when posted online. Time can be saved by writing with this in mind. For instance, don't italicize document names or use footnotes. Use quotation marks for documents and place the footnote information in the text.

Make sure the online application is submitted. There have been instances where a nonprofit thinks it has submitted a grant, because the online application service lists a grant as "100% complete." This only means it is complete, not that it has been sent. Make sure a grant is listed as submitted on your online account. Nonprofits should receive an email that the grant has been submitted, so make sure to keep this email on file. Another good idea is to contact the grant official to make sure the grant was submitted successfully. These officials are usually more than happy to provide this information.

Make sure to allot extra time for online snafus. In the grant schedule, make sure to build in a few extra days for online submission. If the grant application is due on June 15, make sure the schedule has submission listed for June 12 at the latest. Don't rush, and make sure not to submit a grant on the deadline day when many are submitting grants. This will be problematic.

During the preparation of the grant, Sweeney says nonprofits should do the following:

Create a schedule: The creation of a schedule can't be overstated. This schedule can be created prior to the release of the grant guidance, because generally only 30 to 60 days is provided between RFP release and deadline. Nonprofits should look when the grant solicitation was released in the previous year and begin formulating the schedule based on that timeframe. Grant guidance doesn't change much from year to year, so it is generally safe to begin basing grant submissions on it.

Don't be a one-man operation--delegate tasks: A nonprofit should utilize all of the expertise of its staff. This will improve the narrative. Relying on just one staffer for preparation, creation and submission of a proposal is a recipe for disaster. Winning grants always involve collaboration. The grant manager will need to send friendly reminders and hold meetings throughout the process to ensure each individual is working on his or her task.

The project manager should know the grant guidance inside and out: While the project manager can't do everything alone, he should read the grant guidance and take notes. This person will be the one overseeing the overall effort and in charge of making sure others are meeting goals. Regular grant meetings will help to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Look for key phrases and priorities: In the grant guidance, make sure to take note of the latest key words and phrases and priorities. Nonprofits should make sure to use these key words and phrases. This more than anything shows a comprehension of goals of the grant program, which can lead to funding success.

Create the narrative based on scoring information: The guidance on how the grant submissions will be scored is crucial. For instance, grant guidance may say the portion of the narrative on partnerships is worth the most points (say 50 points of a possible 100 points). In this case, make sure the section takes up half of the narrative. Don't waste pages by going into detail on something only worth five points or 10 points.

Get to know the HUD program contact: Many times, nonprofits are afraid to contact program contacts listed in the grant guidance because they falsely believe it will hurt their chances to bother them. In actuality program contacts are more than happy to help applicants. These individuals can provide guidance on submissions and should be utilized as much as possible.

Look for technical assistance meetings and conference calls: Federal agencies are increasingly using these mechanisms to ensure top-notch submissions. However, information on these types of events is generally not in a uniform place in the grant guidance, so keep an eye out for it.

Make sure local U.S. representatives and senators know about the grant submission: When preparing applications, make sure staffers from congressional offices are aware of the activity. They can provide insights on the grant submission and maybe even on the funding process. Schedule an initial meeting with them to inform them about the effort.

Once the application is submitted, nonprofits can't really do anything to improve their chances, but nonprofits can do things to help meet their future funding opportunities.

They should keep in contact with the HUD program staff and the congressional members, because this shows commitment to their programs, says Sweeney. Program staff can provide insights on when funding decisions will be made and the congressional staff can provide guidance on other potential funding opportunities. The congressional office will start viewing the nonprofit as an expert that can be called for guidance, too, which could even lead to testifying on Capitol Hill.

Info: Sweeney, 301/588-6380, ext. 175

GRANT TIP 12: Tips for Accessing Model Programs

With funders becoming more and more interested in awarding grants to model programs, it's a good idea for grant-seeking organizations to become familiar with some of the model program guides that are available.

One guide worth knowing about, for example, is the Justice Dept.'s Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) *Model Programs Guide* (MPG).

Prevention and treatment grant-seekers who use these programs ultimately have "the greatest chance of success" in winning a variety of grants, says Heidi Hsia, who manages OJJDP's program. "Increasingly, many more public and private funding sources give priority to evidence-based practices," she says.

In fact, the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act of 2002 says state agencies must "to the extent practicable, give priority to funding to programs and activities that are based on rigorous, systematic and objective research that is scientifically based." And in some cases, like Oregon, state law makes it a *requirement* for state agencies to give priority to projects that employ evidence-based practices.

Evidence-based practices—also known as model programs, best practices, scientifically- or research-based programs, or "what works"—are programs or elements of programs which, through time and testing, have shown to be associated with positive outcomes.

How it Works

Over the last few years, offices like OJJDP have been collecting and compiling records of these practices. And just recently, these lists have become a lot easier for people to get online and use for themselves.

OJJDP's guide is a searchable Web site (http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/mpg.html) listing information on more than 200 evidence-based delinquency prevention and intervention programs. It's also available on CD for those without Web access.

Substance abuse organizations can search the site to find evidence-based programs that fit their particular needs. The site then provides the information and details users need to help them plan to replicate these "model" programs—or even to extract elements from the program they believe might work for them.

Users can search using a number of different factors:

- **Continuum phase**—Practitioners can search by the phrase of prevention or treatment their program seeks to address within the continuum of care. In OJJDP's guide, these phases are: prevention, immediate intervention, intermediate intervention, residential or reentry.

- **Age group—**As they search, users can plug in the general age group their program hopes to serve. Options are early childhood, preschool, school age or adolescent.

- **Ethnicity—**Some programs are designed to meet specific cultural needs. Options include Native American, Hispanic, African-American, white and Asian.

- **Gender—**Some programs have been shown to be particularly effective with either males or females.

- **Problem Area—**Options include behavioral, learning disability, mental disorder, substance abuse, truancy and family.

- **Offender Groups—**For programs intended to address the needs of offenders, options include drug, felony, first-time, gang-involved, misdemeanor, prostitution, violent, sex, status and very young.

- **Target Settings—**Rural, suburban or urban.

- **Target Strategies—**Restorative justice, detention alternatives and JJDP Act core requirements.

- **Program type—**More than 30 options are available. These include things like drug courts, mentoring programs, family therapy and even wilderness camps.

Now that the site is in working order and people are visiting it and trying it out, Hsia says, the reaction from users has been, "this is exactly what we need—thank you, thank you."

And the guide should be around for a while, Hsia says. Recently the department has committed "a pot of money to maintain and enhance it and keep it up to date and current—and to add new programs," she adds.

Info: To access OJJDP's Model Programs Guide, go to http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/mpg.html and click on "Model Programs Guide"

GRANT TIP 13: Making Sense of the Various Model Programs Guides

With more and more agencies making model programs guides available, it's also getting more confusing for the many organizations trying to make sense of the numerous differences between those guides.

And the task can become especially frustrating when, as more funders give priority to grant-seekers using evidence-based programs, so much is at stake.

Delbert Elliot, director of the U. of Colorado's Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence, says he hears about this confusion a lot. And to try and remedy the problem, he tells a group during a national conference of the Office of Safe & Drug Free Schools, he and others have been working to create a consensus on the factors which should, in fact, indicate an effective program.

In looking at the various model programs list from agency to agency, Elliot says, it's possible to see "major differences" from list to list he says. Elliot says the group performed a side-by-side analysis of six official federal program lists that include drug and drug prevention programs. These came from the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), SAMHSA's Nat'l Registry of Evidence-Based Programs & Practices (NREPP), the Office of Safe & Drug Free Schools, the Justice Dept.'s Blueprints for Violence Prevention, the Nat'l Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the Surgeon General's Report.

From this comparison, the team found:

- Scientific standards for certifying programs vary widely from list to list.
- Different lists present different categories for effectiveness—and different rationale for determining effectiveness.
- There wasn't a single program that showed up on all six lists, and only one program—Life Skills Training, a drug-prevention model—showed up on five of the six lists.
- Of the other common programs, three programs were on four of the six lists, while 12 programs were on at least half (three) of the lists.

Given these confounding findings, Elliot says the ultimate goal is to determine a set of standards, apply those standards to test each program in order to create a master list of model, effective and promising programs. The list also would include programs that were tested but found to be ineffective or even harmful.

In the meantime, Elliot offers recommendations to agencies and organizations that either are creating or using model programs registries. He says:

- When determining programs for state or national projects especially, Elliot stresses that "only 'model' program should ever be taken to scale."
- When deciding programs' effectiveness, evaluators need to use uniform, scientific standards—not just "asking the kids in the program whether they liked it or not."
- Organizations looking at program lists should, for the most part, feel confident using program models from the top category. Beyond that, however, they should exercise

judgment because "programs other than those in the top category are often problematic," he says.

- Organizations should select evidence-based programs based on the particular risks and needs their clientele.

- If an organization decides to use a program not certified as evidence-based, it needs to commit to evaluating it, "otherwise, it's unethical," he says.

- And above all, organizations should never use a program which has been found to be ineffective or harmful, Elliot stresses. "Most of these scare-tactic programs like Scared Straight are not effective," he says. And although fortunately there aren't a lot, a few other programs actually have proven to be harmful. "Please don't use any of these programs," he urges.

Info: For more about the project: Blueprints for Violence Prevention, Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence, Institute of Behavioral Science, U. of Colorado at Boulder, 1877 Broadway, Suite 601, Boulder, CO 80302; call 303/492-1032 or e-mail, blueprints@colorado.edu, or go to http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/

PART II: PRIVATE GRANTS

GRANT TIP 14: Getting A Private Grant—What To Do, What To Avoid

The first step you should take in deciding whether or not to apply for a grant is to take a look at the corporation's or foundation's annual report. Foundation reports usually give lists of grants made during the past year and serve as a guide to the type of activity they like to support.

The cliché "it's not what you know, but who you know" applies to private grants. Most private grantmakers say the best way to contact a foundation or corporation about funding is through a mutual acquaintance. Unlike federal government officials, who must be careful not to appear to be playing favorites, private grantmakers prefer to keep their contacts limited to persons or organizations they know, or at least groups with which a mutual contact is familiar. Foundations still have established procedures for grant review, however, and the persons whose job it is to review grants will probably not be happy if you go over their head or around their authority.

Avoid slick and sloppy pitches, says a Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation program officer. She also warns against using mass mailings or boilerplates. Foundations do not usually fund inquiries addressed to "To whom it may concern." If you are going to use mass mailings, be sure to individualize each proposal in some way.

"I think [the grant process] is a whole lot more than just money—it's about relationships," says Tad Asbury of the Marriott Education Foundation for Individuals with Disabilities. "We look for relationships that will last a long time." You want sponsors who are more than a contact; you want them to be your "cheerleader." Having good rapport with someone in the foundation is crucial, not only to go to bat for you, but to guide your proposal and lead you toward opportunities other than just cash, says Asbury.

The First Step Is Letter Of Inquiry

If you do not have this type of personal contact, your first step will be a letter of inquiry. Letters of inquiry are often the first contact an applicant has with a private grantmaker, yet corporate and foundation representatives agree that not enough care is given in the writing of this document. Grantmakers tell us it is important the initial letter be as strong as possible.

Ideally, the letter should demonstrate both your expertise in an area and your ability to administer a grant. A letter should be the product of a team approach, with the original draft being prepared by a program expert, and revised by your grant administrator.

Be clear in the first sentence. Most foundations have relatively small staffs that are pressed for time. Therefore, the beginning of the letter is no place to be coy or flowery. Instead, make clear you are sending a letter of inquiry for possible funding of your project. Your project title should match the title that appears in the organization's annual report. The letter should be short (one page, if possible), but comprehensive enough to include the following:

- A brief statement of the proposal.
- A demonstration of the relevance of your project to the grantmaker's organization.
- The total sum needed, which should include other sources of income for the project.
- The specific results you expect.

Five Important Components Of The Application

1) **Make sure your objective is clear and specific.**

It is not enough to say you want to fight poverty or provide job training for high-school dropouts. You must provide more specific information about your program goals and how you plan to meet them. Most grantmakers say they do not want to waste time with applicants who are simply shopping for funds, without a clear idea of what they are going to do, how they are going to do it and how it ties in with the funding organization.

A grantmaker must be able to measure what you have done with your grant to determine whether the idea is one it should fund in the future and be able to justify to the board of directors, chairman or others if something goes wrong.

Grant proposals should contain three distinct elements:

- An outcome, which explains in detail what activities you will perform and what you will accomplish.

- A timetable.

- An estimate of the population to be helped: how many and what type of clients, for example—minority high-school dropouts.

Each of the three sections should be specific, if your funding proposal is to be acted upon.

2) **Make sure the application shows how your program ties in with the grantmaker's priorities**.

Failing to do so is one of the more common mistakes in both federal and private grant applications. With the increasing number of proposals received by all types of private grantmakers, they are becoming more and more critical of applications that fall outside of their funding priorities. If possible, your application should show how your activities present an innovative approach in the grantmaker's field. Don't stretch your proposal to try and fit the funder's mission.

Obviously, talking to program officials and reviewing application kits is one way to discover priorities. However, if you find reasons behind the award difficult to discern, several grantmakers suggest you look at the grantmaker's basic mission adopted at its founding.

Discerning why a donor gives will give you a leg up on how best to ask for funds. Some of the more common foundation missions are:

- Dedication to a cause: This tends to be important to social justice organizations, as well as to organizations whose exclusive objective is to help the poor.

- A moral obligation or responsibility, which often motivates religion-related organizations.

- Improvement of the standing (and often profits) of the assisted person or organization. This tends to be of primary concern to corporate grantmakers.

3) **Be willing to combine your efforts with other groups.**

In the past, when federal funds were flowing, many groups tended to worry about their own turf, making cooperation difficult at best. Now, with funding tight, private grantmakers are looking for applications that can give them more bang for the buck, helping several organizations working together for a common goal.

There are several examples of this. Colleges and universities can often act as focal points for a relationship between nonprofits and local governments. In particular, educational institutions often have office space, materials and manpower that smaller nonprofits do not.

Another successful combination brings nonprofits and local businesses together, either informally or in community development corporations. This merges talents of profit-motivated managers and those with knowledge of local problems.

4) **Be willing to develop other types of support besides grants.**

Grantmakers are trying to spread their awards, act as catalysts for other grantmakers and support programs that will continue after its support ends. Suggest ways your project will cut costs, and therefore require smaller grants, enabling funds to go further. Some tested methods include in-kind contributions, “sweat equity” (beneficiaries of a program contribute their time to make it work) and loans.

You should be able to show you can make it on your own once the grant ends. Therefore, requests for seed money, rather than operating expenses or capital projects, are more likely to receive consideration, even if other uses are permissible.

Local community branches of national brands or chains do not usually give monetary donations to local nonprofits, but are able to donate products. Approach your local business with a specific request, written on your organization’s letterhead, as well as a detailed description of how you are serving the community. Some companies have policies on product donations. Some donate products for nonprofits to sell at fund-raisers, or to use as thank-you gifts for volunteers. Other companies prohibit selling donated products, assuming you are asking for products for the youth you are serving. As with grants, research their policies on the web. Read all their instructions to make sure you are eligible. See the Appendix Section for a short list of companies that donate products.

5) **Prepare a professional grant application.**

This does not necessarily mean you should use a professional to prepare the application. Some smaller foundations object to the use of outside grants consultants or at least to paying them via grants. However, whoever prepares the grant application should be capable of producing an accurate and concise document, incorporating the points made above.

Two of the most important aspects of the application are:

Summary: If you get nothing else right, the summary must be done well. Often, it is the only section read in a preliminary review process. It is best written last, since the entire proposal is clearly in mind at that time. The information in the section should be clear and concise, and should not exceed two or three paragraphs. Underlining key words and concepts may help.

"Foundations want to see scaleable projects demonstrating an overall passion for the goal," says Tad Asbury of the Marriott Education Foundation for Individuals with Disabilities. "Originality is a key to catching a private foundations, interest as well. If your project sets your group apart from others, a foundation will take notice and seriously look into specific elements of the project, greatly increasing its chance for funding."

Costs: Grantmakers want to know exactly what they are being asked for, and project costs. Therefore, be as specific as possible in describing what you are asking for, and what the project costs. Indirect costs are often a matter of dispute between grantmakers and applicants. Therefore, it is important the two groups come to a common definition of direct and indirect costs.

"Know everything about your project proposal, from how much it costs to overall benefit and its potential duplication and sustainability," says Asbury.

Info: http://www.meaf.org/ and http://www.marriott.com/foundation/leadership.mi

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GRANT TIP 15: Steps in Writing a Foundation Proposal

Be creative, focused and persistent when seeking grants for your group, says Jon Hardie of the Nellie Mae Foundation.

Grantmakers receive many funding requests they clearly state that they will not fund. It is an obvious, but crucial point—mentioned before, but worth mentioning again: find out the grantmaker's annual funding priorities and guidelines before sending your proposal.

Grantmakers need a reason to get beyond the first page—also known as the 30-second test. This is your opportunity to stand out by capturing the grantmaker's imagination and to invite further in-depth review with a clear, innovative focus.

You need direct, demonstrable, broad-based collaboration, participation and involvement of community stakeholders. These stakeholders, strategic partners and alliances will help you reduce costly duplication of effort. If your goal is to meet community needs, you can reduce your competition for grants significantly—and attract more funders—by putting strategic, collaborative project partnerships together, which lets everyone win.

Board & staff: Who will and how will you successfully manage the project? Folks who have "been there, done that'' can help you in the tough times.

Needs always exceed resources. What is the long term ROI (return on investment) for the grantmaker from your project? Is it advocacy, change, improved emergency or transitional services, housing, education, innovation, an exhibit, a performance, a unique collaboration or reduced duplication of services?

Is your project specific to your community? Could others learn and benefit from or replicate your experience? Funders love to invest in projects that can be replicated. There are, of course, many one-time, unique community needs to meet.

If you don't have the funds to get started or the staff to write grant proposals, consider writing a small capacity-building grant proposal to fund grantwriting or a community needs assessment to get started.

Do not manage your organization as if the grant check is in the mail. Even if your application is everything you want it to be, remember that only one out of nine equally qualified proposals gets funded.

Broaden your donor base; that's where 90% of the money is.

This sounds like quite a process. A resource development consultant for many nonprofit organizations warns that unless you develop some basic tools that are maintained year-round for all fundraising efforts, you're not going to have time to do a proper campaign. These tools include:

A short case, which is a 1-10 page summary of your organization that can act as justification for your funding request. While it can be a pain to prepare, once done, it helps make all other fundraising activities easier. Anderson calls it the hymnal from which all persons associated with the organization speak, write or present. The case should answer all questions that might be asked by prospects; be typewritten and placed in binders for easy changes; available for rapid response to opportunities for support; distributed to all staff and volunteers, and regularly reviewed and updated (this last point is key, as it is often overlooked). The case often makes up a good part of any grant proposal narrative.

A prospect pool, which involves a list of persons and organizations served directly or indirectly by your organization or agency. These are the first people you go to once you decide to do some fundraising. Relevant information should include contact persons, telephone numbers, financial data, interests related to your case, and patterns of giving. Then prepare an evaluation chart for each proposal to determine the best prospects to be contacted first. Factors to be considered include: type of support needed, amount to add (determine after studying their giving patterns, top gift, average gift, budget), interest rating (whether you fall into their primary or secondary interests), number of linkages you have with prospect, level of their awareness of your organization and their potential for influencing others in the community. Soon it will be clear which are your best prospects; always start at the top to set the pace for the others.

Your Approach Strategy

Once you've decided whom to ask for money, you have to decide how to ask. Your research should discover the prospect's instructions and requirements for submission. Then:

- If a letter of inquiry is requested, sum up your proposal in one or two pages, highlight connections to their interests, people, places or products.

- If a written proposal is requested, develop a cover letter personalizing the proposal you are attaching, highlighting connections as above.

- If a call is allowed, arrange an appointment, decide which staff members and, if appropriate, volunteers should make the presentation and work out your pitch and roles.

Be prepared to leave a copy of the proposal if you are requested to do so, but better yet, listen and learn from your exploratory visit, go home and adopt your proposal and send as a follow-up—remembering to thank them for time and help.

If you're rejected at any point, try to determine why. If your proposal can be corrected for that competition, do so. If not, go back later with a more appropriate proposal. Just because a proposal is rejected, it does not mean it is bad and should never be used again. You should not have to start from scratch—in many cases, making a few revisions suggested by funders can turn a losing proposal in a winner.

Proposal Format

Anderson says this involves organizing your case from the prospect's perspective. It should include:

An introduction. This is a one-paragraph summary of the proposal. It should come first, but is written last. While this may be incorporated in the cover letter, it is wise to repeat briefly here: prospect name, amount being requested by what organization and for what purpose. If your cover letter gets misplaced, this serves to clarify your request for the prospect.

A need/problem/situation section. Outline the problem to be addressed by your program/project. Always indicate that the problems, no matter how grave, can be addressed, the picture improved, clients assisted and it is the mission of your organization to do so. If you're asking for funds from a corporate funder, back up your optimism with similar opinions from business magazines such as *Fortune* or *Business Week* or the daily bible of the corporate world, *The Wall Street Journal*.

Your Plan of Action

Highlight why your organization is uniquely qualified to carry out a program or project that addresses the problem. This is an often-neglected area.

Spell out what is needed to carry out this effort (money, goods, services, expert volunteers) and your plan for securing this support.

Show the role the prospect can play—restate the specific request.

Include a conclusion—visualize what it will mean to the prospect, to the community, to society if these goals are achieved (mention social and economic benefits.)

Info: http://www.nmefdn.org/Grantmaking/

GRANT TIP 16: Thinking About Clients and Funders

Grants Should Focus On People Being Served

When writing grant proposals, too many nonprofits are focusing on their programs, says Jeane Vogel, founder of Fund Raising Innovations. That's a mistake, she says. "Foundations and corporations want to hear about people, the clients you're serving," says Vogel, a consultant specializing in assisting nonprofits with budgets under $3 million raise money.

"The greatest complaint I hear is groups have great plans but don't mention who they serve," she says. Vogel recommends using case studies in newsletters, fliers and grant proposals; in a word, personalize. Funders also like to see client input in the creation of programs and services, she says. Board members should be investors in nonprofits. Time isn't enough. Funders want to see board support.

Another common error: groups molding programs to suit corporations or foundations, blindly chasing money rather than doing basic research. Are similar projects being funded? Where? What levels of funding do they provide? Research the board members or trustees of the group. What are their areas of interest? Large national organizations are usually interested in doing pilots or research, supporting ideas that can be replicated, she says.

One last thing: know your competition. Don't have blinders on. Access the competition. Are other groups providing the same services? Is their program better or more cost-effective?

Avoid a 'Values Clash' With Funders

You should develop relationships with funders who share similar values with your nonprofit. This is one fundraising morsel a consultant with an organization named "for Granted" shares with CD Publications. Boasting a 75% success rate in matching clients with funders, consultant Kelli Dudley works with new groups or expansion-oriented nonprofits. We asked her how to turn on the funding spigot:

- **Research:** Access government Websites and do simple keyword searches.
- **Communication:** Talk with funders in advance. The nature of the nonprofit world is not to withhold information. If you call funding sources, they usually offer good information about themselves and often other funding sources.
- **Relationships:** Nonprofits should develop relationships with other funding sources that have similar ideologies.
- **Evaluation measures:** In writing grants, nonprofits need to include achievable goals. Listing specific behavior changes, using pre- and post-tests can be helpful.

Info: http://www.nonprofit-innovations.com/

GRANT TIP 17: Steps to a Stronger Statement of Need

After the one-page executive summary of your grant proposal comes the two-page statement of need. If the reader makes it to these two pages, then a nonprofit has successfully caught the reader's interest. To keep your reader's interest, the Foundation Center offers a few tips for writing a winning statement of need. The statement of need is where the reader learns about your issue. Here, you'll document your need for funds with well-chosen statistics and present a logical argument.

Choose your facts carefully and get them right. Make sure your data are accurate. There's nothing more embarrassing than being told by a funder your data are out of date. Data unrelated to your project weaken the proposal.

Give your reader hope. If you paint too bleak a picture, the reader will wonder whether a grant will help. Don't be overly emotional. Here's one way to phrase such a message: "Car crashes kill children. But statistics show children in car seats are more likely to survive an accident. Therefore, a program providing low-income parents with car seats will reduce the risk of children's deaths from car accidents."

Is your project a potential model? If you present your project as a model, funders may expect you to follow through on a replication plan. If you choose to represent yourself as a model, explain how the need you're addressing also exists in other communities.

Is your problem acute? Be clear about why you're asking for funds.

Don't knock the competition. Even if you feel your solution is best, don't criticize others' approaches. Funders don't like to see you bringing others down. In fact, they like collaboration, and may wonder why you're not already working with other groups on this issue. Explain that you're on good terms with other nonprofits in your field.

Avoid circular reasoning: Don't make a circular argument like this one: "The problem is our community lacks a swimming pool. Therefore building a pool will solve that problem." Rather, emphasize the benefits a pool will bring.

Info: http://www.foundationcenter.org/

GRANT TIP 18: Donor-Advised Funds Growing More Prevalent

Expect more donor-advised grants to flow into neighborhood revitalization, housing, homeless, and other support for low-income people, say community foundations.

The *Chronicle of Philanthropy* says the top 20 community foundations have seen a 230% increase in advised funds—which give contributors a bigger say in how their money is spent—providing $5.5 billion from 1995-1999. Given the surge in advised funds, if you haven't had luck winning grants from community foundations in the past, your luck may be about to change, indicates Peter deCourcy Hero, president of the Community Foundation of Silicon Valley in San Jose, Calif.

His foundation has more than 300 donor-advised funds with total assets of $500 million. “We are growing rapidly, adding over $175 million in new gifts for the fiscal year ending June 30, most of it donor-advised funds,” he says.

The foundation helps advised funds be more effective grant-makers by holding semimonthly briefings, taking donors on site visits and hooking them up with contributors with similar interests.

On the flip side, neighborhood and homeless organizations can boost their chances of getting grants by inviting community foundation board members to see their programs and facilities, Hero says. Regularly attend community foundation functions to meet their donor base, Hero advises. Get information from foundation staff and go after advised funds directly.

Providing heads-up information is another way of keeping your organization’s name in front of foundations and their donor-advised funds, says a Chicago Community Trust staffer. Mail news clips, white papers, occasional studies and other materials related to a foundation’s mission, staff and programs. Attach a brief note saying, “I thought you might be interested.” But make sure it is useful. The information should be mailed or e-mailed directly to the foundation staffer working with advised funds, says the staffer. Don’t assume the foundation administrative and program staffers are in contact with donors.

If you don’t do anything else, send foundations your organization’s newsletter and your annual reports, the CCT staffer says. The Community Trust has an extensive library for these and staffers often scan them for program information and ideas. The key is not to become a nuisance, she says. Once or twice a year is not overdoing it.

New doors are opening

Make community foundations aware of your good work to pass along to advised funds, she advises. Start by seeking funds through a foundation’s regular grant program. This introduces your organization and puts you “in front of the donor-advised funds,” says Andrea Montag, senior donor relations officer for Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta. Stay in touch with a foundation after submitting an application. “We obviously match donors with organizations we know best,” says Montag.

By applying directly to an unrestricted or field-of-interest fund, organizations may receive additional funding from donor-advised funds behind the scenes, says Bryan Clontz, the Atlanta group’s vice president.

Last year, Greater Atlanta awarded $600,000 in grants by matching applicants with donor-advised funds. Soon it will be granting $500,000 in emergency homeless assistance annually through a new fund, Montag says.

Keep community foundations informed of your community's changing needs, suggests Debbie Baxter, community relations director for the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay, Fla. The foundation routinely passes along what it hears to help donors target community priorities.

For instance, two of Tampa Bay's donor-advised funds financed workshops helping neighborhood leaders learn new skills. This addressed a need to strengthen neighborhood organizations, Baxter says. Similarly, a low-income housing improvement project was supported by several advised funds in southern portions of the county. The Peninsula Community Foundation in San Mateo, Calif., encourages applicants to submit "concept papers and concise case statements with budgets" to forward to its advised funds, says President Sterling Speirn. "Even if we don't have donors who may currently fund such projects, we want to have a good inventory of creative ideas and projects," he says.

Info: http://www.siliconvalleycf.org/, http://www.cct.org/ and http://www.atlcf.org/

GRANT TIP 19: Six Guides from A Foundation Reviewer's Handbook

The following is based on the reference guide used by one of the five largest foundations to train its grant reviewers. It's probably similar to guidelines most major foundations use and provides insight into what grantmakers are looking for. Follow the tips to tailor your proposal.

In some cases, reviewers use the questions to simply determine whether or not something was provided. In others, reviewers are looking for signs the applicant understands the foundation's agenda. If your proposal can correctly answer the six topical questions below, and you seem to be in the same philosophical ballpark, your proposal should do well.

1) **What is the nature of the problem?** How did it start? Is the applicant's analysis sound and convincing? Are the statistics used to describe the problem accurate and clear? Why should the problem be addressed NOW and why should the foundation be the one to do it?

2) **What are the applicant's mission and agenda?** What are the key problems the applicant addresses and is it relevant to this particular project? With what other organizations or government agencies does the applicant work closely to carry out its mission effectively?

3) **How is the applicant governed?** What mechanisms has the board established to monitor the success of projects and evaluate the priorities and agenda of the organization? To what extent has the board helped to develop the current proposal?

4) **What are the applicant's sources of support?** Have they changed over the last few

years? Has the availability of funds or the source of funding affected the emphasis of its program? What role do particular donors play in advising or monitoring the applicant's programs? Does the applicant have plans to diversify its funding base?

5) **How does the applicant expect to meet its objectives?** What is the applicant's approach to the problem? How does its approach differ from that of others who are also addressing the problem?

6) **What specific strategies does the applicant employ?** Are they clear and internally consistent? Are they innovative? Has the applicant developed a detailed plan for implementing the strategies? Are there external factors that could derail the project from its inception or mid-way (e.g., a government's refusal to permit access to a proposed research site)? What are the proposed activities? Are they feasible? Is the plan well-defined and detailed enough to be carried out? Has the applicant contacted or worked with other experts in the field to shape its plan of action? If not, would references to organizations or individuals who share its interest in the problem or who have experience with the proposed strategy be useful.

GRANT TIP 20: Being Small Doesn't Mean You Can't Approach Major Private Funders

While the friendliest and most generous foundations are likely to be the ones closest to you geographically, it's worth taking a shot at one of the big national funders.

But according to Richard Male, a long-time private grants consultant who's now CEO of Grantseeker, Inc., proper research is key to obtaining grants from national foundations. In at least one case, the research has already been done. Speaking before a group of community action agencies, Male says his company's research indicates the following 21 foundations are among the best for CAAs and other nonprofits working in areas of poverty, community revitalization and social justice.

In addition, all these foundations award grants throughout the country and are willing to support local projects, says Male.

Be aware most foundations won't be willing to provide general operating support. Most large foundations want to support new or expanded projects, not your day-to-day operations. Of course, you can try to ask for operating expenses by calling it something else, but be careful.

Large foundations often are interested in having local groups implement the funder's program and/or ideas, rather than support locally generated projects; the Annie E. Casey Foundation is one example. Look for studies, reports and papers funded by the foundation (even if the foundation didn't actually do the work), and see if you can use them in developing your program and/or proposal.

Use any contacts you have to gain entry to the funder. And contact previous grantees for advice on approaching the foundation. Remember: While large foundations give millions of dollars away each year, competition is tough. Make sure it's worth your while before taking the time to apply

Now you know where; what's next?

Keep the following in mind when approaching national funders: They are interested in projects that can be replicated, says Male. They want to support programs with a broad impact, often involving strategic partnerships. These can range from collaborations between the funder and the grantee to partnerships between the grantee and other community organizations. Even if they say they give nationally, many large foundations often reserve funds for nearby local projects. That's particularly true regarding grants for direct services and/or operating support. Male stresses that unlike most foundations, the big ones have professional staff that usually want to see some kind of concept paper first. These staffers are experts in the field, says Male, so be careful about exaggerating your capabilities and/or project. As much as you can, try to show your own expertise in the field through such things as press reports and awards for "best practices."

Another key to obtaining funding from a large foundation, he says, is obtaining a personal interview. Your initial letter and concept paper aren't going to win you a grant. They should, however, make foundation staff excited to meet you, but you're going to have to be persistent, he cautions. And when you go to the interview, you shouldn't necessarily take along your board president or similar high-ranking staffer. Instead, "take along the person who can best express … passion about the program," Male says.

Info: http://www.richardmale.com/richsbio.htm

GRANT TIP 21: Approaching Private Funders For Operating Expenses

Repackaging Your Request

The biggest problem in today's private giving world, aside from the shortage of money, is the dispute over whether to fund special projects or operating expenses. Most private funders prefer to support individual projects, claiming such programs are easier to justify. Nonprofits, on the other hand, say they need more operating expense support if they're to survive to implement any special program.

There's no magic answer to this dilemma. But two experts in the field give some suggestions for winning general operating support. Barbara Anderson, a resource development consultant for many nonprofit organizations, says the key is repackaging your request in such a way that officials can easily see a connection between their contribution and activity leading to some result that is beneficial to their foundation or corporation. Anderson warns not to be dishonest, or fudge what you're trying to do—there's nothing that hurts future fundraising efforts more than being caught in a lie.

Anderson suggests you prepare a program-driven budget. This means you don't simply outline a budget listing particular items and their costs. Instead, tie them to specific goals. How? Break down your expenses into individual activities. For example, don't simply indicate you need X dollars for phone calls. Instead, show part of your service is phone referral and counseling, requiring X number of phone hours and personnel, that costs Y.

You should be able to break down most of your organization into activities that help meet your goals. You then tailor your proposal to address each area. If it's done well, the "program-driven" budget clearly shows what grants will be used for. Your organization is not a collection of personnel costs and phone bills looking for funds. Instead, it's series of activities, achieving certain goals that deserve support.

Anderson also suggests care about titling your request: Even if you're asking for general or operating support, the terms are red flags for many funders. Use creativity. This type of budget makes it much easier for foundations to see what they're getting for their money.

Barry Nickelsberg, a fundraising consultant who's worked with organizations such as the Children's Defense Fund, says there's "an easy way to do it and a hard way to do it." The easy way is similar to Anderson's advice, involving packaging your proposal so there's a clear connection between operating expenses and program objectives. If you can, make your proposal a combination of several "projects." Then include overhead as a key part of the combination. You've presented a proposal for specific activities, yet made it clear the costs are necessary parts of the organization's ability to conduct its business. The hard (but often the best) way is through person-to-person contact. Nickelsberg is a firm believer that "people usually give to people," and if you can develop a good relationship with a funder, it will be more likely to be flexible in its support. One way to do this is to invite potential funders to see your organization before asking for funds. If they can see your operation in action, they are more likely to be impressed about the work you are doing. Other suggestions include establishing contacts through media events, funder/applicant seminars, working lunches or company employees who support your organization.

A Case Study: How To Win Operating Funds

The case study here shows how a homeless shelter raises funds by focusing on a problem that plagues both local governments and nonprofits: How to get operating support when everyone wants to fund special projects and new ideas.

Fundraisers for the shelter gave the bad news. Of three government programs they had investigated for funding, some for the homeless and some involving drug abuse, each stressed grants for new projects rather than local operating expenses. The story was the same for private grantmakers. Most of the state and local foundations emphasized project grants and 60% prohibited general operating support.

So, what to do? After 10 minutes of agreeing that life is unfair, the group started to look for ways to get around the problem. After a few weeks of work, it developed an operations plan.

The group divided all potential grantors into three categories: Those that fund operating expenses, those that do not fund operating expenses, and those that may, but prefer special projects. Then, the fundraisers began to plan different approaches for the various funders, whether government or private.

For private foundations, it’s important to develop an informal relationship with those that support operating costs. Invite officers to come out and see the work you are doing before asking them for funds. If your invitation is accompanied by a grant request, they probably will see it as self-serving. But if you target certain foundations as potential grantors, and then invite them out before you’ve asked for money, they are likely to be more receptive. At one corporate funding conference, two local grantmakers said seeing what an organization did before receiving a grant request was the single most important factor in the decision to award funds.

With government grants, it’s difficult to nurture a relationship with agency officials but highly possible to develop one with elected officials who are looking for community support. The shelter designated two local members of Congress as their “Men of the Year,” which required attendance at a banquet and program demonstration in exchange for the favorable publicity. In one case, no relationship developed. But the other congressman was so impressed he promised to support increased funding to help the homeless.

With organizations and agencies that say they specifically don’t fund operating expenses, take them at their word. It goes back to priorities: Don’t try to fit your priorities into agency goals that are clearly contradictory. While it might work once or twice, it’s not worth the time and trouble in most instances.

It’s sneaky, but you should develop the ability to disguise your request for general operating support as a special project proposal. This involves agencies and foundations that prefer to fund special projects, but will support operating expenses if they are presented right. Care must be taken before preparing and submitting an application. Both government and private grantmakers are adept at picking out “operating costs in project clothing,” as one official put it.

Shelter officials were first stumped at what to do when faced with the restrictions on operating expenses. “Everything we do is part of our normal operations,” was how one official put it. But they then decided to break down costs by personnel vs. fixed costs such as utilities and rent that clearly were operating expenses.

Then, they divided the personnel costs by those who would be needed no matter what services were provided, such as the receptionist, and those that dealt only with certain services, such as a drug abuse counselor or public health nurse. These were then designated as costs that realistically could be presented as project costs. The group also tried to see that these costs were related to some of the hot issues of today including substance abuse prevention and job training in the transition from welfare to work. By allocating personnel costs in a different way, the shelter was able to make a presentation for support for a project on the cutting edge of today's social policy.

The result: so far, one government grant and one foundation award from sources that do not like to fund operating expenses, but were willing to go along because of how the request was presented.

GRANT TIP 22: Ten Criteria For Follow-Up Funding Requests

Receiving grants is like an election—the day after you win, you take a deep breath and begin planning for the next campaign. Convincing a private funder to continue support for your organization isn't as simple as getting it from the government, which often assumes continued success unless money is specifically limited to one year.

While the same program criteria usually apply to follow-up funding requests, foundations have internal guidelines on whether a program deserves more money. The following are materials used by one of the five largest foundations to help train its grant reviewers. The materials focus on how the foundation can tell when projects are floundering, which in turn determines whether additional funds will be available in the future.

According to the materials, the following 10 criteria are early warning signs.

1. **Continual Failure to Meet Financial Projections:** Some problems, especially with small nonprofits, are expected. Most small or new organizations have limited cash reserves and high uncertainty about timing and sources of revenue.

   However, the training manual warns reviewers to be wary when annual operating deficits are called cash-flow problems. For a program officer, this may first appear in the form of consistently unrealistic budgets and frequent requests for advances.

   One foundation trainer tells us, "I often get calls shortly after a grant is approved asking whether funds can be used for a different purpose. Months later we get a second request to receive next year's disbursement early. Any group that every year ends up with an operating deficit and has a cash-flow problem is a good warning sign that it's a project that probably should be cut off from future funding."

2. **What the Applicant Should Consider:** Was the original budget realistic in the first place? Foundation officials tell us once you're stuck with an unrealistic projection, it's hard to get out from under to make things work. How many times do you have problems meeting the costs of day-to-day operations? If you're having problems, admit it, but don't leave it at that. Is there a way you can demonstrate the steps you are taking to make sure problems don't occur? This is key, says one of the foundation's trainers.

3. **Disregard for the Original Proposal or Business Plan:** The training manual says that critical indicators of problems are when the grantee no longer refers to the proposal once the project gets funded, or when the budget and operating plan are abandoned at the first crisis. The manual states that this often means the leadership has not thought through the project, financial projects and program goals may reflect nothing more than a uniformed guess and there is little capacity in the organization to carry out the program.

4. **What the Applicant Should Consider:** Do progress reports and evaluations speak directly to the original goals and expectations? If you propose changing your project, have you shown a good reason why you are doing so? Outside experts we talk to say you can change your program's goal or focus, but only as part of a process in which you indicate why you're taking a new approach—which usually implies you've given your original idea a fair test—and how you'll now measure success. The evaluation must measure criteria as specific as those originally proposed.

5. **Founder/Director Conflicts:** The skills to create an organization or program often are not the same as those needed to make operations run smoothly. In addition, founders often have trouble detaching themselves from their "babies"—acknowledging when something is not going right or taking responsibility for failure. Therefore, the manual states that reviewers should be alert for a founder who cannot give authority to staff to do the things he or she is not good at doing and who cannot accept responsibility when things go wrong.

6. **What the Applicant Needs to Consider:** Are management and program operations institutionalized or run on an ad-hoc basis? Is one person—the director, say—doing too much vis-à-vis proposed activities and the budget? How much oversight does the founder have over day-to-day operations, including the right to spend money?

7. **Lack of Communication**: The manual states that good communication within the organization and with donors is a key indicator of a healthy project. Project directors who are experiencing problems and not resolving them often do not communicate within their organization, let alone among donors.

8. **What the Applicant Should Consider:** Is the funder made aware of major staff changes? If the funder sends out a reminder that progress reports are due, does the applicant make an

effort to acknowledge the communication? That's a small point, but a telling one, according to one foundation reviewer. Do you have a quarterly "tickler file" to check in with the foundation? Do you send the funder copies of your newsletter or send regular progress reports to the board?

9. **Inattentive Boards:** Does the board have its eye on the ball? Training materials say, "Do not assume that because the board has business people as members, their voices will be heard...you need to learn how they are functioning when the grantee gets in trouble."

10. **What the Applicant Should Consider:** Does the board have program and financial review committees? Foundation staff tells us they feel a lack of board committees, or little involvement in the development of major proposals, shows the board won't be much help in solving any problems that arise later.

GRANT TIP 23: How To Approach A Corporate Funder

Many in the nonprofit world believe "corporate philanthropy" is a contradiction in terms. That's really not fair. Corporations have an agenda, but so do private foundations and federal government agencies. Corporations award about $2.5 billion annually for a variety of worthwhile programs. And their employees often donate their own time and skills in amounts not so easily measured as dollars.

To help you get your share, we offer coverage of a corporate funders forum, in which five experts from the business community provide dos and don'ts in approaching the corporate sector for help.

General Guidelines

You have to remember you're asking for the stockholder's income, says William Torgerson, vice president and general counsel for the Potomac Electric Power Company. Every year at most stockholders meetings there are proposals to cut off all corporate giving, leaving such decisions to the individual stockholders. While such motions are usually defeated, says Torgerson, it demonstrates the care with which corporations must act when awarding grants.

Vickie Tassan, a public affairs specialist for financial institutions, offers what she calls the four general goals and expectations of corporate givers:

1. Ideally, your request should involve a project that is related in some way to the business from which you're requesting money. If you're a housing organization, and the business in question knows nothing about housing, it is less likely to fund your proposal. But the Federal National Mortgage Association or the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, both of

which grant millions of dollars each year, would be deeply interested.

2. The business community usually budgets on a calendar year basis. The budget for the coming year is usually set in August and September. If you wait until October to request funds for the next year, you're usually too late.

3. Whenever possible, use any business contacts your board, staff members, or volunteers have.

4. Learn the name and title of the proper contact person.

Most of the other corporate executives agree with Tassan, saying they find it insulting if a request is not addressed to them. It's not just a matter of courtesy, adds one. It shows the applicant has taken the time to research the company.

Terry Savage, manager for American Express's philanthropic program, notes corporations have a certain amount of allocated and unallocated funds to give each year. More funds are being allocated to organizations with which businesses already have a relationship. That means groups with little or no history with a corporation probably won't get funding on the first try. Don't give up, says Savage. If you keep plugging, you'll have a much better chance of winning support.

He suggests selectivity in your approach. The "shotgun" method is usually ineffective, compared to a few carefully researched proposals to corporations that may share your interests. A women's wear manufacturer, for instance, is more likely to be involved in domestic violence projects or child care for women trying to get off welfare than it would be in an AIDS project for gay males. But a drug manufacturer with a link to the AIDS Drug Assistance Program would be a prime target.

Thadius Sale, former director of corporate contributions for a Bell Atlantic telephone division, stresses you must know your own organization before applying for funds. This includes knowing your strengths and weaknesses, as well as from whom your competitors obtain funding, market their services to, and how they use their staffs.

The Pitch

No matter what form your contact takes, whether telephone call or letter, keep it simple. Unlike government agencies and foundations, business grantmakers are usually relatively unfamiliar with your field of interest and have other duties beyond corporate contributions. This means they like concise, easy-to-understand explanations of your project and funding request. Proposals must be carefully researched: Don't waste time applying unless you know the project fits corporate funding priorities.

Most of the panel agrees the first contact should be, whenever possible, by phone. This isn't always easy—corporate givers, like federal government grantmakers, are notorious for not returning calls. But keep trying—most of the panel said the success rate for phone contacts was quite a bit above that of written communication. One key is using a board member, executive or employee to make the contact.

While some of the panel plays coy, others admit up front that personal connections could at least move a proposal to the top of the pile. In cases where a CEO or other high ranking officials favor a proposal, it often gets automatic approval. But don't abuse the relationship, several panel members counsel, and use the contact only to open the door, not do all the leg work. One warning; if you're going to use a contact high-up in the company, it doesn't hurt to keep the contributions office apprised. The officer running contributions doesn't love the fact someone is going over her or his head and is also concerned about turning down a request the CEO has expressed interest in. Keep the contributions executive "in the loop" and he or she may look more kindly on future funding requests when your top-rank supporter isn't so closely involved.

If you can't get in to see the contributions officer through personal contacts or a phone call, then it's time for a written request. Again, say our panelists, you must keep it short. Writing skills are important, says Sale. Make sure the person who prepares your proposal or inquiry letter, writes well. Most agree the first written correspondence should be a short (one or two page) letter of inquiry. It should include a time for you to call to discuss your proposal. And for heaven's sake, says Savage, if you promise to call, do so!

Sometimes, especially if you're new to the corporate game, it is better not to ask for funds at first. One panel member tells of receiving a letter, followed by a phone call, which simply asked him to come out and see what an organization was doing for the community. He was so impressed he asked for a proposal, which started the first of several grants the group has received.

No matter what, your letter of inquiry should concentrate first on the need for the project and what it can do for the community. Your organization and its role should be secondary in the letter.

Some general hints on writing the proposal: "do-gooding" is not enough, you must demonstrate the capability to carry out the proposed activities, as well as stress the project's impact on both the community and the company. For example, one proposal all the panelists agree was effective started out by saying the applicant represented "51% of the community, 58% of the company's future workers, and 62% of the firm's potential stockholders." Needless to say, the proposal caught the eye of the contributions committee. Several panelists suggest organizing the proposal as an abstract that makes it easier for program reviewers to decide what the program is about and what you are requesting.

Always include a specific dollar request. Corporate staffers tend to be generalists, so the easier you make their job, the better.

No matter what format you use, the idea of the written correspondence is to get in to see the grantmaker. Funding is impossible, says Sale, if you aren't able to meet face-to-face.

Once you've arranged the personal meeting, it's important that the person who represents your company be a good communicator, says Sale. The person must be able to clearly and articulately spell out the case for funding your organization. It helps that high-ranking staffers, or in the case of private nonprofits, a board member, can come along, though it's not necessary for them to take the lead in presenting your case. This presentation should be practiced before the real event, says Sale. "Winging it" makes a poor impression.

If you don't have much of a community representation, hire expert help. For example, most major cities have professional public relations associations that provide low-cost help for nonprofits developing community support campaigns. No matter the result of your request, ask for feedback. Find out why your project wasn't funded. Was it your presentation? Your written proposal? It's not a lot of fun to get this type of information, but it does wonders for future funding requests.

Now, here are some questions and answers that should be useful for you:

Q: Most nonprofits and local governments are looking for operating expenses, while corporations seem to want to fund restricted projects. Is there a way to overcome this?

A: Not really. With limited resources, contribution officers are going to fund projects that they can justify to the stockholders and corporate officers. It's much easier to do so when you know exactly what you're funding. In addition, many business grantmakers feel asking for general operating expenses is taking the easy way out, and means you're not looking closely enough at what your goals and operations are. It's important to prioritize and be realistic when requesting funds.

Q: How hard is it to get a promotion for a nonprofit in the bills that utilities and others send out?

A: Very hard. In almost all cases, any such message will be selected by the company. Businesses worry that if they accept such messages, they'll have to do them for everyone, which will soon become controversial.

Q: When meeting with corporate funders, how many people from your organization should go?

A: Two are better than one, but three "is a crowd."

Q: Should you discuss your needs first in a proposal or the community needs?

A: First stress community needs, and then what your organization will do to address them.

Q: Are there other departments within a company that should be contacted other than corporate contributions?

A: Both the marketing and public relations departments often provide assistance to nonprofits. While some are nervous about this form of aid (for example, cause-related marketing), it offers greater funding opportunities. But it is also much harder to tap into. Corporations tend to set their own priorities for these funds. You may want to tailor a proposal so it can be reviewed by both the contributions and marketing offices.

Q: Should you always ask for money?

A: No, corporations often prefer giving in-kind assistance including copiers and office space. But check first to learn whether the company gives benefits or cash—don't waste your time applying for something it doesn't provide. Software and computer makers, for example, prefer to offer products.

Q: Do corporations give funding for capital expenses?

A: In most cases, no. If you're going to try, make sure you stress the services the facility will provide, not the structure itself.

Q: If you're applying for a grant from a national organization, do you send it to the national office or local branch?

A: Depends on the company. But no matter who the company wants you to send it to, you should contact the local branch to get its support or endorsement. National franchise companies and national retailers often prefer the request to originate with a local, state or regional franchise or division. The best way to get a Wal-Mart grant, for instance, is to contact the manager of your local Wal-Mart.

Q: How can small nonprofits, especially ones located in rural areas, get the support of larger, urban based companies?

A: It can be tough, because there is not a natural tie-in. This is a case where you stress the benefits to the company and show how the project will increase the number of taxpayers and potential customers for the company. If you don't know what company to send it to, one panelist advised (only half tongue in cheek) "look for the highest building, and send it to whoever owns it."

Two final points: First, all our panelists agree your proposal must show how the project will benefit both the community and company.

Secondly, don't take corporate funding for granted. Business giving follows the stock market. If a company has a prosperous year, it will usually increase contributions to nonprofits. But an industry in a slump, such as defense, will pare back its contributions.

Another factor is merger. Amoco awarded more than $20 million annually, but was acquired by BP, a British company with no history of supporting U.S. charities. The merger of Exxon and Mobil may also have a serious impact. Exxon tends to support a narrow field, basically engineering education and Mobil backs a wide array of arts programs.

Corporations also believe there is a lack of gratitude among some grantees, which means they usually don't get a second grant. If you get corporate support, give thanks to the executive leadership and notify the media. Corporations love favorable publicity. Also, keep the company advised about what you're doing with its shareholders' money without asking for more. You can always make the request at a later time.

Info: http://www.pepcoholdings.com/services/outreach/

GRANT TIP 24: Turned Down By A Foundation? Find A Way to Ask Why

Private foundations do not have to answer requests for information and are not restricted by the Freedom of Information Act. But many foundations will answer polite requests for help in strengthening an unsuccessful grant application. At the very least, insiders say, all applicants should write a letter of thanks to a private foundation for sending them notice even of an unsuccessful application.

Such a letter can't hurt if there is a second chance to apply. Politeness does not assure anyone of a grant, but it can lead, perhaps, to increased consideration of technical questions or special needs in a future attempt at funding. If you don't succeed in winning a grant from a private foundation, try writing a letter along the following lines:

Dear [insert name],

While we are disappointed in not being recommended for a grant, we

greatly appreciate your efforts in reviewing our proposal.
In the interest of improving it, would it be possible to obtain review comments, or at least some sort of written explanation of where the application was not at present fully persuasive?
Such comments will be helpful to us in our efforts to redraft the proposal and obtain funding in the future.

Sincerely,

Writing "Why not" letters is great training for combining the need for polite diplomacy and simple assertiveness in all fund raising. Better still, next time, it might lead to a grant.

Common Mistakes

As a proposal reviewer for a state arts agency, a former corporate marketer and broadcast journalist pays particular attention to how outcomes will be measured. She further notes some nonprofits fail to show other sources of support when they submit a proposal.

"They automatically assume the funder will give them every penny they're asking for," says Diane Gedeon-Martin, a grants consultant in the Detroit area. She claims an 80% success rate helping more than 100 groups from 12 states and the District of Columbia get grants from $5,000-$2 million.

"They wear so many hats," she says of those who come to her, either directly or through the workshops she leads around the state. Her message is upbeat.

Gedeon-Martin says one client, a child welfare consortium, started with nothing four years ago and now has a budget of almost half a million dollars.

"No matter what your mission is, there is money out there," she says. Just don't come to her in a last-ditch effort to keep the doors to your agency open.

"You never do grants for that," she says.

GRANT TIP 25: Know When To Shine A Light And When To Keep It Quiet

If some funders had their way, they would keep things quiet. They would have unlisted phone numbers, no Website and no nonprofit groups singing their praises. Who needs more applications? Not all community foundations allow groups to contact their donors directly. Most advised funds at the Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta prefer anonymity, says Andrea Montag, senior donor relations officer.

On the other hand, some grantmakers feel they deserve all the credit you can give them for their largesse. So which way do you go?

That depends on your funder. If the money is from a corporation, for example, the company is probably looking for a marketing benefit—and not just a logo on a brochure. Diane Gedeon-Martin, a grants consultant in the Detroit area, says she always has a paragraph titled "Marketing" in her proposals, showing how her client will use the grant to recognize the funder. That approach was much appreciated when one of Gedeon-Martin's clients applied for a grant from Ameritech, the local phone company.

In a speech to nonprofit officials in Washington, a Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation program officer offers advice for maintaining good relations with private funders.

Do not take the money and run. Stay in contact. Send copies of program materials, even after the grant period is over.

Do not use the back door. Foundations have established procedures for grant review and do not appreciate groups soliciting endorsements directly from board members.

GRANT TIP 26: What are the Implications of Future Foundation Activity?

Tad Asbury, Vice President & Executive Director of the Marriott Foundation for People with Disabilities, says foundations are funding more comprehensive, long-term projects demonstrating extensive vision and leadership.

Foundation staff are becoming more involved in the grant process, even acting as co-workers with a grantee. Consortium building is the future of the grant process, he says.

Partnerships increase the scale and sustainability of a project, giving a foundation more for its investment. Asbury believes there will also be alliances among private foundations, but those alliances will demand a form of verifiable measurement of student or teacher benefit.

Info: http://www.marriott.com/foundation/leadership.mi

GRANT TIP 27: Backstage at the Foundation; Director Reveals What Can Happen

If you've ever wondered exactly how funders make the decisions on the grant-seeking applications, there's a new book that offers a backstage pass to the process.

> *Thank You for Submitting Your Proposal: A Foundation Director Reveals What Happens Next* is a fairly quick read that attempts to pull back the veil on how funding is granted. And no, it isn't by some form of dartboard or game of chance, says author Martin Teitel, executive director of the Cedar Tree Foundation. Teitel has 28 years of experience as both grant-maker and grant-seeker.

From writing letters of inquiry, to constructing full proposals, to surviving site visits, Teitel offers the perspective of someone who has read thousands of proposals and dispensed millions of dollars. In the *Grantseeker's Reality Check* section, he distills his years of experience into a compendium of do's and don'ts for proposal writers, board members and executive directors.

He's funny, too. He describes who initially grades incoming grant-seeking applications at his foundation. "A very bright and well qualified young man has this particular task in his job description because—I promised to be honest with you—he has the least seniority in the organization," Teitel writes.

Teitel is the first (and only) foundation director in America—in the 100-year history of modern foundations—to pull back the curtain of confidentiality to reveal how this select club of 70,000 decides where to spend its $25 billion each year.

Teitel's Checklist: *Seven Reasonably Easy Things You Can Do To Improve Your Proposal*:

1. **Go on a cliché and gobbledygook hunt.** Funders are as guilty as any group of lapsing into jargon and stylish language. Cut it out.

2. **Use short sentences, active voice and lots of white space.** Successful proposals follow many of the same rules as daily journalism—try to write a compelling story.

3. **Paint word pictures to draw your reader in.** Don't lecture and wag your finger; think like a short-story writer.

4. **Write as much from your heart as your head**. Don't sound like the dispassionate television announcer sitting in the stands at a tennis match. A proposal writer should be close enough to the work to infect the reader with honest enthusiasm.

5. **Have a good friend edit your prose.** All good writers get too close to their work and sometimes fail to see gaps in logic, redundancies or lapses in clarity.

6. **Talk with successful grantees of that foundation.** Asking colleagues for assistance has the added advantage of building the kinds of alliances and networks that help everyone to succeed.

7. **When in doubt, don't.** Tear a page from a daily reporter's credo. Whenever you have a question about including some sort of information (especially at deadline) leave it out. There is a rational but counterproductive tendency to pile on information. Don't.

Before Teitel joined the Cedar Tree Foundation, he was president of the Council for Responsible Genetics and editor of *Genewatch*. For 18 years, he served as executive director & senior fellow of the CS Fund, a private foundation.

Info: www.emersonandchurch.com, martin.teitel@gmail.com

GRANT TIP 28: When Tapping Foundation Cash, Better to Start Small, Local

Dear Grant Guru: “We are a small nonprofit and we are a bit intimidated by the thought of approaching large foundations for money. Is there a better route?”

Grant Guru: Of course. By some estimates there are about 70,000 foundations which each year spend $25 billion on philanthropic efforts. You don’t have to go hat-in-hand to the big independent foundations, like Ford or Gates. So how do you find the smaller foundations who might want to hear from a needy nonprofit?

For advice, we turn to David H. Bangs, Jr., an expert at improving the management of small business and nonprofits and author of “*Nonprofits Made Easy*.”

“How do you get funded?” Bangs says. “The same way as you get funding from individuals. You have to know what you are seeking, do research on foundations that might be interested and establish a relationship.”

Five Sources of Funds:

1. Individuals
2. Government (State, local & federal)
3. Business (for-profit)
4. Foundations
5. Nonprofit Organizations

We will examine just a few of the sources in this column. Foundations, whether public or private, are usually very explicit in their interests. You can research them on the Web or go to the library, Bangs says.

Local charitable foundations serve local nonprofit needs. Community foundations are a good place to start, Bangs says.

Community Foundations

For example, the Montgomery County Community Foundation (MD) serves just a section of Maryland adjoining Washington DC. A place to locate your local community foundation is at www.communityfoundations.net.

Community foundations are very approachable and are a major source of founds for capacity building, which is jargon for helping small nonprofits acquire skills—such as planning, grant writing, negotiating, board training. If your nonprofit would benefit from a strategic planning retreat, for example, your community foundation might be willing to pay for a facilitator to help with the process.

It's a good start. Even if they say no, they are likely to tell you why and explain how you can improve your chances with such a request in the future, Bangs says.

Plus, they will let you in on the grant cycles of when they distribute funding and their decision criteria, Bangs says.

Independent foundations

The big independent foundations are not likely to give money to small nonprofits in reality. Unless you have a really big idea that fits their stated criteria, don't bother. Even if you do, the chances are very slim, Bangs say, because of the large number of applicants who apply.

Corporations

However, corporations and other businesses have charitable wines, usually under the aegis of their community or public relations offices. Many have local or regional branches where you can seek funding, Bangs says.

Ask them what their donation criteria are. But wait. What they may be willing to provide even to a brand new nonprofit is used furniture and equipment, Bangs says.

"They are also a great source of board members," Bangs says. "some companies even require junior officers to be active in local nonprofits as part of their training."

One final word: Beware of "mission creep." There is a danger when searching out for new funding that you twist your mission to fit the requirements of the funder. The logic goes that some money, any money, will be helpful and after all, it's press close to the mission.

"It is insidious," Bangs says. "While you *might* get some funds, in the long run it will cost your nonprofit credibility."

Info: David Bangs has been helping improve management of small businesses and nonprofits from more than 20 years. *Nonprofits Made Easy* is published by Entrepreneur Media, Inc.

GRANT TIP 29: Private Funding: Getting Application to the Right Place Is Half the Battle

Driven by a shrinking federal funding pie, grant-seekers increasingly are looking toward the $25 billion cache of funding that private foundations and corporations deliver each year in philanthropy.

But, how do you get a slice of this charitable pie? A lot of it comes down to hard work, knowing where to look for funding and having a good track record to assure funders their money will hit the mark.

A good lesson is the recent $102,000 grant the New York City Children's Aid Society (CAS) received from the New York Life Foundation, the giving arm of the insurance giant.

The grant will help young people, ages 14-24, in foster care make a successful transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency by participating in The Next Generation Center's intensive programming. The new "one-stop" Next Generation Center, located in the Bronx, will help these youth complete their education, gain employment, find housing, get basic and mental healthcare, and learn life skills.

"This grant will help provide youth who are 'aging out' of the foster-care system with information and skills that will aid their efforts to achieve self-sufficiency," says C. Warren Moses, CAS chief executive officer.

The CAS grant application stood out for a number of reasons, says Peter Bushyeager, president of the New York Life Foundation.

Probably the most significant element was that the foundation was looking for programs that would address the many problems that foster kids face, Bushyeager says.

The New York City Admin. for Children's Services notes every year 1,100 young people "age out" of the city-supported foster-care system. Without family or responsible adults to lean on, these youth are left to make the transition to adulthood alone and many are without the even most basic of skills.

The latest national research on aged-out foster kids shows:

- Two to four years after discharge, half of these young people have acquired neither a high school diploma or equivalency degree.

- Fewer than 10% enter college.
- Nearly one-third end up on public assistance within 15 months.
- More than a third will be arrested or convicted of a crime.
- One-fifth will be homeless for a week or more within a year of leaving foster care.

"Because there are so many children in foster care and their needs aren't being met, we've been looking for a project that addresses this," Bushyeager says. When CAS submitted the application, it didn't hurt that it is considered one of the city's blue-chip nonprofits with a solid record of achievement and a spotless history on oversight.

Further, CAS obviously had done its research and knew the plight of foster children was a priority for the foundation.

CAS submitted an application through the foundation's competitive process (which is open to all grant-seekers) that was both methodical and focused on what it wanted to accomplish, Bushyeager says. This is very important, particularly at the initial stage when many applications are vying for attention.

Be systematic

"They were very systematic in establishing the parameters of a system," they wanted to set up, Bushyeager says.

"We get lots of applications, more than we can fund every year," he adds. "It's very important for grant-seekers to understand foundation guidelines and important for them to be specific in their proposals."

Applicants should be able not only to list the services they expect to provide, but also should show how they will improve the client population they hope to address, Bushyeager says.

Another essential issue is how corporations allocate their philanthropic funding, he says. "Most corporate funders provide project-specific support and don't do general support. We get proposals for general support and they are not within our guidelines."

His best advice is to be very select when you are seeking a grant from the approximately 70,000 funders out there. Getting the right application to the right funder is probably as important as making sure everything is spelled right on your application.

Info: www.childrensaidsociety.org or the foundation's Web site at www.newyorklifefoundation.org

GRANT TIP 30: Young Millionaires Tighter in Wallet vs. Older, Rich Contributors

Grant seekers take note: the newly rich 30-something millionaires may have tons of money, but they generally are less likely to support philanthropic efforts than are older contributors who give a far bigger share of their assets to charity.

The NewTithing Group, a San Francisco nonprofit organization, looked at Internal Revenue Service data and analyzed giving based not just on donors' earnings but also on their investment assets. People older than 65 with $10-million or more in income donated 1.54% of their investment assets to charity, while people younger than 35 who had that much in income donated 0.4% of their investment assets, on average, the study says. People who earn $10-million or more and had no dependents were more generous than peers who had dependents.

Younger people of more modest means tended to give a greater share of their assets to charity. For instance, young people with incomes of $75,000 to $99,999 donated 1.8% of their assets, compared with older philanthropists, who gave just 0.9% of their assets. About 130 million taxpayers gave a total of $148.4 billion to charity in 2003, the period covered in the IRS data used for the report. In almost every income category, single women and single men were equally generous when their gifts were calculated as a share of assets. Though single women earned less than single men, their assets were higher.

Info: www.newtithing.org

GRANT TIP 31: Develop Grant-Writing Plan; It's the Glue that Holds Everything

Dear Grant Guru: "How important is it to develop a grant-writing plan. Isn't that just a bunch of time wasted that could be better spent in actually writing grants?"

Grant Guru: Oh goodness no! Still a good question because a grant-writing plan is an often overlooked, but important document in your grant-seeking search. For advice on this, we turn to Waddy Thompson, author of the *Complete Idiot's Guide to Grant Writing*. Thompson is director of external affairs for the New York Foundation for the Arts, where he oversees fund-raising activities from individuals, foundations, corporations and government sources, bringing in $5 million a year.

First, let's try to understand the nature of a grant-writing plan. It's essentially a funding blueprint into which you insert your research and input from program staff. This you use as a chart through the grant-writing process, Thompson says.

"What could possibly be more boring than developing a grant-writing plan?" Thompson asks. "Plenty. How about writing a summary of the CPA association's changes in accounting rules."

But seriously, you would be surprised to find out how helpful it will be to assimilate all the information you've gathered into the plan, Thompson says. Your ideas about a proposal will coalesce and any omissions in research, program descriptions or budgets will become obvious.

Forming a plan also provides a mechanism for working with the program staff, Thompson says. "They will appreciate knowing what's expected of them and when," he says. "A grant-writing plan will also involve working with finance and executive staff and possible board members. You are the glue that holds that together," he says.

Articulating the Program

Before you can do anything else, you must know what you need to raise the money for, he says, and this means working with the program staff. Schedule time with the senior people involved in the program to discuss what they have in mind. Keep in mind that most program people—those who actually perform the services for which you are seeking funds—won't probably understand what the heck your job is or how you work. It's just a fact of nonprofit life, Thompson says. "Do your best to educate them, but be prepared for misunderstandings," he says and "make sure the program staff understand that there is flexibility with any funding request." At this meeting, come prepared with a list of questions that you will have to address in writing any proposal.

Here is a sample:

1. What is the program's mission?
2. How does your organization's history fit with the program's mission?
3. Why is the program needed?
4. Who will the program serve?
5. How will the program be run and who exactly (by name) will be running it?
6. How will the program be evaluated and what goals must be met for it to be considered a success?

When seeking answers for these questions, don't be content with hearing about what will happen over the next 12 months, Thompson says. Get the program staff to lay out for you a three-year plan. Even though they will not be able to give you very specific information, by forcing them to think beyond the one-year time frame, you will get a clearer picture of how the program will function.

Developing a Three-Year Funding Plan

Funders commonly ask you to address how you will pay for the program after their support ends.

If you don't know what will happen programmatically in the second and third years, you can't know very much about cost or viability. Asking the program staff for a three-year budget may throw them for a loop, but you may be able to construct a rough budget with help from the finance staff. Just be sure that the program staff has a chance to review the proposal's three-year plan before you use it with a funder, Thompson says. And, if the program is intended to grow in future years, this is a good place to note that too, he says.

Info: Dawn Werk, Alpha Books Dawn.Werk@pearsoned.com

GRANT TIP 32: Funding Tips: First Choice Guidance Pertinent for All Grant Seekers

The First Choice Power Fund, the giving effort of an electric supplier, focuses funding on TX schools, but it offers funding tips that can be helpful for anyone writing grant applications.

The organization provides the following 9 tips, including additional insights, which can help improve all submissions.

Convince your reviewer that your idea will make a difference: Winning applications should have one common characteristic--the proposed idea becomes alive to the grant reviewers.

Receive feedback from someone not in your field: Most grant review teams aren't from your field, so avoid acronyms or terms that may not be understood by the general public.

Don't wait until the last minute: Start preparing applications early. This will give you time to get your questions answered and resolve any unexpected problems.

Use spelling- and grammar-check tools: Treat the application like a job resume, making sure to proofread and spell check.

Select a title that captures your idea and the grant reviewer's imagination: Examples from past First Choice applicants include:

- Fishes of the Ditches and Other Curious Creatures.
- SLOPS: School Lunch-waste Organic Project Stewards.
- When am I Ever Going to Use Science?
- Going to the Birds.
- Kids Dig Dinosaurs.
- H2O Ole6.

Write strong objective statements: Consider using SMART objectives:

- **S** (Specific).
- **M (**Measurable).
- **A** (Achievable).
- **R** (Relevant).
- **T** (Time-bound).

If not computer savvy, seek technical assistance: Many organizations are requiring online applications, so becoming familiar with the computer is crucial. When preparing online applications, create project description, objectives, evaluation and community awareness sections in a separate document. Cut and paste these sections into the application. Once the information is posted, check for format changes.

Confirm that your e-mail address is listed correctly: With online applications, information on the status of a grant is provided via e-mail, so make sure the correct address is listed.

More is not always better: State the idea and get to the point quickly.

Info: For more on the fund, please visit www.grantsandfunding.net/docs/5221 and click on the link provided

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PART III: USEFUL FOR BOTH

GRANT TIP 33: You Can't Operate Unless There's Cash In the Coffers

Dear Grant Guru: "We are a new start-up and have just begun to organize our fundraising efforts. Any tips on where to begin?"

Grant Guru: Good Question. You can't do anything unless there is cash in the coffers. For advice, we turn to David H. Bangs, Jr., an expert at improving the management of small business and nonprofits and author of "*Nonprofits Made Easy*."

"Cash, as they say, is king," Bangs says. "Without it you can't provide the programs and services that your nonprofit is designed to provide. Where do you get the necessary cash? It all starts with fundraising, he says.

It all begins easily enough. First comes a case statement, a short (one or two pages) written statement that lets prospects know what you intend to do with their donations. This is not the "elevator speech" (that 30-second spiel designed primarily to spark interest). Instead, a case statement is much longer and detailed.

"The overriding purpose of the case statement is to persuade the potential donor to open his or her checkbook and make a donation to your nonprofit," Bangs says.

To make it more effective, personalize the case statement, he says. Sometimes this is called seeking a "poster child" for the organization.

The giving decision is ultimately based on emotion, not on pure reason alone, he notes. Accordingly, you want to put a face on your organization's beneficiaries, he says. An after-school program will help a young woman avoid trouble or a dental program will help children have healthy teeth and gums, he says. "Paint a picture with realistic people receiving important benefits, "he says, "that makes the case personal. It also makes it more exciting."

You will naturally slant the statement toward the people you are wooing, he says. This does not mean the case statement is entirely plastic; most of it will be constant. But in the process, he notes, you can emphasize facts and numbers to the analytically inclined, the emotional tugs to the sensitive and the prestige of donating to those who need reassurance that they will be joining a select group. "This is not cynical, by the way" he says, "just smart selling."

Individual Solicitations

Getting funds for a new nonprofit is very similar to getting funds for a new for-profit venture, he says. Traditionally, you begin by investing your own assets. Then you turn to the three Fs: *family, friends and fanatics.*

Why you would invest in your own nonprofit is self-evident. And, it should also be appealing to your family and friends. The third group of start-up nonprofit investors—fanatics—see the same social benefits that drive your ideas, he says.

"Part of your job as a fundraiser is to identify those persons and organizations likely to be interested in the programs and services that you offer," he says. "Asking people for a donation to a nonprofit that has no interest to them is folly."

Targeting a small number of potential donors is anefficient way to focus your efforts. Further, make personalized appeals to your core supporters, he says.

The most efficient method of reaching your core supporters is by visiting them individually, he says, but, before you go, rehearse what you plan to do. Winging it just won't do for most of us, he says.

"The beauty of this personal visit is that you will be forming a relationship with the individual," he says.

Info: David Bangs has been helping improve management of small businesses and nonprofits from more than 20 years. *Nonprofits Made Easy* is published by Entrepreneur Media, Inc.

GRANT TIP 34: If You Want to Score With Funders, Develop Measurement Strategies

Dear Grant Guru: "How important is it to develop measures that we can use to gauge the effectiveness of our work. Is this something that funders really look for?"

Grant Guru: It's quite important and is increasingly a critical part of most funding applications. For this question, we turn to Katie Krueger, an eight year veteran of grant writing. Nonprofits that serve children and youth are often so busy running new programs, searching for additional funding, and managing daily operations that they overlook one of the most crucial steps in a grant funding plan: measuring the effectiveness of their work, Krueger says. This is an essential step because all grant proposals require measurable objectives and scrutinize applicants to be sure their methods of success evaluation are reliable. In addition, quantifying the impact of your work will illustrate very concretely to a funder how an investment in your organization will pay off. By quantifying the success that your work has today, you will help yourself get more funding in the future, Krueger says.

These five methods of measuring success can be used for almost any program. The important thing to remember is to plan ahead. All of these are most effective when they are built into the program and administered at intervals rather than only at the end.

1) Questionnaire: Quite simply, ask participants whether or not they are enjoying a benefit from the program in a written questionnaire. Ask them to describe what changes they have made because of what your work has given to them.

This should be a combination of open-ended questions (e.g. How has your attitude about school changed since participating in the Fit Kids Program?) and checklists with standard answers. The latter allows you to draw conclusions from the group as a whole (e.g. 85% of participants feel more enthusiastic about science after participation in Invention Days).

2) Pre/Post Survey: Some changes are not obvious to program participants, so you may want to survey their behavior and attitudes multiple times: before they start the program, after the program has ended and at any interval in between. Asking the same questions each time allows you to measure change very clearly. For example, if the goal of your community basketball program is to get more youth to exercise, ask questions about how many times per week they exercise before they begin in your program. If the number has gone up the next time you give them the survey, you can measure the change.

3) Collecting Data: Look at measurable data related to the change you want to effect. Body weight is a one measure of physical health. Classroom grades are a measure of academic performance. Number of detentions each month indicates how well a student is behaving in school.

4) Participant Interviews: Sit down with children you serve one-on-one and ask them questions about how the program has helped them succeed. This is different from a written survey because there is the opportunity for the students to offer additional information if prompted. They can also offer constructive criticism about the program and clarify anything that is unclear or confusing to the interviewer.

5) Focus Groups: This is just like an interview but the participants are in a group and can hear one another's response. The benefit can be a synergistic effect that causes epiphanies that would not otherwise have reached. On the other hand, if you are discussing a sensitive or potentially embarrassing topic, participants may withhold honest responses.

Use these measures to evaluate a change that is relevant and easily attributable to your work. For example, if your program is a science club for students, it is appropriate measure their knowledge of and attitudes about science. You may also measure their general attitude about school, because you can argue that enthusiasm for one subject would spread to others. Showing funders you are committed to periodically checking the course that your program is on and making necessary adjustments will convince them that you are headed towards success, she says.

Info: Katie Krueger has eight years experience writing grants both as a consultant and a full-time employee. Her clients have included nonprofits, international non-governmental

organizations, and schools. Currently, she is currently the Grant Writer/Resource Development Manager at Sun Prairie Area School District in Sun Prairie, WI. She is the creator and editor of *Find Funding Magazine*, an online magazine for grant writers. She also teaches a community course, *Find Funding: Introduction to Grant Writing*, at the U. of Wisconsin Union. You can reach her online at www.FindFunding.net or by email at katie@findfunding.net

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GRANT TIP 35: The Money is Out There: Five Good, Simple Fundraising Strategies

Dear Grant Guru: "Is it just me, or does it seem to be getting harder to win grants these days?"

Grant Guru: No, it's not just you. That seems a pretty common refrain we hear almost every day. Pretty much every week, we note the passing of reliable private funding sources that either take a sabbatical or permanently stop accepting unsolicited applications. And, the dearth of federal funding drives even more grants seekers to troll for money by diving into the private funding stream.

However, all the news isn’t bad. The overall giving pattern seems to be on the upswing; so the challenge for grants writers is to find the right source of money for their programs. This month for advice we turn to Joe Mizereck, co-founder of the Web site, GrantsAlert.com. They launched the Web site as a way to help financially strapped teachers and schools who are trying to fill the gaps created by state, federal and local budget cuts.

“The single biggest problem facing grant writers today is the growing competition for limited funds, and this struggle is only going to get worse,” Mizereck says. Planning is important, he says.

“But, it's not a matter of planning once the announcement is made,” Mizereck says. “It really has to begin months before. Being prepared to respond quickly is critical.

This is especially true with government opportunities where the window is only open for 30-50 days. If you lose this year, immediately begin working on next year's proposal.”

Top Five Tips for Successful Fundraising

It’s easy to boost funding for your school or organization with successful fundraising programs like Scratchcards, candy bars, lollipops, cookie dough and magazines, Mizereck says.

Here are Mizereck’s top five tips for getting the most out of your fundraiser:

Tip #1 - Start Planning Early

The competition out there can be severe, so as we said at the beginning, plan early. Especially if you’re working with a large group like an entire school, it’s always a good idea to start planning a few months in advance. When you start early, you have the opportunity to look around at the different programs available, determine the best option for your group, and organize your volunteers around your chosen fundraiser, Mizereck says.

Tip #2 - Combine Programs

Combining different programs gives you the opportunity to get even more support by giving supporters choices. Some great fundraiser combinations are lollipops and beef snacks, cookie dough and the online magazine fundraiser, and candy bars and Scratchcards.

Tip #3 - Look for Quality Products at Bargain Prices

Buying products in bulk from a fundraising company means you’re usually getting a much lower price than you would in a store, but shop around to be sure you’re getting the highest quality for your dollar.

Tip #4 - Kick Off Your Campaign

A proper campaign kick-off achieves two things: it informs your participants, and motivates them. Hold your kick-off event with great enthusiasm and your excitement will rub off on your participants. They'll be excited too, and your fundraiser will run strong from start to finish.

Also be sure to inform participants of how the fundraiser will run, and encourage them to ask questions so that everyone is in the know, Mizereck says.

Tip #5 - Prize Programs

Prizes, gifts and rewards are great motivators that can play a big role in keeping participants active throughout your fundraiser. Some programs, like cookie dough and gift brochures, come with free prize programs for qualified groups. On the other hand, it's fairly easy to develop your prize program.

This could include such things as small gifts to reward sales, a group party when the fundraising goal is reached, large prizes or rewards for top sellers, or a big prize draw at the end of the campaign, Mizereck says.

Be Quick on the Draw

He notes that it helps to be a little quicker on the draw than your competitors.

"The opportunities are out there, but with the competition being so fierce," Mizereck says, "your approach has to be top quality...and this takes time and smart work."

Info: www.grantsalert.com/fall_fundraising.cfm

GRANT TIP 36: Grant Experts: Can't Compete? Collaborate

When seeking grants, collaboration increasingly is becoming the way to go, say two grant writers who themselves have collaborated many times in the past.

Increasing numbers of federal, state, foundation and corporate funders favor—sometimes even require—collaborative efforts, say Candra Parker and Dawn Farrell-Moore, who together have more than 20 years' experience in fundraising and grant writing in the behavioral health field. They met while working together to drum up drug court money in Richmond, VA.

Put simply, with fewer available dollars to give, "funders want to get more bang for their buck," Parker says.

At the outset, this can be frustrating for groups that face a hard enough time without having to share grant funds with somebody else, but Parker says collaboration actually can be a boon for smaller organizations that need a little edge in getting recognized by funders.

And with more than one group involved, projects can make a bigger impact and provide greater force than otherwise would occur, they say.

In many cases, several community groups are trying to address the same problem in different ways, so "why not come together on it," Parker says. To do this, she says, "you really need to know your community to identify those gaps in services."

Collaboration as a process

For those thinking about collaborating, it's important to remember that it's a process, says Farrell-Moore. "And there's a lot of funky stuff that goes into it," she jokes to a group at a conference of the Nat'l Assn. of Drug Court Professionals.

Ideally, groups should start courting potential partners before a grant even is in the picture, she says. Develop an "information file" on prospective partners, she suggests. This can include information on the size and type of the agency, the services it provides, its strategic goals, the geographic area it serves, and the phone number and e-mail address of the contact or grants person. And groups can get to know prospective partners by participating in forums, coalitions and professional organizations, she says.

It really helps to know the personalities ahead of time, and it helps to know their agencies' specific priorities and programs. "Do it now," Parker adds. "Consensus takes a lot of time… and I think you get the sincerest people if you start without the money on the table."

Preparing the grant

After deciding on a partnership with one or more other agencies or organizations, Parker says, there are several things grant coordinators can do to improve the partnership's chances of success in winning the grant:

- Meet one-on-one with prospective partners. Do this before the big meeting of all involved. Do the research, ask the tough questions, and identify and avoid potential turf wars.

- Identify program components and experts on those components. Get input from the players involved to sketch out the program and determine where strengths and expertise lie. Use those strengths to build the program and establish players' roles.

- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Or a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This clearly outlines each partner's responsibilities and includes appropriate signatures and letters of support. When they know what's expected of them, Parker explains, "it makes it easier for people to sign on the dotted line." And overall, she says, an MOU "kind of takes it to another level." With the plans and signatures in place, the commitment is there. And, importantly, this should include an understanding of which partner should be the lead applicant and have primary fiscal responsibility

- Maintain proper communication throughout the process. To do this, Parker says the grant coordinator/facilitator should do several things: meet at least on a monthly basis; make sure that high-level decision-makers are engaged from the beginning; be upfront about anything that possibly could go wrong and address it; establish and stick to a common timeline; send out reminders over and over again; and build in lots of time for review and approval.

And if partners aren't willing or say they don't have the time to make these kinds of commitments, Parker says, that may be a sign to look elsewhere. "I don't care how busy you are," she says. "If that person is too busy, then they're not a good partner."

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GRANT TIP 37: Measure Today's Success and Win More Grants Tomorrow

Nonprofits that serve children and youth are often so busy running new programs, searching for additional funding, and managing daily operations that they overlook one of the most crucial steps in a grant funding plan: measuring the effectiveness of their work. This is an essential step because all grant proposals require measurable objectives and scrutinize applicants to be sure their methods of success evaluation are reliable. In addition, quantifying the impact of your work will illustrate very concretely to a funder how an investment in your organization will pay off. By quantifying the success that your work has today, you will help yourself get more funding in the future. The following five methods of measuring success can be used for almost any program. The important thing to remember is to plan ahead. All of these are most effective when they are built into the program and administered at intervals rather than only at the end of the program.

Questionnaire: Quite simply, ask participants whether or not they are enjoying a benefit from the program in a written questionnaire. Ask them to describe what changes they have made because of what your work has given to them. This should be a combination of open-ended questions (e.g. How has your attitude about healthy living since participating in obesity program?) and checklists with standard answers. The latter allows you to draw conclusions from the group as a whole (e.g. 85% of participants have lost weight and have more energy).

Pre/Post Survey: Some changes are not obvious to program participants, so you may want to survey their behavior and attitudes multiple times: before they start the program, after the program has ended and at any interval in between. Asking the same questions each time allows you to measure change very clearly. For example, if the goal of your community healthcare program is manage more patients with chronic illnesses, ask questions about how they are taking their medications and how regularly the are getting tested. If the number has gone up the next time you give them the survey, you can measure the change.

Collecting Data: Look at measurable data related to the change you want to effect. Body weight is a one measure of physical health.

Participant Interviews: Sit down with patients you serve one-on-one and ask them questions about how the program has helped their health. This is different from a written survey because there is the opportunity for patients to offer additional information if prompted. They can also offer constructive criticism about the healthcare program and clarify anything that is unclear or confusing to the interviewer.

Focus Groups: This is just like an interview but the participants are in a group and can hear one another's response. The benefit can be a synergistic effect that causes epiphanies that would not otherwise have reached. On the other hand, if you are discussing a sensitive or potentially embarrassing topic, participants may withhold honest responses.

Use these measures to evaluate a change that is relevant and easily attributable to your work. For example, if you offer a mental health program, it is appropriate measure how patients are progressing.

Determine what to measure by reviewing your goals and objectives and the behavior, attitude, or knowledge associated with them. Writing these measurements into your work plan from the beginning will save you time and energy at the end of your program.

Results from the above methods reveal what areas you are succeeding in and where you need to make improvements. Showing funders you are committed to periodically checking the course that your program is on and making necessary adjustments will convince them that you are headed towards success.

Info: Katie Krueger has eight years experience writing grants both as a consultant and a full-time employee. Her clients have included nonprofits, international non-governmental organizations, and schools. Currently, she is currently the Grant Writer/Resource Development Manager at Sun Prairie Area School District in Sun Prairie, WI. She is the creator and editor of Find Funding Magazine, an online magazine for grant writers. She also teaches a community course, Find Funding: Introduction to Grant Writing, at the University of Wisconsin Union. You can reach her online at www.FindFunding.net or by email at katie@findfunding.net

GRANT TIP 38: Make It Easy For Reviewers

Chris Fowler and Vanessa Davis, program directors for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, have put together and informative and valuable paper offering real-world grant writing tips for nonprofits.

Even before applying for a particular grant they suggest a grant seeker really do some soul searching and answers the following questions first about potential grant partners:

- What does my organization need out of this partnership?
- Does the partner compliment my organization's strengths?
- Does the partner have the capacity and expertise to lend credibility to the proposal project?
- Does the partner have the same larger goals in common with my organization and the proposal?

Once a partner is chosen, or if a nonprofit decides to go it alone in applying for the grant, Fowler and Davis offer concrete tips for completing each component of the proposal.

The Problem Statement

If the project abstract provides the reviewer with an overview of your proposal, the Problem Statement begins to make the case for why your proposal should be funded. The Problem Statement is a key element that presents the reason for the proposal.

Some general tips to take into consideration when writing the Problem Statement include:

- Zero in on the specific problem you want to solve
- Do not make assumptions about the reviewers (i.e. use language that is understandable by non-experts)
- Make a connection between your organization and the problem
- Make a case for your project locally as well as statewide
    - Demonstrate your knowledge of the problem
    - Use accurate, current, and specific information to support your claims rather than general language.

The Budget

Fowler and Davis emphasize that the budget is a much maligned portion of the proposal, yet it can make or break a proposal's chances of being funded.

Although your budget is an estimate, it should be as reliable and exact of an estimate as possible.

Funding agencies will make a funding decision based on your budget; there is no money available if you go over your budget.

If your proposal is funded, it will be possible to request some limited funding changes within reason.

However, the more exact your budget and the clearer it is that you have taken possible extenuating circumstances under consideration, the more reviewers are likely to award points to your budget. When preparing your budget, consider these issues:

- Be specific. Although you do not have to calculate to the penny, neither should you round up to the nearest hundred or thousand dollars.
- Just as your figures should be specific, so should your budget categories. Do not include "miscellaneous" or" contingency" lines. This shows reviewers that you did not spend the time to carefully plan and research your budget.
- Follow the budget directions in the RFP very carefully. Make sure that you are not including funding for items that cannot be funded through the grant. Make sure that you provide all of the information requested on the budget form.
- Expect that reviewers will be looking at if the proposal can be accomplished within this budget, if the costs are reasonable for the current and projected market, if the budget is a consistent budget with the proposed activities, and if the is sufficiently detailed to explain the proposed costs.

General Writing Tips

In addition, Fowler and Davis say that an error free, well-written proposal indicates the level of professionalism and detail orientation that a project staff is likely to have.

By that same token, a sloppy, vague proposal indicates a project staff that has not done their homework and does not have the level of detail and meticulousness to administer a large-scale project.

Careful reviewing of your proposal by several people is extremely important. These internal reviewers should not only consider the content of the proposal, but they should also read for grammatical, typographical, and other kinds of errors.

Some specific things to avoid include:

- passive voice
- unsupported assumptions and generalities
- technical jargon
- acronyms that have not first been defined
- redundancy
- lack of citations for statistics and quotations

Additionally, Fowler and Davis say grant writers should consider the following writing plan suggested by the Nat'l Institutes for Health.

- Start with an outline and follow the organization carefully throughout the proposal.
- Write a topic sentence for each main topic:
- Make one major point in each paragraph. This is key for readability and scanability. State the main point in a topic sentence, usually the first one, and then support it with more information in the next few sentences. Paragraphs serve two purposes-- they aggregate similar information together and break up the page for the reader.
- Divide information into sections in order to give the reader a break. Use headers that, together with your paragraphs, provide white space and helps the reader stay focused.
- Use short sentences with a basic sentence structure: subject, verb, object. Break up long sentences and avoid lengthy introductory and parenthetical phrases. Try to keep sentences around 20 words.
- Include transitions from section to the next. At the beginning of a new paragraph or concept, make a transition to your next point by relating it to your previous point. Focus on showing relationships between your ideas and pieces of information.
- Keep related ideas and information together. Make sure to put clauses and phrases as close as possible to the words they modify.
- Use strong, active verbs
- Use verbal instead of abstract nouns. Turn dull, abstract nouns ending in "ion" and "ment" into verbs. For example, say "creating the assay leads to..." rather than "the creation of the assay leads to."

If you don't feel confident in your writing, get help!

Make Life Easy for Reviewers

Finally, Fowler and Davis remind grant writers that reviewers will be looking at 8-10 applications within about a two week period. This means that after a while, proposals will begin to run together. As reviewers grow tired, it is especially important to make it easy on them. Some ways that you can make your proposal user-friendly include:

- Label all material clearly
- Keep the information short and simple
- Use graphics to organize information where appropriate
- Proofread, proofread, proofread

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GRANT TIP 39: Ben B. Cheney Foundation Offers Tips for Grant Seekers

The Ben B. Cheney Foundation, which supports community health care projects in the Tacoma, WA area, offers the following cogent tips and advice for grant seekers:

1. **Focus on what the project will accomplish.** Accomplishments impact people and communities. For example, constructing a new building is not an accomplishment in itself. The building is only a tool for accomplishing some bigger goal for the community—helping homeless people leave the street or reducing juvenile crime by providing a safe environment for children after school.

2. **Explain how the foundation's grant would complement your organization's usual sources of operating revenue.** The grants made by all U.S. foundations compose less than 10% of all nonprofit revenues. Within that context, such grants should complement the usual and customary revenues that support the organization's annual operating budget. For example, a start-up grant may help a program operate in the first few years as it strives to acquire those usual and customary revenues. In evaluating such a proposal, foundations look both at the needs for a new program as well as the plan for the program to attain those planned revenues.

3. **Proposal letters should summarize fully developed proposals.** Sometimes, foundations receive proposal letters that summarize ideas for proposals rather than fully developed proposals. Such letters create the impression that the writer wants to test an idea, and if the idea receives a positive response, a full proposal will be developed. This approach has two problems. First, the most compelling letters are ones that summarize full proposals because such letters convey a

sense of depth and knowledge about the project. Testing an idea with a proposal letter usually results in a presentation that lacks such depth. Second, if a proposal letter fails to fully answer some key questions, a foundation's staff will often call the organization. If the letter is based upon a fully developed proposal the organization usually has a good answer to the question(s) raised. If the letter is only testing an idea, follow-up questions usually create more questions because the organization hasn't fully developed the proposal.

4. **Proposal letters must provide timely contact information.** When a grant seeker mails a proposal letter his or her greatest hope is that it the foundation will respond positively to it. So as a grant writer completes their proposal letter, they should ask themselves if the letter clearly identifies a contact person for follow-up questions, or for scheduling a site or an office visit. A foundation's staff will usually contact the person who signed the letter if there is no other contact information provided. That may create a problem if the proposal letter is signed by a key volunteer that cannot be contacted through the telephone number(s) provided on the letterhead. Preferably the last paragraph of the proposal letter should include the contact information. In a small, volunteer-run organization this might be a board member. Nonprofits with staff should always provide contact information for the executive director and/or the development director.

5. **Be prepared for your reporting responsibilities.** The first step to an organization's next grant is its reporting on a current grant. When a nonprofit receives a grant it should make sure that it plans for update reports to all donors. Some foundations prefer reports in a letter. The narrative should outline both the progress toward the program objectives outlined in the formal application and an update on the budget submitted with the formal application. Reports should be made at least every six months until the project is completed.

6. **Remember that an organization's budget is only a plan.** While budgets are important, they are only tools for understanding bigger issues. An organization's proposal letter should outline the problem/opportunity the organization wants to address and how it plans to approach the situation. Naturally, that raises the question, "What resources does the organization need for this project?" A budget is a tool for answering that question. In addition, no budget is complete without an income portion. This portion of the budget explains how the organization plans to garner the resources it needs for the project. Often this is the most difficult portion of the budget. Proposal letters only need to summarize the budget information with figures such as total project cost, the plan for raising needed resources and a request for a specific amount.

7. **Consider the timing of requests within the context of several years.** As the number of requests to a foundation grows, there is an effort to increase the time period between consecutive grants. If an organization has a major project coming up in a year or two that it believes would be of interest to a foundation, the organization may want to refrain from making other grant requests until that time. Foundations generally want to see 20 to 24 months between when a grant has been made and the submission of another proposal letter.

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GRANT TIP 40: The Most Important Dos and Don'ts of Grantwriting

Whether a grant writer is a novice or an experienced pro, there are certain dos and don't of grant writing that either greatly improve or diminish an agency's or nonprofit's chances of success.

Seasoned consultant Karen Goldman and Kathleen Schmalz of College of Mount St. Vincent of New York have compiled the following grant writing dos and don'ts that any grant writer should carefully consider before preparing a proposal:

- **Cover Letter**: Do describe the content of the proposal; do commit to following up on the proposal with a visit or a phone call; do address it to a specific person – the correct person and make sure to spell their name correctly. Don't let just anybody in your nonprofit sign it. Get the person in highest authority. Don't use it as a substitute for an abstract or summary. Don't show off your knowledge of the funder's interest areas. Don't beg to be funded, just politely ask.

- **Abstract/Summary**: Do identify target group; do describe the need, problem or issue; do describe a proposed solution; do discuss the importance of the project; do describe the project's anticipated results, and do state total cost, funds committed and the amount requested. Don't put the summary at the end. In addition, don't forget to describe your organization with one sentence on credibility, one sentence on objectives, and one sentence on methods.

- **Introduction:** Do establish who is applying for the funds; do describe your agency's or nonprofit's purpose and goals; do describe the agency's or nonprofit's programs and clients; do provide evidence of accomplishment, including statistics; do include references and the support of others, and do lead into the problem statement. Don't include jargon; don't bore the reader; don't go on endlessly, don't lose the logic of your argument.

- **Need:** Do show involvement of beneficiaries: do state needs in terms of project participants or beneficiaries; do describe how needs were identified; do support needs statements with statistical and statements from authoritative sources; do link needs and proposed solutions to the goals of your agency. Don't plagiarize or use others' words; don't try to resolve needs of unreasonable dimensions; don't make unsupported claims or argue for unsubstantiated need; don't make assumptions or use jargon, and don't be vague or boring.

- **Plan of Operation**: Do define challenging but achievable outcomes; do collaborate with other agencies or nonprofits when possible; do show how objectives and methods meet needs; do demonstrate community involvement in planning; do include a project design, which is a broad picture of your project and what you want to accomplish. In addition, do include goals, which should be broad, general statements that come out of the needs assessment. Also, do include long-range benefits your organization hopes to attain. Don't ignore the private sector; don't propose unreasonable scope of activities or unrealistic timelines.

- **Key Personnel**: Do describe the experience, education and training or project staff as they relate to proposed responsibilities; do match personnel to project design content; do justify staff; do specify staff time allocated to jobs; summarize resumes in narrative and include full resumes in appendix. Don't propose full-time staff for responsibilities that appear part-time; don't propose to use grant funds for salaries, without considering the recurring expensed that occur after the grant ends; don't appear to be relying on only new staff for the program.

- **Evaluation**: Do identify evaluator selection process; do include an evaluation procedure to address each objective; do describe data gathering methods and timelines; do describe data analysis, do explain how findings will be used to modify the project during the grant period afterwards. Don't omit criteria for success; don't say the evaluation plan will be developed after the grant is awarded; don't propose an evaluation plan that doesn't relate to your objectives; don't merely state that an evaluator will be hired to take care of the evaluation, and don't assume you must do the evaluation yourself, because independent evaluators are often preferred.

- **Applicant's Commitment and Capacity**: Do indicate that the organization intends to continue at least some aspects of the project after grant funding ends; do discuss institutionalization plans, and do describe special expertise or equipment available. Don't assume reviewers know about your agency or nonprofit; don't be vague about previous experiences with similar projects, and don't minimize in-kind contributions.

- **Budget and Cost Effectiveness:** Do let the budget reflect exactly what your nonprofit proposes in the narrative; do provide all information, including salary rate, percent of time for salary, fringe benefits, mileage rates for travel, per diem rates and honorarium rates; do include all items for which funding is requested and items paid by other sources. Finally, do describe benefits to target groups in terms of estimated costs. Don't introduce any unexplained or unexpected items; don't request unexplained amounts, such as contingency funds; don't inflate the budget by requesting more than you need, and don't request major equipment purchases that are not justified by the project.

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GRANT TIP 41: Justice Official Pinpoints Opportunities

A Justice Dept. (DOJ) official says that youth-focused nonprofits need to focus on both federal and private funding sources to ensure a healthy stream of grants.

At a recent American Federation of Teachers conference, Scott Peterson, a program manager for DOJ's Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency (OJJDP), provides a laundry list of potential funding opportunities for programs focusing on youths, especially those at-risk.

DOJ provides a bevy of grants, with info available on the OJJDP site (visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3283 and click on the link provided) and at the Office of Justice Web site (visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3284 and click on the link provided).

The Web site for the White House Faith-Based & Community Initiatives Office is another wealth of information, Peterson says. The site (visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3285) provides info on grants in 177 categories.

On the foundation front, Peterson says state bar associations and foundations are great sources of funding for special projects at the state and county level. A list of state bar associations is available at www.cdpublications.com/docs/3286 (click on link provided).

The Nat'l Network of Grantmakers (visit www.cdpublications/com/docs/3287 and click on the link provided) offers great examples of winning applications, Peterson says.

Schoolgrants.org offers a wealth of assistance, including funding for summer programs, equipment and other supplies. Peterson says to check the site every week, because it is updated continuously, with different grant-makers highlighted. Visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3288 and click on the link for more information.

Peterson recommends these additional sites for funding and resource material opportunities.

Nat'l Assn, of Community Mediation: Visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3289 and click on the link provided.

Nat'l Assn. of Youth Service Consultants: Visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3290 and click on the link provided.

Nat'l Center for Learning & Citizenship: Visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3291 and click on the link provided.

Nat'l Crime Prevention Council: Visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3292 and click on the link provided.

Nat'l Network for Youth: Visit www.cdpublications.com/docs/3293 and click on the link provided.

Info: Peterson, 202/616-2368; e-mail, scott.peterson2@usdoj.gov

PART IV: PARTNERSHIPS

GRANT TIP 42: Getting By With A Little Help from Your Friends

Both federal and private funders are increasingly looking for partnerships. A New Jersey Education Dept. official says grant partnerships have are crucial to schools and nonprofits, providing guidance on how to use them to your benefit.

She estimates partnerships are required for about half of today's grants, and besides it makes sense to pool resources. Partnerships help out both parties—and as is almost always the case, two heads are better than one.

What does a good partnership entail? A good partnership provides mutual benefits to both groups; without mutual gains there is no incentive for one side to put forth equal effort, she says. Having a good partner also brings new enthusiasm and interest to the project in the form of cooperation. One thing often forgotten, she says, is the publicity each partner gains from its involvement.

Who makes good partners? The best places to look for partnerships are schools, individuals, businesses, government agencies and foundations. Many times other groups can lend experience to the project.

Who are some specific possible partners? Start with local businesses already involved in community activities, branching out to national businesses and associations. The Gates Foundation, Nat'l Science Foundation, America Online's grant division and other entities receiving federal and state funding are large organizations heavily involved in education.

When should we approach? As soon as possible, says O'Neil. Don't waste any time; identify partners with similar needs and interests as quickly as possible. Meet with potential partners immediately and include them in every facet of the grant process—from preparing your abstract to writing progress reports.

Any key points? Always talk to as many people as you can about your project; tell them what you are doing and what your goals are. Even if they are unable to help you, they may be able to introduce you to someone who can. Always clearly explain to potential partners why it is you want to partner with them, "butter them up" and tell them some of your past experiences and successes. You are selling a project, so do it with enthusiasm, says O'Neil. Don't forget to look into having more than one partner—large consortia help leverage vendors, often giving the group access to free or reduced-price hardware or software.

Some other tips? When you share resources, remember you can share everything, she says. Partners can share presenters, technical assistance, funding and even personnel. Always remember networking is the best way to find new and unusual partners, and attending conferences is the best way find others with similar goals. And finally, look toward your local and state politicians, says O'Neil. They have connections throughout the state and community and like to have opportunities to brag about success in schools.

It's Never Too Early To Start Looking

A grant consultant says it's never too early to start preparing for a grant cycle, especially when it comes to aligning yourself with productive partners.

The consultant has written more than 200 successful grant proposals and says the biggest barrier to a successful collaboration is not allowing enough time to find the right partner. A year before the grant cycle opens is not too soon to begin looking for a partner, he says.

Don't look for the obvious partner, he adds. Limiting yourself to your own short-distance geographic range narrows the options for a working partner. He recommends increasing the scale of a project by working outside of your immediate community. Think about the specifics of a project and then find a partner who can supply the resources to fill the need.

The Internet, E-mail and fax eliminate the need to limit yourself to working with partners within a half-hour drive, says Gershowitz. Technology companies, businesses, educational institutions or school districts, government agencies, cultural groups and civic organizations are excellent sources, Gershowitz says.

The keys to finding the right partner are research to find possible collaborators, orienting them with the project and selling them on the idea. He also says getting a commitment in writing—not just orally—gives you the option of attaching a written commitment of contribution to the initial proposal, enabling the grant reader to see concrete support.

Info: http://www.state.nj.us/education/

GRANT TIP 43: Don't Just Apply; Use Details To Build Grant Partnerships

Jon Hardie of the Nellie Mae Foundation knows a lot about nonprofits. Some of his top grantwriting tips and strategies include:

- Start by writing a concise, focused, bulleted statement of your project's specific goals, including who, what, when, where, why and how much. Limit it to one page each for your project description and goals, action plan and implementation timetable plus a detailed line item budget including cash flow. Now ask 10 friends to read it. If it doesn't make sense to them without additional explanation, it won't make sense to the funder.

- How will those needing services find you? How can the community support you if you keep it a secret? Describe how are you going to assess and measure community needs and involve your project stakeholders—board, staff, clients, other agencies—in marketing your project to the larger community.

- Nonprofits need more than good ideas. Grantmakers often say they have no dearth of good ideas. It's the lack of a realistic, measurable implementation plan that often gets in the way. Critical to obtaining funding is defined and measured needs, clear goals, plus time-based and measurable objectives.

- Not only must your goals be achievable, they must be measurable. Don't wait until the end of the grant to see if you got it right. You'll want to report your incremental achievements as you go along. What will you do and when will you do it by? Benchmarks that are realistic, incremental—monthly and quarterly—quantitative and qualitative are very important.

- Grantmakers develop exceptional skill detecting and evaluating projects likely to work and those that may be fatally flawed. Try not to overstate your case, or your deliverables. Better to deliver more than expected and projected than struggle to achieve impossible objectives.

- Requesting a specific amount without clearly justifying its realistic use or specific, intended, measurable purpose guarantees rejection. You'll need complete, realistic, accurate line-item budgets and cash-flow projections (current and future) identifying ALL of your sources of income and expenses. An Excel/Lotus spreadsheet projecting that you'll deliver comprehensive services to thousands of clients on a shoestring in 12 months will not impress a funder. What will is a tough, lean, doable budget. Describe how you'll use your hard-won dollars and broad community support to deliver needed, demonstrated, well documented, well researched and unduplicated services. Five hundred meals served to 100 participants isn't 500 people served. Unduplicated counts mean you count each person you serve just once and then individual units of service to that person separately. You must keep accurate records of costs and units of service delivered, not only to demonstrate success but to meet project needs and costs accurately next year.

Make sure you ask for what you need

Don't be afraid to ask for what you really need, within the funding guidelines and limitations of the grantmaker. All the better if you can also tangibly demonstrate a broad base of shared community involvement, plus real community ownership and participation—cash, in-kind and volunteer involvement.

Detail how your project or services will be sustained after the grant runs out. The needs you have identified that you want to serve didn’t begin with the grant nor will they end when the grant runs out! How will you, proactively, as a core element of the project, build a wider donor base of community participation, ownership and investment to take up the load gradually by the end of the first, second or third year of funding?

Funders are reluctant to invest in recreating the wheel in your community. They expect you to know your community and demonstrate that knowledge. Use the Internet to check out what others have done and are doing in your community and across the country. Invite other organizations to tell you about their projects. Call and go visit. If there is a match, partner with them. Learn from their mistakes and successes.

Info: http://www.nmefdn.org/ContactUs.aspx

GRANT TIP 44: It's Not All About $$: Community Partners Can Offer Other Resources

Keeping a community effort going involves a lot more than grant money. Sure, grant money is the lifeblood of many community-based organizations, but too often the leaders of those organizations forget to strengthen all the *other* parts of the organizational circulatory system, suggest two experts at a recent fundraising workshop, and those social veins and community capillaries are what really help to keep an organization strong and healthy.

Jan Campain and Modell Bernal, from the Poudre School District Partnership Center in Fort Collins, CO, say organizations in need of more support should--instead of just filling out more and more grant applications--consider the resources that are available to them within the community itself.

And chances are, these community resources are ultimately going to be the kind that keep on giving, they explain during the workshop, held at the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA's) 2008 Nat'l Leadership Forum in Washington, DC.

What many community organizations forget is that they exist to meet important needs within the community, and that the economy and health of that community are often directly dependent on the efficacy and impact of that organization. So--especially in the case of anti-drug coalitions, disability organizations, and other efforts aimed at helping populations at risk--schools, businesses, local law enforcement, civic organizations, and others in the community all have a stake in how that organization's outcomes, suggest Bernal and Campain. Why not, then, ask them for a little help?

On top of this, "businesses *want* to be involved in community citizenship, says Bernal, who through Fort Collins' Partnership Center, helps to build mutually beneficial community partnerships every day.

However, it's important to recognize *how* businesses want to be involved, she says. "They want to be intimately involved with something that's going on in their community," however, "not in the traditional way--no handouts."

Businesses "want to be 'good community neighbors' but don't know how," Bernal and Campain say. And sometimes it just takes someone in an organization to forge a relationship with that company and connect the many--often non-monetary--things an organization needs--equipment, services, time, space, office supplies, food, transportation, etc.--with what the company is able to provide.

And, importantly, make it meaningful, they say. "Like any relationship," Campain says, a community partnership is never going to last unless there is something in it for everybody."

Approaches to the Approach

Making that initial contact can be intimidating, but it doesn't have to be once an organization gets clear about what it has to offer a potential local partner. It's easier to ask for something when you know you have something to give, Campain suggests.

"There is something in it for businesses big time," she says. "It is in their best interest to have a great, well-trained, healthy workforce." And it helps businesses to be perceived positively within the community. The company's name shows up in more places, customers are more loyal to them, and employees feel better about working there. Knowing all of this going into it "gives you confidence when you talk to people," Campain says.

Here are some approaches to initiating relationships with local partners:

Appeal to Expertise and Allow for Options--When asking business owners if they want to become involved, it's important to remember that "people want to be valued and they want options." Campain says. Businesses have a lot to offer beyond money--including a great deal of expertise--and they want to contribute in more meaningful ways, she says. "Instead of saying, 'we need $5,000,'" she explains, "we say: 'Here are our needs; how can you be involved?'" For some, it may be helpful to provide a list of several options to give them ideas. "One guy told me, 'I just sell cars,'" Campain says. "You have to make the process easy," she says, by offering suggestions such as, for example, the use of part of the lot for a car wash, advertised donations to the charity for each car sold, or even use of the showroom--complete with a display of the spiffiest cars on the lot--for an evening wine and cheese fundraiser.

Work with Focus Groups--Create a "focus group" of business leaders in the community to come together and talk about a particular issue in the community that needs addressing, then let each stakeholder suggest a role they can play in addressing that need. It can begin with a simple e-mail, Campain says, suggesting, "Let us buy you lunch; all we want is your mind." The key is, however, to make it an issue that's important to a lot of people in the community. And if its importance isn't clear, be sure and make that connection for people.

Don't Forget the Little Guys--Small business owners want to help too. In fact, many of these small companies have never been asked, even though they're often more than willing to offer up what they can--as well as make their name heard by more people. For example, in one instance, Campain says the owner of a bowling alley happily provided alley space for a special night, then donated a percentage of the proceeds when it was over. But don't forget, sometimes smaller companies need a little encouragement and a little brainstorming, Campain says. "Don't let small businesses tell you they can't do it," she says, "there are ways to work around their issues."

Invite Them to Join the Show, Already in Progress--It's natural for local partners to want to be sure their social investment is going to pay off. As a result, many are more comfortable supporting a project that's already seen a degree of success. "We've learned over the years that supporters don't want to do new things," says Campain. "They want to join you in the good work already going on." So that potential partners get the message, she says, "It is really important that you tell people what you're already doing--things you've already secured."

Maintain Connections--Remember to build *relationships* with local partners. Do this by keeping people updated with the progress of a project through phone calls, letters, and newsletters. Invite people to events. And importantly, give them options with this too. Ask them the type of communications they prefer and how they want to be recognized. All of this will help to build and maintain healthy relationships with community partners, relationships that keep on giving and benefiting everyone involved.

Info: Bernal, 970/490-3205; e-mail, mbernal@psdschools.org ; Campain, 970/490-3517; e-mail, janc@pasdschools.org

PART IV: APPENDIX

Useful Federal Websites

U.S. Federal Agency	*Acronym*	*Web Address*
Agriculture	USDA	www.usda.gov/nonprofi.htm
Education	DOEd	www.ed.gov/funding.html
Health & Human Services	HHS	www.hhs.gov/grantsnet/searchfunding.htm
HHS-Children's Bureau	CB	www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/index.htm
HHS-Nat'l Institutes of Health	NIH	www.commons.cit.nih.gov/crisp
Housing & Urban Development	HUD	www.hud.gov/groups/grantees.cfm
Justice	DOJ	www.ojp.usdoj/ocpa/ataglance
Labor	DOL	www.dol.gov/dol/oasam/public/grants/main.htm
Health Care Financing Admin.	HCFA	www.hcfa.gov/research/prior99.htm
Homeland Security	DHS	http://www.dhs.gov/xopnbiz/grants/
Nat'l Aeronautics & Science Admin.	NASA	www.nasa.gov/research.html (education) Http://sbir.gsfc.nasa.gov/SBIR/Financing.htm (small business) do not type "www"
Nat'l Science Foundation	NSF	www.nsf.gov
Small Business Admin.	SBA	www.sba.gov/specialinterests/ingrant.htm
Social Security Admin.	SSA	www.ssa.gov/oag/grants/ssagrants.htm

*the NIH Website, CRISP, which stands for the Computer Retrieval of Information on Scientific Projects, is run by the Office of Extramural Research at NIH. The database will help you find federally funded biomedical research projects at universities, hospitals and other institutions. The Website has research and grant information for NIH, as well as the following agencies:

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Admin.	SAMHSA
Food & Drug Admin.	FDA
Health Resources & Services Admin.	HRSA
Agency for Health Care Policy Research	AHCPR
Office of Assistant Secy. of Health	OASH
Center for Disease Control & Prevention	CDCP

Useful Private & Corporate Foundation Websites

You can access all these sites through the Foundation Center's Website, http://www.foundationcenter.org *(membership required to access database to conduct searches and for contact information for foundations)*.*

Chronicle of Philanthropy is another helpful resource, http://philanthropy.org.

Foundation	*Website*	*Nat'l or Local*
Abbott Laboratories Fund	**www.abbott.com/community/lab_fund.html#areainterest**	***Nat'l, emphasis on Chicago***
Allstate Foundation	**www.allstate.com/foundation**	*Nat'l*
Annie E. Casey Foundation	www.aecf.org	*Nat'l*
Bill & Melinda Gates Fdn.	www.gatesfoundation.org	*Local-Pacific NW*
Charles Stewart Mott Fdn.	www.mott.org	*Nat'l*
Citigroup Foundation	**www.citigroup.com/citigroup/homepage/fdntion/index.htm**	***Nat'l***
David & Lucille Packard Fdn.	www.packfound.org	*Nat'l*
Edna McConnell Clark Fdn.	www.emcf.org	*Nat'l*
F.B. Heron Foundation	www.fdncenter.org/grantmaker/fbheron	*Nat'l*
Ford Foundation	www.fordfound.org	*Nat'l*
Joyce Foundation	www.joycefdn.org	*Local-Chicago*
Knight Foundation	www.knightfdn.org	*Nat'l*
Kresge Foundation	www.kresge.org	*Nat'l*
MacArthur Foundation	www.macfdn.org	*Local-Chicago*
McCormick Tribune Fdn.	www.rrmtf.org	*Nat'l, emphasis on Chicago*
MetLife Foundation	**www.metlife.com/Companyinfo/Community/Found/index.html**	***Nat'l***
Open Society Foundation	www.soros.org	*Nat'l*
Pew Charitable Trusts	www.pewtrusts.com	*Nat'l, emphasis on Philly area*
Prudential Foundation	**www.prudential.com/community**	***Nat'l***
Public Welfare Foundation	www.publicwelfare.org	*Nat'l*
Robert Wood Johnson Fdn.	www.rwjf.org	*Nat'l*

Surdna Foundation	*www.surdna.org*	*Nat'l*
Tom's of Maine	***www.tomsofmaine.com/mission/grants.htm***	***Local-Maine***
W.K. Kellogg Foundation	*www.wkkf.org*	*Nat'l*

* Many times, foundations ask for a certain type of grant application. For links to some of the most popular, please visit http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/cga.html

Companies That Donate Products

Acrobat

What they provide: Adobe computer software donated to schools and nonprofits. The donation program allows schools and nonprofits to request a maximum of four individually titled software products or one bundled software package per year.
Purpose: The program helps ensure schools and nonprofits have the latest Adobe software to ensure computer literacy across the country.
Info: *http://www.adobe.com/aboutadobe/philanthropy/software.html*

Bally Total Fitness "Stronger Communities"

What they give: Reconditioned equipment, apparel, memberships and staff donate time to inform and educate those who receive the equipment.
Purpose: For inner-city schools, at-risk youth programs, boys & girls clubs, police and fire athletic leagues and other community service organizations.
Info: East Coast: Baltimore, Md.; 21284-2006, 410/296-1950; West Coast: Norwalk, Calif.; 562/484-2980; *http:// www.ballyfitness.com/company/comm/index_comm.asp*

Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream

What they give: Frozen products and gift items.
Purpose: Fund-raisers and volunteer thank-yous. Fill out the application form found on-line.
Info: Amy Weller, 802/882-1240, *http://www.benjerry.com/donations*

Columbia Sportswear "Rethreads"

What they give: Customer returns, no-production styles and sample garments that are in good condition.
Purpose: Year-round program donated "recycled" clothing to various nonprofit, human assistance organizations throughout the country.
Info: *http://www.columbia.com/who/who_support.cfm*

GAP

What they give: Gift cards & white t-shirts.
Purpose: Donations of gift cards and white t-shirts are for nonprofits, no specific restrictions on fund-raising listed on the Website. Send a one-page letter requesting either the cards or shirts and explain program or reason for request.
Info: GAP, 800/427-7895; Old Navy, 800/653-6289, Banana Republic, 888/277-8953, *http://www.gapinc.com/Social_resp/faq.htm*

Green Bay Packers Foundation

What they give: Various items.
Purpose: Fund-raising for Wisconsin charities.
Info: Jeanne McKenna, P.O. Box 10628, Green Bay, WI 54307-0628, *http://www.packers.com/community/foundation.html*

Hanes

What they give: Clothing.
Purpose: Must be nonprofit organizations, and other than disaster relief requests, generally limited to communities in which we have operations. For instructions on obtaining an apparel donation request form call the phone number listed.
Info: Call 336/519-7355, *http://www.hanes.com/faq.html#donation*

Hasbro Charitable Trust

What they give: Toys.
Purpose: Toys are for hospital and shelter playrooms, United Neighborhood Assoc. Members after-school programs, Boys & Girls Clubs in operating areas, holiday giving programs, Hasbro orphanage program, and other programs helping children. Not to be used for fund-raising.
Info: *http://www.hasbro.org/default.asp?x=charitabletrust/productdonations*

Men's Warehouse

What they give: Men's clothing.
Purpose: Send letter on accomplishments of recipients and when the clothes are needed.
Info:
http://www.menswearhouse.com/aboutus/our_community/giving_back.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=2534374302400811&n1=About+Us&n2=Our+Business&n3=Our+Philosophy&bmUID=1216179196659.

Nike

What they give: Footwear, apparel, equipment.

Purpose: Each year Nike proactively donates products to nonprofit organizations working with youth or disaster relief. Send letter of request, requests are considered throughout the year, decisions based on availability.
Info: *http://www.nikebiz.com/community/miss_obj.shtml*.

Quark Xpress

What they give: The latest Quark Xpress version at a low price ($299) to nonprofits.
Purpose: The company provides print and multimedia solutions to help nonprofits get the most out their software investment.
Info: *http://www.quark.com/products/xpress/purchase/nonprofit.cfm*