



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Pima County Community College in Tucson, Arizona for receiving four renewed Upward Bound grants from the U.S. Department of Education. These five-year grants will enable PCC to continue reaching at-risk high school students with academic assistance and other services to help them become college ready and get them enrolled in higher education.

Among the four Pima County Community College campuses delivering Upward Bound to students in impoverished neighborhoods, more than 240 students will be reached each year. The awards are worth between \$250,000 and \$262,000 per year. Way to go Pima team!

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Upcoming Grants Education

If you find that you need more in-depth information about how to be successful with your grantseeking, we recommend investing in the Grant Professional Association's Annual Conference.

Great as our local chapters of AFP and GPA are, they are usually able to provide only an hour of grants education per month or even per quarter. (Unless a regional conference is held nearby.)

The 2012 GPA annual conference will be held October 17-20 in Indianapolis.

Sessions address all levels of grant experience, from the new development officer who learns she is expected to write proposals, to the multi-year veteran who is a life-long learner.

Here is a preview of some of the topics that you can learn about this year:

- Collaborative Program Evaluation
- Objectives-Based Budgeting

- Winning Every Point (from reviewers)
- Writing Strong Objectives
- Reviewer-Friendly Proposals
- Transitioning into Consulting

And much more.

You will also hear from representatives of funding agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Education and a former staffer from the National Science Foundation.

In addition to traditional 75-minute sessions, this year's conference also features several Part I and Part II sessions to allow you to delve deeper into more complex topics if that's your style.

Conference information and registration are available at: www.grantprofessionals.org.

Early-bird discounts expire June 30!

Contact us!

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What 'Impact' Means for Your Grant

By Cheryl L. Kester, CFRE

The word "impact" gets thrown around a lot, both in our profession and by the general public. We all have a general idea of what "impact" means, at least what it means to us.

Grantmakers use the term "impact" in two important, distinctive ways that affect your grantseeking. The first usage of impact is the one most grants professionals are familiar with — asking applicants to describe what the impact will be of the proposed grant-funded activities.

To us, the discussion about metrics and demonstrating outcomes is not new. Some funders have been moving in this direction for several years now. What is happening is that this way of thinking continues to trickle down from state and federal government funding agencies, to national foundations, until now it is reaching smaller, local and family foundations. Good for them.



Succeeding in the New World of "Impact"

1. *You must absolutely be able to tell a compelling story*
2. *It's essential to link the funder's grant to measurable impact*
3. *Invest in better tools or skills for you to measure and report impact*
4. *Seek opportunities to collaborate and partner to extend impact*

The second way funders use "impact" is to emphasize that they want to achieve "impact" with their funding. Of course, they have always wanted to achieve impact. But in today's economy, this often really means, "We are reallocating our giving so that we can make a few big gifts instead of lots of small grants."

There are many reasons funders do this. Mirroring the population of individual donors, foundation staff and boards want to be more "strategic" in their giving. Never, ever forget that "foundations" are run by people. There is quite a bit of donor research out there that tells us what motivates people to support causes and explaining how donor motivations and expectations are shifting today.

At the foundation level, the strategic rationale for reallocating grant making into larger grants grows out of the concept that making a few, larger grants will have more "impact" than sprinkling the foundation's limited grant making funds among several smaller organizations.

One ironic outcome of the economic downturn is that the sheer number of non-profits who have had to cut services or staff or who struggle to remain open seems to prove to foundations that making a few small grants to many organizations is a poor investment. A grant won't keep the doors open of a fiscally unsound agency. It only prolongs the inevitable.



***Never, ever
forget that
foundations
are run
by people.***

***You ignore
research into
individual
philanthropy
at your peril.***



Other rationales come into play as well. For example, foundations have also had to reduce staff. If you are making fewer grants, it doesn't take as many people to manage your grantees. Or, we may suspect that some funders go for one or two high-profile gifts because they want the publicity. That's their right.

We have always said in our profession, "they who have the gold make the rules." Foundations are perfectly within their rights to give one giant grant per year that maxes out their funding budget, if that is what they think will get them the most "bang for their buck."

This is a continuing trend we are going to have to keep watching. We are only now beginning to feel the effects of more and more foundations reconsidering their giving policies and reducing the number of their grantees.

Larger agencies with regional or national reach might benefit from larger grant awards. Ensure you have excellent relationships with your long-term funders, that you are up to speed on what inspires them, and come into meetings with big ideas. Are you the one they call when they want to do something new?

Smaller agencies may see a decrease in grant funding or in the number of funders supporting them. A program officer on a funder's panel just two weeks ago declared that their foundation will be reducing its number of grantees.

It's not all doom and gloom if you are a smaller agency. However, you will have to be prepared for a possible drop-off in grant funding. You will likely have to work harder for smaller grants from more local funders. And you need to get creative about partnering with other agencies to increase impact.

Please share your thoughts and concerns about shifting giving allocations at kestergroup.com/blog

It's not all doom and gloom for smaller agencies. But you may have to re-think your funder portfolio and "right-size" it.

Tell us what you think at kestergroup.com

Tips from Foundations-Direct Quotes!

*From the June 2012 Funders' Panel hosted by AFP, GPA and the Fayetteville (Ark.) Public Library

- We fund organizations who are stable and who have multiple sources of funding.
- Requests to "save" a program are not inspiring.
- We want to see that you are absolutely sold on your mission. We hate it when applicants hint "what do you want us to be?" because we can tell they are just trying to get the money.
- Don't try to make a square peg fit into a round hole trying to keep your funding. Funding is not guaranteed and program priorities [of the foundations] can change.
- Be as respectful as you can of the priorities. [of the funder's program priorities].
- Our small grants toward a huge goal are not interesting. [translation: they don't believe they achieve "impact" by making a small grant to a big project; right-size your project to the funder]
- "Political splits" are less likely to be funded. Try to be aware of who else is doing what you do and how you might collaborate.
- Make sure your application pays a lot of attention to detail on the true outcomes and outputs that are measurable. What is the 'measuring plan?'

Grants Questions and Answers will return here next issue.

Ask us your questions about the quotes at kestergroup.com



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The Kester Group, LLC has helped clients raise more than \$55.9 million in grants and contracts. The principals and associates have been employed by non-profits, schools, colleges, arts and healthcare organizations. We know you and are committed to your mission.

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Upcoming Grant Opportunities

AMA Foundation Healthy Living Grants

<http://tinyurl.com/6b75dl8>

Contact: (800) 621-8335

Deadline: July 16, 2012

Grant Size: Approx. 25 awards up to \$8,000

Eligibility: Medical organizations and nonprofits partnering with medical organizations

Grants for grassroots health education to fight obesity.

NSF Grants for Minority STEM Education

<http://tinyurl.com/d7z8a5h>

Contact: ahicks@nsf.gov

Deadline: August 28

Grant Size: 60 awards from \$50,000 to \$5 million

The NSF's Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program offers grants to colleges and universities to promote an increase in the number of minorities who graduate with science, technology, education and mathematics (STEM) degrees.

Mr. Holland's Opus Instrument Grants

<http://www.mhopus.org/Home>

Tel: (818) 762-4328

Deadline: Pre-Qualification Form due Aug. 1

Geographic focus: National

Grants to provide musical instruments to schools serving low-income communities or with limited instrument budgets. Any school eligible, with some restrictions. See guidelines for details.

Blue & You Fdn For a Healthier Arkansas Grants

www.blueandyoufoundationarkansas.com

Tel: (501) 378-3300

Deadline: July 16

Grant Size: \$5K to \$150K or \$1K mini-grants

Eligibility: Arkansas-based organization or governmental agency

The Blue & You Foundation's mission is to promote better health in Arkansas. Particular emphasis will be given to projects that affect healthcare delivery, healthcare policy and healthcare economics.