

Grant Opportunities

North Country Library System - 22072 County Route 190 - P.O. Box 99 - Watertown, NY 13601 - www.nclsweb.org

“Tracks to Success” Series

In the last “Grant Opportunities” newsletter, you were introduced to Part One of the series, “Tracks to Success” by Cynthia Adams. Part One introduced the concept of creating a letter of inquiry (LOI) to not only meet evolving application processes but also to help narrow your focus to those grantmakers that may truly fund your project.

Identifying the right grantmaker for any program or project can greatly increase the possibility of securing grant funding. Now that you have drafted your LOI, it is time to identify a set of potential grantmakers.

Begin your quest for grantmakers by searching for government funds. Even if you think there isn't the slightest possibility that there might be government funding for your project, you still want to do the research. It won't take you long and there are two good reasons to look at federal and state funding (as stated by Cynthia Adams):

“If you do find a program that funds projects similar to your organization's, it will probably cover most of the costs -- basically "one-stop shopping.”

If you can't find any government funds for your project, doing this research allows you to state in your application to a private grantmaker that you have "reviewed all current government agencies to determine if there are possible funding sources for this project, and at this time there are no open applications." This prevents the private grantmaker from setting aside your grant request because someone on the review board thinks there might be government funding available.”

Federal funding can be found at www.grants.gov, and state funds can be found by accessing the state government's state aid page at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/stateaid/index.html>. You should also check with your local municipal government to identify any grant dollars they may offer.

As part of this first, very broad research step, you also want to look for private grantmakers. If you are doing research on the web and know the grantmaker's name, you can type in the grantmaker's name in a search engine and pull up their website for more information (provided they have a web site). If you do not have a particular grantmaker in mind, you can type in something generic such as “youth and arts funding” to try to locate potential grantmakers. Try to find a volunteer or a board member who can help you with this type of research, as it can become time consuming.

This initial search should result in a set of grantmakers (government and/or private) that may work for your project or program. The next step is to really examine that list and eliminate those funding sources that are less than a perfect match. How do you do this?

You can begin to narrow down the list by reviewing the application guidelines of the potential grantmakers. Be sure to reference the letter of inquiry you drafted before you began your research. Cross-check the geographic focus, how much money your organization will need, the timeline, and other specific items to make sure grantmakers fit *your* needs.



May-July
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Grants & Awards

The new “key” to library funding



Target Local Store Grants

The Target Local Store Grants support nonprofit organizations in the communities where the company's stores are located. There are currently stores in every state with the exception of Hawaii and Vermont.

The company's Local Store Grants focus on the following three areas:

Arts

Arts grants support programs that bring the arts to schools or make the arts affordable for families to participate in cultural experiences, such as school touring programs, field trips to the theater or symphony, or artist residencies and workshops in schools. Programs that make the arts accessible to school children are of particular interest.

Family Violence Prevention

Family violence prevention grants support programs that strengthen families and communities by keeping them safe, such as parenting classes, family counseling, and domestic abuse shelters.

Early Childhood Reading

Reading grants support programs that foster a love of reading and encourage children, from birth through age 9, to read together with their families.

Grants are awarded to schools, libraries, and nonprofit organizations in order to support programs such as weekend book clubs, after-school reading programs, and events encouraging family reading time.

Target does not make grants to/for:

- individuals;
- programs located outside Target communities;
- educational institutions for regular instructional programs;
- religious organizations for religious purposes;
- treatment programs such as substance or alcohol abuse;
- athletic teams or events;
- endowment campaigns;
- capital or building construction projects;
- fundraiser or gala events; or,
- advocacy or research grants.

Visit <http://sites.target.com/site/en/company/page.jsp?contentId=WCMP04-031767> to find out how to apply.

Dollar General Grant Programs

Dollar General Grant Programs support nonprofit organizations and K-12 schools within Dollar General's 35-state market area.

The company provides grants through the following programs:

Adult Literacy Grants

These grants support nonprofit organizations that provide direct service to adults in need of literacy assistance. Organizations must provide assistance in one of the following instructional areas:

- adult basic education;
- GED preparation, and,
- English for speakers of other languages.

Family Literacy Grants

These grants provide support to family literacy service providers in the following areas:

- adult education instruction;
- children's education;
- parent and child together time; and,
- parenting classes that teach parents to be the primary teacher for their child.

Youth Literacy Grants

These grants provide funding to schools, public libraries, and nonprofit organizations to help with the implementation or expansion of literacy programs for students that are below grade level or having reading difficulty.

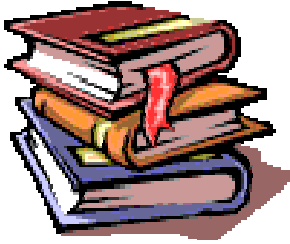
Back-to-School Grants

These grants provide funding to assist schools in meeting some of the financial challenges they face in implementing new programs or purchasing new equipment, materials, or software for their school libraries or literacy programs.

To be eligible for consideration for these grant programs, organizations and schools must:

- provide direct literacy-based programs and services to adults, families, or youth in the 35 states where Dollar General stores are located;
- be located within 20 miles of a Dollar General store;
- have not received funding from Dollar General for the past two consecutive years; and,
- have met all reporting requirements from previous Dollar General grants.

Visit <http://www.dollargeneral.com/servingothers/Pages/caring-for-our-community.aspx> to find out how to apply.



Is your library in need of books or the funding to purchase books?

Distribution to Underserved Communities Library Program

The Distribution to Underserved Communities Library Program (DUC) distributes books on contemporary art and culture free of charge to rural libraries nationwide. The program aims to actively further a more egalitarian access to contemporary art, and is committed to fostering partnerships between publishers, non-profit organizations, librarians and readers to enrich and diversify library collections. The program offers well over 490 titles by more than 90 different publishers. The program reaches readers in all 50 states and has placed over 200,000 free books in public libraries, schools, and alternative pedagogical venues. For more info and how to order these free books visit: <http://www.ducprogram.org/orderform.php>

Lois Lenski Covey Foundation

The Lois Lenski Covey Foundation, Inc. is a charitable institute whose purpose is to assist organizations in their efforts to provide books to children who might otherwise lack access to children's literature. Lois Lenski, the 1946 Newbery medalist for *Strawberry Girl*, had a life-long concern that good books be available to all children. In pursuit of this goal, she established a foundation to provide grants to public libraries, school libraries, and non-profit agencies serving disadvantaged populations.

The Lois Lenski Covey Foundation, Inc. annually awards grants to rural and urban, public and school libraries serving at-risk children. The Foundation gives priority to applications from libraries and agencies with real need and limited book budgets. Funds are earmarked for purchasing books for young people, and are not intended for administrative or operational use. Previously awarded grants have ranged from \$500 to \$3000. Successful applicants have proposed purchases to update their children's book collections generally or to expand their holdings in specific areas. Visit <http://www.loislenskicovey.org/> to find out how to apply.

Libri Foundation Grants for Children's Books

The Libri Foundation is a nationwide non-profit organization which donates new, quality, hardcover children's books to small, rural public libraries in the United States through its BOOKS FOR CHILDREN program. The Foundation awards grants three times a year.

The library director/library manager of each library participating in the BOOKS FOR CHILDREN program selects the books her library will receive from a booklist provided by the Foundation. The 700-plus fiction and nonfiction titles on the booklist have been judged as outstanding or highly recommended by recognized authorities in the library and education fields and have been published in the last 3 years or are classics. The guidelines and application can be found here: <http://www.librifoundation.org/apps.html>.

The Foundation will match any amount of money raised by your local sponsors from \$50 to \$350 on a 2-to-1 ratio. Thus, your library could receive up to \$1,050 worth of new children's books (about 70 books). Local sponsors have five months (or longer, if necessary) after their library has been selected as a participant in the BOOKS FOR CHILDREN program to raise the matching funds.

Deadlines: Annually, January 15th, April 15th, and August 15th

Submit your application before August 15; grants are being awarded August 31, 2009.



Tracks to Success

Identifying the Right Grantmaker *by Cynthia M. Adams, CEO, GrantStation* Prepare to Communicate, Part Four

After completing your funding research, you will want to either call or email each potential grantmaker to determine whether each is indeed a true fit for your project or organization. Don't use this initial communication as a time to "sell" your project or organization. Do use this phone call to determine if your goals and objectives coincide with those of the grantmaker.

Essentially, you want to ensure that your request is a good fit. If it's not a good fit, contacting the funder can help you avoid wasting both your time preparing a request and the funder's time reviewing it.

Now it is time to communicate with the prospective grantmaker. This is the crucial step many grantseekers often avoid, but it is by far the most critical element of the funding search process. Be sure you identify the right person to talk with at the grantmaking institution. Sometimes identifying the appropriate contact person is as simple as looking at the grantmaker's application guidelines; other times you may need to actually email or call the grantmaker and ask with whom you should be speaking.

Once you know the right person to contact, call or email them to schedule an appointment. Be sure to let the grantmaker know you will take only five to ten minutes of their time. Tell them that you have "reviewed their application guidelines and annual report and you have a few specific questions you'd like to ask to determine if your project really fits their objectives."

Before you call, be sure to:

1. Create a brief description of the project and your organization.
2. Compile a list of questions you want to ask each grantmaker that are not already answered in their published materials.

Once you are on the phone, make sure you keep your word about the length of the call by:
keeping the discussion brief and focused;
using your written description to guide the conversation; and,
watching the clock to be sure you take only the requested amount of time.

After a few minutes of discussion, you should have a clear idea whether or not the grantmaker is a good match for your organization.

Sample Questions

You will probably have your own specific questions to ask, but the following queries surface repeatedly:

- After hearing a bit about your project, does the grantmaker think it truly fits their priorities?
- Do they expect last year's average grant amount to change?
- How many new awards do they expect to make in this program area?
- Do they have an estimated application/award ratio?
- Will the awards be made on the basis of special criteria (e.g., geography or type of organization)?
- Does the program provide one-time-only support, or does it offer other funding opportunities in the future?
- Are there unannounced programs or unsolicited funds available to support your project?
- What are the most common mistakes in the proposals they receive?
- What is the review process?
- Should the proposal be written for reviewers with technical or non-technical backgrounds?

Tracks to Success (continued...)

Remember: research is the key to securing grants. Don't be shy about calling the funder, but be sure you've done your homework before you call. Don't ask questions that are already answered in their published materials.

Once you've made the phone call or exchanged emails, you will do a final review of your prospective grantmakers. At this point, you can eliminate those that won't work. File them for another project, if appropriate. You should have a list of three to five solid leads. Incorporate these leads into a funding strategy for the overall project.

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Part Five of the "Tracks to Success" series discusses developing a strategic grant approach. First, check to make sure you have asked all of the questions and made the necessary notes such as deadlines, whether it is a single or multi-year grant, if the organization prefers collaborative projects, etc. To keep all of this information organized, consider creating a chart that includes:

- grantmaker's name and location;
- deadlines for a letter of inquiry (LOI) or full proposal;
- the amount of money you will request from this grantmaker; and,
- any notes that are relevant to the grantmaker.

According to Cynthia M. Adams, "developing a strategic grant approach is much like putting together a puzzle. You want to make sure you have the overall picture in your mind before you start, and then you will select pieces and fit them in where they are most likely to help you solve the puzzle."

What do you do if you have done all of the steps and you still haven't located a promising funder for your program or project? Well, you move on to the last step. Now you are ready for "Taking Research to the Next Level , Part Six!"

The first stop on Cynthia's "next level express" is to look at the list of vendors that work with your library. For example, if your library has a vending machine that has Pepsi products, see if Pepsi has a corporate giving program.

Next, look at local associations and clubs, and their statewide and national counterparts. If you can get a list of active associations and clubs in your area, such as Rotary Club, Lions Club, university women's associations, etc., that will be very helpful in guiding your research.

Lastly, look for businesses that may not necessarily advertise their charitable giving but that will, from time to time, entertain proposals from community nonprofit organizations. Although these companies may not have elaborate corporate giving programs, you just may find that they are willing to make donations to local non-profit organizations that are serving the community.

In the final words of Cynthia M. Adams, "though you may find that you need to be creative in your approach, now is not the time to pull back from your grantseeking efforts. Asking for support during hard times is the American tradition – so don't be shy. Develop a grants strategy that you believe will provide the support you need for your organization, and work it."

Good luck in your grant seeking efforts!



Grant Resources

The new “key” to seeking additional library funding



Sometimes the hardest part about finding grants is knowing where to start looking. Below is a list of grant resources that Carol Weaver, a trustee at the Bodman Memorial Library, and Tracy Tanner, the library manager, received at a grants workshop and forwarded to NCLS.

Only a few of the grant resources have been highlighted in this newsletter as the list was extensive and ALL of the information (web sites, foundations, etc.) could not be included in one newsletter. You can view the complete and updated list on the New York State Library web site at:

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/reference/grantsref.htm>

Thank you Carol and Tracy for passing along these wonderful grant resources!

Grant Resources

The Foundation Center

The Foundation Center collects, organizes, analyzes and distributes information on foundations. The Web site includes the top U.S. Foundations by total giving, starting points for grantseekers, grantmaker Web sites and a nationwide list of Cooperating Collections (free funding information centers), which includes the New York State Library.

<http://foundationcenter.org/collections/index.html>

Fundsnet Online Services

A directory of over 700 financial resources on the Web. It features a nonprofit forum for exchanging ideas, financial aid and scholarship resources for students, a quick reference guide to region-specific grantmakers and new funding announcements.

<http://www.fundsnet-service.com/main.htm>

Getting Grants

Find funding sources online through libraryspot.com. Features grantwriting tips, government resources, foundations and offline resources. <http://www.libraryspot/features/grantsfeature.htm>

Grant Opportunity Resources

Information on locating grants, writing proposals, recommended resources, and useful tools. Contains a meta search page with multiple search engines for Federal, State, and Local sources made searchable through basic keyword searching.

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/products/grants/index.html>

Foundations, Funds and More

This site enables novice and advanced grantseekers, funders and fundraisers, and donors to access relevant information throughout the internet.

<http://www.ssw.umich.edu/resources/index2.html?collection=grants>



Grant Resources



The new “key” to seeking additional library funding

Grants and Grant Writing Links and Resources—Deborah L. Kluge

Researching and identifying grant-making organizations and foundations. (Scroll down and choose “Libraries”) <http://www.proposalwriter.com/grantsubjects.html>

Grants and Related Resources

A collection of reference guides to Grant and Funding resources through the Michigan State University Libraries. (Click on Grants for Non-Profits. Then, click on Libraries.)

<http://staff.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/index.htm>

SRA International Grants Web Resources

Contains resources for government funding, general research, private funding, policy information, and regulations, and an international foundations list.

<http://www.srainternational.org/sra03/grantsweb/index.cfm>

Green Building Funding Opportunities

Numerous sources of funding for green building are available at the national, state, and local levels for homeowners, industry, government organizations, and nonprofits. The links on this page are provided to help you find a variety of funding sources, including grants, tax-credits, loans, or others. <http://www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/tools/funding.htm>

National Endowment for the Humanities

The NEH funds projects and programs that preserve and study our cultural heritage. Its site includes grant application guidelines and deadlines, new funding announcements, a directory of State Humanities Councils and a list of NEH-supported projects. <http://www.neh.gov/>

More information on Grants Available in New York State

Grant links and information from the New York State Government Information Locator Service (NYS GILS). <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/ils/topics/grants.htm>

New York Regional Association of Grantmakers

A non-profit membership association of grantmaking organizations in the tri-state area. Although NYRAG is not a grantmaking association, it offers opportunities for grantseekers to meet funders, publishes an online, full-text newsletter and provides a New York/New Jersey Application Form, which is accepted by 60 grantmaking organizations.

http://www.philanthropynewyork.org/s_nyrag/index.asp



Foundations



The Wal-Mart Foundation <http://walmartstores.com/CommunityGiving/>

The Wal-Mart Foundation offers two possibilities for funding: The State Giving Program and the Community Giving Program. Only organizations with a current 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status are eligible to request funding under either program.

State Giving Program

The Wal-Mart Foundation State Giving Program awards grants at the state and regional level to programs that have a strong impact within the communities the company serves. The program provides grants of \$25,000 and up in the following categories:

- Education grants support programs that address the educational needs of underserved young people ages 12-25.
- Workforce Development/Economic Opportunity grants target job skill training and support services for unemployed and displaced workers.
- Health and Wellness grants strive to improve access to healthcare, reduce healthcare disparities, and promote healthy lifestyles.
- Environmental Sustainability grants assist in the development or expansion of environmentally sustainable communities, with emphasis on green building and job training.

The Foundation has a particular interest in supporting veterans and military families, traditionally underserved groups, individuals with disabilities, and people impacted by natural disasters. The application deadlines for 2009 are April 17 and September 18. Visit the website listed above to review the FAQ and submit an online application.

The Community Grant Program

(allows local facilities to support needs within the communities Wal-Mart does business by providing grants less than \$5,000)

- Submit an application online or obtain one at your local store
- Award stipulations vary for each area Wal-Mart (i.e. the Watertown Wal-Mart has a maximum grant of \$1,000)

You can learn more about requesting a Community Grant from your local Wal-Mart or Sam's Club as well as the award limits by speaking with the facility manager at your local Wal-Mart or Sam's Club Stores or contacting the Community Involvement Coordinator at the location closest to you.

American Honda Foundation

The American Honda Foundation supports projects nationwide in the areas of youth and scientific education, including the physical and life sciences, mathematics, and the environmental sciences. The Foundation focuses on programs with national scope that garner the broadest interest and support and, therefore, the highest potential for success. Requests are reviewed quarterly; the remaining deadlines for 2009 are May 1, August 1, and November 1. Visit the Foundation's website to take the required eligibility quiz and submit an online application.

If your library has grant information or grant acquisition stories to share in *Grant Opportunities*, please contact Dawn Vincent at NCLS: 782-5540 or dvincent@ncls.org