

Grant Writing Seminar

By Linda Johnson

WHAT is a “grant”?

Foundations are developed with specific giving guidelines. Founding members of foundations set criteria to be met for their specific foundation. Each foundation, by law, must give away a certain amount (percentage) of their held monies each year.

Foundations set forth a process to which organizations seeking funding can request funding, this is called a grant.

WHY spend time writing grants?

1. Grants can provide funding for ministries.
2. Financial resources for ministry projects from associations, state conventions and national agencies is very limited.
3. Provides wider base of support for the ministry work.
4. Creates avenues for expansion of ministries.

WHO can write grants?

Anyone. An agency or organization needs to “have all its ducks in a row” but anyone can write a grant.

WHEN are grant requests due?

Grants vary on deadlines. It is important to do your homework to find out the deadlines and grant requirements.

HOW to find the foundation information.

- ◆ Internet searches
- ◆ Foundation search engines
- ◆ Pay to use search engines
- ◆ Local Community Foundations

Getting Started

BEFORE beginning to write foundations for grants, there are number of items your organization will need to submit for grants.

- ◆ 501(3)c IRS Status: There is a specific letter/form for a non-profit organization. 99% of foundations granting requests will require a copy of the 501(3)c status letter.
- ◆ Board of Directors: Most foundations want a listing of the board members.
- ◆ Annual Audit Report: This is the financial recording for the previous year. An accountant completes an audit and a report is then issued to your organization. Most foundations request a copy of that report.
- ◆ Complete a strategic plan. The plan will provide guidance into which grant request to submit.

Once these items are on hand, you are ready to begin the grant writing process.

Writing Grant Requests:

Identify foundations that give to organizations with ministries like your ministry. Use the internet. For most foundations all the information for a grant request is own a web site. You can download the information.

Look at the specific requirements for that foundation grant request. EACH foundation is different, do not prepare one grant request and submit it to many foundations. Each foundation has its own criteria and process.

VERY IMPORTANT...pay attention to the deadline. The deadline dates are not negotiable.

If the foundation request a certain size font size, use that font size s requested.

If the foundation request a certain border for the paper, do exactly as requested.

If the request a certain type of paper, buy that specific paper.

This is important because you may have well written grant, but no one will read your grant if you have not followed the basic rules in order to have the grant written in the first place.

Once you have identified the grant you are seeking, you determine that you have time before the deadline date to finish the request; you then take time to write out your specific request. Most foundations want to know your organization mission statement and overall goals. You then must articulate the specific need you have for funding, how funding will be used, how you will evaluate the success and the future plans of our organization. Most foundations will have an outline they wish for you to follow. Follow their guidelines and instructions.

Pay attention to the deadline date. Some foundation will allow a certain time length for collecting the grant requests. Other foundations have only one particular day in which they accept requests. Still again, some foundations will allow early drop off. You need to know what this foundation expects and follow their directions.

General Foundation Process

- ◆ Foundations collect the grant requests.
- ◆ A paid administrator receives and goes over the grant requests. The requests are scrutinized for their content and if they have provided the information requested. For those not providing all the information requested, the request does not move forward.
- ◆ For the grants that provided all the information requested, the grant request moves on.
- ◆ Grant requests then are evaluated on their content and to how closely the request matches the intent of the foundation purpose.
- ◆ Grant requests are then placed on a spreadsheet with the information on that request amount.
- ◆ Board of Directors then goes over the requests. Questions are asked to the administrator that read each request.
- ◆ Decisions of giving or denial are made at the set date of the board.
- ◆ Grant submitters are written are given either the acceptance or denial letter.
- ◆ If accepted, the money will be distributed as described by that particular foundation.

Summary

Grant writing takes time, but the reward is funding for your ministry needs.