

FUNDED



A GRANTS OFFICE PUBLICATION

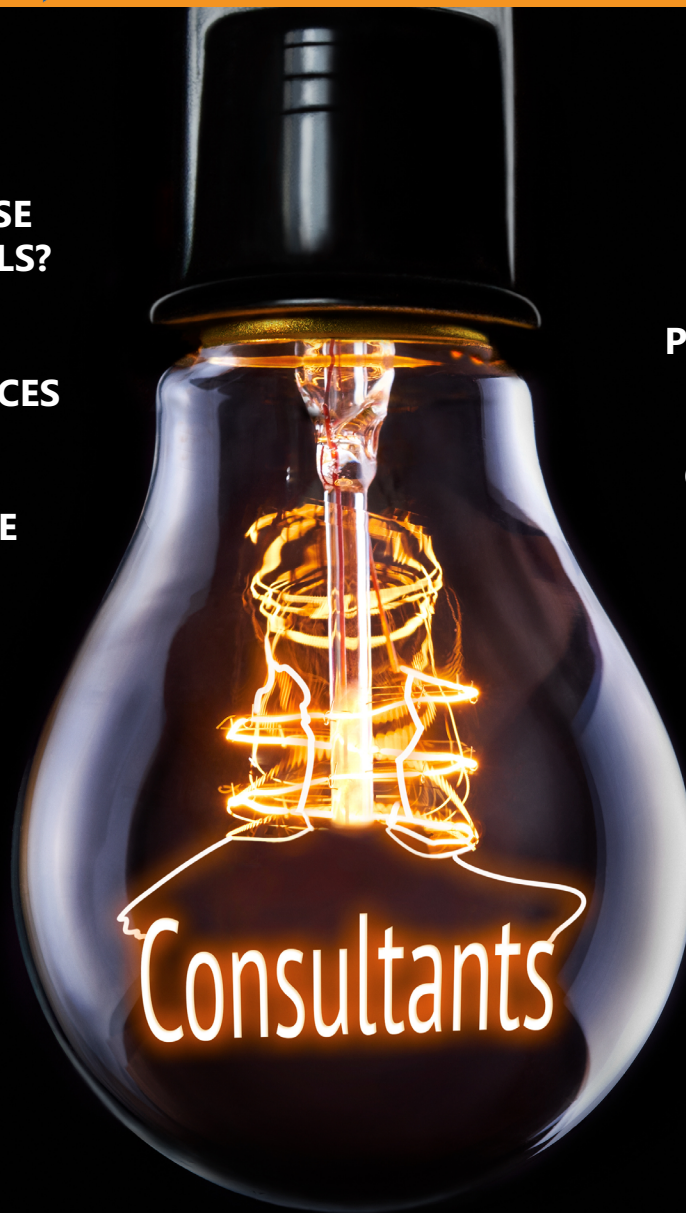
**SHOULD YOU REUSE THOSE
OLD PROPOSAL MATERIALS?**

**TRUMP'S NEW PLAN FOR
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

**WRITE YOUR BUDGET
JUSTIFICATION LIKE YOU'RE
PLAYING CHESS**

**SEE WHERE WE'RE
PRESENTING IN MARCH**

**PLUS SUMMARY INFO
ON 7 EXCITING GRANT
OPPORTUNITIES!**



CONSIDERATIONS FOR SEEKING A PROFESSIONAL GRANTS CONSULTANT

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ON THE COVER

In this issue we discuss the value of bringing in a grant professional from "outside" of your organization to help with more effective grant seeking, project planning, and proposal development!

Read more on page 10.

Dear Readers,

In this issue of FUNDED, we take a step back and provide some practical tips and insights on grantseeking that we hope will be relevant for anyone setting out to obtain funding for a community project. Of course, we wouldn't be doing our jobs if we didn't also keep you up to date on the latest developments in the grants landscape, so that's covered too!

Elizabeth Evans kicks us off with guidance on planning your organization's grantseeking initiative and the considerations you'll want to think through before you begin planning your project and writing your proposal narrative. She covers the pros and cons of a number of important decisions you'll likely make along the road to a finished proposal, and the path you take may ultimately be determined as much by your project goals and organizational structure as by any other drivers. Later, Elizabeth also reviews the art and science of writing a budget justification – and how the process is like a game a chess.

Ashley Schultz follows up with even more practical advice – this time on the age-old question of how much previously developed material can be reused in a current grant proposal. Especially if you're a professional grantwriter, you may want to keep this article handy, so you can pass it along to clients who ask why every proposal needs to be developed separately.

Chris LaPage snaps us back to the moment with a timely discussion of the New Strategic Plan being finalized by the Department of Health and Human Services, one of largest grantmaking agencies on the planet. If you plan to apply to HHS for anything in the next five years, you'll want to follow this one closely.

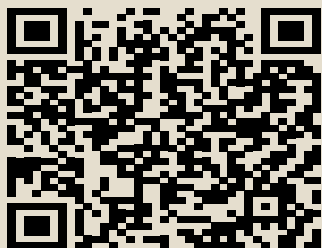
Highlights of seven current or upcoming grant opportunities, and useful criteria for evaluating the relevance of various grant programs for your project round out the grants intelligence we offer in this month's edition.

Be sure to check out our webcasts and come visit us at the conferences our team will be presenting at in Austin and Orlando in the coming month. We'd love to meet you in person! As always, if you have comments, feedback, corrections, or topics for future issues, feel free to drop me a line at: mpaddock@grantsoffice.com.

I hope you enjoy this issue of FUNDED as much as we've enjoyed bringing it to you!

Sincerely,

Michael Paddock
Editor and Publisher,
FUNDED



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RYAN WHITE HIV/AIDS PROGRAM (RWHAP), PART C: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

SUMMARY: This program solicits applications for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Part C Capacity Development Program (RWHAP), which assists current Part C grantees in their efforts to strengthen their organizational infrastructure and to increase their capacity to develop, enhance, or expand access to high quality HIV primary health care services for people living with HIV (PLWH).

This program is for existing RWHAP Part C grantees only. Applicants may submit proposals for one of the following categories:

1. HIV Care Innovation; or
2. Infrastructure Development to address the gaps and need for a comprehensive continuum of outpatient HIV primary care services

HIV Care Innovation: HIV Care Innovation activities should identify and address a specific point along the HIV Care Continuum to be targeted for maximum impact. This funding opportunity will assist RWHAP grantees in supporting a system-wide activity that addresses a gap in the local HIV Care Continuum. For this application, select only one activity in this category or one in the Infrastructure Development category.

- HIV Case Finding;
- Motivational Interviewing;
- Chronic Disease Self-Management;
- Patient-Based Treatment Adherence; or
- Transitioning Youth into Adult HIV Care

Infrastructure Development: Infrastructure development activities should identify and address a specific point along the HIV Care Continuum to be targeted for maximum impact. This funding opportunity will assist RWHAP grantees by promoting organizational infrastructure development and increasing the capacity of organizations to enhance their ability to meet the changing health care landscape. For this application, select only one activity in this category or one in the HIV Care Innovation category.

- Electronic Health Records (EHR);
- Financial Management Systems; or
- Management Information System

DEADLINE: Applications are due by March 9, 2018. A similar deadline is anticipated annually.

ELIGIBILITY: Eligible applicants are currently funded HIV/AIDS Program Part C Early Intervention Services grantees.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: <https://grants.hrsa.gov/2010/Web2External/Interface/FundingCycle/ExternalView.aspx?fCycleID=df7c4f2-55f4-4b83-87d3-e66e0d283180>

The Department of Health & Human Services:

A New Strategic Plan & A New Vision

By Chris LaPage

Applicants are always striving to make their proposals compelling in an increasingly competitive environment. One of the most important tasks that is recommended during the due diligence phase is to familiarize yourself with the funder. A key information source for this activity are the four-year strategic plans that federal agencies are required to make publicly available to comply with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993. Unfortunately, the current strategic plan for Health and Human Services (HHS) that was established in 2014 under the Obama Administration is set to expire in 2018. The plan for 2018 through 2022 is currently under development by the Trump Administration; however, there is much to learn from the draft they published for comment in Fall 2017.



The 2014-2018 HHS Strategic Plan focused heavily on implementing the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and increasing health insurance coverage. That focus is likely to shift in the 2018-2022 plan currently under development by the Trump Administration.

A Look Back at the 2014-2018 HHS Strategic Plan

To project how things may change, it is important to understand the existing playing field. The current HHS strategic plan that went into effect in 2014 was developed during the Obama administration. As such, the underlying theme of the plan was the continued implementation of his signature legislation, the Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA – also known as Obamacare). The ACA recognized a large role for government in the establishment of health insurance exchanges and was laser focused on increasing insurance coverage. As a result, applicants seeking funding through the various HHS grant programs were encouraged to focus on increasing access to healthcare, while prioritizing low-income populations and those with government-provided insurance (e.g. Medicare, Medicaid, Child Health Insurance Program). In addition, projects that incorporated long-term sustainability plans to include both public and private insurers were viewed favorably.

Looking Ahead: The 2018-2022 HHS Strategic Plan

At first glance, the draft of the new strategic plan maintains many of these same goals. The five primary strategic goals are as follows:

1. Reform, Strengthen and Modernize the Nation's Health Care System
2. Protect the Health of Americans Where They Live, Learn, Work and Play
3. Strengthen the Economic and Social Well-Being of Americans across the Lifespan
4. Foster Sound, Sustained Advances in the Sciences
5. Promote Effective and Efficient Management and Stewardship

While each of these goals are accompanied by four objectives each, the draft plan did not contain any performance measures. It seems unlikely that the new plan, once finalized, will be void of performance measures – as those measures will be an essential in how HHS defines success over the next four years. In that respect, there will still be much to be learned from the final plan that is produced.

The real differences between the current and pending plan is not in the goals themselves, but rather in how the agency will implement these goals and how they will be measured. Fortunately, the text of the draft that was published for comment does provide some clues as to how HHS's approach will be different under the Trump Administration. Some of the common themes include stressing faith-based institutions, personal responsibility, and private market solutions.

Emerging Themes: Free-Market Solutions & Faith-Based Institutions

While the previous administration was focused on ACA implementation and an expanding role of government in healthcare, the opposite will be true going forward. This has been made clear by President Trump's statements and recent actions – such as the elimination of the individual mandate associated with the ACA that required people to have health insurance or risk a fine. The provision striking down the individual mandate was included in the recent tax reform package. As a result, we may see grant programs prioritize projects that can move folks away from public health plans towards private insurance companies. In addition, we may also see a discontinuation of grant programs that funded outreach and enrollment into public programs like Medicaid, Food Stamps, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families as the administration seeks a free-market (rather than government) solution to these problems.

The 2018-2022 plan's emphasis on the role and involvement of faith-based institutions goes hand-in-hand with its focus on private markets. It is likely that we will see specific language in future grant program solicitations that explicitly makes faith-based organizations eligible or requires collaboration with such entities. Interestingly, many of these agencies have always been able to apply for HHS grant programs given that they were eligible as non-profit organizations, but there has not yet been an emphasis on proposed projects needing to include these organizations. The administration may look for projects that allow faith-based organizations to expand their role in providing health care and other human and social services such as food distribution, child welfare, and adoption services. The overall idea being that an expanded role for faith-based institutions in this arena will result in a lesser need for the role of government-provided services. Whether or not the new plan will require these faith-based institutions, if grant funded, to use the dollars for only secular-oriented services has yet to be determined.

Emerging Theme: Personal Responsibility

The other major theme in the new strategic plan is the notion of personal responsibility in health care. Historically, healthcare has been an industry that is unique in that the recipients of services (i.e. consumers, patients) often are not directly involved in paying the full cost of their care to providers (e.g. physicians, hospitals). Government and private insurance play the role of payors instead. The proliferation of high deductible insurance plans, co-insurance and other mechanisms work to close this gap by shifting responsibility to the patient. The free-market approach assumes that individuals will make more economically appropriate decisions on health care utilization when they pay for it like other services and goods. In that respect, it appears there will be an emphasis on funding

grant projects that follow this trend. Advocates for this new approach argue that the closer the patient is to payment, the less likely they are to seek unnecessary and costly medical treatments. This is a contrast to the 2014-2018 plan which championed ensuring access to less costly primary and preventative care in the hopes that individuals would be less likely to need expensive emergency services.

In Conclusion

It is crucial for future grantseekers that are targeting HHS programs to familiarize themselves with the 2018-2022 plan once it is finalized. Pay particular attention to any performance measures that are included, as these will provide key insights into how HHS is going to be evaluating future success. Many grant programs are tied to specific pieces of legislation and their priorities are coded into law, which will provide some buffer to the changes in the overarching HHS Strategic Plan. However, HHS and the agencies under their umbrella also have a tremendous amount of leeway in how they implement their grant programs and how they evaluate applicants. Finding ways in which your proposed projects mesh with the priorities laid out in the plan will be crucial to your success as an applicant. ■



Don't forget to look outside the microscope. Even though details are crucial, don't forget the "big picture" perspective when pursuing grants. The HHS Strategic Plan is one such tool that can give a leg up on the competition for healthcare grants.

DISTANCE LEARNING & TELEMEDICINE (DLT) GRANT PROGRAM

SUMMARY: The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program is designed to provide access to education, training, and health care resources for rural Americans. The DLT program provides financial assistance to encourage and improve telemedicine and distance learning services in rural areas through the use of telecommunications, computer networks, and related advanced technologies that students, teachers, medical professionals, and rural residents can use.

Grants may be used to fund telecommunications-enabled information, audio and video equipment, and related advanced technologies which extend educational and medical applications into rural areas. Eligible equipment includes:

- Audio, video and interactive video equipment;
- Terminal and data terminal equipment;
- Computer hardware, network components and software; and
- Inside wiring and similar infrastructure that further DLT services

Grants are intended to benefit end users in rural areas, who are often not in the same location as the source of the educational or health care service. Special consideration will be offered to applications that contain at least one end-user site within a trust area or a tribal jurisdictional area, a Strike Force area or a Promise Zone.

NEXT ANTICIPATED DEADLINE: Applications are anticipated to be announced in March or April 2018, with a deadline date falling within 60 days of release.

ELIGIBILITY: To be eligible for a grant, your organization must:

- Be legally organized as an incorporated organization or partnership; an Indian tribe or tribal organization; a state or local unit of government; a consortium; or other legal entity, including a private corporation organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis. Each applicant must provide written evidence of its legal capacity to contract with the Rural Utilities Service to obtain the grant and comply with all applicable requirements.
- Either operate a rural community facility, or deliver distance learning or telemedicine services to entities that operate a rural community facility or to residents of rural areas at rates calculated to ensure that the benefit of the financial assistance is passed through to such entities or to residents of rural areas.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>

DISTANCE LEARNING & TELEMEDICINE (DLT) GRANT PROGRAM

FUNDED ORGANIZATION: New York State Office of Mental Health

AMOUNT FUNDED: \$500,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Rural Development funds will help the New York State Office of Mental Health purchase telemedicine equipment to provide enhanced mental health services. The project will benefit 19 hub and 66 end user sites by providing video conferencing equipment, tablets and software to allow clinics, schools, doctors' offices, nursing homes and correctional facilities to expand mental health services.

Given the high demand and provider shortages, this project will address the needs of adults and children, with an additional focus on individuals who may need skilled nursing facility interventions and individuals involved with New York State's criminal justice system.

Additionally, the New York Office of Mental Health will leverage collaborative relationships with Western New York Independent Living, Inc., which supports individuals living within the Seneca Nation of Indians and the Tuscarora Nation of Indians to improve Native peoples' access to mental health services.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/RD-DLTAwardsJanuary2018.pdf>

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE: <https://www.omh.ny.gov/>

Need Help Preparing your Site List or Proposal for the Upcoming 2018 DLT Application Window?

Did you know that the DLT grant program is almost 30 years old? While there have been slight changes to the application process over the years, much has remained the same. Here at Grants Office we've been helping education & health care providers successfully secure these grant dollars for nearly two decades. We can help you choose those end user sites that will yield the best score, tell you how much you'll need to provide in match in order to be competitive, and so much more!

Contact us at info@grantsoffice.com to get started today!

Help Wanted:

Considerations for Seeking Grants Assistance

By Elizabeth Evans

It's no secret that the practice of grant seeking is pretty involved. It consists of countless hours of work: researching state, federal, and foundation funding sources; sorting through various opportunities to choose those that best match your project's goals, funding needs, and timeline; figuring out what aspects the funder specifically requires for your project; collecting partnership agreements; not to mention actually writing the proposal! Moreover, few organizations are fortunate enough to have the means for keeping a full-time grant professional on staff. So what is an organization to do?

One option is to share the responsibility for grant seeking among several staff members. The advantage of this "in-house" approach is that what once seemed like an insurmountable amount of work, has now been broken down into digestible portions for various individuals within the team. Each staff member is able to contribute to the process based on his or her area of expertise and availability to take on additional work.

Using this team-based approach for grant seeking can sometimes lead to unforeseen challenges, however. For one thing, progress might slow when staff members have more pressing priorities to attend to. Further, if a leader is not designated to coordinate activities among the grant seeking team – certain items may slip through the cracks, be duplicated, or debated endlessly (i.e. having "too many cooks in the kitchen"). Additionally, it may become difficult for the team to see the proverbial forest through the trees. Meaning, that because the

team is so entrenched within your organization and passionate about the grant project, they may miss possible weaknesses or challenges within the proposal that are obvious to someone from the outside.

For these (and other) reasons, there may be times when it is better for your organization to seek outside help! After all, you don't want to end up limiting your organization's potential access to available project funds simply because of a desire to keep things strictly "in-house". Outsourcing certain, non-primary functions of your organization can open many new doors. Especially in the world of grant seeking.

Following, we'll cover how bringing in an outside grant consultant and/or writer can strengthen the language of your proposal, increase your ability generate new and innovative ideas, and even assist with enhancing your grant seeking efficiency and overall effectiveness!

Proposal Language

Grant funders come from all walks of life, and it is not always a guarantee that they will have a background in the area (e.g. electric vehicles, rural healthcare services, K-12 literacy programs) for which you are requesting funds. As such, there is a certain linguistic finesse to proposal writing that many organization-based grant writers might overlook given their comfort level with sector-specific terminology. Requests which are entrenched with jargon always run the risk of alienating a funder who doesn't understand the lingo or profession specific acronyms

used. An outside grant consultant can assist your organization with presenting your project in a way that is accessible to everyone. She or he can point out where layman's terms for key ideas are most beneficial to your case, and where certain concepts should be explained in greater detail.

Seemingly contrary to this first point, while you should avoid use of your own field's jargon you should also be aware of and make appropriate use of grant funding related verbiage. For example, Letters of Support, Letters of Commitment, and Memoranda of Understanding might be used interchangeably in certain professional sectors. However, each name indicates a distinct type of documents to a grant funder and (depending on the context) one may be appropriate whereas another may not. Working with a grants professional on your project will ensure that your proposal uses the proper terminology for maximum clarity.

An additional benefit of having an individual outside of your organization write your proposal is that he/she will ensure a unified voice is used throughout the document. Often times, when several team members are responsible for writing different sections of the proposal verb tense and tone of voice might change from paragraph to paragraph. This "Frankenstein" approach can be jarring for the grant reviewer as he or she attempts to make sense of the story that is trying to be told.

Challenging You to Generate New and Innovative Ideas

Bringing in an outsider also affords organizations to see themselves through a new lens. Outsiders shake things up. As mentioned earlier, too often those deeply involved in a project cannot "see the forest through trees", meaning, they are unable to impartially view your organization and project the same way a potential funding organization ultimately would. Because of their

immersion within the field of grants and grant seeking, an outside grant writer or consultant can often challenge members of your organization to consider new ways of thinking.

Many grants tend to focus on projects involving innovative approaches or ideas for solving specific, long-standing problems. Proposing to do something a certain way simply because "that is how it has always been done" in your organization, is not enough for funders. Grant funders want to see that your proposed project or program is well thought out and intentionally designed based on what current best-practice literature is available. Funders, especially those concerned with innovation, want to support projects that are "game changing", that expand what we know about a given solution in different contexts, or come up with (and test) an entirely new solution to a particular problem. In their quest to translate the justification for your project from thought to paper, grant consultants and writers may inspire you and your team to reflect on your justification for other practices as well. Moreover, an outsider's feedback in relation to a funder's requirements might even be applicable for general organization improvement or enhancement of current practices beyond the scope of the proposed project.

Enhancing Grant Seeking Efficiency & Effectiveness

Perhaps the greatest benefit of engaging an outsider grant professional, though, is that it frees up the time that you and your colleagues need to instead focus on strengthening partnerships, thoroughly plan projects, and other "big picture" action items. This is because grant seeking, done well, is a time-consuming and on-going process. Organizations that "put all of their eggs in one basket" are inevitably setting themselves up for disappointment – or worse – if they are not successful in that single grant application. As such, working with an outsider to develop an intention-



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al grant seeking strategy can help organizations avoid what we like to call “grant burn-out” (the feeling members of an organization have after unsuccessfully pursuing grant funding for the first time, despite high levels of effort and time invested in developing the proposal).

As stated earlier, leveraging an outsider to conduct grants research and working with you to narrow the scope of options saves you and the members of your organization massive amounts of time. A large benefit of outsider assistance (in the form of a grant consultant) is that she or he brings to the table an enhanced level of knowledge that someone within your organization only writing grants part-time may not yet have had the opportunity to develop. Types of available funding and the processes for pursuing these funds varies greatly among state, federal, and private or corporate foundation sources. Funding trends can also change based on the state of the economy or current political environment, thus someone who is 100% dedicated to the observation of these trends will be able to help you develop a realistic strategy for future grants pursuit. After all, it’s rather disheartening to hear about a grant opportunity that is perfect for your project only after awards have been made, all because your

organization’s staff were not aware of where to look/did not have the time to dedicate to continuous grants research.

Grant professionals are well versed in where to look for various funding opportunities. In fact, any grant professional worth his/her weight can instinctively say if an identified grant is a good fit for your organization after hearing your initial project idea. This is important, of course, in helping to abate the dreaded aforementioned “grant burn-out”. A grant-knowledgeable, impartial outsider can help you identify which grants are worth your organization’s time and energy, and which grants are not. They can help you: hone in on which of the funder’s priorities are most applicable to your project, point to information regarding the types of past projects the funder has a history of funding, and even reach out to funding agencies on your behalf if your organization has a question! Some grant professionals may even have “insider knowledge” about a specific opportunity (e.g. having been previously employed by the funder or served as a grant reviewer for the program, thus knowing “both sides of the coin”).

Finally, a Note for those who are Resistant...

The two biggest obstacles that most organizations face with the choice to outsource their grant seeking are: (1) the cost of the grant writer consultant and (2) that this individual lacks the institutional knowledge that would be needed to effectively communicate who your organization is to the funder.

To the first point, there is little that can be done about this other than shopping around for the best deal. Very few grants allow for a grant writer consultant to be paid from the awarded funds, most writers and consultants must be contracted with up front. Furthermore, the Grant Professionals Association (a national organization whose membership consists of industry standard certified grant writers) generally considers it unethical for compensation of a grant writer or consultant to be based on a certain percentage of the awarded grant (i.e. commission), or included in as a proposed budget line item unless specifically allowed by the funder. Knowing this, paying a writer for their services – despite the grant funds not being a guarantee – is simply too great a risk for some organizations. Having on hand the solicitation or application instructions for the target grant you want to pursue, a general project idea, and knowing exactly where you would like help (e.g. drafting the narrative and budget justification, loading forms to the application portal, etc.) should be enough information for a professional grant writer or consultant to provide you with an initial quote for their assistance.

Overcoming the belief that no one outside of your organization could fathom the extent of the issues at hand in order to effectively conduct grants research or communicate your need for support can sometimes be a bit more difficult to abate. This second area of concern can actually be exacerbated when the organization has someone on staff who writes grants either part-

time or full-time. Often, this anxiety is amplified when mixed with fears over one's job security. An important thing to keep in mind, though, is that when you do decide to outsource and ask for assistance in your grant seeking, you are ultimately in control. You have the ability to determine the extent to which the outside party will provide support. If it helps, think of the outsourcing like hiring an advisor. You are interested in obtaining their expertise, but ultimately not required to rely on it in all aspects of the project unless you so choose. Have you already identified a grant and developed the project idea, and now all you need is someone to translate your plans to the page? Great. Need a little more assistance when it comes to developing and refining your project idea before your own internal grant writer puts pen to paper? All you need to do is ask. Or perhaps all you're interested in is a quickly survey the funding landscape for your project area, so all you'll need from the outsider is grant opportunities research.

Again, it's ultimately your choice how you wish to engage your grants consultant, and any grant writer or consultant is more than happy to work with you in the way you want to be supported. ■



"Don't be afraid to ask questions. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it. I do it every day. Asking for help isn't a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength. It shows you have the courage to admit when you don't know something, and then allows you to learn something new."

- President Barak Obama, September 7, 2009.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (EE) GRANT PROGRAM

SUMMARY: The EPA seeks grant proposals from eligible applicants to support environmental education projects that promote environmental awareness and stewardship and help provide people with the skills to take responsible actions to protect the environment. This grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques.

Applicants must address at least one of the following EPA educational priorities:

- Agricultural Education
- Community Projects
- Career Development

Applicants must also address at least one of the following EPA environmental priorities:

- Improving Air Quality
- Ensuring Clean and Safe Water
- Ensuring the Safety of Chemicals
- Increasing Transparency, Public Participation, and Collaboration with Communities

Applications may address more than one priority in each category. However, it is important that the application is clear as to what the focus of the project will be and how that focus will contribute to a project with quality outputs and outcomes. Finally, applicants must satisfy the definition of “environmental education” through their proposed activities. Environmental Education is defined as educational and training activities involving elementary, secondary, and post-secondary students, and environmental education personnel, but does not include technical training activities directed toward environmental management professionals or activities primarily directed toward the support of non-educational research and development. Moreover, projects shall support the development and widest possible dissemination of model curricula, educational materials, and training programs for students and other interested groups (including senior Americans).

DEADLINE: Proposals are due March 15, 2018. A similar deadline is anticipated annually.

ELIGIBILITY: Eligible applicants are Local Education Agencies (LEA), Institutions of Higher Education, State education or Environmental agencies, Nonprofit organizations, Noncommercial educational broadcasting entities, or Tribal education agencies (which include schools and community colleges controlled by a native tribe/band/nation).

FOR MORE INFORMATION: <https://www.epa.gov/education/environmental-education-ee-grants>

Can't I just Copy/Paste this into my Grant Proposal?

Frequently Asked Questions about Reusing Old Proposal Materials

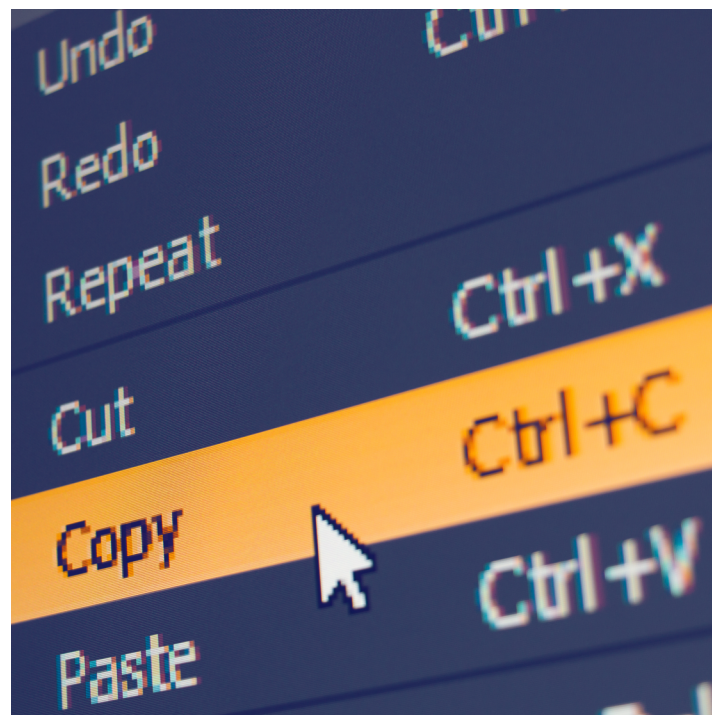
By Ashley Schultz

Imagine this scene: You find yourself sitting at the computer, coffee in hand. The project details your team has spent weeks carefully plotting are printed and neatly stacked in the center of your desk. The plan is ready, the budget set. All that's left to do is type the grant narrative. You open a fresh Word document and are met with that awful blank page...

We've all had that moment of dismay – It's daunting to start a grant proposal from scratch. Well-written narratives contain an overwhelming number of components, including: comprehensive background information, relevant statistics, project objectives, achievable timelines for activities, and a lengthy budget narrative. When met with this large challenge – or after staring too long at that blank white space – even the most experienced grant writers sometimes search for someone else's previous work that can be recycled to get things started.

Copying outside material and pasting it into your own narrative can be a double-edged sword. The act of copy/paste does fill blank space and can provide the much-needed jump start to carry on with the rest of the document. In other instances, these extra materials can provide information that validates – or gives further credence to – the story you're attempting to craft. There are cases, however, when the simple act of copy/paste can be a detriment to your proposal. This is particularly true if a reviewer interprets the act as unoriginal – or worse, lazy.

The next time you're met with a bit of writer's block, stop to consider the answers to these FAQs before pasting someone else's material into your proposal:



Don't rely too heavily on copy/paste work to submit your next grant application. While it may be intimidating to start typing on a fresh, blank page, your proposal will benefit from original work at the end of the day.

Q: Can I copy/paste long term planning documents?

A: **Yes!** This is perhaps the BEST time to paste outside materials into a proposal. Take a few minutes to review local documents (e.g. mission statements, comprehensive plans, annual budgets) for any goals that may align with your proposed activities. For extra points, browse online materials published by the funder to include in your proposal. The trick is to keep these references brief and to the point. Don't copy/paste full paragraphs if 1-2 sentences will do the trick. This is particularly true if the length of your narrative is limited - Use your available space wisely.

Q: Can I copy/paste last year's proposal?

A: **Yes!** Previous applications can be great resources for new or continuing-funding proposals - particularly if your agency has a track-record of success with the funder. This means you know exactly how to articulate a project to secure a grant award. If you experience a bit of writer's block, read through old proposals for baseline information, such as your agency description, local statistics, and recent literature reviews. Evaluators (especially at foundations) often refer to previously submitted proposals while reviewing current applications, so don't copy/paste too much. Once you've got a jump-start, put away those old submission and focus your attention on the newer version.

Q: Can I copy/paste from an application template?

A: **Sometimes.** If the funder provides a model with the application form, be sure to follow that guidance closely. Set up your application to mirror the provided materials,

including any formatting, length, and order of content. In instances where the funder does not provide such guidance, tread carefully if you plan to use a template. Reviewers do not appreciate reading a proposal that was obviously created from a "fill in the blanks" mold. The result is a cold, impersonal text that does not speak to your own, unique program needs. In general, use generic templates similar as you would last year's proposal (see above) - Don't over-rely on generic text. Elaborate with specific project details as needed. And most importantly, put the templates away as soon as you have the inspiration needed to get started.

Q: Can I copy/paste from earlier sections of the proposal?

A: **No!** In writing a proposal, you may come upon a particular question where you think - Oh! I already discussed these details in an earlier section. I'll just copy/paste that information here too. While this may be very tempting - and a huge time-saver - reviewers will consider it lazy. They each have a large stack of proposals to score and will not appreciate re-reading duplicate text throughout the document. Don't risk losing points on your application from a displeased reviewer. If you find yourself in this situation, take a step back and consider the application as a whole. Did you misinterpret an earlier question? Are you providing details the funder is not directly requesting in that space? In which section do those details best belong? You may also insert callouts to other sections, referring readers to a different location in the application for more information. For example, "Providing free breakfast during the early morning program is critical, as many participant students do not have reliable access to healthy meal options at home (see more in Section 3: Project Need)." This reference helps to position your argument within facts mentioned earlier in the proposal, without wasting time/space by fully repeating all of the previously outlined details.

Q: Can I copy/paste from someone else's proposal?

A: No! Pasting project details from another agency into your proposal has the largest potential to backfire. Most grant programs seek to fund new, innovative approaches that address local issues. Copying a project from another applicant will, by default, not be a new venture - It's already been done by someone else! Further, a plagiarized application will not speak directly to the specific needs of your community. As such, you should read other applications as an inspiration for your agency's

own proposal. Let these samples serve as launching points - Not as paragraphs to directly copy/paste.

In general, it's good practice to not rely heavily on others' work to get you over the hump. While it may be intimidating to start typing in that huge blank page all on your own, at the end of the day, your proposal will benefit from original work. So, take some time to review old applications and exemplar proposals. Use these to jump start your own ideas. Then put those documents away, clear your desk, and get to drafting! ■



Struggling to get started? Consider typing your proposal from the middle. Don't worry about wowing the reviewers with a fantastic introduction. Get writing the section you're most excited to share with others.

GRANTS TO REDUCE SEXUAL ASSAULT, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, AND STALKING ON CAMPUS PROGRAM

SUMMARY: This program supports efforts to create or revitalize campus responses to sexual misconduct. Such efforts can be customized to fit the unique needs and population of your campus so long as these efforts demonstrate to every student that such crimes will not be tolerated, that perpetrators will face serious consequences, and that holistic services are available for survivors. Potential grant-funded activities may include:

- Developing victim services and programs.
- Improving offender accountability.
- Implementing effective prevention approaches, including campus safety technology purchases.

For FY18 applications which involve the following will receive priority:

- Strengthen coordinated community response and multi-disciplinary teams for community colleges.
- Meaningfully increase access to OVW programming for specific underserved populations.

Funding amounts will vary based on the number of campuses included in the project. Single campus proposals, if awarded, will receive a base amount. Proposals involving consortia are eligible for additional funds, which will increase with the number of participating entities.

DEADLINE: Applications are due February 22, 2018. A similar deadline is anticipated annually.

ELIGIBILITY: Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education which includes two- and four-year colleges and universities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/page/file/1022671/download>

In Case You Missed It: Back in April 2017, our Grants Office LLC team members were featured in the Campus Safety (CS) Magazine. CS Magazine serves campus police chiefs, security directors, IT personnel, emergency managers and executive administrators involved in the public safety and security of major hospitals, schools and universities in the United States. Check out <http://www.campusafetymagazine.com/> to learn more!

GRANTS TO REDUCE SEXUAL ASSAULT, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, AND STALKING ON CAMPUS PROGRAM

FUNDED ORGANIZATION: Humboldt State University

AMOUNT FUNDED: \$300,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Humboldt State University (HSU) is one of 27 universities in the nation to receive funding under a Department of Justice grant competition to enhance victim services and develop programs to continue addressing sexualized violence. HSU will receive \$300,000 over three years, and will work closely with the North Coast Rape Crisis Team, Humboldt Domestic Violence Services, the Arcata Police Department, and the Humboldt County District Attorney's office.

The program supports activities that develop campus-based coordinated responses that include health providers, housing officials, administrators, student leaders, UPD, Greek Council, athletics, student clubs, Associated Students, and the Office of Student Conduct, and the new campus advocate. This coordinated community response is intended to enhance safety, provide assistance to survivors, and hold offenders accountable.

The grant will focus on several areas:

- Strengthen the coordinated community response to sexual assault, intimate-partner violence, dating violence, and stalking;
- Continue the implementation of Check IT and conduct ongoing training for administrators regarding campus conduct;
- Create a comprehensive campus plan detailing campus professional's roles in prevention and response;
- Train law enforcement in appropriate responses to incidents, victims, and perpetrators of violence;
- Develop materials to prevent retaliation, initiate social media campaigns, and expand creative outreach;
- Improve direct services for victim/survivors; and
- Develop a core group of male leaders of fraternities and sports teams who will model consent-centered behavior and position themselves as active bystanders to disrupt harm.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION: <http://now.humboldt.edu/news/federal-grant-to-expand-hsus-efforts-in-preventing-sexualized-violence/>

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE: <http://stoprape.humboldt.edu//>

How is Writing a Budget Justification like Playing Chess?

...and other Grant Budget Questions

By Elizabeth Evans

When preparing a grant proposal there are several key elements that go into the final product. Often, the narrative - or project description - section is that which receives most of the applicant organization's time and attention. Indeed, there have been ample articles written here, and elsewhere, providing tips and tricks for developing a proposal narrative. But an equally important piece of the proposal is often over looked: the budget. As such, we wanted to take moment to share three Q &As from recent conversations that we've had with clients related to grant budgets and budget justifications.



Many of the skills that one might develop while playing chess (e.g. visualization, calculation, evaluation, strategy and planning) can be utilized for more effective grant seeking

Q: How is a budget justification like playing chess?

A: Well, just like in chess you need to think several moves ahead, connecting the dots along the way toward your end goal. When preparing your grant budget, you should also be prepared to connect the dots for the grant funder between expenses and goals. How does each line item in your budget connect to a specific project activity? Further, how will the expenses related to that activity support your organization in accomplishing their stated goals for the grant project? By providing this information to the funder in your budget justification you are showing that you have intentionally thought through how you plan to accomplish your goals and exactly what will be needed to make those goals a reality.

Q: Do you need to wait to identify a target grant program before creating your project budget?

A: Absolutely not! While you will ultimately want to design your project (and budget) around the required specifications set forth by the funder and grant program for which you intend to apply, having a preliminary project idea and tentative budget will assist in conducting potential funder research. While eligibility (i.e. organization type, geographic focus, project alignment with grantmaking interests) is usually the first thing to look at when filtering out irrelevant grants, you can also gauge the appropriateness of an opportunity by looking at typical award sizes and any budgetary restrictions that the funder has. Comparing this information against your tentative budget will let you know rather easily if you can fund what you want to through the target grant, or if you will need to look towards other funding sources as well.

Furthermore, when you've finally identified your target grant and it is time to prepare your final budget and justification for submission to said funder – you'll now be able to spend your energies on refining your initial estimates for each line item rather than generating this information from scratch. Budgets (and their respective justifications) that are treated as an afterthought run the risk of appearing hastily compiled. From a grant reviewer's perspective, if an applicant cannot provide sufficiently detailed or reasonably accurate budgetary information in their final proposal then that applicant also most likely isn't able to effectively manage any awarded grant funding. As such, budgetary documentation should be treated with as much care and consideration as the main project narrative.

Q: Have an initiative that is too big for any one funder?

A: Create your total project budget and then break it up into bite sized pieces! Many organizations use this practice to explore multiple funding relationships, requesting that each grantmaker support a different aspect of their organization's larger initiative. Moreover, approaching multiple funders for a single project enables you to tailor your grant request based the unique interests (e.g. professional development of teachers, v. student literacy programming) and type of giving made by the funder (e.g. dollars may be used towards technology, capacity building, general operations, capital improvements). Just remember, when submitting your request to each funder: you should mention the total project size, but then provide the detailed budget information for the portion of the project which the selected grantmaker would be supporting. ■

EDUCATION INNOVATION RESEARCH PROGRAM (EIR): EARLY-PHASE GRANTS

SUMMARY: The EIR Program provides funding to create, develop, implement, replicate, or take to scale entrepreneurial, evidence-based, field initiated innovations to improve student achievement and attainment for high-need students; and rigorously evaluate such innovations. The EIR program is designed to generate and validate solutions to persistent educational challenges and to support the expansion of effective solutions to serve substantially larger numbers of students.

EIR Early-phase grants provide funding to support the development, iteration, implementation, and feasibility testing of practices that are expected to be novel and significant relative to others that are underway nationally. These Early-phase grants are not intended simply to implement established practices in additional locations or address needs that are unique to one particular context. The goal is to determine whether and in what ways relatively newer practices can improve student achievement for high-need students.

Applicants are required to serve high-need students to improve their academic outcomes. In addition, last year applicants were also required to address one of other five priorities:

- Improving School Climate
- Promoting Diversity
- Increasing Post-Secondary Preparedness
- Improving the Effectiveness of Principals
- Re-Engagement of Disconnected Youth

It is expected that many of these priorities will return for the FY18 competition. It is also anticipated that a new priority will be added related to increasing STEM engagement for female and minority students.

NEXT ANTICIPATED DEADLINE: Applications are anticipated to be announced in February or March 2018, with a deadline falling within 90 days of release.

ELIGIBILITY: Local education agencies (LEA); a State educational agency (SEA); the Bureau of Indian Education; a Consortium of SEAs or LEAs; A nonprofit organization; or one of the aforementioned entities in partnership with: a nonprofit organization, a business, an educational service agency, or an institution of higher education.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: <https://innovation.ed.gov/what-we-do/innovation/education-innovation-and-research-eir/>

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO LITERACY (IAL) GRANT PROGRAM

SUMMARY: The IAL program supports high-quality programs designed to develop and improve literacy skills for children and students from birth through 12th grade in high-need local educational agencies and schools. The IAL program supports the implementation of high-quality plans for childhood literacy activities and book distribution efforts that are supported by evidence of strong theory. In addition, during the last competition applications were encouraged to also address any of the applicable competitive priorities:

- Leveraging Technology to Support Instructional Practice and Professional Development
- Improving Early Learning and Development Outcomes
- Serving Rural Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

Proposed projects under the IAL program, based on those plans, have included activities that:

- Increase access to a wide range of literacy resources (either print or electronic) that prepare young children to read, and provide learning opportunities to all participating students;
- Provide opportunities for parental engagement, including encouraging parents to read books often with their children in their early years of life and school, and teaching parents how to use literacy resources effectively;
- Foster collaboration and joint professional development opportunities for teachers, school leaders, and school library personnel with a focus on using literacy resources effectively to support reading and writing and academic achievement; and,
- Provide resources to support literacy-rich academic and enrichment activities and services aligned with State College- and career-ready standards and the comprehensive statewide literacy plan.

NEXT ANTICIPATED DEADLINE: Applications are anticipated to be announced in March or April 2018, with a deadline falling within 30 days of release.

ELIGIBILITY: High-need Local Education Agencies (LEA); a Consortium of high-need LEAs; a National not-for-profit (NNP) organization that serves children and students within the attendance boundaries of a high-need LEA; a Consortium of one or more national not-for-profit organizations that serve children and students within the attendance boundaries of one or more high-need LEAs; or a Consortium of one or more high need LEAs and one or more NNPs that serves children and students within the attendance boundaries of one or more high-need LEAs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovapproaches-literacy/index.html>

LOOKING FOR A SIDE HUSTLE?

Grants Office Needs Writers!

Do you have experience with one of these federal agencies and/or their state-level counterparts?

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Education
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Justice
- Department of Transportation
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- National Institute of Health
- National Science Foundation
- and more... including foundations!

Grants Office LLC is a full service provider of strategic grants development services for municipalities, education institutions, nonprofit organizations, healthcare providers, and technology industry partners. Our approach to proposal development is based on collaboration and open communication among team members and clients. Our aim is to lower risk, and shrink the investment of time and resources required for our clients to pursue grant funding.

Our grant writers **work directly with clients** to help **develop all elements** of the project, and coordinate **submission of a high-quality competitive proposal**.

Reach out to us at info@grantsoffice.com with:

- Your résumé
- A listing of which federal, state, and foundation agencies to which you have submitted grants
- A listing of which grant programs for which you have been a proposal reviewer, if any
- Two writing samples (preferably the narratives from successfully funded projects)

We're always looking for new writers,
join the team today!



FIRE PREVENTION & SAFETY (FP&S) GRANTS

SUMMARY: This program supports fire prevention and education, fire code enforcement, fire and arson investigation, and firefighter safety and health programming and prevention efforts. Last year, FP&S offered grants to support activities in two categories:

- Community Fire Prevention and Safety Activities – Projects designed to reach high-risk target groups and mitigate the incidence of death caused by fire and fire related hazards. This includes:
 - Community Risk Reduction,
 - Code Enforcement/Awareness, and
 - Fire and Arson Investigations
- Firefighter Safety Research and Development Activities – Projects aimed at improving firefighter safety, health, or wellness through research and development. This includes:
 - Clinical Studies,
 - Technology and Product Development,
 - Database System Development,
 - Dissemination and Implementation Research, and
 - Preliminary Studies.

NEXT ANTICIPATED DEADLINE: Applications are anticipated to be announced in April 2018, with a deadline falling within 30 days of release.

ELIGIBILITY: Community Fire Prevention and Safety Activities are eligible to fire departments non-profit organizations recognized for their expertise in fire prevention and safety programs. Research and Development Activities are eligible to non-profit organizations, such as academic (i.e. universities), public health, occupational health, and injury prevention institutions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Watch for program updates and deadlines at <https://www.fema.gov/fire-prevention-safety-grants>

Want to get a head start on your 2018 application? Check out FEMA's Self-Evaluation Sheet to start gathering information required for your FP&S narrative at - <https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1485876473121-243174416d901145ba6f011d9c10d50a/FY16FPSSelfEvalFINAL.pdf>

Determining Grant Desirability

With the multitude of funding pathways available to your organization, it is necessary to qualify which grants are best to pursue. This decision should be based on the goals of your department, the parameters of a given project, and the characteristics of the grant program. Consider those conditions, along with the following criteria when determining which specific grant to pursue:

- **Total funding available** – Gives you an idea how broad the program will be and how competitive.
- **Application burden** – Some programs may require a 100-page narrative, while others may look for 10-pages or less.
- **Matching requirements** – Similarly, some programs require a dollar for dollar match (sometimes from non-federal sources), while others may require a 5% match or no cost sharing at all.
- **Scale** – The intended size of the program. You don't want to write 100 small requests to get your \$500,000 project funded if you don't have to. You also don't want to lock yourself into a large number of extra activities that you have no desire to follow through on just to get what you need.
- **Collaboration/partnering requirements** – Forming partnerships beyond what you already have in place is a factor to consider.
- **Lead time** – More lead time generally equals more time to fully develop the project idea and effectively articulate it within the grant application; more than six weeks allows a comfortable pace, while a minimum of three weeks is almost essential.
- **Track record with the funder** – Generally more important for local or regional funders than federal sources, but a consideration nonetheless.

HEADED TO CONFERENCES? ATTEND ONE OF OUR SESSIONS!

South By Southwest EDU (SXSWedu)

Austin, TX

"Technology-Friendly Grants for K-12 Classrooms"

Monday, March 5, 2018 at 11:30am

Austin Convention Center, Room 2

More Info: <http://bit.ly/2FvbzZc>



International Wireless Communications Expo (IWCE)

Orlando, FL

"Grant Funding to Pay for FirstNet and NG911 Deployment"

Wednesday, March 7, 2018 at 2:45pm

Orange County Convention Center, Room N220F

More Info: <http://bit.ly/2DXIZDX>



Conference: March 5-9, 2018

Exhibits: March 7-8, 2018

Orange County Convention Center

Orlando, FL



UPCOMING WEBCASTS

- **Working with the New Grants.Gov Workspace** - Hosted by Grants Office
February 7, 2018 at 2:00 pm EST
Register: <http://bit.ly/2rQUBTj>
- **Grant Funding for Public Safety Initiatives** - Hosted by National Sheriff's Association
February 8, 2018 at 2:00 pm EST
Register: <http://bit.ly/2rY9Tpp>
- **Grants for Public Safety Video: Getting IT Funded** - Sponsored by SentiValut, Stone Security, & NetApp
February 27, 2018 at 2:00 pm EST
Register: <http://bit.ly/2EstZcW>

RECENT RECORDINGS

- **Funding to Develop & Deploy Video for Public Safety** - Sponsored by SentiValut, Stone Security, & NetApp
Replay: <http://bit.ly/2Gv8sBP>
- **Funding Technology-Enabled Literacy Education** - Sponsored by Microsoft, Connection Public Sector Solutions, & HP
Replay: <http://bit.ly/2GxirXa>

Find more replays at: <http://www.grantsoffice.info/webcasts.aspx>

LEARN MORE AT
WWW.GRANTSOFFICE.COM

AND FOLLOW US!

