FUNDED

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ON THE COVER

In this issue, we will share tips and tricks on how to compose an elevator-pitch to get funded for your project and organization. You must be prepared for when the next opportunity presents itself, whether it is in an elevator or a chat room. Sometimes, just applying for grants isn't enough. A human connection will put you ahead of the competition!

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

DEAR READERS,

This issue of FUNDED may be our broadest ever, with articles covering timely information on specific grant opportunities, general insights into making your proposals more competitive, and even an introduction to the Canadian grants landscape.

To ensure you're up to speed on some of the grants that are available now, our team has developed articles on telehealth and distance learning funding – two of the most relevant in the age of COVID – as well as funding for the arts, and specific funding pathways for community colleges and fire departments.

At a higher level, we have an analysis of technology funding included in the State and Local IT Modernization and Cybersecurity Act and an overview of grant opportunities for initiatives in Canada.

And speaking of Canada, Grants Office has gone international, now covering 10 different countries on four continents! As we continue to develop content for these locations, we expect to offer multiple versions of FUNDED that provide the most relevant information for you and where you work, live, and develop grant funding. In the meantime, stay tuned right here for the latest on expanded access to our global funding insights.

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@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

Telemedicine Funding:
LOOKING BEYOND THE CARES ACT

By Chris LaPage

At some point the Coronavirus pandemic will be under control and CARES Act or other related stimulus funds will be exhausted. However, the demand it created for telemedicine services alongside the rapid proliferation funded by providers and public sources (e.g. CARES Act) will remain. In fact, when the healthcare industry eventually does a retrospective on the impact of COVID, one of the everlasting impacts may be the elevation of telehealth as an interchangeable synonym for healthcare. This type of change is typically something that may take generations to fully realize in the absence of a precipitating event. The COVID situation forced people of all ages, patients and doctors alike, to embrace telemedicine regardless of their familiarity or comfort with technology.

The good news is that many of the reforms made by healthcare payors (Medicare, Medicaid, private insurers) to reimburse telehealth care are likely to stick around. Telemedicine encounters are much cheaper than in-person office visits and the convenience make patients more apt to check in with their provider before problems escalate in costs (e.g. emergency room visits, hospitalizations). In other words, all stakeholders have good reasons to continue promoting and utilizing telehealth technologies.

When the dust settles, people will return to some sense of normalcy, but their thought process and decisions will forever be influenced by their experience living in this pandemic. Close contact greetings like handshakes, high fives and hugs may never return to the point of being a social norm. Likewise, providers and patients will ask themselves if it makes sense to risk an in-person office visit unless it is essential to the illness or disease being treated. The circumstances of the pandemic coupled with the influx of stimulus funding means that many previously resistant providers now have the infrastructure in place to continue to utilize. While there are still plenty of CARES Act funding sources providers can use to purchase telemedicine system, eventually they will need to maintain these systems, replace end-of-life equipment and upgrade them in order to keep them functional.

What is the grant funding landscape expected to look like post-CARES Act? Fortunately, funding telemedicine has been a federal priority for grants for several decades, so we have some sense of what is going to be available. Federal funding for telemedicine has primarily focused on increasing access to care in rural areas. Rural communities generally must travel further to access medical services while simultaneously suffering from a shortage of healthcare providers. Thus, federal grant programs have incentivized providing telemedicine to facilities in rural areas. The United States Department of Agriculture's Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program (DLT) provides applicants with up to $1 million in grant funding to fund video endpoints and technology necessary for telehealth visits in rural areas. We expect to see DLT return in the Spring.

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) administers the Telehealth Network Grant Program (TNGP), which also focuses on establishing telehealth networks in rural areas. However, unlike DLT which focuses almost exclusively on hardware and software, TNGP allows applicants to cover personnel, training and other costs associated with telemedicine initiatives. The focus of the 2020 TNGP program was providing tele-emergency services to rural emergency departments. We expect the program to be available in 2021 with a late Spring deadline.

HRSA also administers the Rural Healthcare Services Outreach Grant Program*, which is open now. Applications must be submitted by December 1, 2020. The Rural Outreach program will fund everything from personnel to telemedicine solutions in rural areas. The program requires at least three separately owned organizations to come together, and at least two-thirds of the consortium must be in HRSA-defined rural areas. HRSA offers a suite of rural health grants that are supportive of telemedicine technologies. These include the Rural Health Network Development Program (RHND) as well as their Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP).

Another avenue to explore for federal grants when it comes to telemedicine is to think about the service you are delivering and the target population. There are many federal grants available that will target specific populations, such as veterans, children, and individuals with mental and behavioral health disorders. HRSA has offered grants to coordinate Veteran care in rural areas through telehealth networks. There are even grants available to fund telemedicine technologies in School Based Health Centers that deliver care to children where they spend most of their days. In addition to a rural focus, the RCORP administered by HRSA has a specific focus on individuals addicted to opioids. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has a variety of grants available that could include telemedicine to provide care to mental health and substance abuse patients.

Outside of special populations, finding federal grants to support telemedicine in urban areas is a heavier lift historically. However, there is reason to believe that the current pandemic will change the thinking of federal authorities. In order to prevent future public health disasters, it is likely that federal funders will modify their grant programming to incorporate telemedicine projects in urban areas. In fact, we have seen just that with the CARES Act funding. The FCC administered the COVID-19 Telehealth Program, which was based on their work with rural healthcare providers under the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF). The annual HCF program focuses on rural areas but the stimulus-funded program was open to both urban and rural providers. The nature of the pandemic may provide the impetus for the FCC and other federal funders to consider the inclusion of urban applicants for their grant programming that supports telemedicine initiatives.

While we cannot be certain what the future holds, there will be grant funding available to assist providers with maintaining and expanding their telemedicine initiatives. We will not get a federal budget for 2021 until at least December since Congress passed a continuing resolution to keep the government funded through the 2020 Election. The 2021 annual budget will be our first peak at how federal funders may prioritize telemedicine in their grant programs. In addition, as programs are released in 2021, we may see a trend where federal funders are opening the eligibility for these programs to include a wider array of healthcare providers. Finally, if you don't find success with federal grantmakers, telemedicine projects are very popular with state and foundation-sponsored grant programs as well.

*More information about the Rural Healthcare Services Outreach Grant Program can be found on page 6.

FUNDED October 2020

RURAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES OUTREACH PROGRAM

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The Outreach Program is a community-based grant program aimed towards promoting rural health care services by enhancing health care delivery in rural communities. Outreach projects focus on the improvement of access to services, strategies for adapting to changes in the health care environment, and overall enrichment of the respective community's health. Through a consortia of local health care and social service providers, rural communities can develop innovative approaches to challenges related to their specific health needs. Furthermore, the program creates an opportunity to address the key clinical priorities of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): serious mental illness, substance abuse, and childhood obesity. The overarching goals for the Outreach Program are to:

- Expand the delivery of health care services to include new and enhanced services exclusively in rural communities;
- Deliver health care services through a strong consortium, in which every consortium member organization is actively involved and engaged in the planning and delivery of services;
- Utilize and/or adapt an evidence-based or promising practice model(s) in the delivery of health care services; and
- Improve population health, and demonstrate health outcomes and sustainability

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants shall be domestic public or private, non-profit or for-profit entities, including faith-based, community-based, tribes and tribal organizations. The applicant organization may be located in a rural or urban area, but must have demonstrated experience serving, or the capacity to serve, rural underserved populations. Applicants must serve counties that are entirely rural or rural census tracts of urban counties as designated by HRSA.

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted by December 1, 2020. The program operates on a triennial cycle.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.hrsa.gov/grants/find-funding/hrsa-21-027

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION
El Centro for the Study of Primary & Secondary Education

PROJECT TITLE
Project STOP

AMOUNT FUNDED
$450,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Project STOP is a prevention project aimed at reducing and preventing underage drinking. Our outreach grant provides the resources and staffing to conduct both school and community based services that teach students in grades 6-12 the negative physical, emotional and social consequences of alcohol use. The classroom curriculum, Sembrando Salud (Sowing the Seeds of Health) takes a public health approach to educating youth about the cultural values and community norms that inadvertently contribute to lax attitudes about underage drinking. An incentive component designed to promote participation and encourage long term (participation after 10 week classroom sessions) engagement awards youth with STOP bucks that can be used at local businesses or the project's "STOP" store. Our 1st Outreach grant also was a major factor in getting support from local and state entities that made the opening of a youth recreation center possible. We are now able to offer after school tutoring to help kids improve their academic performance, recreational activities, games and equipment that provide a protective factor against substance use and mentoring opportunities for youth from single parent homes.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION
http://www.raconline.org/pdf/2012outreach_directory.pdf

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE
www.adelantejuntos.org

5 LESSONS I LEARNED DURING MY FIRST DLT APPLICATION CYCLE

By Liz Shay

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) program administered by the Rural Utilities Service of the US Department of Agriculture is a beast of a program. The program is intended to provide rural residents with education opportunities they otherwise would not have by providing real-time classes being taught elsewhere, such as an urban college or university. This program also allows medical providers to connect remotely with their rural patients. Applicants to the program need to give clear system plans and compelling narratives for how their particular program aids rural residents. It was also the first big grant program due after I joined the Grants Office team this past spring. I definitely learned a lot, so I wanted to share some of what I learned before the next DLT deadline, likely occurring this coming spring. Who knows, maybe some of this will even help for other grant programs!

As part of DLT, students in rural areas can gather to participate in real-time educational experiences being sent from a school in another location. This way, they get education options that they would otherwise not be able to access, due to their remote location relative to the instructor.

1. Download the application checklist early. There are so many little pieces that need to be included in the application, so it's super important to know what those are as early as possible! Knowing all these components ahead of time means no one has to scramble to write another 2 paragraphs 12 hours before you want to submit.

2. Confirm your site list. Make sure you know exactly what sites you want to use, and that they're rural (unless they're a pure hub site). If the sites you're thinking about using don't fit within the DLT focus on rural locations, think about changing your selection or maybe finding another grant. Make sure that the end-user sites know that they're in your application and that they're on board with the project! You need support from them to be a competitive applicant, but you also don't want to be caught unaware if they have different plans for a similar project.

3. Start trying to get in touch with people as early as possible. Once you have the checklist, you know all the pieces you need to include, whether it's a letter from your USDA field rep or the signature of a college president or any of the other many pieces of information you need from others. Also, inevitably, someone is going to be hard to get a hold of. With busy phone lines and last-minute vacations popping up all the time, you don't want to have to be chasing someone down at the last minute.

Honestly, it might still happen, but at least you know you did everything you possibly could to avoid it.

4. Focus on the program requirements. With the huge number of capabilities of basically all telecommunications equipment nowadays, it's really important to make sure your narrative is always focusing on the features that fit within the goals of the DLT program. Knowing that you can record your class sessions and share them with students later or let faculty teach from anywhere is great, but that's not what this program is for. Make sure you talk about the wonderful ways you can let rural residents participate in class or medical professionals communicate with patients; this is what will fit into the DLT program and what will get you a good score.

5. Know that technology breaks. In order to submit the application, you need a DUNS number and a SAM registration, plus grants.gov sorted out. Then there are the harder-to-plan-for bits. What if grants.gov goes down on submission day? Can you be prepared ahead of time for submission? Don't wait until the last minute to get all of the technology set up, and don't wait until the last minute to do your final edits and gathering of application materials. You will be calmer and happier if you start earlier!

As a bonus lesson, most of all, I learned the importance of having fresh eyes on everything you're preparing for the application. It's really easy to get caught up in the nitty-gritty minutia of a word choice or a sentence phrasing, or you might get caught up in the big picture dreams of what this project will be. Either way, it's super important to have someone else look at everything and make sure you aren't forgetting any components and that everything you're writing makes sense.

Although the next DLT deadline likely isn't for a few more months and the solicitation isn't out yet, it's never too early to start planning! Grant programs (especially federal ones) don't tend to change a ton from year to year, so previous solicitations will give you a lot of the information you need! Let's be honest, most of these lessons are really about planning ahead. Plus, these tips (at least most of them) are applicable to any application you might have coming up, especially those big federal grants. Happy writing (and planning)!

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CAMPUS CYBERINFRASTRUCTURE (CC*)

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The FY 2020 CC* solicitation invests in coordinated campus-level networking and cyberinfrastructure improvements, innovation, integration, and engineering for science applications and distributed research projects. Learning and workforce development (LWD) in CI is explicitly addressed in the program. Science-driven requirements are the primary motivation for any proposed activity. The CC* program welcomes proposals in six program areas: (1) Data-Driven Networking Infrastructure for the Campus and Researcher; (2) Regional Connectivity for Small Institutions; (3) Network Integration and Applied Innovation; (4) Campus Computing and the Computing Continuum; (5) Cyber Team—Research and Education CI-based Regional Facilitation; and (6) Planning Grants and CI-Research Alignment.

Proposals across the program should reflect and demonstrate this partnership on campus. Proposals will be evaluated on the strength of institutional partnerships, as they are expected to play a central role in developing and implementing the eventual network and data infrastructure upgrades.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are: Universities and colleges (all tracks), which includes:
- Two-and four-year colleges
- Community colleges

Non-profit, non-academic organizations (Only Small Institutions, Cyber Team & CI Planning), which includes:
- Independent museums
- Observatories
- Research labs
- Professional societies and similar organizations in the U.S. associated with educational or research activities.

DEADLINE

Applications were to be submitted by January 21, 2020. A similar deadline is anticipated annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=504748

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CAMPUS CYBERINFRASTRUCTURE (CC*)

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION
Georgia Tech Research Corporation

PROJECT TITLE
Promoting Research and Education at Small Colleges in Alabama
through Network Architecture Enhancements

AMOUNT FUNDED
$730,545

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Advancements in data-intensive scientific instrumentation have greatly surpassed the capability of some campus networking infrastructures to effectively connect data-producing facilities to powerful computing and storage systems. Georgia Tech (GT) working in partnership with Southern Light Rail (SLR) and its high-speed research network, Southern Crossroads (SoX), has established this project to increase connectivity to smaller and HBCU institutions in Alabama. As a result of this project, both Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University (AAMU) and the University of South Alabama (USA) are able to transition their connectivity from a low-bandwidth ISP to a true high-speed R&E network to help increase their research efforts. Since their IT networking staff and budget are smaller and do not possess the expertise or funding in procuring and managing multiple internet providers, this award is allowing GT to install pre-configured hardware appliances for connectivity, performance management, and large data transfers at SoX.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION
https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=2018811&HistoricalAwards=false

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE
https://gtrc.gatech.edu/

CARES ACT: CONNECTED CARE PILOT PROGRAM

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The Connected Care Pilot Program will distribute funding over three years to help defray health care providers' qualifying costs of providing connected care services, with a primary focus on providing these services to low-income or veteran patients. Successful applicants will improve health outcomes and reduce health care costs, thereby supporting efforts to advance connected care initiatives.

Eligible health care providers can receive support for the qualifying costs of providing connected care services to patients participating in their pilot projects. The Pilot Program is designed to be health care provider-driven—eligible health care providers will design their proposed pilot projects, select the service providers for the supported services and network equipment, and identify and enroll the qualifying, participating patients.

In selecting pilot projects, the FCC has a strong preference for health care providers that have either (1) experience with providing telehealth or connected care services to patients (e.g., remote patient monitoring, store-and-forward imaging, or video conferencing) beyond using electronic health records, or (2) a partnership with another health care provider, government agency, or designated telehealth resource center with such experience that will work with the health care provider to implement its proposed pilot project.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are nonprofit and public eligible health care providers, whether located in rural or non-rural areas.

DEADLINE

The program is not yet open. The FCC is expected to post an application guide and deadline in July/August 2020. The application deadline is anticipated to be in September 2020.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-fights-covid-19-200m-adopts-long-term-connected-care-study

Introduction of
CANADIAN GRANTS

By Stephanie Cesar

Have you ever wondered about the grants landscape within the shores of your northern neighbors? In Canada, you can find grants at the Federal and Provincial level and the private grants that come from foundations.

Here are some types of grants you will find in Canada:

- Direct grants: the federal government, through its departments and organizations, distributes a certain amount of money to one or more organizations for a specific purpose. The Provincial government also uses this method.
- Pass-through grants: the federal government transfers funds to provinces that then determine eligibility criteria for businesses or organizations to apply for a grant.
- Competitive funding: this type of grant is open to all those who meet the eligibility criteria and those who receive a grant, recipients are selected following an evaluation by an examiner or team of examiners.

The types of grants that are in the spotlight this year:

COVID-19 Grants: The Government of Canada has provided more than $100 billion to help Canadian businesses and citizens affected by this unprecedented crisis. Part of this fund has been dedicated to research and development of treatments and vaccines against Covid-19.

Another funding type that is common - grants for research and development. The Government of Canada wants to encourage research and development and wants to see a constant improvement of the products and services that are offered in the country. These programs are numerous in the field of health but are not limited to it. We also find R&D grants that can assist with projects in the fields of infrastructure, clean energy, and artificial intelligence, just to name a few.

Another objective of the Government of Canada is for companies, within the country, to grow and to be competitive. To ensure that companies have the best talent, several grants are for recruiting, retention and improving the skills of employees. These programs are specifically aimed at start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises.

Tech-friendly grants are another sector of emphasis. The current global pandemic has only accelerated the reliance and need for technology. Several areas such as IoT, telemedicine, web collaboration, smart cities, core service, cybersecurity have several opportunities available to seek funding. One key thing to note is that, although it is not clearly articulated, most grants can be used to fund technology needs.

In all of this, one must not forget the foundations that play an important role and help Canadian citizens. More than 200 million dollars is distributed by foundations primarily to community organizations. Foundations often have several targets such as health, education, social services, arts and culture. When you wish to apply for a grant provided by a foundation, it is necessary to ensure that your project meets its mission. One advantageous aspect of seeking funding from foundations is that they often do not have a long list of criteria and the process is quite rapid.

Whether it is for non-profit, a community organization or a business, Canada has a vast range of grants available that can help you with your projects.

HOW TO CONVINCE THE FUNDER IN 20 SECONDS OR LESS

By Margit Brazda Poirier, *GPC, M.S., Owner and CEO of Grants4Good LLC®*

There is always more to learn about how to research and find the best grant opportunities and funders for your organization. But what happens when it's time to talk to that potential funder? What do you say? How do you get their attention and fuel their curiosity? How can you talk about your nonprofit without overwhelming them with details?

Funders and donors are deluged with grant requests, so you need to stand out… and try to say it in 20 seconds or less! To do this, consider developing a value proposition, which can also serve as your "elevator speech".

The term, "elevator speech," refers to the brief time you have to tell someone about your organization or program, grab their attention, and be memorable. This is essentially the time it takes to ride an elevator—about 30 seconds (but we are going to aim for 20 seconds or less). In business, a value proposition is defined as "a positioning statement that explains what benefit you provide for who and how you do it uniquely well. It describes your target buyer, the problem you solve, and why you're distinctly better than the alternatives." (Skok, M. Forbes; June 14, 2013)

Nonprofit organizations face many of the same challenges as businesses and can also benefit from a value proposition. This is especially important in grant development because nonprofits are essentially competing for funding. You need to stand out from the competition—that is, from the other organizations that are providing similar services to yours and possibly vying for the same grant dollars. The value proposition differentiates your nonprofit and helps you communicate clearly and succinctly to your potential funders and donors.

CREATE YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION

To create a value proposition, fill in the blanks: We […or name of your organization] work with [insert your target audience] to [insert what you do] as needed to achieve [insert your key outcome/impact].

There are many online templates available that can help you create a strong value proposition. The following is one that I recommend, as it directly relates to grant development. While it was created for business, it can also be adapted for the nonprofit sector. The items in parentheses parallel the requirements typically found in a grant proposal:

1. Highlight the enormity of the problem you are tackling. (Needs Statement)

2. Tell the audience up front what your company sells. (Organization Description)

3. Distill the differentiation down to one, easy-to-comprehend sentence. (Unique)

4. Establish credibility by sharing the pedigree of the entrepreneurs, customers, or the investors. (Past Accomplishments).

Note: If your nonprofit or program is new, you can establish credibility by drawing on the success or impact of similar programs in other locations, and/or highlight your great leadership/team.

SAMPLE
"One person dies of melanoma every 62 minutes. We offer a dermatoscope app for iPhone that enables people to easily diagnose their skin, leveraging patented pattern recognition technology trusted by the World Health Organization." (7 Proven Templates for Writing Value Propositions That Work", Lingo Labs, November 29, 2011)

Margit Brazda Poirier, GPC, M.S. is Owner and CEO of Grants4Good LLC, a grant consulting company that specializes in online training and grant strategy. www.grants4good.com.

Value propositions are extremely helpful in differentiating ourselves, as well as the nonprofits we work for. NOW is a good time to craft your value proposition to create that strong first impression! It will go a long way towards connecting meaningfully with others, including the funders with whom you hope to partner.

We want to help you not only convince funders but also succeed in every step of the grant-getting process. Check out our online self-paced course at www.allaboutgrantwriting.com and contact me for your discount code at info@grants4good.com.

DIGITAL HUMANITIES ADVANCEMENT GRANT

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

Digital Humanities Advancement Grants (DHAG) support digital projects throughout their life cycles, from early start-up phases through implementation and long-term sustainability. Experimentation, reuse, and extensibility are hallmarks of this grant category, leading to innovative work that can scale to enhance research, teaching, and public programming in the humanities. Digital Humanities Advancement Grants may involve:

- creating or enhancing experimental, computationally-based methods, techniques, or infrastructure that contribute to the humanities;
- pursuing scholarship that examines the history, criticism, and philosophy of digital culture and its impact on society; or
- conducting evaluative studies that investigate the practices and the impact of digital scholarship on research, pedagogy, scholarly communication, and public engagement.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are U.S. nonprofit organizations with IRS tax-exempt status; and state and local governmental agencies and federally recognized Indian tribal governments.

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted by January 15, 2021, and June 24th, 2021. Similar deadlines are anticipated annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.neh.gov/grants/odh/digital-humanities-advancement-grants

DIGITAL HUMANITIES ADVANCEMENT GRANT

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION
University of California, Irvine

PROJECT TITLE
Virtual Studiolo

AMOUNT FUNDED
$99,897

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The design and production of a 3D environment re-creating Isabella d'Este of Mantua's (1474-1539) art and music "studiolo" for use with virtual reality headsets, laptops, and visualization walls.

The Italian Renaissance is famed for art, architecture, music, and learning. The integrated experience of these achievements is difficult to grasp, given the dispersal of physical evidence and the disciplinary confines of our learning. It is also often gendered as male. This online, virtual reality project for study of one of Renaissance Italy's most stunning art spaces and collections -- the studiolo of Isabella d'Este (1474-1539) -- will address both of these problems with cross-disciplinary tools for approaching the period through one of its most important women. Its immersive, interactive character will convey the human scale, cognitive density, and aesthetic specificity of a Renaissance art space and capture the multi-sensory complexity of interiors meant to dazzle visitors with humanist ideals. Individual and collaborative work in this environment will foster new approaches to studying and teaching the multi-media Renaissance and provide models for analogous projects in other periods.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION
Click Here

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE
https://www.humanities.uci.edu/SOH/

FINDING FUNDING WHEN YOU'RE A SMALL ARTS NON-PROFIT

By Chris Barnes

Chances are, if you work or volunteer at an arts non-profit, you likely wear many hats depending on the day. This can especially be the case if your role involves finding the necessary funds to keep your lights on and the doors open. Some days, you may be a grant writer, while on others, you're reaching out to potential sponsors or donors. On top of that, you're possibly doing all of this while juggling the day-to-day operations that contribute to your non-profit's art programming and initiatives. This can leave little time to actually sit down, evaluate the different kinds of grant opportunities for which your organization might be eligible, and develop a strategy for the ones you want to pursue in the short-term, and which are better suited for a medium- and long-term approach.

Here, I'm going to break down three broad categories to give you a better sense of what types of grants are out there and whether they might be worth pursuing.

FEDERAL GRANTS

Two of the largest and most well-known federal grant programs that fund arts and humanities projects are the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

Both the NEA and the NEH award a variety of grants for which non-profits are eligible. Often, these grants are focused on funding an array of initiatives, such as arts projects that have a public focus. Others may have a public programming component, but are mainly focused on advancing scholarly study. This range of grants luckily means that you have an opportunity to find one that will best fit the goals of your organization. Because they're federal grants, their award amounts are generally larger than with state or foundation grants, which can give your non-profit the funding necessary to devise more in-depth and elaborate projects than you might otherwise be able to manage.

The challenge with these grants is that while they can at times provide some large sums of grant money, they are often going to require a rather labor-intensive application process. For example, an NEH grant like the Public Humanities Projects grant will ask you to contextualize your proposed project within relevant humanities scholarship. Depending on the resources available to you, crafting a dense and lengthy proposal like this may require several months of lead time. Moreover, these grants are highly competitive. Because the NEA and NEH are so widely-known and popular grant funders, you will no doubt have stiff competition from other organizations across the country. You'll thus want to weigh whether or not these applications will be worth the time they'll require -- and if you decide they are, then you'll want to start planning early and give yourself enough time to engage the necessary people, plan your project, and put together the application.

STATE GRANTS

At the state level, arts and humanities councils can be another potential source of funding. State humanities councils receive funding from the NEH, while arts councils receive funding from the NEA. As you've no doubt guessed, these councils are dedicated to supporting arts and humanities initiatives across an individual state.

The types of grants that an arts or humanities council offers will vary depending on the state. Often, what you can expect are a mixture of grants that fund general operating support (meaning that they provide funding to support your non-profit's basic operations) and ones that will fund specific initiatives, such as arts education grants or community engagement projects.

Unlike an NEA or NEH grant, state arts and humanities grant awards will often be smaller in size. However, you will potentially be competing against fewer applicants, as your proposal will be evaluated against other organizations across the state, instead of across the country. The application process will also likely be shorter and less time-intensive than a federal grant.

FOUNDATION GRANTS

Foundation grants are often one of the best bets for smaller non-profits looking to secure grant funding. Though there are some large foundations that accept grant proposals from around the country and may be more likely to fund larger, more robust organizations, there are also community foundations that seek to fund projects in a particular area or region of a state.

While foundation grants are generally going to provide less funding than federal grants, they can nonetheless be an excellent source of funding for projects with a specific, community-based focus. If you have a project that directly engages the community of, say, Rochester, New York, then applying to a local Rochester foundation that funds these types of projects can be advantageous to you for multiple reasons. For one, your reviewers will be from the area, and will thus have greater context when reading about your proposed project. Secondly, you will be competing with fewer organizations than for a state or federal grant. And three, you may have connections to members on the foundation's board, which can work in your favor as it comes time to evaluate competing proposals.

Even if you don't have those connections, reaching out to a foundation (unless they expressly request you don't on their website) to confirm with them whether your program is a good match for them can be a good way to begin establishing that relationship. Another advantage of foundation grants, especially at the local or regional level, is that they tend to fund those organizations they already have a relationship with and that they see as a safe investment with their grant money. If you're able to build that relationship, they may come to see you as a reliable organization that will use their money wisely.

PRIORITIES, PRIORITIES

If you're at a small non-profit without a full-time grant writer, or where grant writing duties are shared amongst multiple people, it can be especially challenging to know how best to prioritize your grant seeking. Indeed, there are multiple questions you may want to weigh as you're deciding how to rank possible grant opportunities:

- How much time is available for myself or others at my organization to work on grants?

- What are the due dates of the grants we're interested in?

- What kinds of projects or initiatives do we want to fund?

If you find yourself pressed for time, then foundation grants will likely be a good bet for the short-term. The application burden is often far less than federal grants (though some foundations may have lengthy applications) and there's generally a quicker turnaround time for hearing back about the status of your application or receiving grant money than with a federal grant.

If you're looking to incorporate more intensive grant proposals into your grantseeking strategy, but don't feel like your organization has the capacity to pursue them or administer a large grant, consider **seeking out partners**. This can be a useful way to show a funder that you can stretch their dollars further. And depending on the partner, it may also give the funder more confidence that you'd be able to successfully carry out your proposed program, should you win the grant. If there are other non-profits, libraries, museums, or schools that you work with, start having those conversations and see if there's a way you can fruitfully collaborate.

You can also think of grantseeking as a **medium or long-term strategy**. You may have missed a deadline for a larger grant. That gives you enough runway to start preparing for the next round of applications. Most federal grant programs recur yearly and don't change much in terms of their grant guidelines, so you can use the previous year's guidelines to help craft the upcoming year's proposal.

Ultimately, you want to think strategically in your approach to grantseeking. Being realistic about what your current capacities are and making plans for the future can help unlock your success with pursuing and winning grants.

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With so many grants out there, it can be challenging to know where to start or how to prioritize your grantseeking.

COPS ANTI-METHAMPHETAMINE PROGRAM (CAMP)

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The FY 2020 COPS Anti-Methamphetamine Program (CAMP) is designed to advance public safety by providing funds to investigate illicit activities related to the manufacture and distribution of methamphetamine. CAMP provides funding to state law enforcement agencies for equipment, overtime, and other approved personnel costs for law enforcement officers assigned to the investigation of methamphetamine production and trafficking. Funding awarded to state law enforcement agencies may be used to support law enforcement personnel costs for allied agencies' officers participating in a state anti-methamphetamine task force. CAMP seeks to address the growing problem of methamphetamine abuse by assisting state law enforcement agencies in collaboration with other service providers and stakeholders to:

- Increase efforts to locate and investigate illicit methamphetamine activities including precursor diversion, laboratories, or traffickers;

- Establish new or enhance existing multijurisdictional and interdisciplinary task forces to investigate and lead to the seizure of precursor chemicals, finished methamphetamine, laboratories, and laboratory dump seizures;

- Increase the use of community policing strategies during the investigation phase (including problem solving, partnerships, and organizational changes) to reduce the manufacture, distribution, and use of methamphetamine;

- Increase anti-methamphetamine collaboration efforts during investigations with federal, state, local, and/or tribal partners involved in prevention, intervention and treatment, identification of drug endangered children, and enforcement activities.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are state law enforcement agencies in states with high seizures of precursor chemicals, finished methamphetamine, laboratories, and laboratory dump seizures for the purpose of locating and investigating illicit activities, including precursor diversion, laboratories, or methamphetamine traffickers.

DEADLINE

Applications were to be submitted by April 22, 2020. A next funding cycle is anticipated to be released on November, 2020.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://cops.usdoj.gov/camp

FUNDED October 2020

Funding Pathways
FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES

By Joseph Phelan

When it comes to higher education funding, community colleges can sometimes be an afterthought. Research institution regularly apply to the National Science Foundation for funding. Additional federal grantmaking agencies readily offer programs in health, humanities and the like, encouraging general institutions of higher education to apply based on majors or programs that make up their curriculum. Grantmaking agencies, however, offer several programs exclusively for community colleges. These funding opportunities have proven to be viable options to strengthen schools by enhancing their capabilities.

As federal priorities often shift, it's important to know the agencies that offer these opportunities. The programs themselves might change, but who offers them remains constant, so be sure to keep an eye on the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), in particular.

For instance, there are several H-1B visa programs from ETA. Generally, ETA seeks already established relationships with employers and workforce development boards with a focus on improving the training level of potential employees in the region. This year's workforce development program is H-1B One Workforce. Applications are accepted until November 12 which institutions should anticipate in the future for H-1B visa programs. The H-1B visa funded workforce development programs are great examples of what's available from a federal level based on the most pressing industry needs. Institutions with strong workforce development programs are eligible to be a lead applicant, typically. The goal for H-1B One Workforce is to fill critical shortages in economic regions by encouraging states and economic regions to work with industry stakeholders to develop dynamic workforce strategies that train workers and jobseekers for middle-to-high-skilled H-1B occupations in key industry sectors, including:

- Information Technology
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Artificial Intelligence
- Quantum Information Sciences
- 5G/advanced Communications
- Biotechnology

Community colleges have until November 25, 2020 to apply for OCTAE's Rethink Adult Ed. Challenge, which asks for organizations to use funding to advance pre-apprenticeships. This $750,000 competition would be a solid option for community colleges that serve as the leader of adult education in its region.

As the workforce continues to evolve, community colleges must adapt by enhancing its capabilities.

OCTAE, and the Department of Education, coordinate programs related to adult education and literacy, career and technical education and community colleges. They typically administer state formula and discretionary grants under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Adult Education and Literacy programs. It's imperative for community colleges to keep OCTAE in mind when analyzing potential funders. OCTAE has the resources for community colleges to utilize with the goal of creating stronger education and workforce training capabilities.

Speaking of potential funders. States usually have dedicated workforce development grantmaking agencies. Most of these agencies directly appeal to community colleges, in particular ones with a concentration on career and technical education. Of course, it often depends on the school's location and its capabilities, but there could be opportunities worth exploring right in the institution's backyard.

Lastly, there are several programs available annually. Programs like Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants and Advanced Technological Education.

Mainly referred to as Strengthening Community Colleges or simply SCC, the program builds the capacity of community colleges to collaborate with employers and the public workforce development system to meet local and regional labor market demand for a skilled workforce.

SCC, in its 2020 solicitation, offered three purposes, including:

1. to increase the capacity and responsiveness of community colleges to address the skill development needs of employers and dislocated and unemployed workers, incumbent workers, and new entrants to the workforce

2. to offer this spectrum of workers and other individuals accelerated career pathways that enable them to gain skills and transition from unemployment to (re) employment quickly

3. to address the new challenges associated with the COVID-19 health crisis that necessitate social distancing practices and expanding online and technology-enabled learning and migrating services to a virtual environment

Historically, ETA award eight to 16 grants with applications due in early October. For applicants to stand out, they must actively engage employers through partnerships with industry to enhance career pathways, create and refine curricula development, offer work-based learning opportunities, and leverage resources.

Community colleges should identify Advanced Technological Education, or ATE, as a possible funding option. ATE, from the National Science Foundation, focuses on the education of technicians for popular high-tech fields in today's innovative workplace. This grant supports curriculum development, professional development of college faculty and secondary school teachers and career pathways to two-year colleges from secondary schools and from two-year colleges to four-year institutions.

It's easy to see that workforce development is a common theme, but the National Endowment for the Humanities offer a program for community colleges annually titled Humanities at Community Colleges.

This grant, with a singular goal of strengthening the teaching and study of history, philosophy and literature, has a wide

range of applications with the grantee having the power to enhance an already established program, or creating a new one from scratch. Projects the National Endowment for Humanities typically support includes:

• creation of humanities-based curricular pathways towards graduation and/or transfer to four-year institutions

• creation or revision of courses that focus on close reading and analytical writing, including composition courses designed to help students write better

• collaboration with regional museums, libraries, or historical societies to share resources for teaching and learning; or partnering with a school or school system to strengthen K-12 pathways to higher education

• development of curriculum-focused digital humanities projects, including podcasts, mapping tools, or digital resources for distance learning

Funding can be secured in several ways, and it's no different for community colleges. These institutions have at their disposal opportunities from the federal and state level. No matter the institution's size, the number of students or the area of expertise, there are options are worth exploring.

HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PROGRAM (HEP)

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The High School Equivalency Program (HEP) helps migratory and seasonal farm workers (or immediate family of such workers) who are 16 years of age or older and not currently enrolled in school to obtain the equivalent of a high school diploma and, subsequently, to gain employment or begin postsecondary education or training.

To accomplish this, HEP funds projects that help migrant and seasonal farm workers and members of their immediate family to:

- Obtain a general education diploma that meets the guidelines for high school equivalency (HSE) established by the State in which the HEP project is conducted; and
- Gain upgraded employment, be placed in an institution of higher education (IHE) or other postsecondary education or training, or enter the military.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) and Nonprofit Organizations. If a private nonprofit organization applies for a HEP grant, that agency must plan the project in cooperation with an IHE and must propose to operate some aspects of the project with the facilities of that IHE.

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted by January 28, 2020. The next funding cycle is anticipated to be released in November 2020.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www2.ed.gov/programs/hep/index.html

EXPLORING HUMANITIES FUNDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

By Sydney Stapleton

Humanities programs are the cornerstone of liberal arts colleges and add value to community colleges and research universities across the country. Through the humanities, students learn the value of the past, gain an appreciation for culture and the arts, and learn critical thinking skills to explore and change the world. With many higher education institutions facing budgetary cuts, it is critical for humanities programs to look for outside funding sources. Below we have collected a sampling of funding opportunities for colleges and universities to support their humanities students, faculty, and programs.

When looking for humanities funding the first stop is the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The NEH's Humanities Initiatives is a program that helps to strengthen the teaching and study of the humanities at Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs). This broad program allows for a variety of eligible activities and budget sizes. It supports projects that develop new humanities programs and courses, projects that preserve resources, and projects that create partnerships between IHEs and informal education partners like libraries and museums. There are five total Humanities Initiatives grants. The two broadest are Humanities Initiatives at Colleges and Universities and Humanities Initiatives at Community Colleges. The NEH also offers grants specifically for Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Tribal Colleges and Universities.

Next is Humanities Connections which focuses on curricular development. This program creates approaches that establishes partnerships among an IHE's humanities and non-humanities programs to develop new learning opportunities for students. Humanities Connection looks for projects that include collaboration between faculty, the integration of the subject matter, and experiential learning outcomes. This type of funding is an excellent opportunity to support multiple educational programs across an institution.

If an IHE is looking to support individual faculty and students, the NEH funds those opportunities as well. They have Fellowships that they grant to individual scholars pursuing projects that embody exceptional humanities research, Collaborative Research grants that fund collaboration between two or more scholars, and Faculty Awards at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities that fund broad humanities scholarly research.

While the NEH is a great resource, innovation is critical in a grant search. The National Science Foundation may not come to mind for humanities but their Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) grant program funds projects that could support the work of humanities scholars. AISL will support exhibits, media products, after-school programs, and other projects related to informal STEM learning. If a humanities project has strong STEM ties or collaborations, this could be a great funding opportunity to explore.

Along with these federal options, state and local arts and humanities organizations are an excellent opportunity for support. As an example, Humanities New York offers Quick Grants, Vision Grants, and Action Grants all of which Education Institutions can take advantage of to fund programing. Local community foundations also often have initiatives that support the arts and humanities within their communities. Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee supports a broad range of arts and humanities projects across the 40 counties the foundation serves. Keep in mind that these funders are often looking to support projects that reach the general public.

There you have it, with governmental funding and foundations that support the humanities, we hope we've provided a jumping off point for higher education institutions of all types to continue to grow and support their humanities offerings.

As fires become larger and more frequent across the country, fire crews need the tools to confront them.

FACING MULTIPLE EMERGENCIES, FIRE DEPARTMENTS TURN TO FEMA FOR ASSISTANCE

By Shannon Day

It is common knowledge that a firefighter's job is one of the deadliest professions in the United States, and that danger is only getting worse.

As wildfires increase in size, frequency, and deadliness each year due to climate change, over-development, and a history of poor land management, fire departments are having a difficult time keeping up.

Added to these increasing environmental dangers is the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The number of house fires has climbed due to more Americans staying home and cooking. This will worsen with the use of space heaters and fireplaces when colder months arrive. Overall, firefighters responding to more calls, damaging their lungs through smoke and chemical inhalation and living and eating together in close proximity in communal quarters has made them more susceptible to contracting the virus, thus multiplying the dangers for fire departments across the country.

With the increasing challenges fire departments are facing, many are looking for extra sources of funding to help address them. One of these sources is the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, which aims to provide fire departments the tools for responding to the challenges they face.

Each year, FEMA provides grant funding for fire departments through the Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program, or AFG.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, FEMA also added a supplemental grant program specifically for pandemic response – the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program - COVID-19 Supplemental (AFG-S).

ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANTS PROGRAM

The primary goal of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) is to meet the daily firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and non-affiliated emergency medical service organizations.

Since 2001, AFG has helped firefighters and other first responders obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training and other resources necessary for protecting the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards.

While program priorities may change year to year, the AFG has three main funding categories:

Operations and Safety

- *Training:* FEMA has determined the most benefit is derived from hands-on, instructor-led training that leads to a national or state certification.

- *Equipment:* Equipment should enhance the safety and/or effectiveness of firefighting, rescue, and/or the enhancement of emergency medical services provided by EMS.

- *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):* PPE is defined as those compliant items worn by firefighter/EMS personnel to protect them.

- *Wellness and Fitness Activities:* Activities should assist First Responders so their mental, physical, and emotional capabilities are resilient enough to withstand the demands of emergency services response.

- *Modifications to Facilities:* Requested activities may only retrofit existing structures built prior to 2003 that do not already have those safety features in place that are listed as eligible activities.

Vehicle Acquisition

- New, custom, or stock AFG Program-compliant Vehicles are eligible for funding

- Driver Training is included in this category

Regional Projects

- Any eligible entity may act as a host applicant and apply for large-scale projects on behalf of itself and any number of other local AFG eligible organizations that will be participating partners in the award.

Organizations may submit one application under each category, as long as each request is not for the same project, and they may submit for multiple projects within each category. For example, a department may request funding for a new ambulance under Vehicle Acquisition and another under Regional Projects. Provided that the requests are for two separate vehicle acquisition projects, the applications will not be disqualified.

The iconic red fire hat is a vital part of the fire fighter's arsenal.

FUNDED October 2020

ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS COVID-19 SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAM

FEMA released the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program - COVID-19 Supplemental (AFG-S) in April 2020 in response to the developing COVID-19 pandemic. When this supplemental funding window closed on May 15, FEMA learned that they had not reached minimum funding quotas. By law, at least 25 percent of the AFG-S funds must go to volunteer fire departments and at least another 25 percent must be awarded to combination fire departments. Round One did not reach these thresholds, so FEMA released Round Two on October 6 with the application window scheduled to close on November 13.

Round Two of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program - COVID-19 Supplemental program is exclusively for volunteer and combination fire departments. This particularly benefits smaller and rural towns that do not have the budget or resources for professional fire departments.

This separate funding opportunity is solely for eligible applicants to apply for critical Personal Protective Equipment and supplies needed to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency. If an eligible department applied in Round One, they may still apply in Round Two if the request is for new capabilities and the department has not met their funding cap.

Highest priority is given to requests for eye protection, isolation gowns, coveralls, footwear covers, face masks and respirators. These funds can be used as reimbursement for PPE purchases retroactive to January 1, 2020 or the purchase of new equipment, but either way, the equipment may only be used by properly trained personnel.
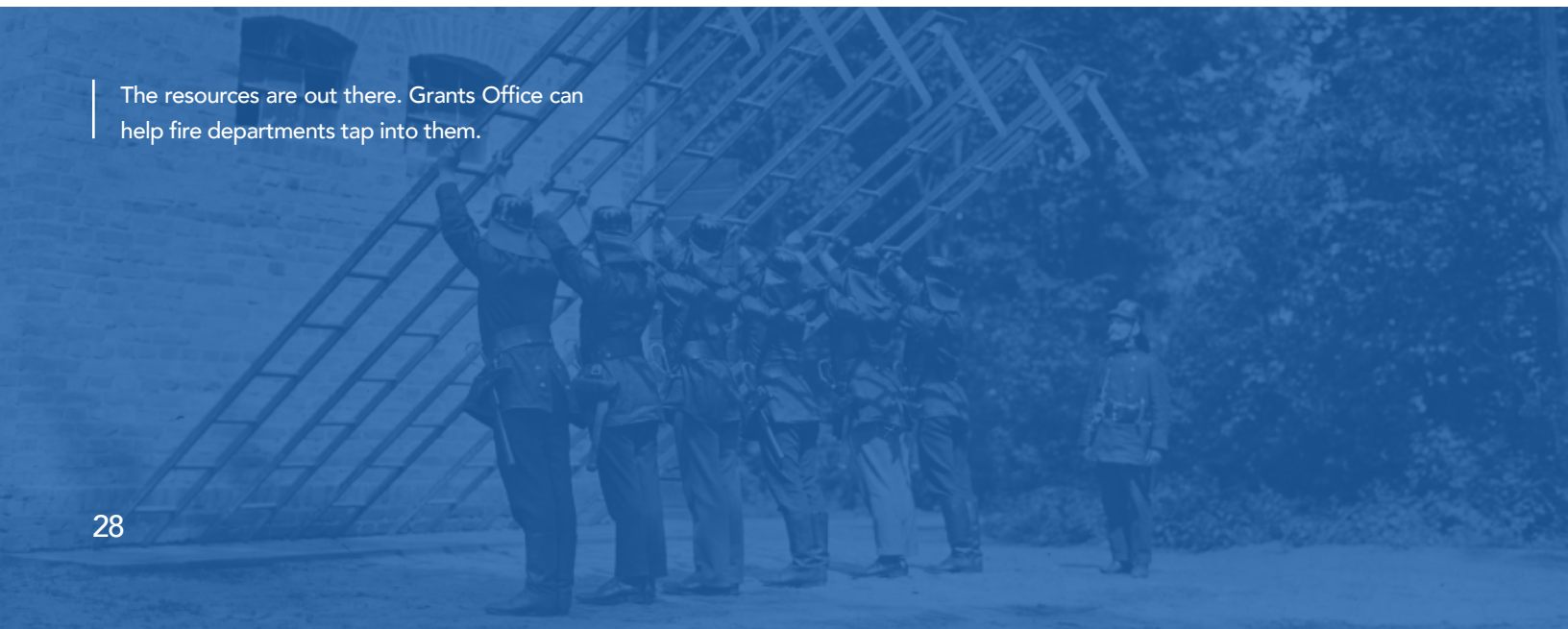
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) is an annual grant program. It can be used to fund a wide array of day-to-day operational projects, from training to wellness initiatives to equipment including tablets and communications equipment for use in the field.

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program - COVID-19 Supplemental is offered solely in response to the ongoing pandemic. Funds can only be used for the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment necessary to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

While the AFG grant is available for all fire department and EMS agencies to apply for, Round Two of the AFG-S program is only available for volunteer and combination fire departments.

Firefighters have one of the toughest jobs in the country, both physically and emotionally. One can move from deep sleep to the adrenal glands firing in the blink of an eye. The alarm sounds and the team must be out the door and ready to work in mere minutes. This roller-coaster takes its toll on the body and the mind. The collegial environment in a firehouse and community support help make the job a little easier. FEMA, along with other federal, state, and foundation grantmakers, are here to help, as well.

The resources are out there. Grants Office can help fire departments tap into them.

RESEARCH ON EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (RETTL)

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The goal of the Research on Emerging Technologies for Teaching and Learning program is to support transformative research on advanced technologies for teaching and learning to educate a new generation of students, teachers, educators, and mentors to excel in highly technological and collaborative environments of the future. The scope of the program is wide-ranging, with a special interest in diverse learner/educator populations, contexts, and content, including teaching and learning in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and in foundational areas that enable STEM (e.g., self-regulation, literacy, communication, collaboration, creativity, and socio-emotional skills). The program accepts proposals that focus on learning, teaching or a combination of both. The program invites proposals that integrate knowledge about how people teach and learn (individually and in groups) with the opportunities offered by emerging technologies. These technologies support learning environments that are, for example, adaptive, interactive, immersive, virtual, embodied, and augmented.

This program solicits projects that are exploratory and experimental in nature. The program serves as an incubator to support frontier research in advanced learning and teaching technologies. Projects should be theory-driven and apply human-centered design methods to explore proof-of-concept or feasibility of innovative learning technologies in the support of new learning and/or teaching experiences. We encourage projects that explore new ideas, especially those where outcomes may be uncertain and involve risk. This program funds a broad range of projects across:

- Content area: to include STEM and other foundational areas supported by NSF that enable STEM learning and teaching (e.g., self-regulation, literacy, communication, collaboration, creativity, curiosity, and social skills).
- Population and context: to include learners, teachers, mentors, educators and other workers in formal or informal settings; and individual, collective, and collaborative learning and teaching across the lifespan.

ELIGIBILITY
Any capable entity is eligible to apply for this program.

DEADLINE
Applications are to be submitted by January 25, 2021.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=504984

FUNDED October 2020

THE STATE AND LOCAL IT MODERNIZATION AND CYBERSECURITY ACT

By Richard Campo

On August 13th, Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI), Sen. Angus King (I-ME), and Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) introduced a new bill called The State and Local IT Modernization and Cybersecurity Act. The bill proposes $28 billion in new IT funding for state and local governments divided into three streams: the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program, the Public Health Emergency Information Technology Grant Program, and the Modernizing IT Grant Program. My August article in FUNDED described the current lack of cybersecurity funding sources, so a dedicated cybersecurity grant program like the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program would be a game changer. Similarly, the Public Health Emergency Information Technology Grant Program would address the need state and local governments have demonstrated for remote work funding due to the coronavirus pandemic. Likewise, the Modernizing IT Grant Program would meet the need for new IT infrastructure from laptops to servers to software, which require updating every five years or so to keep up with the constant march of technological progress.

STATE AND LOCAL CYBERSECURITY GRANT PROGRAM

The proposed State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program would be allocated $400 million annually from 2021 to 2025, for a total of $2 billion. For comparison, the current largest cybersecurity funding source, the State Homeland Security Program from FEMA and designed to deter acts of terrorism, provides about $415 million yearly, but only 5% of that funding must go to cybersecurity initiatives, or $20.75 million. Thus, this new grant program would provide up to an 1800% increase in cybersecurity funding. The primary goal of this program is to address cybersecurity risks and threats in state, local, tribal, and territorial governments. These governments would be required to incorporate this funding into their existing cybersecurity plans, explain how the funding will enhance their ongoing cybersecurity plan, and include an inventory listing all their current information technology equipment. In FY 2021, the bill proposes that grantees would provide a 10% match, and that match will increase by 10 percentage points each year until 2025, when it will hold at 50%. Given the need for new cybersecurity for state and local governments, this program would fill a serious gap in our current cybersecurity funding environment.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROGRAM

The second program of interest, the Public Health Emergency IT Grant Program, would be allocated $1 billion total and fund projects until September 30, 2022. The goal of this program is to award funds to agencies that need to make emergency IT purchases due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each state would be eligible to apply for this stream of funding and must reserve at least 40 percent of its award to provide sub-grants to local governments within its borders to make emergency IT expenditures. Recently, the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) has functioned similarly to help state and local governments purchase work from home software and other items necessary to keep governments operational during the COVID-19 crisis. While CRF provides large sums to state and local governments across the country, none of it was devoted to IT purchases, so different states, counties, and cities have attached different sets of rules to the use of the funds. A dedicated grant program for IT expenditures necessitated by the effects of COVID-19 would be a large boon for governments nationwide struggling with the adjustment to working from home as well as the associated cybersecurity risks such as unprotected home networks and increased phishing, spam, and fraudulent emails.

MODERNIZING IT GRANT PROGRAM

The last, and by far the largest program in the new bill, is the Modernizing IT Grant Program, which would be allocated $25 billion. The purpose of this program is, appropriately, to modernize information technology to allow governments to securely deliver digital services. Eligible digital services include emergency services, government benefit and entitlement programs, and administrative services performed by each state. Like the Public Health Emergency IT Grant Program, states are required to share at least 40 percent of the funds they receive with local governments in their jurisdictions. Currently, there are currently no federal grant programs solely designed to aid state and local governments with IT purchases, but tech-friendly grant programs supporting other projects are not uncommon, such as the State Homeland Security Program discussed earlier, the Emergency Management Performance Grant also from FEMA, and the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant from the Department of Justice. Adding a dedicated grant program to fund IT modernization initiatives would make it much easier for state and local governments' IT departments to purchase the technology they need to deliver a broad range of public services without dedicating all of their effort to a specific type of project that a given grant program funds.

ADDITIONAL IT AND CYBERSECURITY BILLS AND WHAT TO DO?

Recently, we have seen additional progress from Congress in proposing other information technology bills, such as The State and Local Cybersecurity Improvement Act which was passed by the House of Representatives on September 30th this year. This bill only contains State and Local Cybersecurity Grant program and was introduced back in February 2020. The Senate has also taken interest in an IT bill and passed the State and Local Government Cybersecurity Act of 2019 last November. Unfortunately, as of October 2020, the House and Senate are controlled by different parties and are currently unlikely to agree to a compromise bill. This may change in January 2021 when the 117th Congress convenes and new members of Congress are sworn in, and as of this writing the Senate remains fiercely competitive. Overall, we view it positively that Congress is actively considering efforts to improve state and local governments' IT and cybersecurity infrastructure, but we will have to wait for further developments from Congress. It is important to note that this bill is still tentative and has not yet received a vote in the House of Representatives or the Senate or been signed by the president. While the bill has a chance of not becoming law, we at Grants Office believe that it is still worth discussing because the bill's impact on the cybersecurity funding landscape cannot be understated.

In the meantime, state and local governments' IT departments should try to get a seat the table with their finance director and the other local departments to discuss funding sources and opportunities for collaboration. Building those relationships can keep otherwise overlooked IT departments in the minds of the officials in charge of making budgets and other departments interested in adding an IT component to their projects. That way, IT departments will have myriad opportunities to apply for grants that can fund projects that will enable technology purchases and help the broader community.

FUNDED October 2020

HOW TO STAND OUT TO FUNDERS

By Molly Haggerty

Whether you are new to grants or a veteran grant seeker, making your proposal stand out amongst the competition could be the difference between getting awarded, or not. Follow these tips and tricks to get your grant proposal to the top of the stack.

IS IT A GOOD FIT?

First, it is important to decipher if the grant and funder are a good fit for partnership with your organization. To do this, make your way to the funder's website and look for the following information:

1. Funding Priorities

2. Application Instructions

3. FAQs

Finding this information will give you, the grant seeker, all of the information you need in order to make an informed decision on whether or not that grant opportunity is a good fit for your organization's interests. There is nothing funders dislike more than receiving an application that does not fit with the goals of their organization. You have already jumped one hurdle if you do your due diligence BEFORE applying.

If you are new to grant seeking, foundations are a great place to start. As foundations are private money, both the application process and post-award reporting process tend to be much less rigorous. Contrast this with state & federal grants which are publicly funded and therefore subject to additional fiscal regulations; this means they often come with additional application burden and expectation for project activities. Foundations also tend to ask very similar questions for their application process (bonus!), what changes from foundation to foundation is why they, personally, should care about your proposal. Foundations are looking to invest in organizations to accomplish their mission and vision as their 'boots on the ground'. They key to catching a foundation's attention is to situate your needs to match the goals of the funder.

BONUS TIP: Check out foundations local to your area. Local funders will have less of a competition pool AND give you to the opportunity to build relationships with members of the foundation.

USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Second, use social media to your advantage. This is one of the most under-utilized forms of connection on a grant seeking journey. If you use social media correctly, you can build rapport with funders on local, national and even global scale! Be sure to consistently post information about the successes of your organization; job and volunteer opportunities; updates to what you offer; and so on. As an organization, be sure you are using social media to be social. Follow similar non-profits, potential funders, other businesses and organizations you work alongside. BUT, do not just be a fly on the wall of these accounts, interact with them by sharing, liking, retweeting and so on. More engagement on social media can lead to more of a sense of connection and trust from your online community.

REMEMBER: cast your social media net far and wide, you never know who you may reel in!

ASK FOR FEEDBACK

Third, ask for feedback! While asking for feedback does not sound overly complicated, it is crucial to ask for feedback in a very humble manner. Unfortunately, just because you are asking, does not mean you are going to get it (this applies to both funding and feedback).

REMEMBER, ask for feedback on awards you have won and awards you have not. Knowing what worked in a proposal or application when it went in front of reviewers provides you with more tools in your box for your next go around.

When asking for feedback, be sure to approach the funder from a place of value. Ask if there were any comments that came up during the review process that could be shared to assist in strengthening thought processes as an organization and in turn, your proposals and applications. Make it known that your organization intends to continue to seek funding as you believe in the value of your proposed program.

BONUS TIP: Never ask why a review committee did not fund your project. This approach does not show humility.

When a funder is asked for feedback from a place of value, it can leave a lasting impression. Take the opportunity to build onto or create a relationship with the funder and do not forget to apply for the next award round.

There are different reasons every funder and grant exist. Finding the right funders and grants for your organization is the first step to success. Creating channels to build rapport with funders is second followed by humbly seeking feedback. There are many ways to stand out to funders and these are three great methods to try!

GRANTS OFFICE ON THE "VIRTUAL ROAD"

INTERNATIONAL
GRANT PROFESSIONALS DAY
Changing the world, one grant at a time.

GPA 2020 Annual Conference: Online This Year!

November 5th | 10:15 AM - 11:30 PM
Finding and Securing Funding for Health Care Projects by Chris LaPage

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Grant Funding for Public Safety Technology in 2021 by Shannon Day and Ashley Schultz

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Planning or the Year Ahead! Insights on the 2021 USED Budget & Other Federal K-12 Grants by Elizabeth Evans

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YOUR GRANT SUBMISSION PROCESS QUESTIONS ANSWERED!

By Elizabeth Evans

I recently had the pleasure of assisting a novice grantseeking organization through their very first federal grant application. Talk about jumping right into the thick of things! Normally I would coach our clients to start small and build momentum, but this organization had a solid project idea and was highly motivated. So I said, "sure – let's do this!" This experience was a wonderful reminder to me after having worked with so many veteran grantseeking organizations that sometimes we take our knowledge as grants professionals for granted. The world of grants can be rather insular, and details that might seem obvious to one can be revolutionary to another… especially one just starting out.

Below are some of my favorite questions from individuals within that novice grant seeking organization. From when we first set out with funder prospecting for their project idea, up through clicking submit. For anyone reading who is just setting out on their own grant seeking journey, I hope these FAQs help answer some of your questions and set you on the right path for success.

Whenever I research grant opportunities, it seems like I've always missed the window. Most programs I see which are relevant have deadlines that have already come and gone for the year. Can we expect to see future funding for these programs?

Yes! Almost all grant funding opportunities occur on a predictable annual cycle. This means a grant due in May 2020 will likely come around again at the same time in 2021. Occasionally state and federal grants fall on longer biennial, triennial, even quinquennial cycles. Foundation grant opportunities are a bit more diverse in terms of funding timeline. Pending the foundation, they might accept requests annually, biannually, quarterly, or even monthly – but rest assured they also have a cycle that they are following.

Reach out to the grant program manager to confirm another solicitation will be released. If yes, use those months leading up to the new deadline to get a head start on your project. Start assembling partners and gathering common proposal elements so your team is ready to roll once the 2021 timing is announced.

How long is the average grant application window open?

The length of the application window largely depends on the funder. Most state and federal grant windows range between 30 and 45 days. More complex opportunities from the federal government may be open for as long as 90 days in order to give applicants adequate time to prepare. Foundation funding opportunities could be open for as little as a week or as long as three months, but most are typically open for about one month.

Who should I involve from our organization in the proposal preparation process?

It takes a village to pull together a strong grant proposal and project. Given the somewhat siloed nature of our work and areas of expertise, representation from many departments may be required in order to adequately address the required information for a grant proposal. For example, common staff members or departments for a school district to involve in grant seeking efforts include: Business Administrators or finance personnel, Curriculum Directors or lead instructors for the relevant content area, IT staff (especially if the project is going to involve technology), as well as others as needed and as is relevant to the specific grant opportunity. Finally, organization leadership's approval is almost always required – so, for example, even if the superintendent or principal is not involved in the day to day of project activities, grant funders will want to ensure that the project has her or his blessing.

We are ready to apply. Is there a template we can use to fill in our project information for submission?

Unfortunately, no. There is no one-size-fits-all grant proposal that will fit every application. Very rarely will funders provide applicants a template for proposal submissions beyond the proposed budget section; when they do it is almost certainly to make things easier on their reviewers rather than the applicant.

While there are general proposal elements most funders will want to see, each program is unique in terms of the set of questions and required documentation for these common proposal aspects. While you might be able to brainstorm and scaffold initial project ideas from a general use grant project planning template, you should never attempt to use that alone to develop the proposal you submit to a funder. Check your template's content against the specific grant's solicitation to figure out which content is still missing and what can be cut because the funder didn't request it.

Grant funders do not appreciate reading a proposal that was obviously copy and pasted from one application to the next. From their perspective, it is a bit like watching someone try to cram a square peg into a round hole. There are subtle clues that give away if a proposal was sent en masse or generated from a "plug and chug, fill-in-the-blanks" template rather than based on the specific instructions for the one you are applying to in that moment. Chief among them is that information may not be organized in the manner requested. Another clue is when the applicant almost answers a question but falls just short of what was actually asked (e.g. "Please list the city, county, and state where the project will occur: This project will occur in Rochester, New York").

To get an idea of what the funder might expect to see from applicants for the upcoming round of funding the best thing you can do is look at the previous year's solicitation for that grant program. For most annual grant programs, the information requested by the funder is going to be the same from year to year with few variations (e.g. competitive priorities specific to that year). Based on those instructions you can begin to outline your proposed project idea and pull the information that you think the funder will request in the upcoming solicitation.

What are some of the "common proposal elements" that our organization can begin pulling information together for now?

There are many small elements that make up a project grant proposal and when you only have 30-90 days to pull all these elements together it can be very easy to miss something. That is why the more you can prepare your project proposal idea and content ahead of the application window, the less likely you are to let anything fall through the cracks. To be ready, keep the following general information updated and at the ready:

• Organization Description (background or history, strategic plan, financial details including the most recent audit findings and tax-exempt status, certifications or determinations, staff biographies, etc.)

• Data from your most recent community needs assessment

• Local or regional statistics of relevance to your project content area and the target population to be served

• Your successes (previous grants received, accolades or awards of relevance to the project area, testimonials etc.)

Those details form the bases for being grant ready and enable you to then focus on the other project-specific common proposal elements. These are the aspects that funder will want to know about your project specifically, but you can begin outlining some basic ideas now in anticipation of the questions they may ask:

• *Statement of Need:* What is the problem and why is it a problem? What will happen if the issue is not addressed?

• *Project Description:* This is your plan to address the problem. Consider your project goals and key activities. Provide a timeline of the activities to occur and let the funder know your predicted outcomes from the project.

• *Evaluation Plan:* What does a successful project look like, and how will you know if the project is successful? What data will be gathered and how will it be analyzed to determine the degree of the project's success?

• *Sustainability Plan:* Funders don't want to be tied to you indefinitely, they want to be the catalyst for your project. They also don't want to hear that you're going to ask someone else for funding for this project after the grant they gave you runs out. Tell them about your organization's long-term plan to fund this program or project internally.

• *Project Budget and Justification for Expenses:* Never assume that the project costs are self-evident. Most funders will want a guarantee that the funds are "necessary and reasonable"; show them this is the case by connecting each expense to a specific project activity and describe how it can contribute towards reaching one of your project goals. Don't forget to save vendor quotes to show that these costs weren't just random numbers that you came up with out of the blue.

• *Letters of Commitment or Memoranda of Understanding from Partners:* While you should wait to draft the final versions of these documents until you have the current grant guidance in hand, you can begin to brainstorm with partners what might go into these documents now.

How long does it take to develop a grant proposal for submission? I already have a lot on my plate, what kind of workload should I expect to be added?
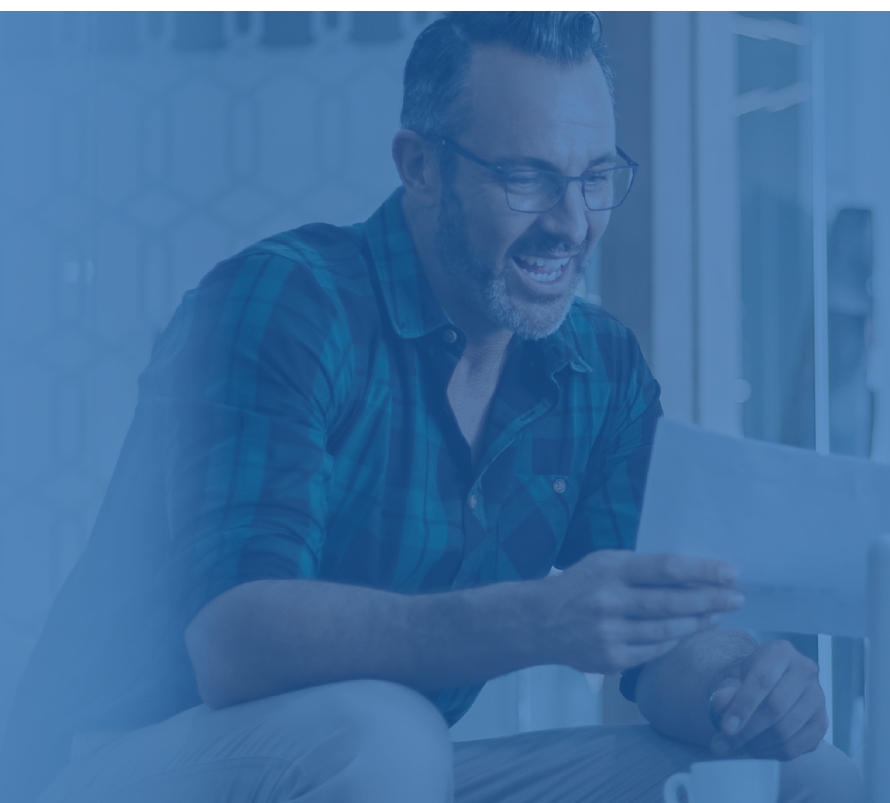
Like so many things, this depends on the grant opportunity itself and who is funding the opportunity. Typically, foundations have the lowest threshold for application burden. The information they request is very straight forward and doesn't take too long to compile if you have common proposal attachment items at the ready (e.g. IRS tax exempt designation, organization chart, etc.) and a clear project idea in mind. Some foundation might ask for three to five pages explaining the project idea to be submitted via mail or email, while others might utilize an online portal which features a series of short answer question boxes. State and federal grants are almost always more complex, with federal grants often requiring the most time to prepare. State and federal grants are also submitted either in paper or through online portals, and ask for much more detail and supporting documentation than a foundation funder would.

Often times we recommend that applicants give themselves as much time as possible to prepare a grant proposal, regardless of if it is for a federal, state, or foundation grant opportunity. With more time you have the ability to space out project development tasks, while keeping the stress of a quickly approaching deadline at bay. For federal grants, consider starting the planning process five to six months out from the proposed deadline, longer if the project requires partnership with other entities. For state grants, you will likely want about three to four months to plan the project at a leisurely rate. Foundation project proposals may only take a weekend to write and submit, but give yourself a month or two to be on the safe side and make sure you've used your limited space to cram in as much relevant project detail as possible.

The thing to keep in mind above all else is that grant seeking is a team effort. You will need to involve individuals from across your organization to be able to pull together all of the required information the funder is going to expect to see in your proposal. These tasks can be divided among relevant staff to make the work go more quickly, just remember to put someone in charge to help herd all those cats!

Finally, even if your organization has someone whose dedicated job is submitting grant applications, remember that they are human. They need to eat and sleep like you, and they are not an omniscient mind reader. Their job is to articulate your grant team's project and put it onto the page, but you still need to come up with the ideas and decide how your project is going to look. Be sure you aren't sending them things at the last minute so they have ample time to work and solicit feedback to ensure they've captured your vision accurately.

What is the typical timeline between application submission and receipt of funding?

This largely depends on the grant program and the funder. Most federal grants will take anywhere from 6 to 8 months to publish their award decisions. This timeline could be extended in instances of federal government shutdowns because review staff are sent home and unable to continue work. State opportunities usually take anywhere from 2 to 4 months to make their decisions.

Foundations are very diverse in their grant making processes, thus their timeline for decisions is equally diverse. Time to decision is usually based upon staff capacity and how frequently they review applications. For instance, a larger foundation with several full-time personnel could turn around a decision in as little as a couple weeks. A smaller family foundation though, might only be able to meet once a year at the holidays to review requests – taking that small group of relatives or family friends several days for them to read through proposals and discuss each applicant.

Regardless, once you've been notified of your proposal's acceptance status you can usually expect to receive instructions shortly thereafter (if not immediately) about how funding will be distributed to your organization and when you can expect to see the first check.

UPCOMING WEBCASTS:

Planning to Make the Most of Mobility for Government Education, and Healthcare Across Texas
Date: November 10, 2020 @ 2pm EST
Sponsored by Samsung
Register HERE

Education Technology & K-12 Grant Funding: The HP Grants Support Program is Here to Help!
Date: December 2, 2020 @ 2pm EST
Sponsored by HP
Register HERE

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