Dear Reader,

This issue of the Journal contains papers on general topics regarding the improvement of the grant professional and the profession. The wide variety of paper topics mirrors the diversity of work that members of our profession perform, and this diversity provides a rich variety of experience from which to learn.

We invite you to contribute your valuable experience to the Journal in the form of an article. Our priorities are articles that address new ideas in our field, contribute research-based information, provide a case study or best practices, and examine any of the competencies and skills described in the Table of Validated Competencies and Skills (available at www.grantcredential.org. (Click on “The Examination;” then “Competencies and Skills Tested;” then “Download Document for More Detail.”)

We invite your comments on this issue of the Journal and we welcome suggestions you may have for us to consider for future themed issues.

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- Serves as a leading authority and resource for the practice of grantsmanship in all sectors of the field.
- Advances the field by promoting professional growth and development.
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Articles must be relevant to the grants profession. If you have questions, please email journal@grantprofessionals.org. Submission deadlines are posted on the AAGP website.
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How to Help Reviewers Evaluate Your Government Grant Proposals Quickly and Effortlessly

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Abstract

Government evaluators of grant proposals rely on a mental toolbox of rapid and fairly simple techniques to decide which proposals to recommend for funding. Because evaluators use predictable mental techniques to evaluate proposals, grant professionals should develop proposals that reviewers can clearly understand and from which they can extract information quickly, effortlessly, and with as little mental effort as possible. Good proposals that are easy to evaluate are more likely to be funded than great proposals that are difficult to evaluate.

Introduction

Grant proposals to government agencies are evaluated differently than grant proposals to foundations, corporate giving sources, and potential donors. Because government agencies are public organizations spending public monies, they usually establish internal or outside panels of expert reviewers to evaluate grant applications based on weighted criteria.

Since the 1950s, psychologists and social scientists have been studying how people make day-to-day decisions in limited amounts of time, with limited amounts of information, and under the stress of dealing with competing tasks. These are exactly the conditions that characterize the grant review process in government agencies. These studies have been applied to business, economics, jurisprudence, and other fields, but not to the review process for government grant proposals. This article will provide practical advice about creating grant proposals to government agencies, based upon the premise that reviewers apply the same simple mental techniques to proposals that they use in their everyday lives.
Decision-making in the Real World

Until the late 1950s, most research in the social sciences was based on the assumption that humans acted with perfect rationality to optimize their choices. This assumption was forcefully challenged and overturned by the economist Herbert A. Simon, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in economics in 1978. As a result of studying decision-making practices in business organizations, Simon argued that people frequently departed from formal decision-making models because of time pressure, incomplete information, the inability to calculate consequences, and other constraints. He called this cognitive process "bounded rationality," which focused on the mental processes needed to make choices and the innate desire for a satisfactory rather than an optimal solution to problems (Simon, 1982).

Gradually, psychologists began applying Simon's concept of bounded rationality to their own discipline. The three most prominent scholars who have shaped the field of cognitive decision-making have been two Israelis, Amos Twersky of Stanford University and Daniel Kahneman of Princeton University, and a German, Gerd Gigerenzer, of the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin. In 2002, Kahneman received the Nobel Prize in economics for his work on how people make judgments under uncertain conditions.

According to these scholars, most people use fast and frugal decision-making processes, rather than formal and extensive reasoning, to make everyday decisions and solve problems (Twersky & Kahneman, 1985; Gigerenzer, Todd, & Adaptive Group, 1999; Marsh & Gigerenzer, 2004). This approach yields fairly accurate judgments and predictable errors and biases. They argue that people use three important and interconnected aspects of rationality to make rapid and accurate decisions:

- **Bounded rationality**: When people make decisions, they arrive at their conclusions using realistic amounts of time, information, and computational resources.
- **Ecological rationality**: When people make decisions, they exploit the structure of information in their environment.
- **Social rationality**: When people make decisions, they often arrive at adaptive outcomes by interacting with other people (Gigerenzer, Czerlinski, & Martignon, 2002).

People use these cognitive approaches because they have limited time, incomplete information, and often cannot calculate the consequences of their decisions (Gigerenzer, 2007; Gladwell, 2005). The description of decision-making by Twersky, Kahneman, and Gigerenzer accurately mirrors the process used by reviewers to evaluate grant proposals.
In their more candid moments, reviewers of proposals probably would admit that they do not spend too much time evaluating an individual proposal, that they may not have enough information to evaluate it thoroughly, and that they are unsure of the long-term consequences for a government agency in choosing one proposal over another. In fact, one study of the proposal review process by Tom Sant (2003) argued that most evaluators used a limited set of cognitive strategies and techniques to make a decision, on average in a little over six minutes.

Because reviewers of government grant proposals must make fast and frugal decisions with limited amounts of information, proposals should be designed to help evaluators gather and process information as effortlessly as possible. This involves four basic strategies. First, develop a comprehensive proposal compliance matrix. Second, use the principles of information design to organize the proposal. Three, depict quantitative evidence, processes, and cause and effect with clear and compelling visual explanations. And fourth, use the most common form of decision-making – recognition – to organize the narrative.

**Develop a Compliance Matrix**

A highly competitive proposal must be responsive to and compliant with the grant guidelines. By developing a detailed tabular proposal compliance matrix that matches the grant requirements to proposal sections and pages, reviewers have a clear, logical, and easy-to-understand road map to demonstrate compliance with the grant guidelines and to find information easily.

A compliance matrix helps evaluators in five important ways:

- It lists all the relevant grant guidelines’ sections and then maps where these sections are found in the proposal.
- It demonstrates that the proposal sections are addressed in the order in which they occur in the grant guidelines.
- It helps reviewers evaluate the content of the proposal.
- It provides reviewers with a handy checklist to verify the inclusion of all required sections.
- It demonstrates that the applicant has addressed all the requirements and thus enables reviewers to make comparative judgments, to the detriment of other applicants.

In addition, a Compliance Matrix serves another important function. It helps the applicant address all the relevant sections of the grant guidelines. Because a Compliance Matrix cannot be part of the proposal narrative, it should be referenced in an applicant’s cover letter with a request for it to be distributed to reviewers (Herndon, 2001).
Use the Principles of Good Informational Design

Government grant reviewers neither know nor care about the proposal development process, but they are very much interested in the design of proposals because that greatly affects their ability to gather and process information. Consequently, government grant proposals should adhere to the following principles of good information design to make it easy for evaluators quickly to find and understand the information that interests them:

- **Create interest** by breaking the expected rectangular design of the proposal page with a ragged right justification, lists and graphics, tables, headings that stand out, visuals, and headers and footers.
- **Meet expectations** by organizing your proposal to reflect the grant guidelines or the evaluation criteria and by using the vocabulary of the grant guidelines to label proposal sections and headings.
- **Reveal structure** by including an Executive Summary, a Table of Contents, a Compliance Matrix, frequent headings, and topic sentences at the beginning of paragraphs.
- **Facilitate navigation** with page and section numbers and letters, headers and footers, and chapter and section titles.
- **Create manageable chunks of information** by breaking the proposal narrative into small units and by grouping related information together.
- **Prioritize information** by using different font sizes, font weights, indentation, and numbering systems.
- **Differentiate information types** with themes, section summaries, lists, captions, sidebars, and visuals (Munger, 2003).

Use Good Visual Explanations

Using visual images effectively is an important element of persuasive proposals because numerous studies have demonstrated that good visuals improve learning and retention and reduce the amount of time needed to explain complex ideas. As Edward Tufte has argued (1990 & 1997), good visuals get readers to pay attention, understand, remember, and agree with you. Visual displays of information – charts, graphs, diagrams, tables, timelines, and pictures – should show cause and effect, ensure that proper comparisons are made, and emphasize the themes and goals of the proposal narrative.

The lack of good visuals is a long-standing problem in many grant proposals for two reasons. First, grant proposal professionals are usually text-oriented and tend not to be visual learners. Second, often applicants believe that they have so much information to convey in so little space that they consider visuals to be superfluous.
This text-based approach to proposal development is an error. Many reviewers are visual learners, and good graphics grab their attention and quickly communicate the information they want to know. And as Edward Tufte has argued, even if reviewers are text-oriented, they find good graphics persuasive, which is a vitally important element in winning grant proposals.

There is no dichotomy between seeing and thinking. Visual perception is integrally related to thought.

Government grant proposals should adhere to the following principles of visual design to engage evaluators and help them better understand the narrative:

• Show the data.
• Give reviewers clear, stimulating high-density information so they can exercise their full mental powers.
• Use colors to enhance data comprehension.
• Use words, numbers, and visuals in close proximity, and integrate the visuals with the text.
• Label visuals with action captions to explain what reviewers need to know.
• Avoid decorative visual elements that provide no data and cause confusion.

Use Recognition to Organize the Proposal’s Structure and Content

The simplest and most common decision-making approach that people use in their daily lives is that of recognition, which divides the world into two categories: unrecognized objects, ideas, people, and other topics, and everything else. It works very quickly and with limited knowledge. Once an individual recognizes something from memory, the search for information immediately stops. Because recognition is extremely simple, fast, and frugal, it is heavily dependent on recalled content and the experienced ease of recall.

Recognition is a powerful decision-making tool because a search that relies on recognizing cues makes fewer demands on memory and computational skills than a search for alternatives. This is especially true under time pressure, when individuals are apt to use simple strategies to solve problems and make decisions (Gigerenzer, Todd, & Adaptive Group, 1999). Nothing is simpler and more direct than recognizing and recalling relevant cues, which seems perfectly tailored to the evaluation of grant proposals.

Because recognition is so widely used in decision-making, proposals should be structured to help reviewers quickly locate the applicant’s responses to the grant guidelines’ evaluation criteria. To accomplish this goal, grant applicants should:
• Organize information by (1) structuring the proposal according to the grant guidelines; (2) discussing major points in decreasing order of importance; (3) summarizing major points and benefits throughout the proposal; and (4) focusing on the needs and mission of the government agency.
• Develop no more than a few major theme statements that are directly linked to the evaluation criteria and use them to organize the content of the proposal.
• Ensure that all major theme statements have solutions, benefits, and proof.
• Write the Executive Summary for non-technical reviewers.
• Link features and benefits to the evaluation criteria.
• Write simply and clearly. Use short sentences and paragraphs. Use plenty of white space. Use the active voice.
• Use plenty of bulleted and numbered lists to make important points.
• Use headings with the exact wording from the grant guidelines.
• Use visuals to emphasize benefits, features, and major themes.

Recognition may appear to be a very elementary approach to solving problems and making decisions, but it is widely used by everyone, including evaluators. In proposals, as in life, cues and clarity foster recognition and recall.

Conclusion

The decision-making processes that government grant evaluators use to review grant proposals are adaptive mental strategies that have evolved because of the need to make judgments and decisions with bounded rationality, limited amounts of time, and under the stress of competing tasks. Like the rest of us, the cognitive resources of evaluators are limited, and thus they rely on a mental toolbox of fast and frugal techniques to decide which proposals to recommend. Government grant reviewers use as little of the available information in proposals as possible to make decisions, which enables them to work efficiently and effectively. These mental processes may not be optimal, but they do provide satisfactory solutions.

The challenge for grant proposal professionals is to encourage reviewers to use simple decision-making processes. Although this approach appears straightforward, it may be hard to accomplish because non-profit organizations often submit unnecessarily detailed and complex proposals that may be difficult for reviewers to quickly and easily understand.

Perhaps the most important conclusion that grant proposal professionals can draw from the study of decision-making processes is that good government grant proposals that are easy to evaluate are more likely receive a higher score than great proposals that are difficult.
to evaluate. Proposals should be designed so that reviewers can evaluate them quickly, frugally, and with as little mental effort as possible. Sometimes, as the research on decision-making demonstrates, less is more.

References


Biographical Information

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Grantsmanship and the University: Five Strategies for Grant Professionals Working with Faculty

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Abstract

Recently, articles in law reviews, academic publications, blogs, newspapers, and magazines have focused much attention upon the changing culture of the academy. As higher education experiences a decline in funding and in tenure-track opportunities for faculty members, there are questions about the value of some core aspects of higher education, such as the arts and humanities. Yet, in light of the current economic downturn, more students of all ages see the wisdom of returning to school for degrees in a wide variety of disciplines. Grantseeking plays an important role in filling the funding gap at colleges and universities and also in supporting innovative and non-traditional programs for new and continuing students. This article discusses some of these trends and then provides valuable advice for grant professionals who are (or want to be) in higher education. In particular, the article uses examples to explore five strategies for grant professionals working with college and university professors. All of these strategies convey the professionalism and value that grant development professionals bring to universities.

Introduction: A Changing Academy

In this new academic and economic environment, grant professionals in research universities play a more valuable role than ever before. New financial resources are especially crucial to many universities – especially public ones – facing funding declines (Arana, 2009). In addition, the press, federal and state governments, and potential students appear to be putting universities on the edge of a public relations decline as well, raising questions about the value of some core aspects of higher education, such as the arts and humanities (Cohen, 2009; Taylor, 2009).
This makes the need for translating the important work of academics to lay audiences even more important. The pool of tenure-track professors is steadily shrinking (Arana, 2009), while more students are returning for higher degrees (Keen, 2009). This results in a greater need for graduate student funding, student scholarships and financial aid, and funding to attract high-quality scholars.

All this points to some key funding gaps that a grant professional can fill with proposals to support innovative and non-traditional programs at universities. However, without implementing some strategies for working productively with faculty members, grant professionals in universities can easily fall into being copy editors or budget reviewers, without leveraging the additional expertise they bring to their positions. This article outlines five such strategies, with examples, for grant professionals in research universities.

**Strategy 1: Cultivate Passion for the Translation and Impact of Faculty Research**

In order to work successfully with college and university professors, grant professionals must be passionate about the faculty’s work. “Translational” work and impact assessment are two primary ways to demonstrate such passion.

*Translational work* requires grant professionals in a university setting to become familiar with faculty members’ work in order to be able to *translate* their ideas to lay readers at foundations or government agencies. Professors may appreciate the guidance of a grant professional to articulate their cutting-edge research projects in more accessible language. As a result, a broader audience of grantmakers, government officials, or program officers can appreciate the interest and importance of such academic research outside the academy. Because scholarly work is often designed to speak to specialized audiences, faculty members often find this reworking more challenging than anticipated. Grant professionals can extract such translations through in-person meetings, proposal revision recommendations, and the process of planning a budget to assign real-life costs to big-picture ideas. For example, at the Indiana University Maurer School of Law, the translation process occurs while budgeting for scholarly conferences. Together, faculty members and grant professionals craft a budget in line with university guidelines that defines the various categories of activity and expense, as well as refines the research objectives of the conference or symposium.

*Impact assessment* describes how a university’s research mission creates knowledge that is of measurable value to society, whether scientific or medical breakthroughs, social scientific data, or findings and analysis in the humanities. Grantmakers want to know the anticipated and actual ultimate *impact* of these various projects – to the academic
discipline, to society, to the clientele served, and to students. Yet, faculty members are sometimes hesitant to extrapolate beyond the particular study at-hand to make broader claims or address policy implications with which grantors are concerned. Grant professionals can help faculty to assess and articulate the ultimate impact of their research, building a case with the scholar for the impact and importance of a specific university research project. In law, for example, translating a legal research project into policy recommendations and describing the resulting impact on various populations is a key part of preparing any grant.

**Strategy 2: Be Creative in Making Connections**

Creative thinking is the hallmark of a successful university grant professional. Advancing a university’s research mission with grantseeking often requires creative connections and ideas to foster scholarship. Foundations and government granting agencies (for example, the National Endowment for the Humanities’ Collaborative Research Grants or the National Science Foundation’s support for collaborative research projects) seek interdisciplinary and collaborative research projects to fund, in particular. In practice, however, it is difficult for faculty members to collaborate across disciplinary lines for a host of institutional reasons and as a result of competing incentives.

For example, evaluation of faculty members in law depends in part upon their scholarship, which generally takes the form of lengthy articles in student-edited law reviews, with a heavy emphasis on citation and argumentation. By contrast, scholars in the humanities and social sciences publish books as well as shorter essays and articles in peer-reviewed journals to fulfill their scholarly goals. Publications of such wildly differing styles and with such divergent editing and selection processes necessarily impact the research design and execution of scholarly projects in a discipline-specific way.

One intriguing example for creating collaborative projects comes from the University of Southern California. The university’s research office recently experimented with a creative model for fostering cross-disciplinary research (Stripling, 2009). Faculty members attended a research fair modeled on the concept of “speed dating,” where they sat across long tables from one another, shared research ideas, and split into smaller groups to generate collaborative ideas and compete for seed funding provided by the university. Faculty “speed dating” may seem trivial to some, but at a research university like USC, opportunities for chance interaction among faculty members from different disciplines can be difficult to create. This research fair provided a forum for just those types of interactions.

Another mechanism for encouraging collaboration is accessing or providing seed funding for groups of researchers who aim to seek
external grants as a result of the initial support. Working through a dean’s or provost’s office, a grant professional can find resources to support a call for proposals from two or more researchers together for small seed funding grants. Grant professionals can act as internal program officers, helping to develop and critique these collaborative proposals. The very act of applying for these grants solidifies faculty members’ working relationships, refines the research projects, and creates a “cultural commons” (Madison, 2009). At Indiana University, faculty members have enthusiastically participated in the New Frontiers grants program, funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. Through this university-wide competition, scholars submit proposals for grant funding for conferences, travel, and individual research in the humanities. At York University’s Hennick Centre for Business and Law, a new “collaborative research fund” aims to promote interdisciplinary research among law and business scholars through small seed grants.

A third way to foster creative “grants thinking” among the faculty is partnering university research with non-profit work. For example, a faculty member could partner with a non-profit organization in his or her area of scholarly expertise to craft a grant proposal in which the faculty member is included as a consultant to the non-profit project. This type of collaboration not only brings university expertise to non-profits implementing projects in the world but also underscores the real-life impact of the faculty member’s research in changing policy or helping society. A grant professional in this case could broker the initial relationship, help plan budgets and cost-sharing, or assist with proposal development and writing. For example, the IU Maurer School of Law’s Center for Constitutional Democracy recently assisted a nongovernmental organization in India to secure a grant from the Global Fund for Women. This grant supports a workshop on constitutional and women’s rights, which a faculty member at the Center will lead.

**Strategy 3: Act Like an Ambassador from the ‘Grants World’**

Grant professionals add value to the university by being ambassadors to the faculty about the world of grantseeking. Faculty members, who are generally responsible to themselves for achieving their teaching and research goals, may require and welcome assistance in learning about the norms of seeking and stewarding research grants. A university grant professional can also help interpret guidelines, assist in identifying grant opportunities and potential collaborators, and advise faculty on protocol with respect to approaching funding agencies, such as budgeting expectations, deadlines, and reporting requirements. Grant professionals become experienced in interpreting program guidelines and judging whether a program is a good fit for a faculty member’s research proposal.
Some of this 'ambassadorship' can take place through relationship-building and social interaction with faculty as well. For example, grant professionals can provide grant development workshops for faculty, such as brown bag luncheons on proposal writing and budget development, or a longer series of workshops culminating in a proposal for submission. In addition, grant professionals should regularly attend academic functions like lectures, talks, and colloquia, and engage substantively on the subjects with faculty members, even by just asking questions. The goal is to be regarded as part of the academic enterprise of the school or department.

**Strategy 4: Navigate the Maze of Bureaucracies**

A grant professional must navigate bureaucracy with confidence on behalf of the faculty. Research grants often involve complex bureaucratic requirements on both the university and foundation sides, such as budget requirements, cost-sharing, overhead calculations, electronic submission systems, and reporting structures.

A grant professional can puzzle through these technical knots and cut through bureaucratic hurdles in a way that faculty members – and even other development officers – may not be trained or have the time to do. University grant professionals must help faculty understand that there are always answers to the tough questions, and that the grant professional has the time, training, and mission to find them. These types of bureaucratic issues often arise, for example, when projects involve institutional review board (IRB) approval for faculty research that involves human or animal subjects. A grant professional can assist professors in articulating the scope of their research design and applying for such approvals.

**Strategy 5: Build Your Credibility**

Finally, senior administrators in colleges and universities often sense a divide between staff and faculty. While cultural differences certainly exist between the two, the cooperation of both spheres of professionals – faculty and staff – is essential to the achievement of a university’s research mission. Credibility of the grant development staff with faculty is key to crafting the most productive working relationship so that professors will alert the staff of new or ongoing projects, successes, and challenges.

Grant professionals can bolster their own credibility with the faculty in a variety of ways. For example, celebrating funding successes generally leads to piqued interest – perhaps even competition – among professors, who may then reach out for assistance in grantseeking. Also, grant professionals could circulate scholarly articles from current
journals to the faculty to demonstrate their own passion for the work and their grasp of the subject matter. They can also advance their own professional development through workshops and conferences on grantseeking and/or substantive research areas, as well as professional association memberships. Grant professionals can take care to maintain professionalism and honor confidentiality, particularly in cases where two or more faculty members are vying for the same grant competition. Finally, the grant professional can regularly research potential funding opportunities to pass on to faculty, using tools such as Foundation Directory, Community of Science, and Philanthropy News Digest.

**Conclusion: Grantsmanship in a University**

With the changing environment of higher education, foundation and government grants are an increasingly important part of funding for a university’s scholarly mission. Grant professionals at colleges and universities may pursue a variety of strategies to work with faculty members to secure grant funding for research. Collaborative and cross-disciplinary research present their own challenges in terms of developing proposals, but a grant professional has a valuable role to play in fostering connections, thinking creatively, and navigating bureaucracies on behalf of faculty members engaged in research.

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Creating Impact with Policymakers: Cases of Building Cross-Sector Partnerships to Build Stronger Programs and Grant Applications

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Abstract
Partnerships and collaborations for non-profit projects and programs that benefit society have become more in demand. Non-profits can partner with many kinds of entities, but partnerships between non-profits and policymakers seem to be less common. Through examining examples of these collaborations, this article will explore the projects funded by various funding agencies, the work involved to form such collaborations and the strengths that partnerships between organizations and policy makers can bring to grant applications. To build upon the need for collaborative work for stronger grant applications, this article will also outline strategies for non-profit program managers and grant professionals to approach policy makers and organizations about partnerships.

Introduction
Many organizations and experts acknowledge the necessity for stronger inter-organization relationships for the benefit of the communities served by collaborations. These not only include collaborations among non-profits but also between the non-profit, business and government sectors. In Nonprofits and Business, Cordes and Steuerle say:

“Events and forces - such as devolution of government services and the evolution from an industrial to an information economy - offer new opportunities and incentives for organizations to explore new modes of operating; new relationships between for-profit and not-for-profit organizations; and new organizational forms” (2009, p. 3).
Interaction with for-profit counterparts is only part of the equation in a multi-sector collaboration. Working with state and local policy makers provides a wider scope and additional support for a collaborative program or project. From the non-profit perspective and for fundraising efforts including grant funding, state governments have a direct impact on non-profits in three ways: they regulate them through policy, they exempt them from major taxes, and they use them as vehicles to deliver publicly funded services (Gronbjerg & Child, 2004). Beyond these impacts, there has been little collaboration among the groups to provide additional support to their communities. The collaborations examined here exhibit positive outcomes and lessons learned in cross-sector collaborations.

While collaborations may serve a need among government entities, businesses and non-profits, they are not always successful. In a few states and cities, valuable collaboration exists among government policymakers, non-profits and businesses in conjunction with foundations to improve programs and services. This article examines current operations and previous attempts to create such collaborations.

From examining each of these collaborations, this article will explore the projects funded by various funding agencies, the work involved to form such collaborations, and the strengths that partnerships between organizations and policy makers can bring to grant applications. To build upon the need for collaborative work for stronger grant applications, this article will also outline strategies for non-profit program managers and grant development professionals to approach policy makers and organizations about partnerships.

The Push Towards Collaboration

As the grant application process becomes more competitive and grant funds begin to shrink, non-profits must find ways to provide the best investment and greatest mission-match for funders. In spring 2009, the Ford Foundation announced its plans to “…Spur collaboration and efficiency among its grantees” (Michaels, 2009, p. 23). Foundations and other funders are looking for collaborations that fulfill their missions and for projects and efforts that do not duplicate services.

A special report produced by the Group Health Community Foundation takes a critical view of stakeholder collaboration in community health, although the principles represented are applicable to many collaborations. The report explains that coalitions “Can utilize community knowledge and perspectives to create effective, appropriate programs” (Group Health Community Foundation Evaluation Team [GHCFET], 2001, p. 5). Collaborations can also be understood from the perspectives of different stakeholders in the process. The funder desires measurable goals, significant performance and support of collaborations.
to make improvements (GHCFET, 2001, p. 7). From the non-profit’s perspective, the needs are support, the opportunity to fulfill the organization’s mission through a project or program, and encouragement of interaction between the “…government and the nonprofit sectors ... as complements” (Steuerle & Hodgkinson, 2006, p. 103) to each other.

Tensions can arise from creating multi-stakeholder collaborations. It is important to recognize this tension and to understand that there is “A direct connection between the outcomes expected by participating organizations and whether the staff members representing them have or develop a sense of common fate over time,” (Dorado et al., 2009, p. 371). Thus a collaborative effort that involves stakeholders from the non-profit, business and government sectors must get a sense of identity through establishing goals and structure. “Participants are far more likely to identify and/or develop shared interests and goals when they engage in mutual influence and joint learning,” (Dorado et al., 2009, p. 372).

**Successful Cross-Sector Partnerships**

**State of Michigan – Office of Foundation Liaison**

The State of Michigan has been working for five years with national foundations like the Justice, Equality, Human Dignity and Tolerance (JEHT) Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and foundations located within the state such as the Hudson-Webber Foundation, to address needs such as criminal justice, education and economic development. The governor’s office houses the Office of Foundation Liaison, whose mission is to identify and broker strategic partnerships between the state and foundations aimed at policy reforms to improve the lives of Michigan residents. Michigan’s foundation liaison—unlike legislators who often may not know the interests of hundreds of foundations in the state—knows the particular philanthropic interests of Michigan’s foundations. The liaison is able to match a foundation’s interests with desired outcomes of state programs, helping each achieve results for the citizens (Harney, 2008).

According to David Egner, chair of the foundation liaison’s advisory committee and president of the Hudson-Webber Foundation, “The Office of Foundation Liaison is a recognized leader in the effort to energize Michigan’s economic competitiveness” (Harney, 2008, p. 34). According to the liaison’s office, foundations invested more than $45 million since 2003 in initiatives designed to help increase Michigan’s economic competitiveness through reforms in areas such K–16 education, economic development, health, early childhood development and land use (Gallagher, April 2008).

The Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative is a positive example of collaboration. Michigan’s foundation liaison identified various
foundations in the state and nationally that had an interest that exactly matched the mission of the Initiative - justice issues such as helping prisoners get jobs and lead productive lives while lowering recidivism rates. The liaison brokered a collaborative public-private partnership involving the state program and foundations such as the JEHT Foundation, the Grand Rapids Community Foundation and the Hudson-Webber Foundation. The Office of Foundation Liaison made sure foundations with the same interests were involved from the start.

This effort has shown significant results for all those involved. According to the liaison’s office, recidivism rates have dropped from 48 percent to 26 percent during the first 24 months (Gallagher, August 2008). The initiative set goals and designed a structure from the beginning of the effort, so the objectives would be clear throughout the whole process. These included educating state officials about foundations, forging relationships to support partnerships between the state and foundations, attracting national foundation funding to projects, and supporting new local and regional public/private partnerships to serve people (Gallagher, April 2008).

Newark, New Jersey – Philanthropic Liaison

Following Michigan’s lead in creating the state’s Office of Foundation Liaison, the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers established the philanthropic liaison in conjunction with the city of Newark and the newly-elected Mayor Booker. Like Michigan, the philanthropic liaison has an advisory committee made up of local foundation representatives as well as city officials. The position is seen as a vital role for Newark and is achieving positive outcomes and creating positive experiences for all parties involved in the collaboration. The Mayor of Newark, Cory A. Booker, recognizes that the city cannot fulfill all needs by working alone.

“It takes strategic alliances with federal and state officials, community and faith-based organizations, and the leveraging arm of philanthropic institutions. The office of the philanthropic liaison creates stronger connections with funders. The matching grants from the private sector show that these efforts are working” (Council of New Jersey Grantmakers, 2008).

For Newark, one example of a successful collaboration stemming from the philanthropic liaison is the Organizing for Newark’s Green Future project. This project enlisted more than 100 grantmakers, non-profits and other stakeholders to improve prisoner reentry, greening and sustainability, children and family well being, and economic development (Johnson, 2008). In addition, the philanthropic liaison brought together the Trust for Public Land, Project USE, and NewarkWorks to create Park
Works, a program for youth, that received over $40 million in funding in addition to the city’s investment for the program (Johnson, 2008).

Efforts on three separate priorities for the philanthropic liaison have garnered more than $7.9 million in foundation funding for Newark collaborative projects involving the city government, non-profits, and funders. This has also spurred further collaboration at the state level that has enabled stakeholders to secure national funding, unavailable to some of the individual entities before collaborating (Johnson, 2008).

**Lessons Learned from Other Attempts**

Admittedly, creating multi-sector partnerships does take time and effort to nurture. Advisory committees have played a vital role in the success of multi-sector partnerships in Michigan and Newark, NJ. In Michigan, Foundation Liaison K. Aldridge-Eason and the stakeholders have had to develop a certain level of trust, while managing a balance among the interests involved (personal communication, August 20, 2008). Similar lessons have been learned in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

**San Francisco, CA – Communities of Opportunity Office**

An example comes from the work of the City and County of San Francisco. In 2006, San Francisco set up a Communities of Opportunity Office, with a similar purpose to the foundation liaison in Michigan and the philanthropic liaison in Newark, NJ, but also incorporating economic development, infrastructure and poverty reduction duties.

The initial plan, created in 2006, called for an advisory committee, with adequate representation from the foundation and non-profit communities; but the advisory committee was not set up until two years later, in 2008. A management audit performed by the City of San Francisco budget analyst in 2008 outlined the issues that appeared to interfere with the office’s success and identified steps to move forward. In the report, the budget analyst cites the “lack[ed] (of) a governance structure since its inception” (San Francisco Budget Analyst, 2008, p. 1). This example demonstrates that a well-organized structure is an important component in making multi-sector relationships and collaborations thrive.

**Los Angeles, CA – Public Liaison**

Sustainability is also another factor to consider for a successful multi-sector partnership effort. Hiring the right person to serve as a liaison and giving that person the support needed to sustain the position is essential. In 2006, Mayor Villaraigosa of Los Angeles supported the creation of the public liaison to the philanthropic community within his cabinet to
serve as a senior advisor. The public liaison, Torie Osborn, designed the Mayor’s plan for the homelessness and anti-poverty agendas (Osborn, 2008). Osborn has since become the Chief Civic Engagement Officer for the United Way of Greater Los Angeles and little has been mentioned about the work of the public liaison since her departure. It is unclear from reports and the city’s website if the position even exists any more, an indication that the inaugural public liaison position was not designed sustainably. From the Los Angeles and City of San Francisco examples, leadership, sustained funding, and community support are clearly needed to make such these types of collaboration successful.

**Working with Government, Policymakers, and Funders**

As exemplified in these cases, the key components of successful collaborations include: setting goals and structure from the beginning, providing advisory leadership, and attracting diverse stakeholders including government, policymakers and funders. Grant professionals are expert at creating goals, and designing meticulous objectives and action steps to achieve the goals. But many grant professionals and other non-profit managers are apprehensive about the collaboration with government and policymakers. Here are some suggestions in managing this area of collaboration:

- **Know that non-profits can work with government officials:** A common misconception with non-profit leaders is that government officials are strictly off limits. While this is not entirely the case, be aware of what is permissible and of what will jeopardize non-profit status. Non-profits and policymakers can work collectively on an issue or task, which can lead to positive advocacy and productive project development. The non-profit however, is limited in how much it can express a view about specific legislation, or lobbying. This depends, to some degree, on the size of the organization and its adopted governing rules (Harney, 2008). According to the IRS, public charities under the 501(c)(3) designation can choose from two options for limited lobbying activity. One rule states that no substantial part of the organization’s activities can be lobbying. The second rule a non-profit could choose is derived from how much is spent on lobbying based on a sliding scale: up to $1,000,000 for total lobbying, and up to $250,000 for grassroots lobbying (direct communication with the public expressing a view and includes a call to action) (Harney, 2008). For more detailed information consult 501(h) of the IRS 501 Code and also IRS Form 5768.

- **Understand that everyone is busy:** If asked to provide information or statistics, keep it short and simple, especially for lawmakers. In this realm, grant professionals have an advantage – making the point in as few words as possible. For each segment of information, be sure
to provide good footnotes and reference pages so that if necessary, a legislator's or mayor's staff person can find that specific resource for more information.

- **Be on the same page:** In the previous examples, the importance placed on setting specific goals and objectives from the onset, with all stakeholders fulfilling the same mission for the project or program, was critical. Just as one might conduct grant funder research, it is important to make sure that all stakeholders being considered for a project are interested in the mission of the project. If an organization and a city are embarking on a green initiative with funders and businesses, do not expect to find support from a foundation or business that is only interested in providing support for health initiatives.

- **Expect bumps and delays:** The government and non-profit sectors operate on very different timelines. This will require continuous education for all stakeholders, ongoing communication, and understanding of the different time expectations. The types of collaborations in the case studies mentioned above did not happen overnight. They took several years to cultivate and bring forward, just as happens with donors in fund development. Know ahead of time the benefits each partner can provide to the other and consistently mention those throughout the process.

**Conclusion**

Collaboration among various stakeholders can be a challenging task, but it is one that is becoming increasingly necessary for this country and economy. Grant professionals and non-profit executives can be leaders in this area because of the vast skills and knowledge they possess and can contribute to the process of building alliances. Although this paper primarily explores collaborations between policymakers and governments, these are not the only types of partnerships; many more examples of successful collaboration and joint efforts can be found in all sectors. Potential to form new types of multi-sector partnerships is always important for grant professionals to consider, as they strive to make their applications stronger and to help their organizations thrive.

**References**


Biographical Information

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The Compensation Differential Between Female and Male Members of the American Association of Grant Professionals

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Abstract

In this article, the authors will review the demographics of members of the American Association of Grant Professionals in terms of gender and differences in compensation. Similar studies of gender related differences and compensation have been conducted in other related fields and the authors will present a review of these findings.

Research on gender differences among grant professionals is done by analyzing the results of three online surveys conducted in 2007, 2008, and 2009 by the American Association of Grant Professionals, which examined the demographics of its members. The authors of this paper hypothesize that a gender gap in compensation will be found within the grant profession.

The findings presented in this research paper advance the grant profession, because equity issues in compensation and position will likely be key aspects to developing future practice and policy guidelines for the profession as it continues to gain recognition. Future salary survey results and any gender differences in terms of compensation will be examined by the authors as a follow-up to this research. The authors will also look at gender differences and compensation with respect to job titles, Grant Professional Certified (GPC) credential, years of experience, type of employer, years with an employer, type of grants written, and geographic location in later papers.
Introduction

Fundraising became recognized as a distinct profession in the 1960s, but grant development was still just considered a subunit of fundraising. It was not until the 1990s that grant development began to emerge as its own profession. That emergence is marked by the formation of a professional association - the American Association of Grant Professionals, the development of a Code of Ethics, and the appearance of professional development opportunities specific to grant professionals (Renninger, 2004).

The grant profession has continued to make great strides with the recent development of the Grant Professional Certification Institute (GPCI) Examination. The purpose of the GPCI certification exam is the promulgation of high ethical standards and the promotion of credibility and integrity among grant development practitioners. Yet little research has been conducted to examine the demographics of grant professionals and any potential gender-related differences that may exist in the field, especially in terms of compensation. This is increasingly important as the number of nonprofit organizations in the United States increases, as more grant professionals are hired, and as more women enter the grant profession. Compensation standards must be closely scrutinized as nonprofits find themselves under increasing pressure for accountability and as government oversight and legislation increase in the fundraising field. These issues are also important as the grant profession continues to become recognized as a highly-regarded, professional line of work (Wells, 2006).

This paper will compare the results of recent salary and demographic surveys conducted by the American Association of Grant Professionals (AAGP) that detail the characteristics of Association members. The authors hypothesize that a gender gap in compensation will be found within the grant profession.

Literature Review

The Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP) conducted a salary survey specifically looking at the salaries of grant professionals. Their most recent salary report (2008) included responses from 31 female grant professionals and 10 male grant professionals. Their results show the mean salary for female grant professionals in 2008 was $63,248 and the mean salary for their male counterparts was $64,556.

No other data, reports, or surveys examining the compensation differentials between female and male grant professionals were found by the authors, but research did uncover reports on gender differences in compensation for fundraisers and non-profit professionals. Since fundraisers and non-profit professionals share some common goals.
and work responsibilities with grant developers, and these are related professions, the authors will report on these studies (Wells, 2006).

A great deal of research has been done on the wage differentials between males and females at for-profit firms. That literature has consistently revealed that women are paid significantly less than men for virtually the same work and that there is a glass ceiling – a term coined by the Wall Street Journal and defined as the barrier which prevents women from reaching the top of the corporate hierarchy. Research also shows that the wage gap for women who work full-time has remained constant over the past decade, with women earning 77 cents on every dollar a man earns (Mesch & Rooney, 2005; Rose & Hartmann, 2004). In 1995, the government-appointed Glass Ceiling Commission found that women in business had 45.7 percent of American’s jobs and more than half of the master’s degrees being awarded; but it also showed that 95 percent of senior managers were men and female managers’ earnings were a mere 68 percent of their male counterparts’. Ten years later, women still accounted for 46.5 percent of America’s workforce and for less than 8% of its top managers (The Economist, 2005).

1) Gender Differences in Compensation for Non-Profit Professionals

The non-profit sector has historically been an important employer of women who founded some of the first charities and philanthropic efforts. In 1987, 68.3 percent of non-profit employees were female (Steinberg & Jacobs, 1994, p. 94); in 1990, 65 percent of them were female (Burbridge, 1994, p. 121); and today the membership of the Association of Fundraising Professionals is 67 percent female, indicating that the high number of women in the non-profit sector has remained constant over the years. Yet, Steinberg and Jacobs (1994) assert that “…many tasks performed in nonprofit settings are economically devalued in society because the skills the jobs require are taken for granted and treated as invisible. We believe this is the result, in no small part, of the fact that the work is often performed by women…” (pp. 79-80). They go on to argue that the non-profit sector is associated with feminine qualities – it is about helping people, dealing with moral and ethical concerns, and is far less concerned with money-making than with the provision of services – that devalue the work performed in non-profit organizations (Steinberg & Jacobs, 1994).

In terms of compensation for non-profit employees, Guidestar’s 2008 Nonprofit Compensation Report found that in most instances, although females dominate the sector overall, their compensation lags behind that of males (Reuters, 2008). The report went on to reveal that:

• At the biggest organizations, female CEOs earned 34.8 percent less than their male counterparts.
• Women held 46 percent of the positions included in the report, but received just 35 percent of the total compensation.
• Women held 55 percent of the CEO positions at organizations with budgets of $1 million or less, but only 36 percent at organizations with budgets greater than $1 million (Chronicle of Philanthropy, 2008).

The Association for Healthcare Philanthropy’s 2008 Salary Report, which examines salaries in health care philanthropy, found that in all 16 non-profit career categories that were included in their survey, including grant developers, males earned more than females in 2007–2008, which also was the case for the 2005–2006 study. The 2008 report included responses from 1,757 AHP members, or 47.2 percent of all those contacted and of those, 73.4 percent of survey participants were female.

Similar findings were seen in the Council for Advancement and Support of Education’s (CASE) Advancement Compensation Survey (2008). That survey showed that in college advancement offices, women trailed men significantly in pay and earned on average $62,728 while men earned $80,988.

Research by Grey and Benson (2003) found that at non-profit small business development centers across the country, males, on average, earned over $4,800 more than their female counterparts. Ye and Manzo’s 2004 study of over 500 California non-profits found that males were paid significantly more than similarly qualified females. Overall, women who lead non-profits in the U.S. earn about 20 percent less than men in comparable positions (Hallock, 2002; Lipman, 2002; Lewin, 2001). This pay gap is most visible in the largest non-profits (Mesch & Rooney, 2005).

Mesch and Rooney conducted a 2005 study of non-profit employees. The authors examined four years of data from the Association of Fundraising Professionals Compensation and Benefits Survey and looked specifically at the differences between males and females. They found that:
• Men had significantly higher average salaries than women.
• Men were more likely than women to serve in educational, religious, and consulting organizations.
• Men were more likely to work in international and national non-profits.
• Women were more likely to work in social services, the arts, and cultural non-profits.
• Women were more likely to work for local non-profits.

The review went on to show that female chief development officers earned 12 percent less than their male counterparts. Females received significantly lower bonuses than males, while female consultants received salaries that were approximately 35 percent lower than male consultants (Mesch & Rooney, 2005).

In addition to compensation inequities, there is a glass ceiling in the non-profit sector. Gibelman’s (2000) research shows that among non-
profit human service agencies, men are disproportionately represented in upper-level management positions. A 2006 study focused on the New England area confirmed the existence of a glass ceiling as well as a significant difference in the average salary of women versus men. This study also revealed that the salary gap between men and women has been widening over time because most of the growth in salaries has occurred in senior-level positions which tend to be primarily occupied by men (Sampson & Moore, 2006). Guidestar's 2008 Nonprofit Compensation Report (Reuters, 2008) discovered that while females are more prevalent in top positions at small organizations, males dominate the top at medium and large organizations, and that even when controlling for organization size, women still earned less than men.

2) Gender Differences in Compensation for Fundraising Professionals

Early research on the fundraising profession (Panas, 1984) was primarily conducted by men who surmised that women were not as good at fundraising, because men were better with widows and middle-aged men (dominant giving groups) who were naturally more comfortable with other men. Panas (1984) also claimed the fear of sexual harassment was a reason women were not top fundraisers and therefore not top earners, and he blamed the women themselves for this problem. John Detmold (1981) actually suggested that many women loathed soliciting for funds since solicitation is synonymous with prostitution and the implication for female fundraisers was that raising funds was equivalent to prostituting oneself. The bias against women in the field has a long history and has presented tremendous barriers for female fundraisers (Kelly, 1997).

Conry (1991), one of the first women to research gender and compensation in the fundraising profession, described what she called the feminization of the fundraising field and referred to it as a pink-collar job, a general term used to describe fields that are characterized as having a majority of female workers. Conry (1991) goes on to suggest that this feminization could have negative implications on salaries, prestige and status of fundraising which had come to be seen as women's work (Mesch & Rooney, 2005; Conry, 1998).

The latest Association of Fundraising Professional's Compensation and Benefits Study (2008) is taken from the organization's membership which comprises 29,071 members in the U.S. and Canada, with 67 percent females and 23 percent males. The Association received 3,644 responses to the 2008 survey, now in its eighth year. Survey results revealed a $21,425 wage gap between the salaries of male and female fundraisers, a gap that has remained constant over the years of the survey. The average salary of male fundraisers was reported to be $88,071, while the average salary of female fundraisers was reported to be $66,646.
Data Sources for Salaries of AAGP Grant Professionals

Four salary surveys have been conducted by AAGP detailing compensation levels and demographics of their membership. These surveys were conducted in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009. The 2006 survey did not contain any questions related to gender and is therefore not relevant to this study. The 2007, 2008, and 2009 surveys did contain information related to gender thus allowing for cross-tabulation of gender and salary data. However, the 2007, 2008, and 2009 surveys excluded data on consultant fees, so only salaried positions are measured. The authors will use the information from the 2007, 2008, and 2009 surveys to examine any potential salary differences based on gender among AAGP members.

Results of AAGP Annual Salary Surveys

In 2007, 340 members of the American Association of Grant Professionals participated in the salary survey (Figure 1). Of those, 281 responses (83%) were from females and 59 responses (17%) were from males. The mean salary of the female participants was $56,504. The mean salary of the male participants was $62,246. The difference in salary between female and male participants was $5,742. The 2007 mean salary for a male participant was slightly more than 10% higher than for a female participant.

![Figure 1. 2007 Salary Survey (mean salary by gender)](image)

In 2008, 168 members of the American Association of Grant Professionals participated in the 2008 salary survey (Figure 2). Of those, 142 responses (85%) were from females and 26 responses (15%) were from males. The mean salary of the female participants was $56,504. The mean salary of the male participants was $73,636. The difference in salary between female and male participants was $16,591. The 2008 mean salary for a male participant was slightly more than 29% higher than for a female participant.
In 2009, 582 members of the American Association of Grant Professionals participated in the 2009 salary survey (Figure 3). Of those, 493 responses (85%) were from females and 89 responses (15%) were from males. The mean salary of the female participants was $61,360. The mean salary of the male participants was $61,985. The difference in salary between female and male participants in this survey was $625. The 2009 mean salary for a male participant was 1% higher than for a female participant.

There was a 51 percent decrease in participation for the 2008 survey when compared to the 2007 survey. However, there was a 247 percent increase in participation for the 2009 salary survey. Interestingly, the percentage of female versus male participants varied by only 2 percent from 2007 to 2008 and remained constant at 85 percent versus 15 percent in 2009. The mean salary for female grant professionals increased from 2007 to 2008 by almost 1 percent ($541) and increased again by 7.6 percent ($4,315) from 2008 to 2009. The mean salary for male grant professionals increased from 2007 to 2008 by slightly more than 18 percent ($11,390) and decreased by 18.8 percent ($11,651) in 2009. The significant disparity in salaries between female and male grant professionals evident in the 2007 and 2008 salary surveys disappeared in the 2009 survey.
Discussion

The salary surveys conducted by the American Association of Grant Professionals in 2007 and 2008 show a significant pay gap between female and male grant professionals. However in 2009, the pay gap between the genders decreased from $16,591 to just $541 in one year and the mean compensation decreased by $16,050. The authors believe this decrease in compensation differential is caused by a sampling size increase from 2007 and 2008 to 2009. The larger the sample size, the more likely it is that the sample accurately represents the true demographics of the entire AAGP membership. Positive and negative outliers in salary data have less of an effect in skewing the data with a larger sample size.

Based on the conflicting results of the AAGP salary surveys, the authors are unable to support their original hypothesis that a gender gap in compensation is prevalent in the grant profession. Despite findings in most of the literature reviewed by the authors that there is a significant gender pay gap for fundraisers and employees in the non-profit sector, that does not seem to be the case among grant professionals who are members of AAGP. Nor does that seem to be case among grant professionals who participated in the 2008 AHP salary survey which found little difference in salaries and compensation based on gender.

Overall, more research is needed in the grant profession to determine the influence of gender on compensation. Future AAGP annual salary surveys should be examined to determine if the compensation trend continues in favor of equality or if 2009 was an exception. If the gender pay gap really has narrowed in the grant profession, then it is important to determine why the grant profession is different from the rest of the non-profit sector. It will also be critical to compare the grant profession to the for-profit world where women have historically lagged behind men in terms of salary. If AAGP salary surveys in 2010 and beyond show the salary differential between females and males has returned, then further research is needed to uncover the cause of the survey discrepancies. Other factors, such as job titles, years of experience, type of employer, years with an employer, geographic location, and types of proposals developed should also be examined in future studies to determine their impact on any salary differentials. It is the hope of the authors that this initial review of gender and compensation will lead to further research on this issue in the grant profession.

Conclusion

The authors encourage all AAGP members to participate in the annual salary surveys which serve as a valuable tool in advancing the grant profession. The surveys also provide vital insight for a professional
organization trying to determine what the needs of the membership may be in the future. The authors cannot emphasize enough that the more members who participate in the annual salary survey, the more useful the results will be. It is also in a grant professional’s best interest to participate in the survey since the results help determine the salary levels of the profession.

For a professional vocation that is often focused on helping those less fortunate, a compensation differential based on gender would be inexcusable. While the grant profession is still in its infancy and needs to continue growing and developing, it is critical that the AAGP strive to ensure equal pay for equal work regardless of gender. As the AAGP continues to gather annual demographic data from its members, any gender inequities identified should be addressed in future practice and policy guidelines for the profession.

References


**Biographical Information**

**Jay Janssen, GPC** has worked in the healthcare field since 1996, both as a senior administrator for a community hospital and as a consultant to hospitals throughout the Carolinas. Using an extensive background in healthcare finance and operations, Jay has been a consultant for nearly eight years developing grant proposals for several hospitals and public health departments in North and South Carolina. Jay has been an active member of AAGP since 2003 and received his GPC designation in
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**Jodi Pearl, MA, GPC** received her Grant Professional Certification (GPC) in 2008 after more than 10 years as a grant professional. During her career, Ms. Pearl has written applications for a wide variety of organizations and currently researches, writes, and administers grant proposals for the fifth largest healthcare system in the country. Today, Ms. Pearl serves on the Boards of the American Association of Grant Professionals (AAGP) and the Grant Professionals Certification Institute (GPCI). Jodi grew up in Canada and earned her Master’s Degree in Anthropology at Florida Atlantic University. Contact Jodi at jpearl@mhs.net.
The Importance of Creating Project Buy-In During the Grant Proposal Process

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Abstract
To be successful in receiving grant awards, proper planning and follow through are critical. The buy-in of key stakeholders facilitates these processes. If the proposal receives funding, lack of personal investment by staff may prevent thorough implementation of the project, jeopardizing its success. This article discusses critical points of creating buy-in for a project, including building relationships, assessing project readiness, locating a funding source, showing relationship to the strategic plan, organizing a timeline, holding planning meetings, using a grant approval form to provide the needed motivation to ensure the proposal will be submitted, and follow-up contact with project personnel.

Introduction
“We need a grant,” is a phrase grant professionals hear often, whether from clients, supervisors, or co-workers. Unfortunately, what many people who are unfamiliar with the grants process do not understand is, there is no magical “Grant Tree” planted out back, ripe to pick the perfect grant proposal to fund their specific project or idea. Grant professionals must educate people who have good project ideas about the process of project planning, which leads to planning a proposal. Staff buy-in of a fundable project idea is critical for success in the grants profession.

This article will discuss issues necessary to project planning to help grant professionals create the environment that will serve clients, supervisors, and co-workers as fundable project ideas develop. The discussion will focus on the reasons buy-in is important prior to and during the grant development process and the steps to achieve it: the importance of building relationships; assessing project readiness for grant success; and how a grant approval form can help solidify the grant development process. Planning and persistence in communicating with everyone are key points to yielding successful results with grant proposals.
Why Project Buy-In is Important

In this day and age, with budget and staffing cutbacks, many people wear multiple “hats” within organizations. Grant monies are often on organizations’ wish lists, but who has the time to research, plan, write, and then administer the grant if funding is approved? This can be quite an intimidating process to those who have no prior experience with grants. One of the jobs of the grant professional is to educate and support others in the area of grantsmanship.

A major obstacle grant professionals encounter is that project staff will sometimes complain of the limited time they have to help with the grant proposal process. However, logic would suggest that if the project is worthy of receiving grant funding, it should be important enough to the key stakeholders to take the necessary time to assist in the proposal process.

Another obstacle grant professionals face is the lack of grantsmanship knowledge by the individuals requesting funding. Grant development, whether to private foundations or government entities, has rules and a well-defined skill set, as recognized by the Grant Professional Certification Institute and the American Association of Grant Professionals. Grant professionals recognize the need to educate those less knowledgeable about the expectations of grant development. They know that by creating understanding of the process they have a better opportunity to develop commitment on the part of the project development team. Buy-in on the part of the team is important and by assisting their understanding throughout the grant proposal process, the grant professional can help take a proposal all the way through successful submission using the following steps.

Steps to Creating Project Buy-In

Building Relationships

It is important for the grant professional to build relationships, not only with the grantmakers, but also with departments and individuals interested in pursuing grant funding. The grant professional should meet with those individuals interested in pursuing grants to determine funding needs. At these meetings the grant professional should be prepared to listen to ideas and to provide attendees with information about the services the grant professional can offer to support the proposal process. Examples of support include brainstorming; organization of ideas; creation of a proposal template; writing assistance for all sections of the proposal; editing; final proposal preparation; proposal submission; and reporting guidance. Providing information regarding available grant proposal assistance gives reassurance to
novice grant seekers that they are not alone in a process that can seem overwhelming at first.

Creating this early relationship of trust and providing all this information at the beginning of the process will also give the project stakeholders confidence in the grant professional’s expertise. Taking the time to listen to funding needs will help build a trusting relationship between the individual and grant professional.

**Convening Key Stakeholders**

One way to garner support and buy-in for the proposal writing process is to gather all the key stakeholders at a project kick-off meeting. Key stakeholders usually include the potential project director, co-directors, evaluators, fiscal/grants manager, and the grant professional. Being face-to-face at a meeting, giving all individuals involved an opportunity to invest their own energy and ideas during the project development, will create a sense of accountability for the project and grant proposal. The stakeholders will take ownership in the project if their ideas are put to use within the project. Without the commitment by key players, project implementation is doomed, even if the proposal gets written.

**Brainstorming**

The initial brainstorming meeting should include a discussion of all activities required within the project and grant process. By explaining all the requirements of creating the project, writing the grant proposal, receiving grant funding, implementing the project, and meeting grant reporting requirements at this initial meeting; the grant professional helps everyone on the project team understand the goals, objectives, and tasks that will require attention before and after the funding is received.

Developing project plans early allows for complete creativity, because no guidelines or limitations are placed on the project initially. Being proactive versus reactive is another avenue to creating buy-in by key stakeholders. If the stakeholders take the time to develop the project idea before the funding opportunity is available, there will be increased commitment to the proposal development process once a funding source has been located and to the project implementation phase if funding is forthcoming.

Areas of discussion at the brainstorming meeting should include timeline for proposal development; deadline for submission; timeline for project implementation; goals; objectives; tasks for the project; how project staff will carry out all project activities in addition to regular duties; who is responsible for grant reporting; who will complete the tasks/by when; and when the next meeting will take place.

Another discussion item important to have during the meeting is that the organization’s priorities should not be required to change if grant
funding is secured. Staff time and other organizational resources may have to be reallocated and new procedures may need to be developed with the addition of a project funded by a grant (Miner, Miner & Griffith, 1998). Overall, grant funding is meant to be used as an enhancement to assist an organization in achieving the mission and strategic goals already in place.

It is also important to note the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders in order to attain project success. The stakeholders/staff must be willing to provide the grant professional with the content for the proposal since the staff members are the content experts, not the grant professional. Without the project staff’s assistance, the proposal will not have merit or the necessary buy-in to make the project successful if a grant is awarded.

After the initial brainstorming meeting occurs, the grant professional will outline and distribute the ideas generated to the key stakeholders. The grant professional should then reconvene the group to discuss the direct impact the project will have on the organization, projected problems, additional ideas, and when the project should be initiated. During these two meetings, the stakeholders will add their input to the project, and that will help them to feel invested in it.

Assessing a Project Idea’s Worthiness

At the stakeholders’ meeting following the brainstorming session, the discussion will shift to the topic of assessing project readiness. It is important to ask, “What is the need?” and “Does this project align with the mission of the organization?”. If the answers to these questions are “yes”, it is then important to ask, “Is this project grantworthy?”. The stakeholders must determine, with the assistance of the grant professional, how valuable this project will be to the organization and to its clients.

Other questions to ask when determining worthiness are: How innovative is the project? Are the costs associated with the project reasonable? Is the project sustainable? Is the project replicable? Other things to consider are: Is there a willing project director? Are the necessary partners available? Is there space available to house the program? Asking all of these questions helps make the project come to life and helps create buy-in of the key stakeholders.

Locating a Funding Source

The next step is locating a funding source for proposal submission. Grant professionals can help create confidence in stakeholders by showing how well a potential funder matches the project at hand. Finding a good mission-match gives stakeholders confidence that their project idea is one step closer to becoming a reality.
There are always times when a grant opportunity is found at the last minute. Having project ideas already defined will maximize stakeholder interest in moving forward quickly with an application, in this case. Those involved with the project will be more willing to go the extra mile for a last-minute deadline, because they have already assisted during the planning and development of the project and will be excited about seeing the work come to fruition.

Grant professionals can also attract the attention of key stakeholders, by giving them the tools needed to assist with funding source research. By providing a website or even a worksheet that hosts information on how to search for grant opportunities such as funding source websites, key words for funding searches, tips for proposal development, and other grant writing resources, the stakeholders will feel empowered to assist in the research process. When a stakeholder plays an integral role in finding the funding source, additional buy-in is an automatic result.

**Demonstrating the Relationship Between the Project and the Strategic Plan**

When a grant opportunity is found, the grant professional needs to show the project stakeholders how the opportunity can meet specific goals of the organization’s strategic plan. According to a 2008 publication by the Rockley Group, by showing how the funding opportunity meets the strategic plan from the beginning of the process, a grant professional can plant the seeds needed for additional proposal development (Kostur, 2008).

**Organizing Timelines**

The next step is to organize a timeline for the entire project idea. Topics in the timeline should include project need; goals; objectives; work plan; impact; evaluation; budget; budget narrative; project abstract; and attachments. The grant professional will work backwards from the grant proposal deadline, assigning every section of the proposal a draft due date. After creating the weekly deadlines the grant professional might assign the project team members “homework” assignments that align with the deadlines to produce a complete grant proposal in the time available.

**Using a Grant Approval Form**

A very effective way to create buy-in for a specific project is by utilizing a grant approval form that the project director will complete with the assistance of the grant professional. The grant professional will offer assistance with the form by editing the initial draft and helping organize project ideas. The grant professional can also assist in gathering the
required signature approvals on the form. Taking the time to complete
the form and receiving all required approvals from supervisors and
administrators offers extra motivation to the project director to make
time to work on the proposal and to complete it on time for submission.
Below is an outline of key areas that should be included on a grant
approval form:

- A project summary/description: This section should be limited to no
  more than one page since this form is meant to provide the “basic
  ideas” for the project, not the finite details.
- The project goals, objectives, and timeline.
- A section that discusses how the project meets the strategic plan
  and/or mission of the organization.
- A budget section. This will give the supervisors a good idea of what
  type of funding is to be expected and what types of match/in-kind
  funding will be required by the organization writing the proposal.
- Signatures of approval should be required by the project director, the
  project director’s supervisor, the chief financial officer for match/
  in-kind approval, technology department supervisor (if technology
  equipment is being requested), and the chief executive officer/
  president. Collecting all of these required administrative approvals
  will add buy-in by all key members at the organization and add
  motivation for the project director to see the proposal all the way
  through to submission.

The grant approval form demonstrates commitment by all parties
involved with the project. The form holds the project director
accountable and provides the motivation needed to complete the grant
proposal. It encourages proposal submission. The grant approval form
also helps diffuse any turf issues through the approval process, so that
all individuals affected by the grant will be given project information
as the grant proposal progresses. The form will allow for the notion of
“planned paranoia,” (Rohe, 2009) by increasing communication through
the ranks at the organization, taking the mystery out of what the group is
planning throughout the proposal process.

**Communicating with Stakeholders After the Award**

In order to provide great grantsmanship assistance to key stakeholders
and project staff, the grant professional should contact project directors
periodically to see how the project is coming along after funding is
awarded. By taking the initiative to check in, the grant professional will
help maintain the buy-in of the project director and be able to provide
any extra motivation needed to help the project achieve success. The
grant professional can assist with any questions regarding the reporting
requirements or any other concerns that arise. The extra assistance also
adds to the confidence of stakeholders in the grant professional that
will allow them to feel comfortable applying for additional grants in the future.

**Conclusion**

Grant professionals must accept the responsibility to teach grantsmanship to others in order to be the most successful in receiving grant awards. In order to get individuals involved in the grant proposal process, a certain level of buy-in must be created for the proposed project. Without the necessary support of key stakeholders in the organization, the grant project will not be successful even if funded. Important steps grant professionals should take to create buy-in for grant projects include building relationships, assessing project readiness, locating a funding source, showing relation to the strategic plan, organizing a timeline, holding planning meetings, and using a grant approval form. The key to creating adequate buy-in for a successful grant proposal requires additional work by the grant professional, but is well worth the effort once a grant proposal is funded.

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**Biographical Information**

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Maximizing Community Resources: Non-Profit Collaborations with University Service-Learning Programs

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Abstract
As non-profits seek to create beneficial programs for their clients, they often look to other non-profits for partnering opportunities through inter-agency collaboration. At the same time, institutions of higher education have traditionally focused upon academic pursuits. More recently, however, universities and colleges have begun integrating experiential learning with curriculum, even as communities’ needs have increased. As a result a new, productive type of partnership has arisen between non-profit organizations and institutions of higher education. University and college administrators, faculty, and staff now continuously create unique approaches for supporting the communities they serve through service-learning, civic engagement, and university-sponsored volunteer projects. This paper summarizes the community service programs of four major universities in Greater Cincinnati and offers guidance to non-profits and institutions of higher education that wish to engage in such activities for mutual benefit.

Introduction
Community service is a long-standing tradition in the United States. It can involve mandatory activity, such as penalty, required of someone convicted of a crime, or it can be a simple act of volunteerism, such as working for the American Red Cross. In recent years, community service has become a required component by some employers and in many educational settings. In higher education, community service may be demonstrated in many ways, three of which are pertinent to the purpose of this article: civic engagement, service learning, and volunteerism.

- Civic Engagement: “Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the
A combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes” (Ehrlich, Preface, p. vi).

There is a clear academic component to civic engagement that includes the application of the concepts of democracy and citizenship (A. Miller, personal communication, August 20, 2009).

**Service Learning:** Many institutions of higher education now require students to participate in a type of community service called “service-learning” as an effective way to integrate their experiential learning and application of theory in the real world setting of communities that have need for assistance. “Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities” (Learn and Serve America). In order to qualify as a “service-learning” activity, the experience must relate to the subject matter a student studies. Reflection plays a key role in service learning, as the student engages in preparatory and follow-up reflection activities (A. Miller, personal communication, August 20, 2009).

**Volunteerism:** Community service may simply be exemplified in the volunteer activities sponsored by many institutions of higher learning, such as campus-wide participation in community food drives, walkathons, and other community-wide events. Individuals may also serve as volunteers for community and campus causes. There is no academic component to volunteerism, but it might instigate a student’s interest in service-learning or civic engagement activities (A. Miller, personal communication, August 20, 2009).

**Service-Learning in Action**

Greater Cincinnati, which includes counties in southwestern Ohio, northern Kentucky, and southeastern Indiana, is home to at least four major universities that have unique approaches to community service. Each of the four cited in this paper provides volunteer, service-learning, and community engagement elements involving faculty, staff, students, and community agencies, in addition to or as part of its academic offerings. The service-learning component offers valuable assistance to the benefit of businesses, non-profits, and communities, while providing students an opportunity to enhance their learning while providing valuable service to the community. However, there is more to these programs than simply connecting students with agency needs. Each university has a unique approach to collaborations with the non-profit community.

Non-profits who have not yet benefited from the free labor and ideas generated by working collaboratively with institutions of higher learning
might wish to consider the variety of possibilities in one small area of the country.

**Miami University Office of Community Engagement and Service**

Founded in 1809, Miami University (MU) is a mid-sized state university, located in Oxford, Butler County, Ohio. The Miami University Office of Community Engagement and Service, through the residence halls and campus organizations, encourages campus-wide participation in community service projects. It provides support for volunteer training opportunities, department-sponsored programs, self-initiated projects, and guides structured opportunities for hands-on community-based learning. The office sponsors a volunteer fair on campus each semester, when local agencies come to campus, giving both students and agencies the chance to communicate their mutual needs.

Service-learning programs the office offers include:

- **Empower**: a nine-week program intended for first and second year students at Miami University who wish to learn more about how social issues impact local communities. Empower combines service, education, and critical personal investigation to foster social awareness and build community. Through Empower, the Office of Community Engagement and Service also seeks to cultivate and support a group of engaged students who can guide future service programming.

- **Service Guides**: a program for upper-class students who have completed Empower. It represents the blending of service, learning, and leadership. After completing the Empower course sequence and continuing with additional training, Service Guides help community agencies to develop excellent volunteer or service-learning opportunities, lead volunteers into the community, help them establish relationships with the community organizations, offer support to the volunteers and agency staff, engage the volunteers in thoughtful service and reflection, and represent agency needs and perspective to the university.

Volunteer programs Miami offers include campus-wide volunteer initiatives that give all members of the Miami community an opportunity to give to Oxford and surrounding communities, including:

- **Pledge a Meal/Hunger Awareness Week**: Every fall Miami’s Oxford campus tightens its belt and prepares to skip a meal in support of local food pantries. Students can choose to donate the equivalent of one meal from their dining accounts and take part in a series of lectures and activities geared towards understanding the issue of hunger in the community. At the end of the week, the skipped meals are counted, and local agencies are given a lump-sum donation.
• **Adopt-A-School**: Miami students tutor students in grades K–12 in subject matters of their choice. Started by the Greek community, now all students on the campus may choose to assist teachers and act as role models for young students, while offering consistent, ongoing support to the local community through positive interactions with teachers and children.

• **America Reads**: Tutors use a hands-on approach to combat illiteracy in local school districts. The main purpose of this project is to help elementary school children become excited about reading. Through extensive training and weekly lesson plans, tutors develop effective and efficient ways of helping students become better readers.

**Miami University's Regional Campuses in Middletown and Hamilton**

Miami University and its two Ohio regional campuses, both founded in the 1960s, are 20–25 miles apart in Butler County. The regional campuses are in cities that have suffered tremendous economic declines over a decade or more. In both cities the downtown streets are lined with vacant historic buildings, following the closure of paper mills and other manufacturing companies. Both cities have efforts underway to revitalize their respective downtowns. As active community partners, the regional campuses support these efforts with downtown centers, which double as service-learning sites and community meeting places. The regional campuses have been described as “portals to communities”, which facilitate service-learning opportunities, a true fusion of scholarship, teaching, and service.

In 2006, the Middletown campus formed the *Campus-Community Connection (CCC)*, a committee that brings together faculty, staff, and students who have a desire to create and implement service-learning opportunities and civic engagement projects. CCC coordinates them. One community engagement project of the CCC is its downtown center, *Miami Middletown Downtown (MMD)*, which opened in March 2008. The Hamilton campus opened its *Miami Hamilton Downtown Center for Civic Engagement* six months earlier, in October, 2007. Both downtown centers bring faculty and students into a portion of their respective cities which might otherwise be untouched by the university’s presence there.

More recently, emphasis upon service-learning greatly increased in the fall semester of 2008, when the regional campuses co-piloted a new *Bachelor of Integrative Studies (BIS)* degree with eight possible concentrations: Applied Sociology; American Contemporary Experience; Environmental Studies; Family, Gender, & Society; Geographic Information Science (GIS); Information Technology Strategy for Organizations; Organizational Leadership; and Understanding Media and Visual Culture. Two concentrations can be combined. The BIS degree requires service-
learning experiences. The combination of applied and liberal studies allows students to build a curriculum that matches their academic and workforce advancement needs. The imagination soars when considering how concentrations might be combined and community projects created to satisfy the service-learning requirements for a BIS degree.

Northern Kentucky University: Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement and Nonprofit Development

Northern Kentucky University (NKU) is a mid-sized private university located in Highland Heights, Campbell County, Kentucky. NKU has a well-developed and growing effort to connect with and support the Greater Cincinnati community through its Scripps Howard Center. The Center’s goals are to “deepen classroom learning, strengthen the ethics of civic engagement, and bring the time, treasure and talent of the campus to positively impact real community problems.” By engaging students, faculty and staff at NKU in organized community service, the Center is trying to bring civic knowledge development and educational pedagogies such as service-learning into the mainstream.

The following are examples of services and activities that exist under the umbrella of the Scripps Howard Center. Community engagement services include the Institute for Nonprofit Capacity (INC), which is a new project of the Center. INC’s purpose is to develop the organizational capacities of non-profit groups across the region and to help transform the non-profit sector into a high-performing, accountable and successful organization. Any non-profit in Greater Cincinnati can access information and management support through the INC.

Service-learning activities include:

- The Provost’s Office offers *University-Community Partnership Grants*. Projects chosen for funding must directly and meaningfully address a social, educational, health or civic need of the region through a mutually beneficial partnership that enriches and expands the learning functions of the university while enhancing the community’s capacity to address its challenges. Grant-funded projects provide win/win situations: learning and educational benefits for the university and its students as well as service-delivery or problem-solving benefit for the local community. These projects must be true shared partnerships of effort and financial resources.

- The *Mayerson Project*, an initiative of the Manuel D. and Rhoda Mayerson Foundation, encourages student philanthropy. This project supports for in creating classes that allow students to invest in the community, enabling faculty to use student philanthropy as a service-learning pedagogy through direct and indirect giving.

- NKU students can take advantage of *non-profit internships*. Students also have an option for alternative activities, which involve travel and
service-learning opportunities, over spring and summer breaks.

- The Scripps Howard Center encourages students to participate in community engagement activities by giving the Civic Engagement Achievement Award for graduating seniors who have made an impact in their community, both on and off campus, through course work, internships/co-ops, volunteer activities or a combination of these.

University of Cincinnati

Founded in 1819, the University of Cincinnati (UC) is a large urban, public research university, located in the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio. UC has many resources open to the community and is a proud partner in many community initiatives, which are coordinated through Community Partnerships:

- **Center for the City** fellowships provide opportunities for UC faculty and staff and leaders in the larger community to delve more deeply into an issue or challenge facing the community or the university, to support active learning or scholarship on urban issues, or to provide expertise to a project or program with an urban focus.

- **The Center for Community Engagement** has a mission of bringing the faculty, staff, and students of the University of Cincinnati together with the community through service activities. These Signature Programs offer:
  - **Volunteer activities** such as Hoxworth Blood Drives, Relay for Life, Habitat for Humanity, Walk for a Just Community, and Zoo-Mates. Students locate volunteer opportunities through a university sponsored Online Volunteer Directory. They can also locate them through student groups and the university’s Weekly Service Update provides listserves and links to resources.
  - **Service-learning experiences** for which students receive credit, such as Alternative Spring Breaks, Green-Up Day, Into the Streets, OTR Community Housing, and Tutoring Programs.

Other civic engagement projects which serve UC’s communities are:

- **Community Connections** is a database keeping track of many of UC’s partnerships and programs in the greater Cincinnati region.

- **Strive** represents unprecedented collaboration among education, business, non-profit, civic, and philanthropic sectors, who are all sitting at the same table with community members to engage in discussions about how to work together to support students, families, and educators academically and socially as they work toward a better future.

- **Uptown Consortium** is a non-profit organization made up of Uptown’s five largest employers: Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, The Health Alliance of Greater Cincinnati, TriHealth, Inc. and the University of Cincinnati.
The purpose of the consortium is to encourage revitalization in the Uptown neighborhood.

- **Partnerships** sponsors service-learning through *Agency Collaboration, Community Work Study*, and *Business Partnerships* (hire a UC graduate or a Co-op student)

Furthermore, the University of Cincinnati offers assistance to students for post-graduate, summer, and other opportunities to continue in community engagement.

**Xavier University**

Founded in 1831, Xavier University (XU) is a private, coeducational university located in Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio, providing a liberal arts education in the Catholic, Jesuit tradition. The University is the third-largest independent institution in Ohio, the sixth-oldest Catholic university in the nation, and one of 28 Jesuit colleges and universities nationwide. Xavier offers several avenues for community engagement:

- **The Community Building Institute**, established in 1996, focuses on asset-based community planning that promotes community-driven development, emphasizing both the community's existing physical assets and the passion of its residents.

- **Service-learning Semesters** combine 12–15 credit hours of academic study with community service for students under the guidance and supervision of XU faculty. Community service may occur in urban Cincinnati, Nicaragua, India, or Ghana. “A primary goal of the entire semester is integration of the academic study with the experience of service. The academic component provides students with knowledge of the culture, religion, history, government and economics of the area in which the semester takes place, with an emphasis on issues of social justice. The service component functions as the medium through which learning occurs by placing all study in the context of living and working with the economically poor. Reflection is a major component of the program and is integrated in many ways. In addition to the academic focus, the course of study helps participants relate sensitively to people across ethnic and class boundaries. There are also opportunities to interact with community-based organizations and leaders.”

- **Peace & Justice Programs** seek to “educate, empower and affirm a community interested in building a more compassionate, just world through social action and community service. Peace and justice programs help students, staff, and faculty envision a better world. Using spiritual and intellectual resources, the programs work toward global economic justice, basic human rights, a culture of non-violence, and a more orderly and humane way of making decisions on an international level.”
How To Create a Non-Profit and Higher Education Partnership

Any non-profit agency may profit from this trend in higher education. If there is a local option for post-secondary education within a county or region, it is possible to establish a community engagement relationship. Even if that institution did not already have formal community engagement programs, an agency could initiate a relationship by requesting volunteer assistance from the student body through contact with the office of student affairs. If specific needs exist, the agency could request assistance from the appropriate department by contacting the department chair (contact information available by phoning the campus or on the school’s web page). For example, if the agency sought to develop a business plan, a discussion with the dean of the college of business or chair of the business department requesting assistance should work.

Steps to establishing a non-profit/higher education collaboration

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<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Non-Profit Agencies</th>
<th>Institutions of Higher Education</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Determine volunteer needs and need for capacity-building; obtain approval of the leadership (CEO, board of trustees); review agency policies &amp; procedures for updating, if necessary, to allow volunteer activity</td>
<td>Determine academic programmatic needs and students' needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Check college or university websites</td>
<td>Check local non-profit websites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>Contact a service-learning program; or contact the dean or chair of the department or college most appropriate to the need (business, social work, education, environmental sciences, etc.)</td>
<td>Call or email non-profit CEO; invite non-profit leaders to a round table discussion; or sponsor a health fair, volunteer fair, or job fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish the partnership</td>
<td>Formalize relationship to satisfy agency’s policies &amp; procedures and needs; create civic engagement, service learning or volunteer project</td>
<td>Formalize relationship by creating appropriate project and placing volunteers, students, staff, and/or faculty to meet non-profit need; integrate service learning project with curriculum</td>
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</table>
Even if a college has no formal service-learning program, students might be compelled to develop projects to satisfy course requirements. Fraternities and sororities require their members to provide community service. Through these options, a non-profit agency with needs might find free assistance, while also providing students the real-world learning experiences they need to graduate fully prepared to be productive and effective citizens in the world. The non-profit agency/higher education collaboration is a powerful one: a win-win solution for students and communities alike.

**Conclusion**

These examples of the various ways institutions of higher education in southwest Ohio reach out to their communities are becoming common throughout the United States. Support for the development of service-learning programs is available through such organizations as the National Youth Leadership Council, Learn and Serve America’s National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, and Campus Compact. The wisdom of incorporating service-learning with theoretical academic classroom learning is benefiting communities throughout the United States.

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National Youth Leadership Council. (http://www.nylc.org/)

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Biographical Information

Barbara Roberts, MA, GPC, has worked with Miami University’s regional campus in Middletown, Ohio for more than three years. Earlier in her career, she worked extensively in the non-profit sector, providing in-home counseling, parenting education services, grant development, and project development and oversight.
A certified grant development professional, Barbara has also worked as a consultant with human services agencies, health care agencies, religious organizations, senior centers, and institutions of higher education to submit federal, state, and local governmental applications, as well as private and corporate foundation applications. Contact Barbara at robertb5@muohio.edu.