



Grant Guidance

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

—Edwin Schlossberg

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Are Grant Writers Fundraisers? 2

Resource Review: Perfect Phrases 3

Grants Questions Answered 3

AAGP Conference 4

Upcoming Grant Opportunities 5

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Measuring the Impact of Grants

by Melanie Nolen

This month, the federal government released its first report on the impact of Recovery Act funding on job creation/retention. Reports were filed from recipients of grants, loans, and contracts.

The data show that 30,383 jobs have been saved through contracts, which represent only 8.0% of the total awards made, compared to 91.7% grants.

While data on the impact of grant funds are still forthcoming, we have to ask, “is job creation/retention the most accurate benchmark for measuring the economic impact of grants?”

As nonprofit professionals know, the impact of our grant-funded programs reaches far beyond job creation in its potential effect on economic recovery. A child who receives after-school tutoring today will contribute more to the economy as an entrepreneur in the future.

Victims of violent crime who receive counseling are more productive at work. Assisting individuals in need at home will make them and their businesses more competitive in the global marketplace.

None of these long-term economic improvements will be evident in the data on job creation/retention from Recovery grants, no matter what it shows.



In an atmosphere of distrust of nonprofits, it is more important than ever to advocate for the economic value and

long-term impact of nonprofit services that reach beyond how many jobs the sector directly creates or sustains.

While the federal administration must measure the short-term results of stimulus funds, we as grant professionals must tackle the grayer, less measurable areas. We must see the “big picture,” and help others see it too.



The skills needed to motivate someone to make a gift to support a cause are essentially the same whether you are targeting an individual, a corporation or a foundation.

People read your proposals, and people have to be inspired to give.

Are Grant Writers Fundraisers?

By Cheryl L. Kester

Lately I've been surprised to learn that there is a discussion about whether grant writers are fundraisers or really just . . . Well, I'm not sure what goes in that blank. Just writers? Most of us would insist that we bring way more skills to the table than only our ability to put words on a page.

At the risk of stating the obvious, isn't a fundraiser one who generates funds on behalf of an organization? When we have a successfully funded grant, isn't that what we have done?

But beyond such obvious (perhaps circular) reasoning, the reality is that successful grant professionals are professional fundraisers. They know about cultivation, solicitation, moves management, stewardship, call notes, and how to make the ask.

I sometimes joke that I'm a grantwriter and not a major gifts officer because I work from behind a computer screen and don't make small talk at cocktail parties.



"Fundraising" for Grant Professionals

- Cultivation and Solicitation
- Stewardship
- Moves Management
- Asking Strategically

But that's just a joke and is patently untrue. Successful grants professionals know that long-term relationships between funders and their organizations are essential. This requires being willing to call and go visit foundation personnel. It requires thinking strategically about what to ask for and what is an appropriate amount. About how you can move that foundation donor to a higher giving level.

Working with some family foundations in particular is actually major donor work, because one or two individuals still drive the decision making. Do you hand those prospects off to the major gifts officers, or keep them yourself? If you keep them, are you effective at motivating them to give?

While the principles of presenting written materials to inspire someone to support a cause are the same whether that person is a \$25 donor, a \$1 million estate donor, or the individuals reading your grant proposals at a foundation, getting invited to present your request in writing requires skill and determination.

I know that many of my fellow grant writers are isolated either because there is no "development team," and they are the only ones raising funds for the organization or because their organization views them as "just the writer."

It is to your advantage to advocate for yourself to be let in the club, to be considered part of the fundraising team. You will become a better grant writer and your value to the organization will increase. Always a good thing.

Resource Review: *Perfect Phrases for Writing Grant Proposals*

So you've done your research on a prospective funder, gotten the guidance, and gathered all the information about your organization and project that the funder requests. You sit down to a blank page to type, take a deep breath...and suddenly that big white space seems incredibly intimidating. Sometimes, even when you know just what you want to say, it can be difficult to know *how* to say it.

If you have ever found yourself in this situation, consider thumbing through Dr. Beverly Browning's new book, *Perfect Phrases for Writing Grant Proposals* (McGraw-Hill 2008).

The book addresses common pieces of information funders request in grant proposals, such as organizational experience, target

populations, needs, goals & objectives, evaluation, and budgets. For each section, the book identifies key facts to hit upon to paint a persuasive picture of your project to the funder while addressing all the points that the funder requests.

These instructions are illustrated with many samples of phrases and summaries that will give you the format and the language you need to craft your own.

So, next time you're run up against a wall trying to figure out how to describe the need for local music concerts or how to word that final objective, reach for this book to help you fill your blank screen with brilliant and compelling phrases.

Grants Questions Answered

Q. I've seen some grant proposals that use charts and tables instead of narrative to present data. Is that advisable?

A. Charts and tables can be useful tools in presenting data to a funder. This is common especially in federal and complicated foundation proposals that require a lot of information. If you are presenting the obesity rate growth in your community over the last decade, a line graph can illustrate a sharp increase more dramatically than narrative alone could. If you are using figures that you want funders to compare—say, the reported sexual assault rate in your community vs. the state and national rates—a table can make a discrepancy obvious. Tables and charts can also be space savers, and can prevent your narrative from becoming cumbersome.

However, using charts and tables without narrative may confuse some reviewers who aren't adept at interpreting them. Be sure to supplement your chart or table with narrative that emphasizes the points you want the funder to see in the chart or table. If you are working against a page limit, this will affect your decisions of when to use charts or tables, and how much supplemental narrative to provide. Above all, be sure all your information is clear, complete, and consistent.



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

There is still time to register for the AAGP 10th Annual Conference in Austin, Texas November 4-7, 2009

“Grant Professionals Round-Up — Skills, Strategies and Success”

We just bought our tickets to Austin, and fares are pretty reasonable (low-cost carriers). AAGP has a room-sharing service if you need a roommate to cut costs. This is NOT a year to back off on learning how to be a stronger grant writer. Competition for grant funds is only going to get tougher and tougher.

AAGP’s annual conference is the most comprehensive professional growth event for those in the grants field. Every year, participants learn valuable skills in high-quality workshops presented by experienced and knowledgeable experts.

2009 Featured Speakers include Representatives from These Funders:

- U.S. Department of Education
- LiveStrong Foundation
- Michael & Susan Dell Foundation

Workshops are provided in: Proposal Development and Planning, Grant Construction, Grant Management and Reporting, Communication Skills, Professional Ethics, Resource Knowledge/Grant Research, and more.

Come join 500 of your colleagues in the grants profession and learn how to maximize your grant seeking efforts.

Registration information available at:

<http://grantprofessionals.org/>. Click on “Annual Conference.”



Workshops We'll be Teaching at AAGP:

- 1/2-day workshop on Federal Grant Writing
- Facilitating Panel Discussion on Making Yourself Valuable to Your Employer



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We are members of and follow the
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 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.

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

Cardinal Health Foundation: E3 Grants

7000 Cardinal Place
Dublin, OH 43017
Email: communityrelations@cardinalhealth.com
Grant Range: up to \$50,000
Deadline: LOI due Oct. 30, full proposals Mar 5
Giving to programs to improve healthcare safety and quality and programs promoting healthy communities
To apply, visit [Cardinal Health Foundation](http://www.cardinalhealth.com) online.

General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids

1 General Mills Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55426
Contact: Beth Labrador
Tel: 1-800-877-1600 ext. 4821
Email: blabrador@eatright.org
Grant Range: all grants \$10,000
Deadline: January 15
Giving to programs that improve eating and physical activity patterns of young people
To apply, visit [General Mills](http://www.eatright.org) online.

NEH/ALA "We the People Bookshelf"

Tel: 1-800-545-2433, ext. 5045
Email: publicprograms@ala.org
Grant Range: giving collection of books and DVDs
Deadline: January 29
Giving collections of books & DVDs to as many as 4,000 public and school (K-12) libraries
To apply, visit [NEH: We the People Bookshelf Program](http://www.neh.gov) online.

Mathile Family Foundation

P.O. Box 13615
Dayton, OH 45413-0615
Tel: (937) 264-4607
<http://www.mathilefamilyfoundation.org/>
Grant Range: \$1,000. Foundation instructs that request should be 10% of project budget.
Deadlines: Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1, & Nov. 1
Giving to programs that benefit children in the areas of education and health
To apply, visit [Mathile Family Foundation](http://www.mathilefamilyfoundation.org/) online