



Grant Guidance

Thomas-Forbes & Kester, LLC

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 7

JUNE 2009

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

—Edwin Schlossberg

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Cover Letters with Style 2
- Foundation Center Resources 3
- Grants Questions Answered 3
- Upcoming Grant Opportunities 4

Contact us!

Cheryl Kester, CFRE
ckester@cox.net
(479) 582-1053

Melanie Nolen
melanie@tfkgrants.com
(479) 582-4600 ext 105

www.tfkgrants.com

Happy Summer from TFK!

It looked like it might never arrive through all the rain (at least here in Arkansas), but summer is finally here! Because so many people are out of the office or on vacation during this time of the year, we will not be distributing an issue of our newsletter in July. We will send out our August issue during the third week of the month as usual. We wish all of you safe travels and a restful summer season!

Sign up now for Intermediate Grantseeking workshop!

Because of scheduling conflicts, our Intermediate Grantseeking Workshop has been rescheduled for **Thursday, August 6, from 1:00 to 4:30pm** in the Henry Board Room at the Fayetteville Public Library.

This workshop is designed to provide advanced grant proposal writing and budgeting skills to non-profit volunteers, board members, or staff members who have experience preparing grant proposals or who have been through some introductory grants training and want to learn more.

Participants are asked to bring a proposal in progress so that we can work on it together, or a previously

rejected proposal that we can strengthen.

The [Care Foundation](#) generously sponsors this workshop, so that the participant fee is only \$50 per person. (Check their website for a list of other upcoming [capacity building programs](#).)

There are still spots available for Intermediate Grantseeking, so please e-mail Melanie at melanie@tfkgrants.com or call 582-4600 to reserve yours today!

We hope to see you there!

Cover Letters: Introducing Your Proposal with Style

By Cheryl L. Kester



The cover letter is one more chance to sell your really fabulous idea, so make it a sales pitch. Relax the tone a bit and get a little more enthusiastic.

Cover letters can play a valuable role in smoothing the way for your grant proposal. If a funder's guidelines do not prohibit you from attaching a cover letter, then do so. Of course, if the guidelines request a cover letter, you must include it.

The cover letter should give a concise explanation of why the project is exciting and is a perfect fit with the funder's interests. If your organization has a prior relationship with the funder (foundation or corporation), you should adopt a less formal, friendlier tone. If there is no prior relationship, a more formal tone and content that introduces the organization to the funder are called for.

If you have talked to anyone in the funder's office, refer to this assistance and mention the staff person by name. If a program officer asks you to send a proposal to his or her attention, be sure to mention that and say "thank you" for the invitation. If you shook hands with a program officer at a conference, mention that and make a specific comment about what you appreciated about his or her participation in the event.

Cover Letter "No-Nos"

1. *Don't introduce new material that is not in the proposal*
2. *Don't make the letter too general or vague*
3. *Don't make the letter too long (one page is usually enough)*

It should go without saying that if your organization has received grants from this funder in the past, this is a perfect opportunity to practice good stewardship by saying "thank you" again. Be specific and report briefly on results from the prior gift.

A senior leader should sign the letter, but you (the grant professional) usually write most of the content, since you are the person most in touch with the funder's interests and passions. Adjust the tone of your letter to the person who is most likely to read it, if you have this information.

Finally, tie the proposal to the funder's interests. Summarize why you are confident that the attached proposal is a good fit with the foundation or corporation's funding priorities. Find a way to mention that your research indicates that your project is likely a good fit. This is especially important if you are presenting a creative approach to an issue that may need some explaining to illustrate how it fits the funder's guidelines and interests.

(This article is condensed from an article by the same title published by *Grants & Foundation Review* at CharityChannel.com, September 12, 2007)

Making the Most of Free Resources: Visit Your Local Library

Does your organization need help finding funders, but cannot afford expensive subscriptions to foundation directories? Visit your local library.

To see if a public or university library near you provides access to grant directories, visit the website of the Foundation Center and follow their link to [Cooperating Collections](#). Cooperating Collections provide their patrons with free access to and assistance with using the *Foundation Directory Online*.

The *Foundation Directory* is a powerful database that enables you to search for funding prospects based on their location or what types of organizations or projects they fund. You can even see a list of the grants they have awarded recently.

Even if your library is not on this list, give them a call and ask about resources for nonprofits. They may have many useful texts or access to other search tools that will be just as helpful.

The [Fayetteville Public Library](#) in our hometown is an excellent example of how libraries can assist nonprofits with grant-seeking, fundraising, nonprofit management and board development. The library has a complete Nonprofit Resource Center with excellent books for checkout, in addition to free access to the *Foundation Directory*.

You may call the Fayetteville Public Library at (479) 856-7250. If your local library is not a Cooperating Collection, encourage them to consider joining or to call our library to inquire about the benefits from a librarian's perspective.

Grants Questions Answered

Q. My organization just received a large grant for a program. How can I ensure that my organization will live up to the promises made in the grant proposal?

A. As soon as you receive notification of funding, schedule a "post-award meeting" with the grantwriter, program director, treasurer, and Executive Director of your organization. Go over the work plan from the grant proposal together to ensure that everyone understands what you said you would do with the grant funds. Assign tasks to the appropriate staff members and highlight the timeline for completion in the submitted grant proposal. Often (particularly with grant-hired staff) the program director was not involved in writing the grant proposal, so it is especially important to bring her and all other relevant staff "in the loop" to make sure grant objectives and goals are met.



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

Thomas-Forbes & Kester, LLC
Grants Consultants
Fayetteville, AR 72704
(479) 582-1053
info@tfkgrants.com
www.tfkgrants.com

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

Monsanto Fund

800 North Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63167

monsanto.fund@monsanto.com

Deadline: July 1 & January 1

Grant Range: \$250-\$1,200,000 (avg. \$22,000)

Giving in the areas of Nutritional Improvement through Agriculture, Healthy Environment, Science Education, and Communities in areas of company operations

For details, visit the [Monsanto Fund](#) online.

Bank of America Local Grant Program

401 N. Tryon St.
Charlotte, NC 28255
Tel: 1-800-218-9946

Deadline: none

Grant Range: \$1,000-\$125,000 (most <\$20K)
Giving interests vary by community. Applicants must be located in a specific community and must fit community priorities.

For details and to apply, visit the [Bank of America Foundation](#) website.

The Lawrence Foundation

530 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 207
Santa Monica, CA 90401
Tel: (310) 451-1567

Deadline: October 31 & April 30

Grant Range: \$1,000-\$100,000 (avg. \$5,000)

Giving to the environment, education, human services, disaster relief, and other causes.

For details, visit [The Lawrence Foundation](#) online.

Sara Lee Foundation

3500 Lacey Road
Downers Grove, IL 60512
Tel: (630) 598-8691

Deadline: none

Grant Range: \$50-\$350,000 (most <\$3K)

Giving in the areas of food-related programs, healthy lifestyles, women's self-sufficiency, and cultural programs.

For details and to submit an electronic Letter of Intent, visit the [Sara Lee Foundation](#) online.