Internet resources for grants and foundations

By Hilary Sternberg

The Internet way to say "show me the money"

In a world where information is power, nowhere is this more evident than with the identification and solicitation of grant and foundation funding. Whether seeking funds for your library's information literacy program or assisting a development officer find support for a cultural agency, researching foundations and grants is not an easy task. Targeting a financial champion for your project or program takes considerable preparation. The seeker of such financial support must dovetail proposals precisely to the foundation's programmatic requirements. While the competition is keen and the number of funding requests remains high, as many as 80 percent of proposals submitted to private foundations are automatically disqualified. Applications are eliminated because the applicants failed to match their needs with the foundation's stated mission and priorities.1 Meticulous research and thoughtful preparation of grant proposals can prove rewarding; after all, foundations are created for the purpose of donating money. In 1995 private foundation giving reached $10.44 billion.2

Unfortunately, many nonprofit and not-for-profit institutions have been facing stagnant or steadily declining budgets at a time when the need for operational sustenance is greater than ever. Some, weary of this less-is-more environment, have been forced to do less with less, requiring many of the uninitiated to seek outside funds for the first time. Grant monies can supplement many types of critical activities—endowments, capital campaigns, matching funds, equipment, fellowships, research, special projects, conferences, and seminars. Most successful grants request underwriting for specific activities which have a finite support period, thus confining the funder's commitment.

The Internet encompasses an exciting galaxy of foundation information and a variety of funding resources for both the neophyte and the experienced grant researcher. Foundation sites contain keys to programmatic giving, geographic focus, range of grant awards, program and support limitations. Additional information provides networking opportunities with colleagues, grant-writing structure and methodology, and access to professional literature. Many associations and government agencies, as well as corporate, private, and community foundations maintain a Web presence on the Internet. Of course, with the ever-changing nature of the Internet no article could provide a permanently comprehensive list of resources. Be aware that some sites with multiple points of access will have overlapping information and links. The following selected sites are intended to provide an introduction to the subject of grants and foundations. Explore the sites, peruse an e-journal, and enjoy surfing the links.

Best starting places/megasources

• CARDE's Other Grant and Funding Pages on the Web. Produced by the Center for Applied Research and Development in Education at the University of Texas at Austin, this site has links to federal and private sector grants, general resources for grantseekers, and resources for grantwriters and graduate fellowships. Access: http://edb518g.edb.utexas.edu/www_server/hotlist.html.

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• Community of Science Funding Opportunities. A boolean searchable, international database that includes federal agencies, private foundations, state and provincial organizations, commercial entities, nonprofit organizations, professional associations, and academic institutions. Contrary to what the title might suggest, this site also includes some sources for arts and humanities, education, engineering, law, and others. Access: http://cos.gdb.org/repos/fund/fund-intro.html.

• Financial Aid Information Page—Grant Information. Sponsored by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, this site includes links to indexes of grant information, grantwriting, grant database, periodicals, government grants, and grant-related sources. Access: http://www.finaid.org/finaid/awards/grants.html.

• Nonprofit Resources Catalogue: Fundraising and Giving. Award-winning site developed by Phillip A. Walker with more than 200 links which include funding sources, foundations, and corporate contributions. Updated monthly. Access: http://www.clark.net/pub/pwalker/Fundraising_and_Giving/.

Organizations
• Council on Foundations. A nonprofit coalition of grantmaking foundations and corporations whose goal is to promote responsible and effective philanthropy. This site includes Foundation News and Commentary and Council Columns Newsletter, publications of books and videos, general information on foundations, how to start a foundation, legislative and public policy watch, and foundation homepages. Access: http://www.cof.org.

• Foundation Center. This site provides grantmaker information, funding trends and analysis, Philanthropy News Digest, training and seminars, libraries and locations, fundraising process, Foundation Center publications, and a list of cooperating libraries. There are annotated searchable links to more than 160 private, community, and corporate foundations, plus federal grants and public charities. Also ranks foundations by assets and total giving. An online librarian is available to answer your e-mail questions. Access: http://fdncenter.org/.

• The Grantsmanship Center. TGC is known for its grants and fundraising seminars. A list of its excellent print publications—each available for $3 to $4—and an order form are provided. Also included in this site are nonprofit resources, TGC Magazine, today’s Federal Register grant information, and links to grantmaking foundations—arts, community, corporate, international, private foundations, and public charities. Access: http://www.tgci.com/.

Directories

• IAN Web Resources: Grant Opportunities. Alphabetical links to individual foundations, organizations, and grant collections. Some listings have full or partial text. Access: http://www.pitt.edu/~ian/resource/grants.htm.


Government funding

• Federal Register Online via GPO Access. The Federal Register, as the official publication for presidential documents, executive orders, notices, rules, and proposed rules from
federal agencies, will provide the first published notification for federal grants. This database is searchable using boolean operators from 1995 to the present. Access: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html.


- Grants and Awards. This U.S. Government grants site includes a searchable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance—the most comprehensive listing of federal grants from government agencies. There are links to 25 government sites. Access: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/topics/grants.html.


- TRAM Research Funding Opportunities and Administration. From the Texas Research Administrators Group, which contains unusual tools and types of information including electronic downloadable forms in Mac and PC versions for several government agencies and foundations, links to federal regulations and guidelines to several government agencies, a search engine for research opportunities and funding sources, links to sample policies and agreements contributed by universities and organizations, and links to additional servers. Access: http://tram.rice.edu/TRAM/index.html.

Grant writing
- Corporate and Foundation Funding. Dick Olsen and Chris Murray of the University of Southern California provide examples of an introductory letter and proposal to a foundation. An outline for effective proposal writing takes the guesswork out of this process. Includes a step-by-step methodology for securing corporate support and foundation funding. Access: gopher://cwis.usc.edu/11/Library Research/Research/Funding.
- How to Write Successful Grant Proposals. The full text of three successful grant proposals are posted here, as well as shareware and freeware applications to make grant writing easier. Access: http://ipt.lpl.arizona.edu/IPT/Grant/.
- Proposal Development. Written by the Pennsylvania State University Research and Technology Transfer Organization, this site includes a reprint portion of Proposal Development Handbook written by Dean Kleinert and Libby Costello of the Office of Federal Programs. It explains how to develop a statement of need, goals and objectives, methodology, budget and proposal elements. In addition there is identification of funding opportunities and a bibliography of print sources. Access: http://infoserv.rttonet.psu.edu/spa/fac-guid.htm#pd.
- Tips for Success. Created by Rebecca Ryan and Howard Kaplan of Georgia Southern University from their workshop Nuts and Bolts: An Introduction to Grant Development. The authors discuss developing contracts, boilerplate proposals, following guidelines, dissemination plans, reviewer's comments, and more. Access: gopher://eagle1.cc.GaSoU.edu:70/00/Georgia%20Southern%20University Office%20of%20Research/Tips%20for%20Success.

Electronic journals/magazines
- The Chronicle of Higher Education—Academe This Week. This segment of the Chronicle provides deadline and contact information for grants, fellowships, papers, and exp.
change programs, as well as other information. With few exceptions, the deadlines are so current that it is too late to apply this year, but now there is an entire year to think about a project for next year’s deadline. Access: http://www.chronicle.merit.edu/.events/.links.html.


- **Foundation News and Commentary.** A bimonthly periodical published by the Council on Foundations, which lists a table of contents for the last three issues and includes two or more full-text articles per issue. Access: http://www.cof.org/lnc/.


- **Philanthropy Journal Online.** “All the Nonprofit News That’s Fit to Hit.” A nonprofit newsletter providing news and information regarding the nonprofit sector including numerous links and resources available on the Web. Access: http://www.philanthropy-journal.org/.

- **Philanthropy News Digest.** A Foundation Center weekly publication whose articles are gleaned from newspapers and wire services relating to philanthropy. Many articles have “FC” annotated notes which provide background information. Full text is provided for the past eight weeks. Access to the archives is through a search engine. In addition, there is a searchable donor, officer, and trustee index. Access: http://fdncenter.org/phil/philmain.html.

**Other interesting sites**

- **Fundraising.** A bibliography of print sources in fundraising. Citations are for works published in 1995 or earlier. Many are of the “how to” variety for finding information on grants and foundations and grantwriting methodology. Access: http://www.iupui.edu/it/philanth/bigbib.html#FUNDRAISING.

- **Payton Philanthropic Studies Library.** The library provides links to foundations, nonprofits, grant information, and electronic journals. An online searchable version of the Philanthropic Studies Index (1991-1994) provides access to book and periodic literature on volunteerism, nonprofit organizations, fundraising, and charitable giving. Information is included for the fundraising school, school degree programs, applied research, and more. Access: http://www-lib.iupui.edu/philanthropy/payton.html.

- **University of Idaho Education Grants Directory.** Links to sites recommended by James Kearney in The Grant Getter’s Guide to the Internet, which include federal grant sources, foundations and private grant sources, grant directories, and education resources. Access: http://radon.chem.uidaho.edu/~pmits/grants/homepage.html.

**Notes**


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**Grant funding and distribution by major subject categories, 1995**

[Diagram showing percentages of grant dollars and number of grants by subject category]

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