



# Grant Guidance

Thomas-Forbes & Kester, LLC

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“The skill of writing is to create a context in which other people can think.”

—Edwin Schlossberg

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## Join us at the AAGP National Conference!

If you haven't registered yet for the [American Association of Grant Professionals 2010 Annual Conference](#) taking place November 3-6, we encourage you to do so! This year, Melanie will be presenting *Presentation Pearls of Wisdom* with Barbara Putman from the [Walton Arts Center](#). Come learn how to use your grant writing skills to make you a better communicator when you give a presentation to your board, pitch an idea to a boss, or collaborate with colleagues. The AAGP conference offers a variety of outstanding [workshops](#) designed to develop your grantseeking skills. We hope to see you there!

## Excellent New Stewardship Resource

The Foundation Center Fundraising Guides series has just released *After the Grant: The Nonprofit's Guide to Good Stewardship*. While we will admit that we have not searched for a grants management book in particular, we have read numerous grants books over the years, and none of us here at TFK can remember seeing one focused on what a grant recipient should do after receiving a grant.

The authors of *After the Grant* are clearly writing from a “been there, done that” perspective and include quotes and stories from other nonprofits as well as from foundations. The authors clearly realize that smaller nonprofits with little or no staff face different grants management issues than larger organizations with multiple layers of departments who will touch a grant when it

comes in. The authors recommend post-award management strategies with this in mind.

*After the Grant* includes several sample documents and checklists throughout the chapters on “The Grant Award Letter,” “Communication with the Funder” (saying “Thank You!”), and “The Grant Report.” Like most Foundation Center publications, there are even samples of successful grant proposals, but this book also includes sample grant reports as well as three grants Case Studies.

*After the Grant* should be on every grant professional and development officer's bookshelf. It can be purchased on the [Foundation Center website](#) for \$39.95.

## No More Debates About Whose Job It Is, Please!

By Cheryl L. Kester



*“Grant professionals must be loud and vocal advocates for it being someone’s job to steward the grants.”*

It seems like lately there has been a “perfect storm” around the topic of managing grants. At the Chicago AAGP conference, I attended a roundtable discussion on, “Is it our job to manage grants after they are received?” The editor of *Grants and Foundation Review* just asked for an article addressing the topic of whose job it is to manage grants.

And then the Foundation Center’s book, *After the Grant: The Nonprofit’s Guide to Good Stewardship*, arrived with the answer. After explaining that program staff do the actual work for which the grant was awarded, the authors announce, “Development staff members are the ones charged with keeping in touch with the program staff to make sure that the funded work is being carried out according to the terms of the grant. . .and that the work is proceeding on schedule.”

Well that settles it, doesn’t it?

Most of the places where we work do not have an entire “post-award” department. Where those do exist, the pre-award staff (jargon for those of us who write proposals) have their own set of issues to navigate and often feel left out of the loop. There is even a professional association for post-award people called the National Grants Management Association ([www.ngma.org](http://www.ngma.org)).

However, for the rest of us, the fact remains that someone has to be responsible for ensuring that someone says thank you, that grant funds are spent appropriately, that the funder is properly recognized (or not!) in press releases or other announcements, and that reports get submitted on time.

Whose job is it? That is a red herring.

No matter the size of the organization receiving a grant, whether it is an all volunteer or a multi-million dollar operation, it is essential that someone be responsible for managing grant funds. Period.

Grant professionals must be loud and vocal advocates for it being someone’s job to steward the grants. Sure, you should probably have a recommendation for who this should be when you do your advocating. And sure, often those with good ideas get rewarded by getting more work assigned to them. Quite frankly, many of us would prefer that we be allowed to manage our grants rather than entrusting them to someone else.

Is it “our job” to manage grants? Yes, absolutely.

How much management we do and how much we are able to entrust to our colleagues will change from organization to organization and sometimes from grant to grant.

If we remember to think of grants management as donor stewardship, and if we recall that managing a grant well is actually part of our next application, then it will be easier to explain why we are spending valuable time chasing down the dollars that have already been awarded when we could be writing a new application.

## For our Arkansas subscribers: Join us for a day of grants training, presented by the AAGP Arkansas Chapter!

### Grant Seeking and Management Workshops

Date:	Friday, June 11, 2010
Time:	8:30am—3:15pm
Location:	Pulaski Technical College 3000 West Scenic Drive North Little Rock Campus Center, Grand Hall & Private Dining Room
Cost:	FREE to AAGP members; \$30 guests
RSVP:	Melanie Palmer melanie@tfkgrants.com (479) 582-4602

The AAGP Arkansas Chapter is presenting a day-long series of workshops on grant seeking and management, with a focus on state funding agencies. Workshops will include several funding panels with representatives from the Arkansas Arts Council, Arkansas Department of Health, Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism, Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, and Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality. Sessions will also address grant management, subrecipient monitoring, and grant writing basics.

We hope you will join us to hone your grantseeking skills and network with other grants professionals throughout the state! For a detailed agenda, more information, and to RSVP, please email Melanie at [melanie@tfkgrants.com](mailto:melanie@tfkgrants.com) or call (479) 582-4602.

## Grants Questions Answered

Q. How long does it take to write a federal grant?

A. The answer depends on many factors, but don't forget that there is much more to preparing a competitive application than just "the writing." In fact, the writing itself is often much less time-consuming than the planning process, which is essential to developing a competitive project; after all, even the best written proposal will not be funded if the project design is flawed or does not fit the funding program's priorities. Most federal applications are for complex, multi-year projects that require significant planning and research. While we have successfully gotten proposals funded that were developed and written in less than four weeks, doing so is a challenge and puts great strain on the grant writing team. We like to see organizations working on their projects, budgets, activities and plans long before the funding announcement comes out – two to three months from start to finish is an ideal, less frantic pace. The best strategy is to take note of federal funding programs that come out regularly (yearly or every 2 or 3 years) and begin working on the application before the program is announced. Usually, the guidance will not change much from cycle to cycle.



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Thomas-Forbes & Kester, LLC is committed to serving non-profits through grant writing, training, strategic planning and program design and evaluation. The principles and associates have been employed by non-profit organizations, been volunteers and served on non-profit boards. We know you and are committed to your mission.

Please visit our website for more information: [www.tfkgrants.com](http://www.tfkgrants.com).

You may request to be removed from our newsletter mailing list at any time by sending an email to [melanie@tfkgrants.com](mailto:melanie@tfkgrants.com).

## Upcoming Grant Opportunities

### **The Ella Fitzgerald Foundation**

Contact: Fran E. Morris Rosman, Exec. Dir.  
PO Box 1587, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Deadline: none

Grant Range: \$500—\$30,000

*Giving for creating educational and other opportunities for children; fostering a love and knowledge of music; providing health care, food, shelter and counseling; and medical care and research.*

For more details, visit the [Ella Fitzgerald Foundation](http://www.ellafitzgeraldfoundation.org) online.

### **Verizon Foundation**

One Verizon Way  
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

[VerizonFoundation@Verizon.com](mailto:VerizonFoundation@Verizon.com)

Deadline: October 31, 2010

Grant Range: \$5,000—\$10,000

*Giving in the areas of education, literacy, domestic violence prevention, healthcare & accessibility, and Internet safety.*

For more information and to apply: [Verizon Foundation](http://www.verizonfoundation.org) online.

### **BNSF Foundation**

Mary Jo Keating, Mgr. Corporate Contributions  
2650 Lou Menk Drive  
Ft. Worth, TX 76131

[BNSFFoundation@bnsf.org](mailto:BNSFFoundation@bnsf.org)

Deadline: none

Grant range: \$200—\$300,000

*Giving for civic, cultural, educational, health, and youth programs, as well as federated organizations in areas of company operations.*

For more information, [BNSF Foundation](http://www.bnsffoundation.org) online.

### **State Farm Companies Grants Program**

[http://www.statefarm.com/about/part\\_spos/grants/cogrants.asp](http://www.statefarm.com/about/part_spos/grants/cogrants.asp)

Deadline: October 31, 2010

Grant Range: unknown

*Giving in the areas of safety, community development, and education in communities with company operations.*

For more information, visit the [State Farm Companies Grants Program](http://www.statefarm.com/about/part_spos/grants/cogrants.asp) online.