



Grant Guidance

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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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Congratulations!

Congratulations to [Pima Community College](#) East and Desert Vista Campuses for receiving five-year, \$1.2 million Student Support Services grants from the Department of Education to provide services to help low income, first generation, and disabled college students succeed!

Data Sources for Grant Proposals

If you have any experience in writing grant proposals at all, you know what a powerful (and often required!) tool good data can be in presenting your case to a funder. Data research can be time consuming, but it is worth the investment. Here are some great sources for data that you can use in describing your community or target population.

US Census—The Census is a great source for data of all kinds: demographic, education, health, economic indicators, and more. Updated population estimates are available for each year, and the American Community Survey provides data more recent than the 2000 survey. Want to cite how many Native Americans hold a college degree in your service area for an education project targeting Native American students? The Census is the place.

[The Annie E. Casey Foundation's](#)

KIDS COUNT—If your project targets children, this is a great resource for data. It provides state- and national-level data on children in poverty, in foster care, and from single parent homes. Teen dropout rates and parental employment can be found here too.

US Bureau of Labor Statistics—If your project relates to employment or targets the unemployed, the BLS offers state, local, and community-level employment data.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)—If you are writing for an educational project, check the NCES for education-related data on early childhood through higher education.

Be sure to also keep an eye out for local data—surveys, research studies, or publications from local organizations can help you quantify your service area's needs.

Preparing for the CFRE Exam

By Cheryl L. Kester, CFRE



“The CFRE Review Course [at the AFP Conference] really helped me prepare.

The presenters were experienced development professionals who were well informed and trained. It provided me with the tools I needed to pass the exam! I would highly recommend this course to others.”

*- Ms. Kelly Kemp,
Director of Development at a family center, and a 2010 CFRE recipient*

Anyone with five years of experience in fundraising who meets the other application requirements (professional development, funds raised, service, etc.), may sit for the CFRE exam. The questions test the knowledge of a person who has been fundraising for five years. A team of CFREs examines each question carefully and asks themselves, “Would a person who has only been raising funds for five years know the answer?”

Will you be expected to be an expert in all areas of fundraising? No. Is it a good idea to attend conference sessions or read articles on topics outside of your primary area of responsibility? Yes. If you have experience only with special events, then read up on prospect identification. Learn some basic Planned Giving terminology so you know what an annuity or a trust is. Read at least one basic fundraising book.

Exam Prep Tips

1. Use the Study Outline provided at www.cfre.org
2. Read at least one broad fundraising book from the reading list
3. Attend conference presentations or read articles on fundraising topics outside your primary area of responsibility
4. Consider a review course, like the AFP CFRE Review Course

The CFRE website (www.cfre.org) offers good exam preparation material, and you should review it all, including a study outline, sample test questions and a list of recommended reading. “Once I reviewed the sample test questions, I had a good understanding of the question framework, wording, and how to study,” said Ms. Amy Linimon, Director of Special Events at a hospital and a 2010 CFRE recipient.

One book highly recommended by recent test-takers (and often used by those of us who are writing CFRE test questions) is *Fundraising Basics: A Complete Guide* by Barbara Ciconte and Jeanne Jacob; others by Kent Dove or James Greenfield are also highly recommended. The Fayetteville Arkansas Public Library owns all of the books on the CFRE study list; your local library or university may own these resources also.

Studying some basic test-taking skills can be helpful as well. Mr. Ben McLintock, Director of Development at an economic opportunity agency and a recent CFRE recipient, gives this advice: “Pay very close attention to the question’s wording and structure, particularly the stem. This will help you figure out the correct answer, even if you are not familiar with a particular form of fundraising. For example, “What is a form of donor stewardship?” versus “What is the *most effective* form of donor stewardship?” Just a couple of words can completely change the nature of the question and which answer will be correct.”

Some are fearful of exams or fearful of failing. If you meet all of the other requirements for the exam, I encourage you to prepare as best as you can by reviewing the sample questions then make yourself take the exam. You may do better than you think and pass it on the first try. Many do.

If you do not pass, you have a good idea of what sorts of questions you will face and how to study. You have 12 months from the date of your approved application to try again. You have to earn 500 exam points out of a possible 800 (there are 200 questions), or a 63% to pass the exam. Most of us did not have college professors so generous! You could miss every single planned giving question and still pass the exam.

So what are you waiting for? Don’t let fear of the exam stop you from earning your credential.

Resource Review: *After the Grant*

We have long lamented the scarcity of resources available on good stewardship practices. Since so much of grant seeking depends upon developing and maintaining good relationships with funders, it is essential that you manage grant funds responsibly and build trust with a funding agency after you are awarded. Good stewardship can work wonders for your future gift prospects.

This year, the Foundation Center has added *After the Grant: The Nonprofit's Guide to Good Stewardship* to its long list of valuable resources on fundraising from private foundations. Insisting that “getting a grant begins with a relationship” and “receiving the grant is not the end but a beginning,” this book takes the reader through every step of the stewardship process, from the legal requirements and contents of award letters to useful filing systems to track and maintain grant-related records to proper communication with funders. *After the*

Grant also provides instruction for compiling an effective grant report as well as how to prepare for your next grant after completing a grant-funded project. A troubleshooting guide also advises how to handle sticky situations that inevitably arise, such as having a project leader leave during the grant period or finding that grant funds were spent on items not associated with the funding project.

As with other Foundation Center resources, *After the Grant* uses worksheets, samples, and concrete instruction to help clarify the material. We highly recommend adding it to your library for reference.

For more Foundation Center publications, visit the [Foundation Center Online](#). *After the Grant* and other FC resources are available on the Foundation Center website, at the Fayetteville Public Library's Nonprofit Resource Center, and at other libraries and retailers nationwide.

Grants Questions Answered

- Q. The hardest part about grant writing for me is getting started. Sitting down to a blank page always seems overwhelming. What can I do to make it easier?
- A. When we write a proposal, we almost never begin with a blank page. We borrow material from other proposals—usually beginning by changing “ABC organization” to “XYZ organization” in all the right places and going from there. This saves us time and keeps us from reinventing the wheel. Why spend half an hour recreating a table format when you can just delete the information out of an old one and put in the new? Cut and paste is the grant writer's best friend. We recommend working off of an existing proposal; it will also help give you ideas for content and format (following the funder's guidance of course), and will familiarize you with some common “grants language.” Check out Foundation Center's *Guide to Winning Proposal* series for sample funded proposals, ask a colleague for sample proposals or advice, or work off of one of your own.



Have a question?
Send it to Melanie
to include in next
month's newsletter!

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Codes of Ethics of :



Thomas-Forbes & Kester, LLC is committed to serving non-profits through grant writing, training, strategic planning and program design and evaluation. The principals 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.

You may request to be removed from our newsletter mailing list at any time by sending an email to melanie@tfkgrants.com.

Upcoming Grant Opportunities

Dollar General Literacy Foundation Waiting List Reduction Grant Program

<http://www.dollargeneral.com/dgliteracy/Pages/WaitingList.aspx>

Grant Range: up to \$10,000

Deadline: September 30, 2010

Giving to extend adult literacy programs and reduce waiting lists for these services

To apply, visit the [Dollar General Literacy Foundation](http://www.dollargeneral.com/dgliteracy/Pages/WaitingList.aspx) online

Finish Line Youth Foundation

<http://www.finishline.com/store/youthfoundation/guidelines.jsp>

Grant Range: \$1,000—\$5,000

Deadline: none

Giving to youth athletic programs and sports camps, especially for disadvantaged and special needs kids

To apply, visit the [Finish Line Youth Foundation](http://www.finishline.com/store/youthfoundation/guidelines.jsp) online

VSA and MetLife Foundation Arts Connect All Program

Email: artsconnectall@vsarts.org

Grant range: up to \$15,000

Deadline: November 19, 2010

Giving to partnerships between arts organizations and schools to use the arts to contribute to the social, cognitive, and cultural development of students with disabilities

For more information and to apply, visit [VSA](http://www.vsa-usa.org) online

Chamber Music America Presenting Jazz Program

Contact: Jeanette Vuocolo, Program Director

Tel: (212) 242-2022

Email: jvuocolo@chamber-music.org

Grant Range: \$5,000—\$12,000

Deadline: October 15, 2010

Giving for public performances by jazz ensembles and artists

For more information and to apply, visit [Chamber Music America Presenting Jazz Guidelines](http://www.chamber-music.org)