



A Grants Office Publication

FUNDED

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HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR GRANT WRITING THROUGH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

*Health & Human Services:
2020 Budget Primer*

*Every Little Bit Counts:
Smaller Grants for Library Projects & Programs*

*How to Answer the “Sustainability
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PLUS! SUMMARY INFO ON 4 EXCITING
GRANT OPPORTUNITIES!

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ON THE COVER

In this issue, we discuss how grant writers can leverage the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to better hone their grant seeking, proposal development, and writing skills for state and Federal opportunities.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

DEAR READERS,

As you've probably come to expect, this issue of FUNDED explores current issues in grant funding and provides a little refresher on some fundamental grantseeking skills as well. Jumping right ahead to page 18, we're pleased to present a timeless article on answering that most difficult of questions asked by funders, "How will you sustain this program after the grant ends?" by guest author, veteran grants consultant, and fellow Rochesterian Margit Brazda Poirier.

Back to the top of the issue, Chris LaPage dives into the landscape of 2020 funding from the Department of Health and Human Services – the biggest single provider of grant funding in the world – no small potatoes here!

Ashley Schultz provides some helpful tips on how to leverage FOIA requests to inform your grant proposals. Ashley also provides some sample language you can use in making some of the most common FOIA requests.

On the smaller side, Elizabeth Evans then takes us through some often-overlooked funding prospects for smaller grants for public and school libraries.

Throughout the issue, we also summarize a number of open, or soon to be open, grant programs, including the NSF Computer Science for All Program (due April 13), the Department of Justice's Stop School Violence Program (due March 3), the Department of Education's Small, Rural School Achievement Program (due April 17), and the DHS Nonprofit Security Grant Program (coming in the early Spring). Finally, we answer a question that came up on one of our recent K-12 focused grantscasts: Why do some states have more competitive grant opportunities than others?

Be sure to check out the other timely and informative grantscasts our team will be presenting on, or review some of the replays of past events on topics you find interesting. As always, if you have comments, feedback, corrections, or topics for future issues, feel free to drop me a line at: mpaddock@grantoffice.com. Or tell me in person at the International Wireless Communications Expo in Las Vegas, where Ashley Schultz and I will be speaking on April 3 on the topic of grant funding for smart transportation & smart public safety initiatives.

Oh, and don't forget to pat yourself on the back on Grant Professionals Day March 13, 2020 – you're doing great work for the communities you support!

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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COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR ALL (CS FOR ALL)

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

Launched under President Obama, Computer Science for All is a bold initiative to empower all American students from kindergarten through high school to learn computer science and be equipped with the computational thinking skills they need to be creators in the digital economy, not just consumers, and to be active citizens in our technology-driven world. Our economy is rapidly shifting, and both educators and business leaders are increasingly recognizing that computer science (CS) is a new basic skill necessary for economic opportunity and social mobility.

A key goal of this program is to provide all U.S. students the opportunity to participate in computer science (CS) and computational thinking (CT) education in their schools at the preK-12 levels. CT refers to the thought processes involved in formulating problems and their solutions in such a way that the solutions can be effectively carried out by an information-processing agent (usually a computer). CT activities do not require the presence of a computing tool, but involve the requisite reasoning needed to capitalize on the use of computational tools. CS, as used in this solicitation, includes CT but also the broad range of understandings, competencies, and skills needed to apply computation in our digital world. It includes topics of problem specification and representation; algorithm development; software design, programming, and debugging; the Internet; big data; cybersecurity; and application across a wide range of disciplines, including the associated societal impact and ethical considerations.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are Universities and Colleges; Non-profit, non-academic organizations; For-profit organizations; State and Local Governments; Unaffiliated Individuals; Foreign organizations; and Other Federal agencies.

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted by April 13, 2020. A similar deadline is anticipated annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pgms_id=505359



COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR ALL (CS FOR ALL) FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Improving Undergraduate STEM Education: Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program (HSI Program) aims to enhance undergraduate STEM education and build capacity at HSIs. Projects supported by the HSI Program will also generate new knowledge about how to achieve these aims. This project at the University of Houston will advance the aims of the HSI Program by improving retention of students from first-year courses to higher level courses, and through completion of the bachelor's degree. The project will analyze student motivation and desire for obtaining a STEM degree. It will also implement and test the effectiveness of academic interventions, such as a summer bridge program, on student success. As one of two public research institutions in the state of Texas designated as an HSI, and given the demographics of its student enrollment, the University of Houston can contribute to developing a diverse STEM workforce for the state of Texas and the Nation.

This project has two components: an intervention component and a research component. The objectives of the intervention component are to implement and test the effectiveness of interventions including: (1) a Summer Bridge Program, (2) a First Year Interest Group, and (3) the Undergraduate Research Guild Experience program. The objective of the research component is to examine the effect of these interventions on motivational and self-regulatory student characteristics and psychosocial contextual factors (e.g., sense of belonging) that are

malleable to change through intervention and that are associated with college grades and persistence to graduation. The project will evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of these interventions, which have built-in academic and personal support mechanisms. By measuring the impact of these integrated interventions on student success, the project will extend knowledge about best practices for improving retention and graduation rates. The project has the potential to increase the graduation rate of STEM undergraduates who are prepared to advance into STEM careers and graduate or professional school.

FUNDED ORGANIZATION

University of Houston

PROJECT TITLE

Building Capacity: Integrated Interventions to Improve Undergraduate Student Success in STEM

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$1,499,879

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=1832534&HistoricalAwards=false

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<https://uh.edu/stem/>



Health & Human Services: 2020 BUDGET PRIMER

By Chris LaPage

On December 20, 2019, President Trump signed two budget bills that will fund the government through the remainder of federal fiscal year 2020 (September 30, 2020). When considering defense and non-discretionary (e.g. Medicaid, Social Security) spending, the 2020 budget tops out at about \$1.4 trillion. In terms of the impact on grants, the important number is the amount of discretionary spending included in the budget. Many of these funds result in the competitive grant solicitations we all know. The 2020 budget includes almost \$185 billion in domestic discretionary spending. Over half of these discretionary dollars (\$94.9 billion) have been appropriated to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), making it the largest federal grantmaker. This represents a \$4.4 billion increase over 2019 funding levels for HHS and a staggering \$16.8 billion more than requested in the President's Budget. The following is a brief primer on the appropriations included in the 2020 HHS budget and its impact on grant programming.

KEEPING US HONEST

In the [November issue of FUNDED](#), we told you to go ahead and take grants for granted. As we predicted, funding levels remained consistent or saw modest to significant increases across the board compared to 2019 funding levels.

HEALTH RESOURCES & SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (HRSA)

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) focuses on improving healthcare access and overcoming health professional shortages in underserved urban and rural areas. The 2020 budget includes nearly \$7.3 billion for HRSA, a modest increase from 2019 and over \$1 billion more than requested in the President's Budget. HRSA generally prefers to disperse funds through a grant mechanism, which is good news for grantseekers as that means we'll likely this increase translate to either more awards or larger award sizes.

HRSA realized a 9% increase in funding for its Bureau of Health Professions compared to 2019, for a total of nearly \$1.2 billion. The additional money for health professional education and training initiatives is largely driven by a 36% increase in funding for the training of the behavioral health workforce (\$102 million). Funding remained consistent for most of HRSA's programs for nursing and physician training in primary care settings with small to modest increases in funding.

Funding for HRSA's other priorities remained consistent with 2019 levels, including budgets for federally qualified health centers, the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, maternal and child health, and rural health.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration aims to reduce the impact of substance misuse and mental illness on communities across the United States. In total, SAMHSA's 2020 allocation of nearly \$6 billion represents a small increase over 2019 funding levels. However, the budget maintains the federal government's recent priority of investing in opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery while significantly increasing spending on mental health services. Just like HRSA, SAMHSA generally favors grants as a distribution mechanism as opposed to contracts or other alternatives.

SAMHSA has been allocated \$1.64 billion in funding to address mental health services, which is a nearly 8% increase over 2019 levels. Several grant programs in this arena are seeing increases in funding between 40% and 75%. These include allocations for the Mental Health Awareness Training Grants, the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grant, suicide prevention and treatment grants, criminal and juvenile justice programs, and assertive community treatment for individuals with serious mental illness.

SAMHSA allocations for substance abuse prevention and treatment are nearly identical to 2019 funding levels. There is a continued emphasis on tackling the opioid epidemic as the budget included new funding for the State Opioid Response Grants (\$1.5 billion). There were some modest increases for certain programs that address opioid/substance abuse training for first responders, as well as funds targeted towards pregnant or postpartum women and building communities of recovery.

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES (ACF)

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) received more than \$24 billion in the budget, which is \$1.2 billion more than 2019 funding levels. The bulk of the increase is being allocated to early childhood initiatives, including \$5.83 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grants that are administered by each state. In addition, Head Start and Early Head Start funding increased by 5.5% 12.4%, respectively (combined \$11.5 billion). Funding for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) are consistent with 2019 levels.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2020 HHS BUDGET

Despite dramatic cuts proposed (nearly \$5 billion) in the President's Budget to research funding at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Congress increased funding for NIH by nearly \$2.6 billion, or \$7.5 billion more than the administration requested. While all institutes and offices received increases over their 2019 funding levels, the biggest beneficiaries include the National Institute of Mental Health (8.9%), National Institute on Aging (15%) and the National Cancer Institute (8.7%).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) received a small increase with a total budget of nearly \$8 billion. New this year is \$12.5 million dedicated to funding firearm injury and mortality prevention research. Funding for CDC surveillance activity related to the opioid epidemic remained consistent with more than \$475 million in funding included. The Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) Grant Program realized a 7.2% increase in funding and tops out at nearly \$60 million.

SOURCES

HHS Budget Bill:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1865/text>

Appropriations Process:

<https://www.senate.gov/CRSPubs/8013e37d-4a09-46f0-b1e2-c14915d498a6.pdf>



STOP SCHOOL VIOLENCE (SSV) GRANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The STOP School Violence Act is designed to improve school security by providing students and teachers with the tools they need to quickly recognize and respond to violent attacks, mitigate risk exposure, and prevent acts of violence. It provides funding to state, local, and Indian tribal governments to develop threat assessment and crisis intervention teams and anonymous reporting systems designed to identify threats before they materialize, including those that originate from individuals with mental health issues; and for the training of students, school personnel, and local law enforcement officers so that they can partner in preventing violent events from happening.

In 2020, the Department will accept applications under the following purpose areas:

- Train school personnel and educate students on preventing student violence against others and themselves to include anti-bullying training. This can also include specialized training for school officials to respond to mental health crises.
- Develop and implement threat assessment and/or intervention teams to operate technology solutions such as anonymous reporting systems for threats of school violence, including mobile telephone applications, hotlines, and websites. These teams must coordinate with law enforcement agencies and school personnel.

Priority consideration will be provided for applications that:

- Address the specific challenges that rural communities face.
- Encourage program investments in economically distressed communities (e.g. Qualified Opportunity Zones).

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are:

- Public agencies – e.g. school districts, towns, cities and municipalities, individual schools, police departments, sheriff's departments, mental health service providers, health departments
- Federally recognized Indian tribes
- Nonprofit entities to include private schools

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted by March 3, 2020. A similar deadline is anticipated annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/bja-2020-17313.pdf>



STOP SCHOOL VIOLENCE (SSV) GRANT PROGRAM

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Act Program (SSV Program) furthers the Department of Justice's mission by supporting and assisting state, local, territorial, and tribal jurisdictions efforts to reduce violent crime through the creation of school threat assessment teams, the use of technology for anonymously reporting suspicious activity as it relates to violence in schools, and by supporting the creation and enhancement of State School Safety Centers in K-12 schools.

The objective of Category 7 is to implement a technological solution, such as an anonymous reporting technology, that can be implemented as a mobile phone-based app, a hotline, or a website in the applicant's geographic area designed to enable students, teachers, faculty, and community members to anonymously identify threats of school violence. That technology will enable teachers and school staff, students, and community members to anonymously report potential threats against individuals, schools, or other entities within a school district or the community in general. The solution should consider existing resources available in the area, new technology, or any combination of the two that can be used to proactively identify threats that would endanger teachers, students, administrators, public safety officers, or members of the community. This technology may be in the form of an app, hotline, or website or a combination of all of the above. The proposed technology solution should be used to help prevent incidents before they occur.

FUNDED ORGANIZATION

City of Milwaukee Police Department

PROJECT TITLE

BJA FY 19 STOP School Violence Technology and Threat Assessment Solutions for Safer Schools Program

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$250,000

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

<https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2019-ys-bx-0072>

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<https://city.milwaukee.gov/police#.XjSRYchKiUk>



How to Improve your Grant Writing THROUGH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

By Ashley Schultz

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) was created over 35 years ago to “open up the workings of government to publicscrutiny” (Fielding v. CIA, 1983). This system allows any US citizen to request information about the daily activities and spending of their government agencies. And while many folks are aware of news organizations leveraging FOIA for investigative journalism, the media makes up less than 8% of all FOIA petitions annually (Schouten 2017). More often, individuals, law firms, and private businesses leverage this system to gain valuable information for their own daily operations at little to no-cost.

Here today I want to share a number of reasons as to why **grant writers** should join these ranks and begin requesting public information about popular state and federal government funding programs. Doing so can provide invaluable insight into the brains of grant reviewers - allowing us to better hone our grant seeking, proposal development, and writing skills moving forward.

POPULAR GRANT USE CASES FOR FOIA REQUESTS:

FOIA requests can benefit your grant-seeking agency before you even begin work on a proposal. Potential applicants have the ability to request information on previous awardees - from quick project abstracts to full proposals. This information can help your organization better determine if a particular grant program is a good fit for your project idea. It illustrates average award sizes and reveals trends in the geographic distribution or general characteristics of applicants. What's more, access to the full text of a successfully funded application provides excellent insight into what a successful proposal actually looks like.

But the benefits don't end with grant-prospecting research! One of the greatest assets provided to grant writers by the FOIA system is the opportunity to read reviewer feedback on a recently denied grant proposal that they submitted. Applicants can request full point breakdowns and reviewer comments for any materials submitted to a state or federal program. Such information can illustrate exactly where your proposal fell short - whether it be 1-2 points lost for neglecting to upload an optional document, or much larger concerns with the substance of your grant project. This clarity is vital in determining if your organization should choose to re-apply for grant funding in future rounds.

Last, but certainly not least, FOIA requests may also be submitted for reviewer feedback on any awarded proposals. These details show the interested party exactly where the funded proposal succeeded in gaining reviewer approval and signals which aspects of the proposal could be replicated for future applications.



Before you click submit, consider these additional tips for your FOIA request:

1. **Submit using your organization's email and signature.** These items signal to the FOIA team that your request falls under their nonprofit funding bracket, resulting in lower fees (if any) for research and delivery.
2. **Request digital copies.** This ask will also result in lower fees since the FOIA team will not need to spend money on printing or postage.
3. **Wait to receive a confirmation email.** Most FOIA teams will acknowledge receipt of your request within 1 to 7 business days. This message should include a breakdown of fees (if any) and an anticipated timeline for the return of information. If you do not receive a confirmation email, consider calling the agency to verify their FOIA process has not changed.

HOW TO SUBMIT A FOIA REQUEST:

So, what does this all look like? Once you've identified the subject of your FOIA request, head over to the appropriate State or Federal government website to submit. Most agencies have a webpage completely dedicated to their FOIA process; listing appropriate emails, forms, and other required information for each request. If you have questions, or the process is unclear, contact the agency for clarification.

The content of your FOIA request should be as specific as possible. Be sure to clearly identify the grant program by name and/or ID number, as well as the precise pieces of information desired. Check out a few examples below:

Request: Detailed list of previous awardees.

Email: This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act. I request a digital file listing all applicants that were awarded funding to the *[insert grant program name here]* that was due on *[insert most recent deadline here]*. I request the following summary information on all applications: (1) Applicant name; (2) Applicant state; (3) Funding amount received; (4) Full text of project abstract.

Request: Proposal materials of an awarded applicant.

Email: This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act. I request digital copies of the program narrative, budget, and budget narrative for the following awarded proposals under the *[insert grant program name here]* that was due on *[insert most recent deadline here]*:

- (1) *[insert applicant name here]*
- (2) *[insert applicant name here]*
- (3) *[insert applicant name here]*

Request: Reviewer feedback.

Email: This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act. I wish to be sent a digital copy of (1) Scoring breakdown; and (2) Reviewer comments/feedback for the grant proposal submitted by *[insert organization name here]* to the *[insert grant program name here]*. These materials should consist of point allotments and comments to the entire application - including project narrative, budget, budget narrative, and any attached documents.



LIMITATIONS AND ALTERNATIVES TO THE FOIA PROCESS:

While FOIA requests can be a great asset to the annual grant-seeking process of many organizations, they do carry certain limitations. Timing, fees, and statute limitations can sometimes impede our quest for information.

Let's say, for example, that you need access to FOIA results quickly. This type of grant research is not an overnight process. FOIA requests may be returned anywhere from 20-days to 6-months after the initial request is submitted and acknowledged. To avoid this limitation, try to plan well in advance of a new grant solicitation so you may properly benefit from the materials. Make it a practice to submit a FOIA request for reviewer comments within one-month of hearing a yes/no from the funder. If you're in a rush, include a note in the body of your email that says - "If possible, we wish this information be returned by [date]." Clarify if your organization is willing to pay a fee for expedited delivery of the information.

Another barrier to information is the potential for your agency to be charged in order for the government to complete your research request. Current statute maintains that FOIA requests must be provided at no-cost so long as they remain reasonable. The definition of reasonable seems to vary on a case-by-case and agency-to-agency basis. Despite my best efforts to reign in the scope of my own FOIA requests, I've been quoted anywhere from \$50 to \$1500 for public information. Note that in each instance I was offered an opportunity to refine or retract my request before being charged. Your agency will not be irrevocably on-the-hook to pay for information if it's not in the budget. To reduce the risk of fees for research or delivery, keep

your request for documents minimal. Don't ask for materials from every single applicant. Instead, focus your efforts on 3-5 proposals of most interest to your agency and future proposed grant project.

Last, grant funders are not required by law to share limitless amounts of information with applicants. Emails and phone numbers of program managers, for example, may be exempt from FOIA requests. Grant proposals that involve innovative or untested ideas may also be blocked. This restriction - notably used by the NSF, NIH, and branches of the military - is in place to protect intellectual property included in these grant applications. In still other instances, funders may withhold information on unfunded applicants in order to protect the competitive position of the person or organization who submitted the information. If you run into one of these limitations, try searching the web for news articles or blogs about awarded grant projects. From there, consider contacting the funded organization directly to discuss their project and experience with the program. Awarded agencies love to brag about their successes.

The next time you're trying to crack the nut of a particular grant program, consider leveraging the tools offered by the Freedom of Information Act. This simple process can provide invaluable insight into the grant-making process at the state and federal level. Do you have a different use case for leveraging the FOIA system for grants? We want to hear from you! Find the Grants Office FUNDED team on your favorite social media site to share it with us today.

SOURCES

Fielding v. Central Intelligence Agency. 697 F.2d 1095 (D.C. Cir. 1983)

Schouten, Corey. (2017) Who files the most FOIA requests? It's not who you think. Retrieved from: <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/foia-report-media-journalists-business-mapper.php>.

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SMALL, RURAL SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT (SRSA) PROGRAM

SUMMARY

The purpose of the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program is to provide rural LEAs with financial assistance to fund initiatives aimed at improving student academic achievement. Funding is allocated under title V, part B, subpart 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). Local education agencies (LEAs) are entitled to funds if they meet basic eligibility and application requirements. Awards are issued annually, and award amounts are determined using a formula.

Funds received under the Small, Rural School Achievement Grant Program may be used to carry out activities authorized under one or more of the following Federal programs:

- Title I-A (Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies) Example: A school district develops an entrepreneurial education program to supplement its civics curriculum.
- Title II-A (Supporting Effective Instruction) Example: A school district pays the stipend for a prospective teacher to work alongside an effective teacher, who is the teacher of record, for a full academic year.
- Title III (Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students) Example: A school district offers an afterschool enrichment program for English learners.
- Title IV-A (Student Support and Academic Enrichment) Example: A school district purchases a bully prevention program for all schools.
- Title IV-B (21st Century Community Learning Centers) Example: A school district purchases instruments to supplement schools' band and orchestra programs.

Every school district eligible to receive a positive SRSA allocation for FY 2020, according to the Master Eligibility Spreadsheet, will apply for an SRSA award using a unique link in MAX Survey that will be sent to eligible school districts on February 3, 2020. The new, simplified SRSA application is the result of extensive feedback received from local school district officials and rural stakeholders nationwide. The new SRSA application in MAX Survey uses a single platform that should take no more than 30 minutes to complete.

ELIGIBILITY

An LEA (including a public charter school that is considered an LEA under State law), is eligible for an award under the SRSA program if:

- The total number of students in average daily attendance at all of the schools served by the LEA is fewer than 600, or each county in which a school served by the LEA is located has a total population density of fewer than 10 persons per square mile; and,
- All of the schools served by the LEA are designated with a school locale code of 41, 42, or 43, as determined by the Secretary of Education; or the LEA is located in an area determined to be "rural" by a governmental agency of the state.

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted by April 17, 2020. A similar deadline is anticipated annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/rural-insular-native-achievement-programs/rural-education-achievement-program/small-rural-school-achievement-program/>

Every Little Bit Counts: **SMALLER GRANTS FOR LIBRARY PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS**

By Elizabeth Evans

Library systems receive funding from a variety of sources, chief among them taxes from their surrounding community. But where can you look when those local dollars aren't enough to make ends meet? Traditional State and Federal dollars such as those available through the E-Rate Funding Program or the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) can only take a library so far. As a result, increasingly more and more libraries are turning to non-traditional public funding sources and foundation grant opportunities to help cover the costs of new or expanding programs, professional development for staff members, and even book acquisition or distribution efforts.

For those libraries new to grantseeking, the American Library Association (ALA) and the Public Library Association (PLA) are great places to start one's grantseeking journey. Both organizations are host to a number of competitive grant programs as well as award programs with cash prizes. For the sake of brevity, we won't list each of their grant offerings here, but we encourage you to visit each organizations' websites to explore what is available. Most of the programs are targeted towards public libraries, but a few are also available for school libraries.

Already familiar with all of the ALA and PLA opportunities? If this is the case, we recommend checking out your state's Humanities Council. As libraries are often a hub for engaging their community members within the greater field of the humanities, the Humanities Council in many states encourages application submissions from public libraries. Often these opportunities are focused on community engagement efforts around regionally specific humanities topics. They support activities such as a seasonal lecture series, education activity nights for families, or even walking tours!

Beyond these popular library-supporting grantmakers though, it can sometimes be a challenge to track down additional funding options. Fortunately for you, we've scoured the depths of the internet to uncover some lesser known gems for your consideration as well. Whether you're a public or school library, you'll definitely want to check out the list below for a few of our favorite opportunities!

Every year, the American Library Association (ALA) honors people and institutions through an awards program that recognizes distinguished service to librarians and librarianship. ALA also offers a variety of grants and fellowships that provide funding or material support for present or future activities. Grants may be offered to support the planning and implementation of programs, aid in the preparation of a dissertation or other publications, and to promote research in library and information sciences. Grants are also given to support travel to conferences, such as the ALA Annual Conference, or other events that can broaden an individual's experience or education in librarianship. More information on funding available from ALA is available at: <http://www.ala.org/awardsgrants/awards/browse/grnt?showfilter=no>





OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC AND SCHOOL LIBRARIES

- **Believe in Reading Grants for Literacy Programs** – This funding targets literacy programs which have demonstrated previous success and serve populations that show “out of the ordinary needs”, such as geographic areas with low reading scores and high poverty levels. Grant awards range from \$1,000 to \$10,000. Applications are typically accepted starting February until funding runs out for the year. More information is available at: <https://www.believeinreading.org/grant-guidelines/>
- **The Dollar General Literacy Foundation** – Grant programs are available to literacy supporting organizations in the 44 states where Dollar General stores are located. Major interests include helping adults learn to read, family literacy initiatives, summer reading programs for students, and support for English language learners. Grant awards and deadlines vary based on the priority area to which you apply. More information is available at: <https://www.dgliteracy.org/grant-programs/>
- **Ezra Jack Keats Public School and Public Libraries Mini-Grant Program** – This funder is interested exclusively in organizations that provide creative, innovative programs that support or extend the Common Core Standards in literacy education. Programs may serve children from preschool to grade 12. Grant awards may be up to \$500, and applications are typically due in March each year. More information is available at: <https://www.ezra-jack-keats.org/section/ezra-jack-keats-mini-grant-program-for-public-libraries-public-schools/>
- **First Book Market Place** – This funder provides new books and educational resources - for free or at low cost - to programs serving children in need, from birth to age 18. Their purpose is to raise the quality of literacy education by making sure that students have access to the resources they need to be successful in school and in life. Note that this is not a traditional grant award. Selected applicants are provided with in-kind donations of materials, discounted purchasing options, and access to exclusive funding opportunities facilitated by First Book Marketplace. Applications are accepted throughout the year. More information is available at: <https://www.fbmarketplace.org/register/>
- **The Foundation for Rural Service Community Grant Program** – The goal of this program is to support local efforts to build and sustain a high quality of life in rural America. Grant projects vary but are concentrated in four major areas including business, community and economic development, education, and applications of telecommunications. Grants range from \$250 to \$5,000 and applications are typically due in December each year. More information is available at: <https://www.frs.org/programs/grant-program/community-grant>
- **Library of Congress Surplus Books Program** – The Library of Congress always has available surplus books which are not needed for the Library's own uses. The guiding principle behind the program is to build library collections across the nation. Interested participants must select materials in-person at the Library of Congress, however, if you are unable to be present you may designate a local individual to act on your behalf. Note that this is not a traditional grant award, rather an in-kind donation of materials. Applications are accepted throughout the year. More information is available at: <http://www.loc.gov/acq/surplus.html>
- **Lois Lenski Covey Foundation Bookmobile Grants** – Funds go to organizations that operate a lending bookmobile that travels into neighborhoods populated by underserved youth. The grants are for purchasing books published for young people preschool through grade 8. Grants range from \$500 to \$3,000 and applications are typically due in September each year. More information is available at: <https://www.loislenskicovey.org/bookmobile-grants/>
- **Pilcrow Foundation Children's Book Project** – This foundation is interested in supporting libraries in rural areas, whether they are independent; under a Native American Tribal jurisdiction; or part of a county, regional, or cooperative system. School libraries are only eligible if they also serve as the community's public library. Applicants may receive up to \$1,200 towards the purchase of new, hardcover children's books but must provide a 2-to-1 match and show proof of at least \$200 to \$400 in support from a local sponsor. Applications are due twice a year, typically in April and October. More information is available at: <https://thepilcrowfoundation.org/childrens-book-project/>

JUST FOR SCHOOLS

- **Scholastic's James Patterson Library Grant Program –**

These funds support any idea or concept that focuses on getting books into the hands of kids, creates a positive environment to foster a love of books and reading, and/or helps to bring books, reading, and literacy to the forefront of a community. Grants of \$250 are available for veteran teachers and grants of \$500 are available for new teachers. Applications are typically due in July each year. More information is available at: <http://www.scholastic.com/pattersonpartnership/faq.htm>

- **Snapdragon Book Foundation –**This foundation exists to put books in the hands of kids in a time when many schools

are transitioning to exclusively digital resources. Funds may be used towards the purchase of books, processing or cataloging fees from vendors, reference materials for student use, or magazine and newspaper subscriptions. Grants range from \$2,500 to \$10,000 and applications are typically due in February each year. More information is available at: <http://snapdragonbookfoundation.org/>

- **Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators**

Amber Brown Grant – Each year, one school is awarded an all-expense-paid visit by a well-respected children's author and illustrator. The school will also receive \$250 stipend for the day's activities and \$250 worth of books by the visiting author/illustrator. Applications are typically due in April each year. More information is available at: <https://www.scbwi.org/awards/grants/amber-brown-grant/>

Granted some of the opportunities from this list may not be relevant to your specific needs. There are plenty of budget items that your library may be hurting for which these opportunities consider unallowable. In cases such as this, we encourage you to get creative. While being mindful of that ever popular "supplement, not supplant" rule, it is possible that your library could use some of these grant award monies to free up internal funding for purchases that wouldn't be covered by the funder. Remember, every little bit counts!



The Public Library Association (PLA) is a subset of ALA and host to 10 additional funding opportunities each year. These grant and award programs are designed to honor those providing extraordinary public library service, as well as highlight innovative and creative public library initiatives. More information on funding available from PLA is available at: <http://www.ala.org/pla/awards>

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

NONPROFIT SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM (NSGP)

SUMMARY

The NSGP provides funding support for target hardening and other physical security enhancements to nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of a terrorist attack. The program seeks to integrate the preparedness activities of nonprofit organizations with broader state and local preparedness efforts. The NSGP also serves to promote emergency preparedness coordination and collaboration activities between public and private community representatives as well as state and local government agencies. Emphasis is placed on capabilities that address the greatest risks to the security and resilience of the United States, and the greatest risks along the Nation's borders.

In FY 2019, allowable costs include:

- Planning
- Equipment - Eligible costs must focus on target hardening and physical security enhancements. This is limited to items in the following categories - (1) Category 14: Facility Security Enhancement Equipment, and (2) Category 15: Inspection and Screening Systems. A comprehensive list of allowable equipment in these categories can be found in the DHS Authorized Equipment List (AEL) at: <http://www.fema.gov/authorized-equipment-list>.
- Construction and Renovation
- Training
- Exercises
- Maintenance and Sustainment
- Management and Administration (M&A) fees - Costs directly relating to the management and administration of IBSGP funds, such as financial management and monitoring. M&A costs may not exceed five percent (5%) of the total grant award.

Up to \$90million is anticipated to be available in 2020. Of that amount, \$50 million will be dedicated to applicants located in large urban centers.

ELIGIBILITY

Awards are made to State Administrative Agencies (SAAAs). The SAA must pass through 100% of NSGP allocations to eligible nonprofit organizations. Eligible nonprofit organizations must be: (1) Designated as a 501(c)3 agency; and (2) Determined to be at high risk of a terrorist attack by the Secretary of DHS.

DEADLINE

Application deadlines vary based on state, but are anticipated to be due in May 2020.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<https://www.fema.gov/nonprofit-security-grant-program>



How to Answer **THE SUSTAINABILITY QUESTION IN GRANT APPLICATIONS**

By Guest Author: Margit Brazda Poirier, GPC, M.S.

Perhaps you have seen these questions asked in your grant applications:

What is the future of this program and how will you support it beyond the grant period? How will the program be sustained after the grant ends?

The “sustainability question” in a grant application is a challenging section to write for many grant professionals and nonprofit staff. The question appears in almost all federal, state, foundation and corporate grant applications. Even when the funder doesn’t ask the question directly, they still want to know your plans for the program when the grant funding runs out.

Why is it such a popular question? Funders want to know that their money will be put to good use—that a program’s results will generate long-term impact for the community—beyond the grant period. The easiest and most common answers tend to focus on leveraging grants to get more grants. However, grant funding typically runs out within 12 months or less, and very few funders offer multi-year grants. Grants alone, while an important source of revenue, will not sustain a program or organization.

To address the sustainability question, we must first ask, “what exactly are we sustaining?” All too often, this question is interpreted in a way that assumes sustainability means the program will continue intact. However, if funders are interested in long-term community impact, then they are interested in sustaining outcomes (not necessarily programs). Funders may also be interested in organizational sustainability, i.e., your organization’s long-term ability to grow, adapt to changing circumstances, and deliver on the mission. Or they may specifically ask about financial or programmatic sustainability. This article focuses on sustaining outcomes, since that is typically the highest priority for any funder.

I recently moderated a “Meet the Funders” panel discussion hosted by the [Association of Fundraising Professionals](#), at which three major area funders discussed their priorities and answered questions posed by nonprofit professionals. When “sustainability” was brought up, groans – very audible groans! – echoed throughout the room. Even the foundation executives admitted they don’t like (or understand) this question. To quote one: “We know your program isn’t sustainable, or you wouldn’t be asking us for money.”

From this and many other discussions with funders, it seems what most are looking to sustain is actually the impact of your program/project/initiative on the community you serve (beyond the limits of the grant period). This does not necessarily mean the program will continue intact, but rather that the positive outcomes from that program can continue into the future.

But how do program outcomes continue if the program is cut short, loses funding, or is reduced in scope? The report, [Sustaining Improved Outcomes: A Toolkit](#), by Scott Thomas, Ph.D. and Deborah Zahn, MPH, describes 12 specific factors that focus on sustaining outcomes rather than organizations and programs. While there is always some level of funding needed to sustain organizations and programs, more funding is not necessarily required for supporting improved outcomes. The report states that we achieve our goals when the strongest components of any program become institutionalized as a standard part of doing business.

Here are just two of the twelve factors described in the Toolkit that you may find useful in your next grant application:

1. Staff. “Staff have the skills, confidence, and interest in continuing new ways of working and improved outcomes” (Thomas and Zahn). An example of a sustainable outcome is that staff utilize a new curriculum that is more effective at achieving results x, y, and z. Another example is the use of a train-the-trainer model to address high turnover rates at the organization. This model ensures program fidelity over time. The organization can use the grant for staff training, addressing sustainability through the long-term impact of new ways of doing things that lead to improved outcomes.

2. Partners. “Involvement of partners who actively support new ways of working and improved outcomes” (Thomas and Zahn). Partnerships, if they can help achieve improved outcomes, are an important part of a sustainability plan. For example, the sustainability plan may include a Memorandum of Understanding that details the commitment of project partners to continue a particular process, such as safe and high-quality youth mentoring. In my home community of Rochester, New York, major hospitals partnered to share expensive diagnostic equipment and medical services, primarily to save on direct costs (and the indirect costs of fundraising) but also to benefit patients and the community.



Margit Brazda Poirier, M.S., is a nationally certified grant professional (GPC) and Owner/CEO of Grants4Good LLC, a grant development consulting company that specializes in training and grant strategies. www.grants4good.com

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INTERNATIONAL

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WE PROUDLY SUPPORT THE 6TH ANNUAL GRANT PROFESSIONALS DAY

International Grant Professionals Day recognizes and celebrates the work of grant professionals. Grant professionals everywhere rely on the efforts and expertise of our partners. Without these service providers many grant projects would not succeed. Hand-in-hand these professionals serve the common good.

This year's International Grant Professionals Day will be on Friday, March 13, 2020.

For more information, visit the International Grant Professionals Day web page at: www.grantprofessionals.org/igpd

GRANTS OFFICE ON THE ROAD



GRANT FUNDING FOR SMART TRANSPORTATION AND SMART PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVES

April 3, 2020 | 8:15 AM - 9:30 AM | Las Vegas Convention Center Room: S225

Is your city struggling to pay for its next IoT deployment? Join us to learn about the current grant landscape for smart transportation and smart public safety initiatives for local government entities. Our conversations will include funding for a variety of tech projects, including smart streetlights, connected intersections, and enhanced communications for first responders. Hear about grants from a variety of federal agencies - focusing not only their deadlines, but also recent priorities, award amounts, and examples of projects funded in the past. Explore how to partner up with other agencies (such as area universities) to enhance your funding potential, and get tips for writing a successful grant proposal to increase the likelihood your next project will stand out from the rest.

GRANTS EDUCATION CORNER

Back by popular demand – another answer to a recent Grantscast question! This Grantscast was focused on the funding landscape for K-12 education in the year ahead. One attendee asked:

When it comes to competitive grant funding for districts to apply for, why do some states have more opportunities than others?

"State's Rights" means that even with certain federally mandated activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, education practice and funding can vary drastically from state to state. Some state legislatures invest heavily in public education while others do not. As a result, some states are host to multiple competitive grant opportunities throughout the year, while others may only look forward to "pass-through" grant opportunities from the federal government.

Pass-through grants (such as 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grants or Carl D. Perkins Career & Technical Education Grants) come from the US Department of Education, go through each State Education Agency before being passed on to local entities. States may still have to apply for these funds and often keep a portion to cover administrative costs, but once awarded, each state will maintain its own re-granting process, timeline, and may choose to add additional priorities beyond those initially required by the federal agency.

For a look at how grant seeker friendly is your state education agency, check out Volume 9, Issue 3 ([August 2019](#)) of Funded Magazine!

RECENT WEBCASTS:

Bigger. Better. Faster. Stronger. Building Out Campus

Cyberinfrastructure and Instrumentation

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Find more replays at:

<http://www.grantsoffice.info/webcasts.aspx>

2020 Local Government Funding Forecast:

Relevant and Actionable Grants Intelligence

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2020 K-12 Funding Forecast: Relevant

and Actionable Grants Intelligence

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2020 Healthcare Funding Forecast: Relevant

and Actionable Grants Intelligence

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Funding AI to Support Data Empowered Learning

Sponsored by: HP and NVIDIA

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UPCOMING WEBCASTS:

Bringing Technology Funding Home to Florida's Local and State Government Agencies

Date & Time: Tuesday, February 11th, 2pm ET

Sponsored by: Strictly Tech and HP

Register [HERE](#)

From Research to Reality: Funding Scientific Applications in Virtual, Augmented & Blended Reality

Date & Time: Tuesday, February 18th, 2pm ET

Sponsored by: HP and NVIDIA

Register [HERE](#)

Digging into Data: Grants for Training America's Data Science Workforce

Date & Time: Tuesday, June 2nd, 2pm ET

Sponsored by: HP and NVIDIA

Register [HERE](#)



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