Foundation Prospecting

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Grants are Gold

$76B to U.S. Nonprofits in 2020

$491B in 2020 U.S. Govt. Grants
Why Don’t More Nonprofits Write Grants?
Results are Poor When you **Crash the Party!**
Our Agenda

- Fundraising Context for Coalitions
- Identifying Prospects
- Getting in the Door
- Get Your Story Straight
- From 20% to 50%
- LOI & Proposal Tips
- Follow Up
Context for Coalition Fundraising

- Be sensitive to the potential of competing for funding with local programs.

- Any fund development strategies or plans need solid and strong support from your coalitions’ members.
Specific Steps to Build Local Support

• Review policies about sharing revenue with your local programs, when holding an event in their community.

• Review any policies about promoting the local agency’s direct services.

• Reach out 6-12 months in advance with members, to avoid scheduling conflicts.
Keep in Mind

- Coalitions cannot bill their staff time or other expenses (e.g., consultant, etc.) for government grants.
- Factor or budget for any staff time needed for staff to have unrestricted time to work on specific fundraising activities.
Identifying Prospects

FoundationCenter.org
In Person & Foundation Directory Online

Grantstation.com
Searchable Subscription Service + Training
Identifying Prospects

- Current Trends & Training: TechSoup, Granthub
- **Focus on Top Prospects**, But Err on the Side of Outreach
- Don’t Forget About OE (Operation Effectiveness) Grants
- Attend Meet the Funder/Giving Network Events
- Know Your Peers: Collaborate with Similar Orgs & Member Agencies
Identifying Prospects

- Research Funders of Similar Orgs
- Focus on Areas of Greatest Need
- Divvy Up Outreach: Create a Culture of Philanthropy
- Be Creative with Positioning Program Areas
  - NNEDV’s Hotline Framed as Technology
How to Get In the Door

- Leverage Personal Relationships
  - LinkedIn; Email Staff, Board, & Advisors

- Develop Social Capital
  - Twitter

- Water Down the Stone
  - VMs, Google Alerts
Get Your Story Straight
It’s Not About the *What*...
It’s Not About the *What*...
It’s About the *So What*
Typical Message
Ideal Message
The Best Story Ever Told: Vision Meets *Credibility*

1. The Problem
2. Your Solution
3. Your Plan
4. (The Ask)
People don’t give to you, they give *through* you.

Kay Sprinkel Grace
From 20% to 50%
Rule #1: Never Submit a Cold Grant
Rule #1: *Never* Submit a Cold Grant

- Warming it Up:
  - Secure an Invitation
  - The Pasta Test
    - Programs & Positioning
Rule #1: *Never Submit a Cold Grant*

- Dollar Amount
- Deadline
- Jedi Mind Trick
LOI & Proposal Tips

• Never Go Cookie Cutter

• Lead with:
  • Your Story
  • Context
  • *The Ask & Related Impact*

• Details Follow Need & Impact
LOI & Proposal Tips
Leverage Stories and Stats

• Data: Current, Accurate, & Compelling
Do Your Homework

• Understand the History & Objectives

• Integrate Insights & Language from Meeting

• ToC: Speak to How You Advance Their Goals
Theory of Change

A ➔ B ➔ C
Follow Instructions

- Follow All Directions & Guidelines
  - Deadlines
  - Length
  - Format
  - Font

- Answer All Questions
Follow Instructions

• Show Vision & History

• Don’t Provide Additional Info
Make it Easy to Read

• Put Headers in Bold or CAPS
• Minimum 11 Point Font
• Avoid Jargon
• Define Terms & Acronyms
• Get an Outsider’s Eye
Check Yourself

- Double Check *all* Math
  - Especially Budgets

- Verify all References

- Don’t Exaggerate
Follow Up

• Be Persistent
  • Follow Up in *Their* Time Frame

• If Declined, Ask Why
  • Avoid Disrespect
  • Call/Revisit Website Annually to Learn of Changing Priorities

• If Approved, Say Thanks!

• Build Relationships With Program Officers
Thank You!

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