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Journal of the American Association of Grant Professionals

About this publication

The Journal of the AAGP is a professional journal devoted to the improvement of the grants professional and the profession. It is a resource for teaching and learning within the profession and provides an outlet for sharing information about the profession. It also provides a forum for the discussion of issues within the grants profession and the expression of philosophical ideas.
Dear Readers,

It is with great pride that I offer these introductory remarks as part of the inaugural issue of *The Journal of the American Association of Grant Professionals*. Every profession has a unique body of knowledge. Through the sharing and expansion of this knowledge, the profession will develop and achieve greater recognition. This publication provides a vehicle for practitioners to share and develop their unique body of knowledge.

On behalf of the American Association of Grant Professionals’ Board of Directors, I would like to express my appreciation to the authors who contributed to this inaugural issue. Your sharing of relevant articles represents grant professionals in an exemplary manner. The Journal Committee, under the leadership of Iris Coffin, deserves our thanks for their important and historic efforts.

This inaugural issue has professional articles, book and website reviews. As you read this issue, I challenge you to respond to the authors, initiate relevant dialog on the Association forum, and correspond with our journal committees, most importantly through the submission of your own articles for publication.

The inaugural authors and committee members have begun an important process for grant professionals. I hope you find this progress helpful and relevant to you in your work and encourage you to add to this growing body of knowledge in future issues.

Sincerely,

Bradley G. Knudson, Ed.D.
President, American Association of Grant Professionals
Dear Readers,

As Chair of the Journal of the American Association of Grant Professionals Editorial Committee, I would like to welcome you to our inaugural issue of the JAAGP. I join with President Knudson in expressing my pride in this effort. It has been a long journey to this point and it is my hope that the JAAGP can become a valuable tool for grant professionals.

We have included a variety of articles from the scholarly to the how-to. We hope those of you reading this issue will join these authors and contribute your knowledge and skills to future issues. If there are topics you would like to see covered, please contact one of us. The book reviews and Web site reviews will be regular items included in each issue so if you have book titles or Web sites you would like to see here, just let us know. AAGP is a member driven organization meaning this publication is yours. Feel free to shape it as you wish.

I would like to thank the committee for all the hard work they have put into this publication. Their ideas, time and energy have greatly contributed to the quality of this effort. It has been a great experience and one I hope to continue. The Committee would like to thank the authors included in this first issue. It is through your efforts and trust in us that we have succeeded in publishing this inaugural issue of the JAAGP.

Thank you all and enjoy your reading experience.

Sincerely,

Iris A. Coffin, Chair
Founding Member AAGP
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This summer my family and I vacationed in Yellowstone National Park. Driving through the forest we were awed by the beauty and majesty of the trees. It was not until we climbed up Mary Mountain (my 20-year-old daughter, Mary, insisted we climb that one) that we could actually see the forest, as a forest. It is true that it is hard to see the forest for the trees. Similarly, it is often difficult to see our profession—for the grants. This article is designed to step up on the mountain of American Philanthropy to take a look down through the frameworks which contextualize, standardize, and energize our profession.

There are those in the “grants world” who prefer not to see “grant” activity as a profession. They will disagree with the argument herein formed. It must be granted that our “isolation” as grants people can contribute to a perception of us as “technicians.” Ironically, however, the eclectic intermingling necessitated by our jobs mandates that we function, in many cases, as anything but a technician. To gain a better perspective of this “forest,” we shall examine four contextualizing frameworks: the historical, the societal, the philanthropic, and the professional.

**Historical Framework**

**Ancient Origins**

The grants process is a component of a larger philanthropic process which has ancient roots. The granting of money through semiformal and rudimentary foundations can be found in ancient Egypt and Babylon in the form of bequests, etc. Ancient Greece was well accustomed to formal gift giving. The ancient Greek writer/politician/soldier Xenophone in his seven-volume work *Helenica* and his seven-volume work *Anabasis* recounts many such traditions.

**Roman Legal Personality**

One of the keys to the concept of the modern foundation is the notion of “legal personality” for organizations existing and operating as “persons.” The first discussions and initial attempts to begin moving in that direction were made in ancient Roman law.

**Enlightenment/Individual Rights**

It was not until the period of the Reformation and the Enlightenment that the notion of legal personality became implemented in small ways. This coincided with the growing movement toward individual human rights and the ownership of private property. People came out of the feudal environment into a renaissance wherein they could begin to better look beyond their own personal survival needs and see others in need.

**The American Foundation**

Time and circumstance brought a new wind, even a breath of fresh air, with the American experience. Our country profited from the thinking and experience of the British who adopted some very progressive procedures for dealing with the poor, in the English Poor Laws. America, as a land of opportunity, afforded the privilege to rich people of assisting those around them through formal and “legal”
organizations set up for the purpose of positively affecting society.

**Societal Framework**

**The Three-Sector Mentality**

Such a societal contribution was made possible by our three-sector system, consisting of government, for-profit organizations, and nonprofit organizations. This set-up, fostered by democracy, a strong civil society, and a capitalistic economy, works well in our context to balance the fulfillment of the needs of the less fortunate. It certainly is not a perfect system. Yet, compared to non-Western nations, it is far superior. The very nature of the system permits either totally private efforts or joint ventures of the public and private sector. The tax laws permit the formation of foundations as well as strong corporate giving programs from the for-profit sector. Hong Kong, for example, also has numerous government and nonprofit collaborative efforts, but their tax structure provides no incentives for the for-profit sector to join in philanthropic projects.

Originally, of course, our government was structured as a weak federal system with strong states. While that direction has shifted and it is not uncommon to see nonprofits completely or almost completely funded through government direct and/or indirect grants, there is still the societal desire and practice of participating in societal problem-solving from all three sectors.

**The Tocquevillian Perspective**

Alexis De Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* pointed out that which has become, for many, the classic reason why our balance of sectors has been able to work so well, when compared with developing nations. His observation was that we are associationally oriented. While we may consider ourselves to be rugged individualists, we are among the most associational peoples in the world. We “join” groups of all kinds. That spirit of “joining” or cooperating has contributed to the thousands of nonprofits operating in this country. It has provided us, as grants people, with livelihoods. This spirit of joining--or our associational nature--is somewhat odd, in that our society is a melting pot. What has caused us to be willing to join with others who are unlike us? Some would say that originally we were far more homogeneous--principally protestant Europeans--and we “had to” cooperate on the frontier to survive. Some propose that those early groups of settlers were able to craft the constitution and the economy in such a way that a philanthropic spirit was engendered through good will for others, and law which facilitated the expression of that spirit.

**Philanthropic Framework**

**Civil Society’s Social Capital Engenders Philanthropic Capital**

The “had to” explanation for our system, even if true initially, cannot explain what has happened as the nation has become diverse and pluralistic. In his book *Bowling Alone*, Putnam expresses the feeling that the civility within our society and the corresponding bond we have had for each other have declined over the last fifty years. He believes that that which permits us to be civil is primarily the level of “social capital” we have as a nation. By social capital he means the units of exchange we use to interact with each other--in other words, our
associational spirit. He argues that as a people, we joined far more groups 50 years ago than now; groups like the PTA, Boy Scouts, YMCA, and bowling leagues. He suggests that today we tend to “bowl alone.” The situation he describes relates to the heart of our philanthropic activity. If we are less civil, then it is likely we will become less concerned and give less or grant less.

An alternate and more optimistic view is expressed by Fukuyama in *Trust*. He suggests that our society has a deeply ingrained sense of trust which inherently tends to engender a civil society. He also points to our willingness to associate with each other to accomplish a common purpose—e.g., environmental movements, women’s movements, professional associations, and we might add, September 11th concern/affinity groups. Why do we do that? Because, he says, we are a high trust society. We are not a society based on families or clans, like China. We are not a society based around a forced, formal, official religion, like Iran. Nor are we a society based around force or coercion like North Korea. As Les Lenkowsky, new director of the Corporation for National Service in Washington, D.C., has observed, we are a society based around the rule of law and the crucible of civility—not clan, creed, or coercion.

‘Granted,’ *It’s a Tangled Web We Weave*

A trusting type of society has permitted us to work with each other to construct paths to accomplish a multitude of missions leading to the facilitation of the public good. Grant making has been one of the primary areas through which we have constructed public/private partnerships. As the government attempts to meet its social responsibility, it is continuing to move toward the use of nonprofits to accomplish its goals. The new “Faith Based Initiatives” are a clear indication of the direction. Due to the sensitive nature of such an arrangement, the likely scenario is for religious groups to form separate 501(c)(3) organizations to accomplish the specific mission of the respective “government” programs. This tends to professionalize at least that aspect of religious philanthropic assistance.

**Professional Framework**

*The Professionalization of the Third Sector*

Such professionalization is not limited to religion. The grants world has seen the professionalization of the foundational sector ever since the tax reform act of 1965. The inherently formal and bureaucratic orientation of the federal and state governments was naturally transported to the foundation as the trust factor came into question. The government questioned the advisability of foundations having so much money/power and proceeded to place considerable limits on them. Ostensibly, this protected the public from foundations which would abuse the “trusting” system of the nonprofit tax exemption structure. The corresponding and consequent professionalization of nonprofit grant programs seems almost inevitable.

*The Inevitability of the Professionalization of the Grants “World”*

Bureaucratization of the governmental and foundational grant
processes fosters a spirit of professionalization necessary to cope with “excess” formality and ever increasing rules of “engagement.” As the chain of funding finds its way down to the individual nonprofit, so does the “chain” of bureaucracy. Complex government grant application processes and increasingly complex foundation grant applications push nonprofits toward increasingly formal, stringent, and bureaucratic grant departments. To compete, these offices must professionalize their grant staff to broaden their perspectives and capabilities—just to survive.

Conclusion
As grant professionals, we do not live in a vacuum, nor in a “tree”—we live in the “forest” of philanthropy. Our jobs and our lives proceed from a continuing flow of history, circumstance, and context. To be either naive or uninformed about these background elements is to be left behind. A bullish stock market produced increased philanthropic giving. The graying of the population promises a major turnover of wealth. The tragic events of September 11 prompted massive giving within the context of an essentially “trusting” civil society. The grants profession has a bright future as we, the grant professionals, serve as “boundary spanners,” spanning the boundary between our organizations and the philanthropic will of our system. The American Association of Grant Professionals is an associational expression of the desire of a heterogeneous group of people striving to facilitate the philanthropic spirit of our country. This is done within an amazing array of organizations in the private and the public sector, for purposes of health, human services, poverty, urban development, K-12 education, higher education, the arts, etc. We are recipients of a long tradition of people uniting associationally to better their situations, enhance their contributions, and empower themselves to affect change in society—together, unitedly!

Bibliography


Randal J. Givens is a founding member of AAGP and served as our first President. He currently serves as Past President of AAGP and is the Director of Grants and Program Development at York College in York Nebraska.
Introduction
Since the 1980’s, people have been discussing that “tightening of the financial belt” (Seldin & Maloy, 1981: p. 330) and “declining enrollments and dwindling budgets” (Maloy & Seldin, 1982: p. 65) have led public school systems to increasingly look to federal and state grants to support new and innovative educational programs. These authors made the point that for many school systems the decision will be “what educational programs must go, rather than what new program to support” (Seldin & Maloy, 1981: p 330). In the early 1990’s, White & Morgan (1992) discussed the financial straitjacket that most school systems find themselves in because of a “triad of budget woes of shrinking tax dollars at the local, state, and federal levels; ever-rising fixed expenses; and skyrocketing personnel costs” (p. 260). In the late 1990’s, Schnitzer & Nichols (1998) stated that, “Finding novel ways to fund projects that do not fall under the regular operating budget is important to school leaders in today’s budget-tightening world” (p.1). The reason for this is that it is no longer enough to have a teacher standing in front of a class imparting his/her wisdom and then asking students to recite that wisdom on a conventional assessment measure. Instead, “reformers call for teachers to be facilitators of instruction, students to be involved in relevant, real-life experiences, and the curriculum to provide the skills, processes, and knowledge for productive citizenship in the third millennium….None of these changes come without a price tag – yet the needed funding is often outside the reach of the school district’s regular operating budget…” (Schnitzner & Nichols, 1998: p. 1).

One of the main reasons for the cost of innovative educational programs being beyond the regular operating budget is the high fixed expense of a school system. The single budget item of salaries and benefits now accounts for almost 80% of an average school district’s expenditures. This in turn directly affects the quality of educational programs because there are not funds available for all the current programs let alone developing new programs (Rebore, 2001). White & Morgan (1992) reported that one of the methods that some school systems’ parents have used to ensure the quality of educational programs for their children is to form educational foundations and other fund-raising organizations to bypass the limitations of the tax base and raise significant amounts of money. Schnitzer (1995) made a strong suggestion that principals must become the driving force behind obtaining grants for their campus if they are to acquire their campus’ fair share of available grant money. The general consensus from the twenty plus years of discussion about alternative methods for funding public education is that a coordinated effort to develop additional funds would yield real benefits to public
The Changing Nature of Public School Financing and Its Effects 6

Creation of the Grant Proposal Writer Position at Public Schools

Introduction

When community and other school district stakeholders discuss public school finance, all agree that acquiring extra funds from non-tax based sources is a positive event. These additional funds translate into supplemental programs that are designed to meet students’ educational needs, which in turn contribute to the creation of a climate where educational performance is enhanced. This can lead to higher standardized test scores which show community stakeholders that the school district is effectively performing its duty of educating the youth. The most obvious source for these non-tax based additional funds would flow from grants (Quinlan, 1995). The major problem with tapping into this flow of funding is developing and writing the grant proposal. This problem exists because the current structure of staff duties in most school districts does not provide free time for staff to write grants. Therefore, if a school district or campus within a school district wants a grant written, staff members must usually do it at night and on weekends. One reason that these staff members may be willing to relinquish their free time is their conviction that their students need the program that a grant would provide. If the grant should be funded, their first thought is establishing the program to benefit their students. Staff members may not consider writing another grant unless their students have continuing educational needs that are not being met by the first grant. Thus, the school district has not created a process for tapping into grants as a funding source on a continuing basis. There is not a school district wide program for grant writing.

Information on Public Schools that have Created the Position: Literature

“The most obvious source for these non-tax based additional funds would flow from grants (Quinlan, 1995). The major problem with tapping into this flow of funding is developing and writing the grant proposal. This problem exists because the current structure of staff duties in most school districts does not provide free time for staff to write grants. Therefore, if a school district or campus within a school district wants a grant written, staff members must usually do it at night and on weekends. One reason that these staff members may be willing to relinquish their free time is their conviction that their students need the program that a grant would provide. If the grant should be funded, their first thought is establishing the program to benefit their students. Staff members may not consider writing another grant unless their students have continuing educational needs that are not being met by the first grant. Thus, the school district has not created a process for tapping into grants as a funding source on a continuing basis. There is not a school district wide program for grant writing.”

Thus, Schnitzer & Nichols began their monograph entitled New Ways to Fund New Projects: A Practical Guide to Winning Grants to Support Education that was the story of Norfolk Public Schools development of a grant writing program. From the 1990-91 school year, when they began the organized
program of writing grants, until the 1996-97 school year the Grants Development Office received over $7.6 million in grants. Before this systematic effort began, when various individuals learned about a grant they independently developed proposals that met with limited funding success. A notable exception was an assistant high school principal who had had several small proposals funded. She approached the superintendent about the possibility of establishing a grant writing position. The superintendent decided that such a position might be valuable and the results would support the value that the creation of this position brought to the Norfolk School System. The office grew from this person to one that has two full-time grant proposal writers and clerical assistance. The office became a liaison to other community agencies, helping to write grants for the community. This cooperation has brought greater benefit to the students because of the increased services that the grants have provided. In summarizing what they had learned in the development of the grant office they stated:

While all of these functions can be performed by personnel assigned other duties, our experience in the Norfolk Public Schools has been that if the grants functions are not assigned to someone specific, they somehow receive inadequate attention or “fall through the cracks” altogether. Therefore, our school district found that it was economically feasible and advantageous to have one professional devoted exclusively to the competitive grants arena. Such positions will more than pay for themselves as an organized effort is made to seek and win competitive grant funds (Schnitzer & Nichols, 1998; p. 6).

Born & Wilson (2000) monograph, Philanthropic Support for Public Education in the Southwestern Region: An Assay of Philanthropy’s Potential to Impact Comprehensive School Reform in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas, stated similar findings for the five state area – Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas – that is served by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). They were looking at school districts that engage in comprehensive school reform and found the school districts that were successful in implementing school reform obtained funding from non-traditional sources. One of the unexpected outcomes of SEDL’s study of philanthropic support for public education was:

…the discovery of how hard it is to capture a picture of our quarry. Simply put: the data are elusive, inconsistent, and ill-defined. Extant systems for capturing information in both the education and philanthropy sectors render imperfect data. Our clarification discussions…have provided much useful anecdotal information, but much is still left to speculation. Perhaps we are pioneering a new area of inquiry, but in any case we are in a muddy field (Born & Wilson, 2000; p. 4).
school board of Lubbock-Cooper Independent School District (LCISD) created the new position of Grant Writer/Dyslexia Coordinator. The district had been increasing in student enrollment for several years because of its proximity to Lubbock, Texas and had added several positions a year since 1996. There had been interest expressed by a school board member to see if the school district could get grants. The new superintendent (promoted in 1995 from high school principal) had developed, with his leadership team, a vision of what LCISD could become. This vision focused on making LCISD a top rated school district that met the educational needs of all its students. This vision can be summarized in the motto that was developed; “Building the Future…One Student at a Time!” There was a teacher who in the previous year had gotten the school district a $15,000 grant to create an Algebra program at the junior high and also had a number of teaching and professional certifications. The district administration saw a need for a more formal dyslexia program because of the growing number of students with dyslexia. Further, within the State of Texas methods of funding public schools had changed that made receiving grants one of the few sources of extra funds to develop new programs because of legislative and legal changes in the system of public school finance. All of these factors converged to support the leap of faith that culminated in the creation of this dual role position.

Several factors entered into the superintendent’s thinking. First, based on a thorough review of the school district’s goals by several stakeholder groups, he now knew where he wanted the district to head. Second, there was clearly a need for funds beyond what traditional school funding could provide to fulfill this vision. Third, the school district had a staff member who had proven that he could obtain grants by getting one for LCISD and one for his former school district. This same staff member also had special education, reading, and diagnostician certifications that made him extremely qualified to establish a more comprehensive dyslexia program. In a worst case scenario, the district could “try” the grant proposal writing position and if it was not successful the school district would not have a person that they would need to fire because he could serve many other roles within the district. With this decision, grant writing began at LCISD.

In the first year, the grant proposal writer obtained $163,343 in grants for the school district. Based on these results, the district administration added teachers to work with the dyslexic students and made the grant writing position a 12-month position so that more time could be spent writing grants. In the second year, the grant proposal writer obtained $375,536 in grants and the school district began to look at grants as a way to fund programs on a continuing basis. In the third year, the grant proposal writer obtained $476,911 in grants and all of the teaching duties of the grant proposal writer were given to a newly created dyslexic teacher position. In the fourth year, the grant proposal writer obtained $902,495 in grants, developed a preK-12 reading program that was funded by grants, and developed a grants office for LCISD with support staff. In this the fifth year, the grant proposal writer by September had funded $358,539 in grants for the
2001/02 school year along with $157,500 for 2002/03 school year. The school district has been able to create several programs and add several new staff positions that allow it to better meet the needs of all of the students, their parents, and other community stakeholders. The school district has achieved a district rating of “Exemplary” from TEA (only 8 years ago the district was under TEA monitoring for being low performing). The school district is reaching its motto of “Building the future…One student at a time!” and shows what can be done when money is not the limiting factor and the school district has developed a vision of success.

But what does LCISD’s success mean for your school district and why should you be concerned about grant writing at your school district?

**General Information on Positions in Public Schools**

Staffing decisions are one of the more important responsibilities that administrators have in public schools. These decisions directly affect the quality of the education that their students receive and account for almost 80% of a normal school district’s budget (Smith, 1998). Webb, Greer, Montello, & Norton (1987), described the effects that filling a position can have on a school district as being “One of the quickest ways to make an important improvement in the services of a school …” (p. 77). Gallagher, Bagin, & Kindred (1996) gave a method for the effective setting of goals for a school district. Their major focus was that school district administrators need to be proactive in communicating their vision to both the public and the staff. Keeping both of these groups informed makes the process of school change more effective. Meek (1999) reflected this same theme. Effective communication was seen as a way to: 1) strengthen the partnership of parents and the school; 2) promote school activities and events; 3) explain school programs and school benefits; 4) enhance the image of the schools; and 5) promote support for education in the community. In terms of creating the grant writing position, the communication would need to clearly outline how this position would advance the goals of the school district. By providing a proactive vision of what the grant proposal writer could provide to the school district in terms of providing additional educational programs, stakeholder support for the position would be gained.

**Survey Information from the 2000 Mid-Winter Texas Educational Agency (TEA) Conference: Views on Creating the Grant Proposal Writer Position**

During a presentation at the 2000 Mid-Winter Conference entitled “Grant Writing in the Public School: District and Consortium Views” the attendees were surveyed about several items related to this topic. Most of those attending the presentation were district level administrators who were there looking at the possibility of creating this type of position in their school district. (Both presenters were asked by several districts if they would consider moving.) The items gained as a result of the session that the attendees felt would most likely allow them to create the position was they now felt that they could show the school board how the position could pay for itself in that the grant proposal writer could very likely
bring more money into the district than his or her salary. The most often given dollar amount as to how much in grants it would take to convince a school board that they had invested their money wisely was $150,000 (range of $35,000 to $500,000). Some of the staff members of smaller school districts expressed the view that they would need to be in a co-op for grant writing for both paying the salary of the grant proposal writer and having enough students served to compete for larger grants. Many of the school district representatives said they realized they needed grants because their school district was reaching the upper limits (the $1.50 cap set by law) of its taxing authority. Most also were aware that TEA had increased the number of grants that they were authorizing and that some programs now required a grant to be written. Several people expressed concerns that they were missing out on grants that school districts around them had received. These grants were allowing those districts to provide more services for their students, and this was giving those students an edge. These administrators felt that they needed to find a way for their school district to get grants to fairly compete with those surrounding school districts.

How Do I Go about Creating the Position of Grant Proposal Writer?

The first thing that a school district needs to do before creating the position is to create the vision for what they want the school to become. The reason for this statement is that, as strange as it may seem, just getting grants for the sake of getting grants can cause more problems than not having the money. This is because when a grant is received, the district is then under contract to perform the items in the grant. By having the vision in place first, the program(s) that are requested in the grant fit into an overall plan for the district.

The second thing the school district must realize is that grant writing takes time. There are a limited amount of other duties that a grant proposal writer can fulfill for the district. The writing of the grant is just one part of the overall process that allows success in obtaining grants. Networking with funders, researching funding sources, and developing program concepts with other school district staff members are other duties that take the lion’s share of a grant proposal writer’s time. All of these tasks must be done if what is written in the grant is going to have a good chance of being funded.

The last thing the school district must realize is that there is a learning curve that an inexperienced grant proposal writer must experience. In other words, grant proposal writing is something that is learned on the job. There are a few training programs that can teach one the terms and basic concepts of grant writing, but these courses will not substitute for the knowledge gained by the experience of actually applying for grants. Having the time to serve as a grant reviewer can teach a person how to write quality grants by seeing what other people write to get funding. All of these duties take time and the ability to travel when required which cannot be done if the grant proposal writer needs to be at a campus to fulfill other responsibilities not associated with the grant proposal writing function.

If your school district is willing to commit to the aforementioned factors
then you can think about creating the position of grant proposal writer. If you think it might be a “stretch” to commit to everything at first, you might at least consider giving a teacher or administrator a half-time release to start the grant writing process. As a last resort you might consider sub-contracting and/or collaborating with a college/university to provide this activity. In any case with the changes in school finance, you need to be thinking of making a start.

References


Gary Lee Frye is currently Lubbock-Cooper ISD Grant Writer/Dyslexia Coordinator, holds a Master’s in Special Education along with 13 provisional and 5 professional certifications from Texas Education Agency, and is a Doctoral student in Educational Leadership at Texas Tech University. He has presented at several state and national conferences on the subject of grant writing and served as a grant reviewer for TEA and the Department of Education on numerous grants.

Dr. Charles A. Reavis has directed a series of dissertations focusing on the cognitive components of Educational Leadership. He has published over 50 articles, presented at over 50 national and state conferences, and has led workshops on the Four Cornerstones of Effective Schools, based on his research spanning 14 years. Currently he is professor of Educational Leadership at Texas Tech University.
Grants as Part of a Capital Campaign
Michael Wells

Capital campaigns, raising money for a building or buildings, are different from other fundraising. You’re creating a permanent asset, something that makes a statement about your organization’s stability and longevity. In the process of a capital campaign, organizations usually become better organized, more mature, and improve their business operations. Sometimes the growth is painful – staff and board may leave, unable or unwilling to move to the new level of operation.

Grantwriting for capital campaigns is also somewhat different from other grants. They are generally larger – if your largest previous grant was $100,000, a capital request may be $500,000 or a million or more. They require more strategy and coordination with other fundraising efforts. You need to decide which funders to approach for capital and which to save for operations and program grants. Capital proposals are also an opportunity to re-introduce your organization to a foundation – to change your image.

When planning a capital campaign, think of grants in the context of your overall strategy. Resist the temptation to mail out a few big grant proposals early, then develop your funding plans. The grantwriter should be working closely with the campaign consultant on strategy and developing materials. (You're not really thinking of doing a capital campaign without a consultant, are you?) Much of the information you need for a capital campaign grant will be generated in the case statement. In any case, the grantwriter needs to be coordinating on strategy with whomever is running the major gifts part of the campaign. This is important for several reasons:

- The campaign consultant or development director is probably working with a board of directors who doesn’t really want to do the work of asking for money. The board will be hoping that all of the funds will come in as grants. You need to help them understand that this isn’t going to happen, that grants are part of a larger effort.
- Foundations and corporations are interested in board support and other significant lead gifts. This tells them how those closest to your mission feel about the project, and if the feeling is demonstrated in financial support. You should be able to say that you have 100% board participation at a significant level before submitting major grant proposals.
- In some cases, grants can be used as lead gifts, to get the campaign off the ground. Be sure you know which funders are willing to come in early (see below).
- With smaller or medium-sized family foundations, it may be more effective to make a personal “major donor” call on family members than to submit a written proposal by mail – or the proposal may be hand delivered as part of the personal visit, or sent as a
follow-up.

- Sometimes you’ll want to ask for a challenge or matching grant to encourage future gifts. But be careful in asking for challenge grants – you should know who your target audience for the match is and have a plan for approaching them before requesting a challenge grant. It should be designed to make your fundraiser’s work easier and bring in more money. I’ve often seen organizations ask for a challenge grant for money they would have been granted outright, and then struggle to raise the matching funds.

In seeking foundation grants, start locally, then work further away. Get the foundations in your state to give first, before you start looking for national money. In the first place, most of your funding will come locally and you want to make those contacts early. Second, having the local grants in hand or applied for makes you more credible with any national funders you approach.

Before starting to write, you need to have certain basic information. You may need to develop this jointly with whomever is running the capital campaign. In general, if you don’t have the following information, you’re not ready for major grantwriting.

- The campaign case statement, at least the rationale for why the building is needed.
- Architectural plans, at least front elevations and site and floor plans.
- A construction budget, with costs developed by the architect or contractor. A contractor’s bid is best.
- The campaign fundraising plan, showing how much has been raised to date and where you expect to raise the balance.
- Financial projections for program operations after construction.

Plan when you want to approach each foundation. Some are willing to commit early to help you get started, some want to come in the middle with specific conditions, some would rather be late in the campaign, or give “capping” grants. Know what each funder wants and design them into your strategy. As a rule of thumb, think of asking larger foundations each for 10% of the project. With family foundations, decide if a personal contact is better than a written proposal.

In addition to the large local foundations, there are several specific types of funding sources you should consider:

- Religious: If you’re working with an organization that has a religious affiliation, look for funders within their faith. There are foundations that only give to Catholic organizations, foundations that only give to Jewish organizations, etc. This may open doors on a national level for an otherwise local project.
- Field of Interest: Some foundations have a strong interest in children and families, or education, or health care, etc. Check to see if some funders in your subject area give capital grants.
Grants as part of a Capital Campaign

- Government: Look for possible government granting sources and think creatively. Community Development Block Grants (administered locally), federal programs related to your work, possible help from your local program funders (County and State agencies). Be careful when seeking government funds, that you know all the strings attached. There is always more oversight and conditions than with private foundations. Federal funds usually oblige you to follow the Davis Bacon Act which requires paying “prevailing wages” for construction, which can add 30 – 50% to your costs. States may have similar “little Davis Bacon” requirements. You may decide that these funds bring more costs than benefit, but explore them anyway.

- Corporate: It used to be a rule of thumb that large local banks, utilities and headquarter companies would contribute 1% of a capital project. With corporate mergers and fewer community ties, this is less true today. Nevertheless, you should be approaching key local corporations for your project. Some companies have foundations, others don’t – but they may still have corporate giving programs. Work with the major gifts person on your campaign to decide if these should be written proposals, personal visits, or a combination.

- Capital only: A few foundations specialize in capital campaigns, Kresge being the largest and best known. Be sure to check their guidelines to see what their eligibility requirements and timelines are.

The hardest money to raise is often early money for your feasibility study and planning. If you have strong connections to a local family foundation, this may be their opportunity to make a relatively small grant have a big impact.

Know the timing of your funders’ payments. Many foundations will set conditions on their capital grants, that they are payable as you meet certain milestones in terms of funds raised or construction progress, etc. You need to figure these payment schedules into your construction planning.

For a good background on capital campaigns (although it doesn’t say much about grants), look at the book Capital Campaigns: Strategies that Work by Kihlstedt and Schwartz (Aspen Publishers, 1997).

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Developing Grant Procedures
Jessica Whitmore, MA

The Grants Administration Office at Valley Forge Christian College was created in the Spring 2001 semester. Currently this department has two members: the Vice President of Resource Development, and the Director of Grants Administration and Public Relations. Since this department is newly established, a set of procedures and standards was needed to clearly communicate the purpose of the department as well as provide instructions on how interested personnel can provide ideas and information. Furthermore, these procedures and standards were necessary to establish a proper flow of communication between all external and internal personnel involved in a grant-related project.

In the quest for developing these procedures, the process began where all good grant proposals begin: research, research and research. This started with identifying comparable academic institutions in size, location, mission statement, and affiliation that have grants-related offices. Once these institutions and offices were identified, they were contacted for further information on how they operate their offices. Once this information was collected, the varying procedures, formats and forms from the institutions were compared with each other and with the organizational culture of processes and procedures at Valley Forge Christian College.

This analysis resulted in the development of various forms and a step-by-step process to involve the college’s faculty and administrative members in the grants process. These materials include a two-page summary of the “Grants Administration Procedures,” a “Proposal Request Form,” a “Proposal Verification Form,” and a “Grants Award Form.” The “Grants Administration Procedures” was specifically limited to two pages so it would be easy to read and understand. This form starts with answering the basic questions of the department: what is the purpose of the department, and how does the department meet this purpose. Additionally, the form identifies that these processes are continuous and that faculty and administrative members are encouraged to become involved by providing ideas via the “Proposal Request Form.”

The “Grants Administration Procedures” then provides step-by-step information on how to submit a proposal request as well as the process the Grants Administration Office will take in reviewing and processing the request.

To begin the process, a faculty or administrative member must submit a completed “Proposal Request Form.” On this form, a faculty or administrative member provides basic information relating to the project. The required information includes a summary of the project and answers to the following questions: who will benefit from this project, why is it important to complete this project, what are two core outcomes of completing this project, what methods of evaluation will be used to determine if this project was successful, what is the budget for this project, what is the timeline for completing this
Developing Grant Procedures

project, will expenses continue after the funding period, and how will these expenses be paid after the funding.

The gathered information causes the faculty or administrative member to carefully consider the need and funding opportunity. Additionally, the basic project information is vital in researching funders and composing the necessary documents for submission. The form also asks for identification of potential sources of funding; often times faculty or administrative members are aware of organizations or associations involving their specific area of expertise or interest.

Signatures are required to complete the form. These signatures include the faculty or administrative member submitting the request as well as his or her immediate supervisor. These signatures guarantee that all personnel within that department are aware of the program and the request for funding. Additionally, the signatures assure the Grants Administration Office that the necessary personnel support the project.

When this form is completed, it is distributed to the Grants Administration Office. The form is then distributed to the “Grants Selection Committee.” This committee not only reviews these requests but also brainstorms about possible project ideas. The committee includes personnel from various areas within the college; this provides insight and ideas for projects in the various campus areas such as information technology, library, faculty development, etc. The committee reviews the completed proposal request form to ensure that the project falls within the overall structure and goals of the college. Once the committee gives authorization to move forward and a potential funder is found, the Grants Administration personnel and the project leader work together to create the proposal. At this point, the Grants Administration Office created a very crucial aspect of the office’s role. The specific wording from the procedures is as follows:

“Here at VFCC we have established that when your idea is turned into a proposal, please understand that all communication and contact with the foundation, government agency or corporation needs to go through Grants Administration. This is essential because of internal and external concerns. Internally, we need to make sure the funder’s guidelines are being followed. Externally, we do not want to confuse the foundation, government agency or corporation as to whom their contact is or campus priorities. Furthermore, some funders only allow one proposal from a non-profit during a funding cycle.”

Before the proposal material is submitted to the potential foundation, the “Proposal Verification Form” is used. This form identifies the key personnel within the college who need to review the proposal before it is submitted. After reading the material and making any suggested changes, each personnel member signs off on the form. This, again, helps promote knowledge about the project and the implications of funding.

The procedures for the Grants Administration Office also include what occurs whether a grant is denied or awarded. If the award is not funded, the
Grants Administration Office works with the funder as well as the project director to revise and resubmit the proposal.

If the grant is awarded, the Grants Administration Office works with the project director and business office to ensure all grant protocol is followed correctly and final reports are submitted accurately. The “Grants Award Form” provides a summary of the following information: title of the awarded project, the award amount, the internal fund account number as well as the funder’s requirements and the deadline for the final report.

Any information relating to the project, including a copy of each expense requisition is given to the Grants Administration Office. Each project director is also responsible for submitting monthly updates on the status of the grant project. This allows for easily evaluating the status of the grant at any point and compiling the final report.

The Office of Grants Administration encourages faculty and staff members to become involved in the grants process. This information was presented to the faculty and administrative members at an on-campus retreat. Additionally, the procedures and forms were distributed via e-mail as well as posted on the college’s intranet. The Office of Grants Administration is continually informing faculty and staff of funding opportunities. If the faculty or staff member is interested, the grant application process is initiated. Since implementing these procedures and forms, the Office of Grants Administration has received completed “Proposal Request Forms” from faculty and administrative members.

These procedures can be easily replicated at any other place of employment. When replicating, however, it is important to adjust the procedures to fit the organizational culture at the place of employment. Additionally, the organization does not have to incorporate all of the procedures outlined nor all of the forms. Again, the organizational culture impacts the implementation of the procedures and forms.

Examples of the Forms on Following Pages
The formatting has been changed to allow for a multi-page form to be reduced to a single page.
Grant Award Form
Valley Forge Christian College

Congratulations on receiving funding for your project! We are here to assist you in meeting the requirements of the foundation, government agency or corporation that funded your project. As a reminder, I need to receive a copy of each requisition to be included in the project file. Additionally, you will need to submit monthly updates on the status of the project; this will help in compiling a final report for the funder.

Please take note of the award and account information listed below that will be used throughout the funding cycle. Again congratulations, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Jessica Whitmore
Director of Grants Administration and Public Relations

Date ______________

Awarded Project

________________________________________________________________

Award Amount

________________________________________________________________

VFCC fund account number

________________________________________________________________

Foundation, government agency or corporation requirements

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

Final Report Deadline

________________________________________________________________
Proposal Request Form  
Valley Forge Christian College

Fill out as completely as possible, include appropriate signatures, and return to Jessica Whitmore.

Department: __________________________  Date: ________________

Contact: ______________________________  Extension:___________

Project Title:                                                                                     
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Summarize the project.

Why is this project important to complete? Who will benefit? Be specific.

What do you want the final outcome of the project to be? What would you like to see accomplished? Identify the top two core outcomes.

State method(s) of evaluation for your project. How will you determine that your project was successful?

Total Project Budget: $_________________ (Attach itemized budget)

Funding Needed By: ______________________ (Attach project timeline)

Is this an ongoing project?

How much of the project are you looking to fund with this grant? $__________________

How will you continue to pay for this project once the grant funds are depleted? Are there any other committed sources of funding for this project?

Have you identified any potential sources of funding?

Signature of Project Coordinator: _______________________  Date: ________

Signature of Dean/Department Head: ______________________  Date: ________
Proposal Verification Form
Valley Forge Christian College

In order to facilitate a timely submission, please review, sign, and return to Jessica Whitmore with changes and/or suggestions, if any, within 48 hours of receipt.

Date ______________    Deadline ______________

Project _________________________________________________________

Foundation, Government Agency or Corporation
_______________________________________________________________

Project Director______________________ Date __________________

Director of Grants Administration ___________________________ Date __________________

VP of Resource Development ___________________________ Date __________________

VP of Academic Affairs ___________________________ Date __________________

Executive Director Of Finance ___________________________ Date __________________

President ___________________________ Date __________________

Date Submitted to Funding Source ____________________________

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Grantseeking & the Internet
Iris A. Coffin

Overview:
You've heard the phrase many times. "There's lots of money out there, you just have to find it." Seems like a simple thing to do: just find a list of people wanting to give their money away and ask them for it, right!! However, there isn't a 'single' list and there are thousands of others asking right along with you. You will find, if you haven't already, that this is a very complex profession.

“Charitable giving slowed last year to its lowest rate of growth in five years, rising just 3.2 percent to an estimated $203.5-billion” (1). Fundraising officials say the slowdown can be attributed to a steep decline in stock prices and eroding consumer confidence due to a weakening of the national economy. The largest growth was Foundation giving at 15.7 percent, 2.1 percent lower than the 1999 increase (ibid).

With 12 percent of the total giving coming from Foundations, this category has become an increasingly larger portion of the giving picture. Traditionally individuals still maintain the largest giving category. The Foundation giving increase has come from asset growth, the addition of new foundations, and a large level of gifts going to foundations (2).

On the grantmaker side of the coin, they are feeling the pressure to be more accountable and responsive. The public view of such gifts as those made by Bill Gates and others has prompted them to re-examine goals and missions.

Among those are: The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, considering adding new grant-making programs and The Kresge Foundation, looking for new causes and charities to support (3).

Where does business stand on the philanthropic scene? Big business has increased giving but some of the changes are a concern for recipients. Even though the amount given has risen, companies have not necessarily become more generous. Company giving in 2000 increased an estimated 12.1 percent representing 1.2 percent of corporate pre-tax income (2). Charities who depend on business generosity worry about the effects of big business mergers and acquisitions. These typically cause grantmaking to be in limbo during the deal-making timeline; often taking more than a year. Also, the companies that merge their giving programs usually choose the middle of the road solution. When NYNEX merged with Bell Atlantic Corporation they set the giving rate at 0.7% of their pre-tax profits. Previously Bell Atlantic had given 1% while NYNEX gave 0.4% (4).

Employee giving is one of the largest growing areas of corporate donations. Employees have increased their giving thus causing an increase in company matching funds as well. Many companies also give incentives to employees that contribute volunteer time to their favorite cause in the way of increased giving dollars. Wal-Mart, for instance, encourages workers to spend time outside of work organizing fund-raising events with the company matching dollar-for-dollar the amount raised (3).

The following is further discussion of how you can tap into the available funding sources using your Web
browser. At the same time, keep in mind that at last count only 5% of charitable foundations are on the Web.

**Funders:**
Private foundations usually work from an endowment fund to support their giving. A portion of the income from this account is distributed to charities that fit specific criteria. Most charities make personal contacts with local foundations that become repeat contributors. However, there are many that give on a national basis and that can be found on the Web. The Foundation Center (FC) publications are a fairly complete source of information on private foundations. The Center now has a subscription system in place for Web access to their information with the Web version of their FC Search CD-ROM now activated. (see end of document)

Corporate giving and corporate foundations are another source of funding. Again these should be local businesses having an interest in your cause. Personal contact is also influential in the giving process. FC has information on corporate sources but keep in mind most do not give unless they have a presence in your community. Be sure to check corporation Web pages for more information.

Government funders are all on the Web at the federal level. Many states also have a Web presence. Often federal money is distributed to the states and they, in turn, distribute it to local charities. A new government site called the Federal Commons is now active with links to all federal offerings. It is organized in categories but agencies are accessible.

http://www.cffda.gov/federalcommons/

**Internet Searching:**
The best place to begin a search is by using the search tools the Internet itself offers. These tools change over time and each tool has its own method of use. The following information will give you a very basic understanding of the various search tools out there. There are several listed in the Bookmark document that accompanies this article. The easiest way to learn how to use them is to just give it a try. Most have a help/information section that will tell you about the search methods used by that particular tool. You will find a search engine tutorial at http://204.17.98.73/midlib/tutor.htm.

**Search Tools:**
A directory search tool searches for information by subject matter starting with a general heading and following with a succession of increasingly more specific sub-headings; also called a subject search. These are good for finding general information on a topic. They are usually small but information retrieved can often lead to more specific information.

Search engines search databases by using keywords in response to a query. These are used for more specific information since a comprehensive database is likely to contain the information sought. These are usually updated more frequently but are not very exacting in the way they index database content so specific information is difficult to find.

A directory with search engines uses both the subject and keyword search methods. It follows a directory path through increasingly more specific subject matter. This is a coordinated search. The further down the path you
go, the narrower the search field and the fewer and more relevant the hits.

Multi-engine search tools or metasearch uses a number of search engines simultaneously. It searches by keyword then usually lists the hits by the name of the search engines used.

**Search Operators:**

These are used by search tools to enhance the search for better results: Boolean employs AND, OR, NEAR and NOT to connect words and phrases in the query. Plus/Minus signs (+ -) are used to add or subtract keywords from the search query. Quotation marks ("'") indicate that the words within the quote marks are to be treated as an exact phrase, or reasonably close to it.

Stemming is the ability of a search to include the stem or main part of a keyword and is written with an asterisk such as educat*. This will draw hits from all forms of the word such as education, educational, educators, etc.

Case sensitivity means adjacent capitalized words are treated as a single proper name such as Robert Kennedy. You will need to check the help files of the search tools you are using to find out what operators work for that tool.

**Planning a Search:**

Gain a general understanding of how the search tools work and practice their use before you begin to search in earnest. Without prior planning a search can often go astray and yield little helpful information. Once you have an understanding of search tools, you can begin to plan your search. In the beginning, avoid searching for obscure information that might need a more sophisticated search method. Keep to more general topics. Stay focused on your topic and try not to let "interesting" hits take you off in another direction. All of the engines use one or several key words to initiate the search. Make a list of possible keywords for the information you want. Try simple searching without using operators first. If this does not yield enough information, proceed to the more complex operator assisted searches. You will need to play with the tools to find the ones that best suit your needs. It is best to become adept at two or three tools rather than using several with limited knowledge. Try to do your searching at off-peak hours or when you know your server carries less traffic. Waiting for Web pages to open can take up a large amount of time on a slow day.

**Internet Sources:**

Now that you are familiar with how to search for information on the Web, the question is "what do I search for?" This, of course, depends on your area of interest; education, human services, community service, etc. You will begin to build a library of bookmarks on your Web browser that you can use on a regular basis. You can organize these by creating folders named by category (government, private, search engines, etc.) and then moving bookmarked pages into them. Trying to find the page you want in a list that is hundreds long can be a nightmare.

We will cover free sites vs. pay sites, private/corporate sources, and government sources. Keep in mind there are millions of pages of information available. However, that presents a problem with having the time to browse through them for the right information. There are several ways to cut the time spent in searching the Web. The following are just a few examples
of what's there. You will find many more through your search efforts. All of the sites mentioned are included in the attached Bookmark listing.

**Free Sites:** There are many free sites on the Web that will do the basic searching for you. However, the searches are not complex and often the hits are not fruitful. It is better to use those sites that are specific to your particular interest. For example: The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has its own alert system. If you go to their home page at [http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/grants/grants.html](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/grants/grants.html) you can sign up for JUVJUST which is their e-mail communication system. Grant opportunities and information on the grant process is posted to this list regularly.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is a compilation of all the government agencies dealing with health topics such as the National Institute of Mental Health or the National Institute on Drug Abuse. The NIH is presented in Listserv format. You will need to subscribe to the list and will then receive updated information on all funding opportunities through your e-mail. All federal agencies can be accessed through the Federal Commons Web site (see list).

**Pay Sites:** ScienceWise at [http://content.sciencewise.com/fedix/index.htm](http://content.sciencewise.com/fedix/index.htm) is a site that searches keywords in up to three areas. When new information is retrieved, you will receive an e-mail notice with a link to their Web site. This is more commonly known as push technology because ScienceWise is ‘pushing’ information to you rather than you remembering to visit their site and do a search.

The Grant Advisor asks $398 per year for access by your entire institution. They produce a newsletter, deadline information, database and article searches, and have a good links page. Some information is free.

The Foundation Center's Associates program starting at $595 per year provides you with a toll-free line to their help desk where their staff can conduct searches at your direction and can find specific information such as the 990 tax forms for your funder in question. You also receive a newsletter and an e-mail service. They will do biographical searching for trustees and board members and conduct philanthropic information searches as well. They also have numerous online services.

The key to these services is finding the one or two that specifically fit your needs. Most pay sites will give you a trial period before you actually need to invest dollars. Take advantage of these and see if it contributes to your stock of usable information. Keep in mind, the free sites can be just as good if they fit your needs. However, registering with too many can flood your e-mail or take up an inordinate amount of time to process results.

**Private/Corporate Sources on the Web:** The Foundation Center has a lot to offer when searching for information on both private and corporate funders. They have an extensive link system that leads you to those that have a Web presence.

Internet Prospector is also a site that has many links to funders on the Web. They have an e-mail newsletter that is very informative with sections including: Corporations, Foundations/Grants, People, News

The Chronicle of Philanthropy site has a great deal of information about philanthropy in general. However, if you subscribe to the Chronicle in hardcopy, you will be able to access pages with more extensive information. The process is explained on their Web site.

Guidestar has several areas of interest including: the Charity News, the Nonprofit Center, and advanced searching along with their regular search engine. The Nonprofit Center allows funders to edit their own entries on the site. Information is gathered from the 990PF form that must be filed with the IRS each year. These can now be searched with some going back to 1998 for comparisons. Most information on the 990 is approximately two years old.

Grantsmanship Center site hosts the tgci-forum which is a forum with grant discussions. They, of course, post information on their grant-writing seminars that take place across the US. They have some search capabilities, however, I could find no private or corporate funders, only federal, state, community foundations, and international.

**Government Sources on the Web:**
The government funding sources on the Web are extensive and quite complex. However, it is worth the time to learn how to use these sites, especially if you are in education, medical areas, or human services. Several have e-mail subscriptions that deposit information into your e-mail. The Federal Commons site has simplified this information to some degree.

The Federal Register is a listing of all the government agency offerings but includes much more than funding opportunities. All rules and notices are posted as well. However, you are able to bring up the table of contents each day that lists everything within that day's offerings by agency. For example, if you are only interested in education, you would scroll down to the Department of Education and find their listings for the day. If the department is not listed then there were none for that day.

The Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance lists all of the funding programs for the entire government. However, they are not all currently funded. Most of the entries have a funding section that will tell you funding levels for the last couple of years and for any years ahead. Entries also discuss eligibility, focus, and the award process. If you find an offering that you are eligible for and that fits your needs, you will need to contact the appropriate agency for more information and guidelines.

The Department of Education site has a tab labeled Grants & Contracts which is very convenient. Many pages require the viewer to advance several steps before actually arriving at useful information. They use a category system for organizing pages and include process information as well. They also have a News section for news articles and information on current issues.

The Department of Health & Human Services has an advanced search feature as well as categories for more efficient searching. They also have links to all other agency pages within the DHHS. This page is more useful as a gateway to the agencies than as a source itself.
E-mail Listservs:

E-mail Listservs are a great way to interact with other professionals in your specific area of expertise. You can become and stay aware of the trends in your field or monitor the general outlook. Often people on the lists offer assistance with problems you might come up against. There is an etiquette involved so be aware of how these lists operate. This information is usually outlined in the new member information sent by e-mail when you subscribe. Also keep in mind that subscribing to too many lists will clog your e-mail. The Prospect Research list (PRSPCT-L) often deposits 30-40 messages per day.

Topica, located at http://www.liszt.com, is a Web page listing information on many lists. You can search by category or by a manual search for the lists with your interests. They have brief information on the list and instructions about subscribing. Other sites that host lists are CharityChannel (for non profits) and Yahoo!

The following are a few of the lists I currently use or have used. They are a great way to problem solve and network.

PRSPCT – L can be found on the Yahoo! Forums page. PRSPCT-L is a product of the Internet Prospector Web site. It is basically devoted to the area of prospect research focused more on individuals than foundations or corporations. Discussion often includes the positive and negative about various kinds of search tools.

GRANTS can be found on the CharityChannel forums page. This list is also a general discussion of granting and the grant process. Posters often exchange information on funders and share experiences of applying to funders. They are very willing to help newcomers and often respond to special requests. Other lists include Advancement, Accountability, Consultants, and many others.

DEV-WRITING can also be found on the CharityChannel forums page. This forum is devoted to development writing in any form. Discussions often include how to word ideas and many other aspects of putting development needs into writing.

Some lists are of a more private nature and it is necessary to become a member of the group prior to gaining access to the list. The American Association of Grant Professionals provides the AAGP Listserv through CharityChannel. The Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement also provides access to a discussion list on a local/regional basis.

Along with these forums, I also visit the Foundation Center page and read the PND Bulletin Board discussions and visit the Grantsmanship Center page and participate in the forum discussions there. By offering help when I can and participating in discussions, I engage in a form of payback for the help that was extended to me as a newcomer to the grants profession.

Conclusion:

You will find attached to this article a listing of bookmarks from both my personal collection and from other AAGP Board members. Please notify me at jacoffin@hotmail.com if you find addresses that do not work. You will also find more information on this topic in the Foundation Center's publication "Guide to Grantseeking on the Web" and in Helen Bergan's "Where the Information Is" published by BioGuide
Press. Another promising publication is “The Invisible Web” by Chris Sherman and Gary Price. They delve into the specialized world of information that generalized search engines can’t find.

The Web can shorten your research time and can contribute to your expertise as you work. Always keep in mind, however, that not all information resides on the Web and, as was stated earlier, only approximately 5% of charitable foundations are represented. Often information from the Foundation Center or the Taft publications and your local library is more easily reached. If the funder has a Web presence, it will usually be listed in these publications.

References:


Grantseeking & the Internet Bookmark List

Search Engines:

Yahoo!
   http://www.yahoo.com

Alta Vista: Main Page
   http://www.altavista.digital.com

Google
   http://www.google.com

Dogpile
   http://www.dogpile.com

Lycos
   http://www.lycos.com

MetaCrawler
   http://www.metacrawler.com

Directories:

Switchboard (telephone directory)
   http://www.switchboard.com

AT&T Telephone Directory (has reverse lookup)
   http://www.att.com/directory

List of Listservs (Topica)
http://www.liszt.com

Secondary Search Tools:
The Chronicle of Philanthropy (free & pay)
  http://philanthropy.com
The Grant Advisor Plus (pay site)
  http://www.grantadvisor.com
Internet Prospector
  http://internet-prospector.org
Fortune.com
  http://www.fortune.com
EDGAR Online - People
  http://people.edgar-online.com/people
Companies Online Search
  http://www.lycos.com/companies
Corporate Information
  http://www.corporateinformation.com
FECInfo Home Page
  http://www.tray.com/FECInfo/index.html-ssi

Government Agencies:
FirstGov
  http://www.firstgov.gov
Federal Register
  http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html
Search Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog (a.k.a. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance)
  http://www.gsa.gov/fdac
Federal Commons
  http://cfda.gov/federalcommons
US Government Printing Office
  http://www.gpo.gov
National Institutes of Health
  http://www.nih.gov
US Department of Health and Human Services
  http://www.os.dhhs.gov
Health Resources and Services Administration
  http://www.hrsa.dhhs.gov
Bureau of Health Professions
  http://www.hrsa.dhhs.gov/bhpr
US Population Projections
  http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/popproj.html
Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  http://www.cdc.gov
OSHA Home Page
  http://www.osha.gov
US Department of Education
  http://www.ed.gov
US National Library of Medicine
US Government Blue Pages (telephone directory)
  http://bp.fed.gov
GrantsNet
  http://www.grantsnet.org
National Center for Health Statistics
  http://www.cdc.gov/nchs
NonProfit Gateway
  http://www.nonprofit.gov
Thomas (Legislative information)
  http://thomas.loc.gov
National Science Foundation
  http://www.nsf.gov

Private Sources:
Foundation Center
  http://fdncenter.org
Council on Foundations
  http://www.cof.org/links
The Grantsmanship Center
  http://www.tgci.com
GuideStar
  http://www.guidestar.org
Nonprofit Virtual Library
  http://www.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/znonprof.htm
Join Together Online
  http://www.jointogether.org/home
Polaris Grants Central
  http://polarisgrantscentral.net
ScienceWise
  http://content.sciencewise.com/fedix/index.htm
SchoolGrants (K-12)
  http://www.schoolgrants.org
Education World
  http://www.education-world.com
Nonprofit Times (links page)

Business/Media
Nonprofit Online News: Current News
Slate Magazine - Table of Contents
  http://www.slate.com
New York Times on the Web (registration page)
   http://www.nytimes.com/yr/mo/day/index.html
CEO Express!: The business resources you need everyday
   http://www.ceoexpress.com
MSNBC
   http://www.msnbc.com
CharityChannel
   http://www.charitychannel.com
Fundraising Bank
   http://www.fundraising-ideas.com
Library of Management Information
   http://www.mapnp.org/library
Deja.com
   http://www.deja.com (bulletin board list)

Professional Organizations:
American Association of Grant Professionals
   http://www.grantprofessionals.org
Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement
   http://www.aprahome.org
Association of Fundraising Professionals
   http://www.nsfre.org

Grant Writing:
Granthelp
   http://granthelp.clarityconnect.com
   http://www.oryxpress.com/miner.htm
Grantwriters (click Free Info)
   http://www.grantwriters.com/links.htm
Greenlights (click Nonprofit Tools/Forms Library)
   http://austingreenlights.org
The Foundation Center listed earlier also has a free grantwriting course.

Internet Education:
Searching the Internet: Subject Indexes and Search Engines
   http://www.sldirectory.com/search.html
How to Search the World Wide Web: A Tutorial for Beginners and Non-Experts
   http://204.17.98.73/midlib/tutor.htm

If you discover any of these URLs to be unreachable, please let me know at
iacoffin@hotmail.com

Iris A Coffin is a founding member of AAGP and has served on the Board of Directors as Treasurer and
Member Services Chair. She currently serves as Chair of the Journal Committee and is the Development Writer
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Grant Management:
A Critical Component of a Total Grants Program
Marsha Wilde, MPH

Introduction
Whenever an organization is entrusted with dollars received from individual donors, private foundation grants, or public funding, there is a high level of accountability, both legally and ethically. The recipient organization can be placed under the microscope of accountability and must be able to clearly describe how all of the resources have been expended. The United Way has fallen under public scrutiny and found to be negligent in their use of donations. More recently, there is a growing demand for the accounting of funds donated to the Red Cross specifically for disaster relief in New York. As in all aspects of philanthropy, an organization requesting and receiving grant funds must have a well thought out system in place to manage those funds.

Grant management is that aspect of a total grants program that is the least glamorous, the least exciting, and the most often overlooked, but it is one of the most important pieces of the total grant development program. Concern over the seeming complexity of procedures related to grant management is often a deterrent for many in their decision to apply for a grant. For many people, the prospect of managing a grant contract, no matter what the size and scope, is daunting. The prospect of an audit sends many into a panic. However, systems and controls can be put in place that can make the grant management process bearable.

Rationale
A great deal of time and effort goes into the development, writing and submission of grant proposals. A key activity in ensuring success is matching funder interests with program needs. Once that connection is established, the next step is to build a relationship with that funder. A series of carefully crafted communications tells the funder that your ideas are good, your methods will be effective, and your evaluation of process and outcome is methodologically sound. These communications include a series of phone calls, visits to the funder and invitations to visit your site. Many private foundations and corporations see themselves as partners in the activities undertaken by the grantee and want to be a part of the communication loop regarding the developmental progress of the project.

The payoff for this careful attention to funder cultivation is a higher success rate in grant funding. Acceptance of a grant award means that there is agreement to use the money as described in the proposal. Acceptance is a contract and it is a trust relationship between the two parties. The funder must believe that you say what you mean and that you mean what you say and you’ll be faithful 100% (with apologies to Horton the Elephant and Dr. Suess). It is up to the grantee to prove that the trust is well placed and that the program will be managed with honesty and integrity. Grant management is the extension and continuation of the good relationship
Grant Management: that has been developed in the process of winning the funds.

Definition

Once the initial trust and interest of the funder is established, there is a two-pronged responsibility on the part of the grantee to maintain that initial trust. Future success of grant programs is based on a confidence earned from a good history of grant management.

The first responsibility is to be true to what was presented in the program/project proposal. This responsibility can be defined as stewardship of “thought” resources and “action” activities. This stewardship translates into regular and timely reports of progress. These reports include areas where progress may not have been made and include the reasons for this lack of progress. Lessons can be learned from failures as well as from success. What is important is to accurately report current status and make adjustments as required. In this way, the funder becomes a partner in the process. There is great value in discovering what doesn’t work, as well as what does work. It is the responsibility of the grantee to track progress on a regular basis, to report trends, and to make changes as necessary in activities and provide documentation in case there is a need to change the program/project.

The second responsibility is to assure that dollars are being spent for the line items that were described in the initial proposal. This tracking of expenditures is defined as stewardship of financial resources and translates into careful financial record keeping that demonstrates detailed accounting of dollars spent. This aspect of grant management is especially important for the obvious reasons of accountability, plus the need to monitor appropriateness and applicability of the original budget proposal. Budgets are, in reality, some one person’s ‘best guess’ as to how dollars will be needed. In the case of a new program concept, this guess may or may not be close to reality. Careful monitoring of expenditures on a regular basis adds to the knowledge gained in the ‘project experiment’ and can be another means of measuring progress. In addition, any changes that need to be made to the budget can be made early in the process.

The responsibilities described above can only be carried out through a systematic method of record keeping that allows for progress to be charted and tracked in a reasonable manner. There are many people who have the innate ability to organize themselves and chart their work methodically. These concrete sequential individuals are not the ones who are daunted by grant management and do not need coaching in the importance of record keeping. They greatly appreciate assistance, and easily adapt to the special demands of grant record keeping. There are also many who are abstract random personalities and need a great deal of assistance in organizing and keeping records of activities. These are the individuals who most need a systematic method for grant management if they are to succeed in project development.

Methodology

CHI, Catholic Health Initiatives, is one of the largest Catholic Hospital Systems in the nation. The CHI Colorado Foundation is a corporate entity that provides philanthropy
services to the 5 CHI Hospitals and Senior Service facilities in Colorado. The program of grant development and management was established in November 1997. Prior to that time grant acquisition was a small portion of fundraising revenue and was primarily in the form of ‘gifts’ from friendly foundations. Reporting was haphazard, sometimes conducted over the phone with the funder. This was not due to a lack of attention to detail as it was that grant dollar acquisitions were seen more in the range of relationship building with major donors.

In addition to setting up a formal grants acquisition program, the challenge for the CHI Colorado Foundation was to assist a wide variety of people in many positions within the organization, most of who self report as being fiscally and/or organizationally challenged. The answer to the problem of systematic organization came in the development of a system to place all of the necessary tools and information into one central source for the project manager.

The development of the grant management notebook was based on the following assumptions: 1) not everyone is a good record keeper, 2) not everyone is a good organizer, 3) not everyone knows what is important to keep and for how long, and 4) project managers have enough to do without worrying about how to keep track of necessary papers.

Upon receipt of grant dollars, the grants management office sets up a notebook specific to each project. If a project has more than one source of grant funding, a notebook is prepared for each grant. The purpose of the notebook is to provide one place for the project manager to maintain records of expenses as well as records of progress.

The notebook is divided into eight sections. Following is a description of sections included in the notebook and purpose for each.

Section 1: ‘Grants Management’. The first section of the notebook provides introductory material for each project manager. The section includes a chart of responsibilities that informs the project manager of their responsibilities in grant management. The chart also includes the responsibilities of other key players in the grants program. Also included is a copy of the financial project summary sheet as maintained in the finance department. A copy of the overall project timeline is also included in this section.

Section 2: ‘Grant Contract’. Included in this section is a copy of the proposal and a copy of the grant contract for easy reference.

Section 3: ‘Reports’. This section contains the due dates of all reports and a copy of the format required by the funder. The project manager keeps the blank forms for future reporting plus a copy of completed reports for reference.

Section 4: ‘Financial Record Keeping’. This section provides definitions and forms for several key aspects of financial management. Forms
for recording in-kind and matching contributions, personnel logs, and expense reports are located in this section. The personnel and expense reports are required for payroll accounting, the expense reports for travel and meeting expenses. These forms must be used when requesting reimbursement in these cost categories. Matching and in-kind contributions must be accounted for particularly in those grants that require these funds as a condition of grant award. An important part of this section is the definitions page. Providing definitions creates a greater comfort level for the neophyte financial manager and allows the project manager and the grant management coordinator to speak the same language.

**Section 5: ‘Project Record Keeping’**

Section 5 provides an organizational approach to project management for those who do not have much experience with this aspect of grant management. Included in the section is a sample monthly project checklist. This checklist provides a structure for tracking progress on a monthly basis to assist in the semi-annual or annual report writing. Also included is a timeline report format, again, to assist in information gathering for the funder reports. Project managers are free to use this section of the notebook for any kind of record keeping organization that they prefer. The notebook offers a place to keep this information.

**Section 6: ‘Project Budget’**

This section is designed to provide the project manager with tools for tracking their budgets. An Excel spreadsheet with a line item budget for the project is developed for each notebook. On a monthly basis a financial expenditure report is sent to each project manager from the grants management office. These reports can be kept in this section to provide an ongoing history of grant expenditures on a monthly basis. This regular reporting allows the project manager to identify areas of expenditure that are varying from the projected budget, and then to re-examine original budget projections and request changes as necessary early in the grant.

**Section 7: ‘Check Requests’**

In this section of the notebook is a copy of the check request format used by the foundation accounting department. The fund number specific to each individual project is pre-typed onto the check request format so the project manager does not have to remember a long number. A list of project specific expense account numbers is also included so that the project manager does not have to sort through a long list of possible categories.
This also reduces error rate in grant tracking. Included also is an instruction sheet on what fields on the form must be filled out and the information required.

Section 8: ‘Invoice Copies’ This section is reserved for maintaining copies of invoices and bills submitted to the grant management office. Keeping copies of submitted invoices is particularly helpful if there is a discrepancy in expense reports.

Results
The results of the development and distribution of the grant management notebook have been positive in many areas. For example; through the use of pre-printed check request forms the error rate in recording grant expenditures accurately has been reduced to those resulting from keying in the incorrect number. By providing a list of expense account numbers specific to that project, the number of choices for expense account categories is reduced. This forces the project manager to examine how dollars are spent and allows for early identification of budgetary discrepancies.

By providing one place for keeping records of all activities, the project manager does not have to devise their own system of record keeping and then translate that system to the grants management office that may have a different system. Both parties are speaking the same language resulting in a reduction of errors due to misunderstanding and faulty assumptions.

At the end of the grant period, the notebook is returned to the grant management office to be compared to the central records for that grant. Any discrepancy in reports or expenditures is reconciled at that time and the grant is closed. Information in the notebook is retained in the event of an audit. This has proven to be particularly helpful in the A-133 process because all of the necessary information is located in one resource for the auditors.

Summary
All grants management programs must contain cost accounting principles that provide for the necessary controls needed in order to satisfy reporting and audit requirements. Depending upon structure, size and sophistication of the organization, these cost accounting procedures may range from the complex to the simple. The basic premise remains the same; accurate records of the dollars that come in, where these dollars go in the system, and how the dollars are spent. These cost accounting principles must be based on the following ideology: responsibility, integrity, and accountability.

The role of the CHI Colorado grants management program is two-fold. First, the program’s staff provides grant/project development services for a five-hospital system in Colorado. Once a grant award is made, it is the role of the program to provide oversight to assure that the resources associated with that grant are used appropriately. Resources in this case means more than just financial assets and include personal, intellectual and environmental assets.

A grant management program that combines sound administrative procedures along with organizational integrity in the appropriate use of all resources is the hallmark of a total grant program. The notebooks described in this paper provide
Grant Management: a system of organized record keeping and reporting that addresses all aspects of grant management.

Marsha Wilde, MPH is Vice President of Penrose-St. Francis Foundation and a Charter Member of AAGP.
Book Review
Marsha Wilde, MPH

Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations: A Practical Guide and Workbook.
Michael Allison & Jude Kaye
The Support Center for Nonprofit Management
John Wiley & Sons, Inc  1997

Allison and Kaye have put together an outstanding road map for the nonprofit organization to navigate the planning process successfully. The focus of the book is on process and, thus, the workbook is organized in such a way that the planner can easily follow and refer to the various stages of strategic planning. Beginning with an introduction to strategic planning, what it is (and is not) and why it is important to the organization, the guide is organized into phases of planning and the specific steps required for the completion of each phase. In addition to the clearly presented outline of the process, the authors have provided a series of worksheets for leaders to use in working through the planning activities.

It is obvious that it is critical to ‘begin at the beginning,’ and this is what the authors have done with their guide. The first phase in strategic planning is planning the process, including defining roles of participants, the extent of participation, and the development of a ‘plan to plan.’ Once the fundamental elements are in place the authors walk the reader through the construction of a clear mission and vision statement; an assessment of the current environment (both external and internal); an examination of needs of stakeholders and clients; priority setting; and the development of goals and objectives and core strategies. Then of course, is the all-important phase of actually writing the strategic plan.

Once the planning process is completed, the guide provides insight into the activities that keep the strategic plan alive and useful to the organization. The first step is the development of a work plan, and evaluation of progress towards goals and strategies to update the plan. The authors emphasize that an organization should not become a slave to the strategic plan, rather use it to assist in the enhancement of the organization and it’s ability to meet it’s mission and vision.

I have found this book to be particularly helpful in establishing the groundwork for a well-developed grant proposal. By following the strategic planning process for either an organization or a particular program, the writer is naturally focused on the planning and the steps involved in developing an implementation plan. The components of a strategic plan, as presented in this text, have a direct correlation with the outline of a successful grant proposal. In teaching daylong grant writing workshops, I have spent one half of the day on strategic planning, the grant writing follows naturally and puts a process to proposal development. The book comes with a diskette containing all of the worksheets used in the text. The book contains a step-by-step, highly structured process that, interestingly enough, is adaptable to many varied situations and levels of experience. I highly recommend this book as a guide for consultants and writers alike.
Two-thirds through *Writing for a Good Cause* I stopped reading, went to my desk and rewrote the final draft of a cover letter for a foundation. The director's e-mail response was instant and ecstatic. The new letter was positive, strong, and inviting.

It doesn't matter whether you write for a museum, social service agency, boys and girls club, or a medical research group, *Writing for a Good Cause* will improve your writing style and the way you work.

Joseph Barbato and Danielle Furlich write with a good supply of reality and humor. Take the Brooklyn Bridge - with examples of a well-made table of contents, executive summary, proposal and budget, the authors convincingly sell you an un-built bridge in 1870.

You can tell they've worked under the gun creating compelling pieces. Furlich has been a writer and editor at the Wilderness Society and The Nature Conservancy, and director of development communications at the National Trust for Historic Preservation. She's now an independent writer and consultant. After years with the City University of New York and The Nature Conservancy, Barbato now owns Barbato Associates, a consulting firm for non-profits. He is a contributing editor of Publisher's Weekly and has written for *Smithsonian*, *The New York Times* and *Washington Post Book World*. His piece on the Farmland Trust sent me hurrying to my desk to re-create that cover letter.

The authors provide a rigorous method for proof reading, excellent tips for thank you letters, and suggestions for careful and useful follow-up reporting. They promote good stewardship of the donor relationship, conscientious planning and writing, honesty at all times, and exhaustive research.

In the trenches a writer learns to put the organization front-and-center in order to sell, sell, sell. That's good, but not as good as what the authors suggest: "...link your request to current events or other activities going on in your community. Mention a recent study, media reports, ... and explain how that makes your cause more important and timely than ever."

That sort of background research is an excellent warm-up to writing. It's much like a lawyer's "discovery" phase before presenting a case. To write an excellent proposal, case statement, concept paper or newsletter copy you must truly immerse yourself in the topic. Take the authors' advice on interview techniques and tricks, and enjoy their anecdotes of some of the more pleasant ways they plunged into research.

When it is finally time to write, all that information will be ready to spill out onto the page, or screen, after you overcome writer's panic (tips included).
Keep *Writing for a Good Cause* close-at-hand. Read it when you start to write on a new topic. Read it when you get bored with what you've been writing. Read it when you just can't get started. Barbato and Furlich write so well that their book is a pleasure to read for work -- not work to read.
Book Review
Iris A. Coffin

The Invisible Web: Uncovering Information Sources Search Engines Can’t See
Chris Sherman and Gary Price
Published by CyberAge Books, Information Today, Inc. Medford, New Jersey 2001

Ever wonder why the information you are looking for is sometimes so difficult to find? I have spent hours searching for what would seem to be an easy piece of information to locate. Search engines can be very frustrating to work with and impossible for most of us to fully understand. Sherman and Price, however, give a simple explanation for this frustration; “. . . vast expanses of the Web are completely invisible to general-purpose search engines. . .”

This book gives you a clear understanding of what the authors call the Invisible Web. The book is quite usable by novices and a valuable resource for advanced searchers as well. Nearly every book I have about this subject includes a history of the Web/Internet but this one contains one of the best. It clearly explains the progression and advancements and does it in a very readable fashion.

Chapter two through eight involve an in-depth look at the topic. The authors examine common search engines and Web directories taking into consideration both their strengths and weaknesses. There is a thorough explanation for why these tools do not explore the Invisible Web that makes perfect sense. The authors show the reader how to deal with this disadvantage. They cover dealing with tools such as “targeted directories and crawlers, metasearch engines, value-added search services, ‘alternative’ search tools, and fee-based Web services.” They attempt to define the Invisible Web and show the reader how to recognize invisible content so as to avoid spending hours looking for it using visible tools.

Chapter six sets out a list of the top 25 Invisible Web categories. The purpose is to encourage searchers to use Invisible Web sources when looking for these specific categories of information. This is an admittedly confusing and difficult topic to tackle for even experienced Web searchers. The book is easy to use and understand. It does make the searching maze clearer. However, it adds another dimension of difficulty in that we, as searchers, now have to decide when to use a general search method or when to use an Invisible Web method. That has not become much clearer. If the reader only searches in a specialized field, then the Invisible Web is where he or she needs to be searching. That is not the case for a good share of us. The key, of course, is to use the book to become familiar with this element of searching and then realize it will take a good deal of time to become comfortable with what’s out there.

Chapter nine offers a list of pathfinders or finders for Invisible Web sources. Chapter 10 through chapter 27 contains URLs for a vast number of Invisible Web sources from Art and Architecture to Transportation. There is also a Glossary and an extensive Index. This is a valuable resource but, as with all Internet publications, the information will become dated as the Web changes and evolves. With an accessible Web site at http://invisible-web.net, designed to keep these lists updated, this one will last longer than most. It is a good investment of both time and funds.

Biographies from the book (condensed):
Chris Sherman is President of Searchwise, a Boulder, Colorado-based Web consulting firm, and Associate Editor of SearchEngineWatch.com. He is a frequent contributor to Information Today, Online Magazine, Econtent, and other information industry journals, and his previous books include The McGraw-Hill CD ROM Handbook, and The Elements of Basic, The Elements of Cobol, and The Elements of Pascal from John Wiley & Sons. Chris has more than 20 years of experience in developing multimedia and Internet applications.

Gary Price is a library and information research consultant based in suburban Washington D.C. Gary is the creator and compiler of several well-known Web research tools including Price’s List of Lists and Direct search, a compilation of Invisible Web databases. He is also the creator and editor of The Virtual Acquisition shelf and News Desk. Gary is a frequent speaker at professional and trade conferences and is a regular contributor to Searcher magazine.
**Grant Resource or Tool**

**Mary Hale Meyer**  
Grants Development Specialist  
University at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY

*Grants and Foundations Review* is one of CharityChannel’s new e-newsletters for the fundraisers.

The *Review* is a weekly newsletter emailed every Tuesday, and, like all of CharityChannel’s services, free. The editors promise that it’s “More than just ‘where can I apply and when?’” Instead, *Grants & Foundations Review* is “your competitive edge in getting expert advice on the do's and don'ts and the ‘how-to’ knowledge to help your applications rise to the top.

As is to be expected from CharityChannel, the newsletter is well written, lively and informative, offering tips, techniques and news – the latter including a section of funding opportunities. Writers encompass the field, including Michel Wyland from CharityChannel. The topics are wide ranging, from funding trends to approaching different kinds of sources – the community and private foundations, corporations and the government – to the role of the board in grantseeking. I was pleased to learn from an early issue that funders are increasingly willing to offer feedback on a rejected proposal.

Each issue includes a funding tip – one I particularly liked came from Wyland: “When developing a grant application, you can work with a team, but you must write alone.” In addition, the weekly newsletters incorporate the Foundation Center’s Grant Alerts. Since *Grants and Foundations Review* is emailed simultaneously with the Alerts, you can relieve your mailbox of at least one mailing!

In my opinion, many of the tips will be most useful for the beginning to intermediate grant writer. On the other hand, the lively writing is welcome, and even the most grizzled among us will learn something new nearly every issue.

Like all of CharityChannel’s offerings, *Grants and Foundations Review* is archived at CC’s website, [http://charitychannel.com](http://charitychannel.com). Subscription information is also available there.

CharityChannel publishes the newsletter in collaboration with GrantStation.com. Editor is Jeane Vogel; she is assisted by a panel of able contributors. Letters to the editors are always welcome.
Website Review
Jessica Whitmore, MA

Association of Small Foundations
http://www.smallfoundations.org/
Last Accessed: October 15, 2001
Last Updated: October 12, 2001

According to this website, “[f]oundations with few or no staff provide half of the total foundation funding in the U.S., giving essential financial support to hospitals, libraries, youth programs, senior programs, education, historic preservation, the arts, social services, and other important activities in thousands of communities across the country.”

This website then continues, “The Association of Small Foundations (ASF) was formed to assist these foundations. ASF’s mission is to provide information and assistance related to quality philanthropy to those offices having five or fewer persons and a portfolio that includes all aspects of foundation work: public relations, writing letters, cutting checks, mailing and processing grant applications, working with trustees and grantees, doing site visits and evaluations, managing assets, tax matters, etc.”

While the association’s website is ultimately geared toward the foundation, it provides useful information for the grants professional. The website is divided into two sections: Members Only and Public.

The Members Only section focuses on the needs common to small foundations. For example, this section provides access to update the foundation’s GuideStar report, tips for small foundation management, sample investment policies, sample grant guidelines and applications, sample site visit reports, sample letters to grantees and prospective grantees (rejection letters, request for additional requirements, award letters and agreement/acceptance letters), sample annual reports, insight on analyzing financial statements of potential grantees, sample grant reports and sample job descriptions. This information, unfortunately, is not available to the general public as it is password protected for members.

The useful information for the grants professional exists in the Public section. Here the grants professional finds a listing of foundations that are members of the Association of Small Foundations. This listing is organized by state; foundations outside of the United States are also included. If time exists, this is a good source leading to further research of small foundations as the site says “[c]urrently over 2,600 small foundations claim membership in ASF.” The list, when printed, is 48 pages long.

The Public section also provides access to the ASF Members’ IRS 990PF. However, when linking to a 990PF, the site directs the researcher to GuideStar’s website (www.guidestar.org). Unfortunately, not all of the members’ 990PFs are directly accessible; in other words, for quite a few of the foundations, the researcher must manually search GuideStar for the foundation. Members’ websites are also accessible through the Association of Small Foundation’s site. However, these are not directly linked to the initial state listing of members. Instead, the researcher must access the “ASF Member Web Pages” page and search for the foundation. Additionally, not all of the members have websites available.

The Public section also provides access to information on how a foundation operates. A researcher, without membership, can access web links (such as Council on Foundations
or National Center for Family Philanthropy), job openings at various foundations, and information on insurance programs and grants management software. Access is also available to an article providing insight into the criteria foundations should use when reviewing grant proposals.

This website is easy to navigate as the navigation bar remains visible on the left of each webpage. The biggest hurdle in accessing this site is having the time to research through the state listing of members.
Website Review
Paula Shambach
Grants Development Coordinator
Cumberland County Schools, Fayetteville, NC

GuideStar
http://www.guidestar.org
Last Accessed: April 2, 2002

Being a new user of GuideStar’s website, I was extremely pleased with the ease with which I found a wealth of information about foundations in my area. The GuideStar website is produced by Philanthropic Research, Inc., a 501(c)(3) public charity founded in 1994. The mission of GuideStar is to “revolutionize philanthropy and nonprofit practice with information.” They offer free and subscription services to promote philanthropy through shared information.

Free services include:

- Informative “GuideStar Pages” that are registered and updated by nonprofits
- Searchable database containing more than 850,000 nonprofit agencies
- Resources for Nonprofits and Donors

Nonprofits can list information about their agency on GuideStar’s website at no cost. Depending on the amount of information entered by the agency, you will find the following topics covered on GuideStar Pages:

- Summary of the agency’s mission and programs
- Financial information, including copies of 990 forms filed with the IRS
- Leaders and/or board members
- A copy of their latest newsletter
- Contact information, including website, e-mail, phone, address, etc.

If the nonprofit chooses not to list detailed information, you’ll find the information contained on their 990 tax form. Form 990 is a report that must be filed by agencies exempt from federal income taxes whose annual receipts are normally more than $25,000 a year. In addition to basic information about the foundation, these reports usually provide a detailed list of who received money from the foundation and for what purpose.

GuideStar’s search tool allows you to search for organizations by keyword, name, city, nonprofit type, revenue range, and many other characteristics. Due to the size of the database, it is wise to refine your search as much as possible.

GuideStar also provides links to valuable resources for Donors and Nonprofits. Donors will find a detailed list of web links broken down by areas of interest, information on how to give wisely, and links to articles of interest to donors. In addition to the free GuideStar pages, nonprofits have access to a wide range of resources. The “Classified” section allows nonprofits to search and post ads related to job openings, volunteer opportunities, requests for donations, and more. You can also search for upcoming conferences in your area.

Charity Check™ and GuideStar Analyst Reports are available by subscription or for a fee. Charity Check™ is designed to assist grantmakers in determining an agency’s
nonprofit status. It is a searchable database linked to IRS Publication 78 which lists the organization's name, city, and current tax-exempt status, including what percentage of contributions to it are tax deductible. GuideStar Analyst Reports provide detailed information related to a nonprofit’s performance over the past several years. According to GuideStar, these reports “are perfect for nonprofit research, benchmarking, due diligence, sector scans, and reporting.”

GuideStar has created a website that is visually pleasing, easy to use and packed full of useful information. A menu bar is included on each page and the consistent placement of links makes it easy to jump from one search to another. Other nice touches include a Site Map and Glossary. Although it has a comprehensive Help page, the online tutorial is located in an obscure place (i.e. under Nonprofit Resources link).

GuideStar provides practical tools for research that grant writers and non-profit administrators will find very useful.
Website Review
Iris A. Coffin

The Foundation Center
http://fdncenter.org
Last accessed September 20, 2002

Billed as “Your Gateway to Philanthropy on the World Wide Web,” The Foundation Center is a required staple on your list of bookmarks or favorites. I have used this site for many years with good success. It has gone through several upgrades over the years and has become a very functional page with logical access points. It has a large number of free access services, several pay services, offers learning opportunities both free and pay, and also offers a resource store called the Marketplace where you can purchase books, online resources, and their popular FC Search program.

The Foundation Center page also offers Research on Philanthropy including a list of the top 100 Foundations listed by assets with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation topping the list at more than $21 Billion in assets (2000). All but 20 are linked to their Web sites for additional information. Other selections include Literature of the Nonprofit Sector, Funding Trends, FC Stats, and Nonprofit Links among others.

Philanthropy News Digest (PND), the Center news publication, includes links to Today’s Headlines, Job of the Day, New Requests for Proposals, and the NPO Spotlight. You can also receive an e-mail version of PND outlining current information. There is a message board you can access for an exchange of grant/nonprofit information. It is well used and, as with most Web communities, is very helpful with questions.

Under Finding Funders you can choose from several links including a 990-PF database provided by GrantSmart.org, links to common grant applications, and samples of prospect worksheets for both institutional funders and individual donors.

The Learning Lab is especially useful for new people in the grants profession. It includes a vast amount of information with access to free courses on writing, organizing, researching and many other topics. You can also link to their list of seminars around the country, both free and fee-based, and register online. You will have access to the Center’s online librarian where you can ask a specific question and receive a reasonably prompt answer. It would be wonderful to be able to engage in an instant message type exchange with a live person but this is not available.

The site includes a section called For Grantmakers with links to a large amount of information designed to assist grantmaking professionals to organize and manage their institutions. A section outlining how grantmakers can help the Center maintain its services is well presented and makes a good case for support.

Currently Drake subscribes to the Foundation Directory Online at the Plus level with single user access. This gives me search capabilities on 10,000 of the largest foundations and the Center database of 150,000 grants awarded. The cost is $295 per year for this level. Their Platinum level, at $995 per year, gives access to their entire range of funders including corporate funders. There are two other levels to consider commensurate with your research needs and budget.

The Center does a good job of staying abreast of what’s happening in the philanthropic field as well as creating information of its own. The newest report out is the 2002 edition of Foundation Growth and Giving Estimates: 2001 Preview. This is a
12 page report on original research done by the center. “It provides a ‘first look’ at 2001 giving together with actual aggregate 2000 giving and asset data for nearly 56,600 grantmaking foundations tracked by the Foundation Center.” You can click on the link provided then save the document to your own files at no charge.

This is a premium Web site with quality information and easily navigated; one that I would not want to do without. It is a must for any newcomer to the field and also provides those of us that have been here awhile with valuable and reliable information.
Author Guidelines

Articles or article proposals may be submitted at anytime to the listed editors of the JAAGP.

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Articles should be submitted as e-mail attachments or on computer disks. Hardcopy versions will be accepted, however, processing will be delayed. Electronic versions should be saved as Word documents in IBM format or as RTF files. Average length expected is 3-6 single-spaced printed pages. Any graphics must be compatible with PageMaker or Word software. Accepted articles will be published in the next available issue and/or at the discretion of the JAAGP Committee.

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