Grantwriting Workbook

THE LENFEST INSTITUTE

JOURNALISM INNOVATION DEMOCRACY

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Session 1: Research and Relationship Building

Grantwriting is actually a whole cycle of activities:
Step 1 is research and relationship building
Step 2 is getting permission to submit a proposal
Step 3 is writing the grant - making your case
Step 4 is Reporting on what you've done
Step 5 is starting the cycle over again!

Before you begin, it is important to understand a few aspects of grantseeking. First, foundations typically only give to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. But do not fear - if you are a for-profit organization, you can seek out a fiscal sponsor organization (which is an organization that will receive the grant on your behalf and pass the money to you, less a small administrative fee). It is recommended that if you are not a nonprofit, you find a fiscal sponsor before beginning your grantwriting journey.

Also, be prepared - you will be asked (or required) to submit some standard back-up documentation along with your proposal, so it is best to have those ready beforehand:

- ☐ A letter designation your 501(c)(3) status (or one for your fiscal sponsor organization)
- ☐ An approved budget for the current year
- ☐ A list of your board members and their affiliations and demographics, if you are nonprofit
- ☐ A copy of your annual tax return (form 990) if you are a nonprofit
- ☐ A copy of your latest annual financial audit (sometimes they ask for more than one year)
- ☐ A letter with your Employer Identification Number on it
- ☐ A budget for the project itself (more on this later in the workbook!)

Build A List of Prospects

As a first step, you'll want to find and build a list of prospective funders who might be a good match for your project or organization. Foundations typically make their guidelines available on their website. Their guidelines indicate what types of projects or organizations they do and do not fund. In some cases, their guidelines may include geographic restrictions for the recipient organizations, but more typical is subject areas they are particularly interested in funding.

As an example, Knight Foundation has on their website two different pages: One is their funding options (i.e. what they DO fund) and the other is their funding restrictions (i.e. what they DO NOT fund). Taken together, these are their guidelines.

As a first step, you will need to reach the guidelines of any foundations you find out about to see if your organization and/or project fits their guidelines. If it does not fit, the chances are quite slim that you will actually get a grant from them so it would be better not to waste your time pursuing funders where you don't fit their guidelines.

To help you with this research, here are some free and/or subscription-based websites:

- **Impala** - this is a fairly new database which helps you search funders
- **Candid's Foundation Directory Online** - this is a (somewhat expensive, though monthly subscriptions are available) online directory of all funders in the United States and many global funders. It is an extensive database, which you can search by subject, type of grant, recipient location, etc. They have links to each foundation's page or website, where you can read their guidelines. We strongly recommend using a resource like this for your research. Many public libraries carry this database if it is outside your organization's budget.
    - Media Impact Funders Map (within Candid Database)
- **Guidestar** - If you create an account, you can look up any nonprofit or foundation on Guidestar for free. You will then click on their Form 990 tax return for the most recent fiscal year to see more information on the grants

they have made (a summary is on Part I line 25, and the detailed schedule of grants is usually an attachment). You can supplement this research by scanning their guidelines on their website.

- **Pro Publica's Nonprofit Explorer** - This is an online free search engine that helps you pull up the recent tax returns and sometimes audited financial statements of foundations. In there, you can find detail on which organizations they funded and on their grants. You can supplement this research by scanning their guidelines on their website.
- **Instrumentl** - this is a subscription-based service company that will do everything from do the research for you, to creating your list of top prospects, to even writing your proposals. They offer each of these services a la carte and have some educational resources as well.

Another approach to research is to look at the 990s and websites of other similar organizations to see how much they receive in grants and from which foundations. This will give you a solid starting point because you know these foundations have "demonstrated interest" (i.e. they have funded this in the past) in work that is substantially similar to yours. Finally, you might ask your board members if they know anyone on the board of a foundation where they could make a connection and introduce you.

Use these and other resources you find to build your list of prospective funders:

Funder	Guidelines	Website	Intended Project

Build Your Relationships

It's important to try to build relationships with these funders before sending a grant proposal. Most cold proposals don't get funded, so it's worth investing the time to try to get on their radar and help them get to know you before you submit a proposal. Below are some suggestions from prior participants in this program for building a relationship:

Direct Approach

Send an email

Request an informational meeting

Invite them to an event

Indirect Approach

Invite them to an event

Attend information sessions

Send newsletter or piece of journalism to introduce them to your work

Networking Approach

Look on LinkedIn to see who you know who knows them

Ask your current funders for an introduction

See if anyone on your board knows anyone on their board

Build A Calendar

As you build these relationships, you'll want to start keeping a calendar of which funders will accept proposals when. With funders, ***it is very important not to miss their deadlines — they do not look kindly on that.*** In addition, create a folder (online or analog) of the materials we listed on page 1 that will regularly have to accompany your grant proposals, so you are ready to go. You don't want to have to search for these when you are working on a deadline!

You'll want to keep track of various kinds of deadlines on this calendar:

- Letters of inquiry (a formal way of asking permission to submit a grant proposal)
- Grant proposal deadlines
- Grant reports
- General updates

Here is a link to an Excel calendar but you can use any type of calendar that works for you. The ideal is to integrate these deadlines into your regular work calendar. *Note: you will be forced to make a copy of that calendar which you can save into your files.*

Background & Context on Grantseeking

Below are some resources you may find useful to inform you about some of the background and current context of the grantseeking industry:

1. Trust-Based Philanthropy - a collective of funders who are seeking to lower the barriers organizations face when looking for grants.
2. Nonprofit AF - a snarky blog written by someone with lots of experience writing grants in which he speaks truth to power
3. Community-Centric Fundraising - a movement that seeks to prioritize the community's needs over the needs of any given organization in fundraising
4. Decolonizing Wealth - a book that traces the colonial roots of philanthropy in this country.

Section 2: Making the Case

Introduction

It is important to remember that journalistic writing and grant writing are quite different forms of writing. You may be a fantastic journalist, but just starting out as a grantwriter. So this session is entirely focused on helping you understand how to write for grant applications.

Remember that grantwriting is NOT objective - it is persuasive. You are trying to persuade the reader to give you money to support your work. So it's okay to embellish a bit, to add some emotionally resonant pieces to the writing.

Step 1: Describe the Need

The first step in writing a compelling grant application is describing the need for your project. Focus on using asset-based language to describe the need in a way that paints a picture that is compelling, yet respectful of those you are serving.

Use this proposal template to guide your thinking in developing a solid case for support. This template will get you started.

Remember to personalize your protagonists, and make them relatable even if they are quite different from your reader. Describe the "need or problem" as a challenge they must overcome - not something wrong with them.

Step 2: Why You?

It is important to make the case for why your organization is well positioned to address this need, without using competitive language like "we are the best at" or "we are the only ones who." Grantseeking is competitive enough, we don't need to make it even more so. Also, remember that funders know when you are getting lazy and using superlatives to make the case vs. articulating a compelling reason why your organization is particularly well-positioned to address this need.

Step 3: Describe Your Approach

Funders want to know you are not just jumping in on instinct, but that you have thought through your approach to helping them overcome that conflict. They want to see your goals and objectives - what you are hoping to accomplish by virtue of your approach to addressing the need?

Step 4: How Will You Know It Worked?

Funders want to know you have figured out how you will measure the effectiveness of your approach to addressing the need - how will you know it worked? What will you measure? What metrics will tell you your approach was effective?

Funders are in the business of giving out money, but they want to feel their money is really making a difference, so they ask you to help them do that by measuring your effectiveness and impact.

At the end of this section are the following handouts to help you work on your case statement:

1. A National Common Application Form - an outline of what a grant proposal should address
2. An infographic on how to write a compelling narrative for a proposal
3. An article with 30 tips for helping you write a good proposal.

Resources to Support Storytelling About the Need for Journalism:

Solutions Journalism:

- The Keys to Powerful Solutions Journalism

- New Research Puts Solutions Journalism to the Test
- Solutions-Focused News

Decline in voting participation/divide if news orgs fail:

- Who is Hit Hardest by the Decline in Local Journalism
- The State of Local News
- Local Journalism in Crisis
- The Cost Of Corruption When The Local Newspaper Dies
- Less Local News Means Less Democracy
- Signposts for the Future of Local News
- How We Know Journalism Is Good for Democracy

Studies on how Journalism is Good for Democracy:

- Democracy Fund List of Studies

American Views on Journalism:

- American Views on Journalism

Handouts

National Network of Grantmakers
COMMON GRANT APPLICATION

Dear Nonprofit Colleague:

To save you time and effort in the grant application process, the National Network of Grantmakers (NNG) has developed this common application form. NNG is an organization of grantmakers committed to social justice and philanthropic reform. The common application format is one way of moving toward our mission.

Strategies for Successful Grant Seeking:

- Research the funding interest of a foundation before applying and obtain a copy of its annual report and/or guidelines.

- Familiarize yourself with the funder's application process, including timetable and preferred method of initial contact. It is important to note that some funders accept proposals only after an initial phone call, query letter or pre-application form and in general, it is never a good idea to send out mass mailing of proposals.
- Include a brief cover letter that outlines the link between your proposal and the funder's interests. One paragraph of the cover letter should provide a brief summary of your project.
- Follow the attached format and any specific instructions from the funder.
- Remember that NNG members are interested in addressing the root causes of social problems and address this in your narrative.

Because this is a broad attempt to meet the general requirements of a number of grantmakers, certain funders might request additional information.

The National Network of Grantmakers is an organization of individuals involved in funding social and economic justice. The Network values individuals, projects and organizations working for systemic change in the U.S. and abroad, in order to create an equitable distribution of wealth and power and mutual respect for all peoples. NNG works primarily within organized philanthropy to increase financial and other resources to groups committed to social and economic justice. NNG has three strategic directions: Embarking on a campaign to galvanize existing and new philanthropic resources for social and economic justice work; Providing a network to offer mutual support for progressive grantmakers, share information across grantmaking sectors and promote the exchange of information and strategies among social change funders and community activists; Working to reshape philanthropic policies and procedures among our own members, as well as the larger field of philanthropy, to promote diversity and open, democratic processes in order to increase the amount of funding and other resources for progressive social change.

For more information
contact:

NNG, 2801 21st Ave S, #132 Minneapolis, MN 55407
Tel (612) 724-0702 Fax (612) 724-0705 E-mail: nng@nng.org
Web site: www.nng.org

PARTICIPATING FUNDERS LIST

Information about individual foundation funding interests is available from each funder. The NNG

Grantmakers Directory is a good starting place for this type of information. It can be obtained from NNG. Please call for the current price. In addition, many local libraries carry a collection of funding resources provided by the Foundation Center. To identify a participating library near you, please call the Foundation Center at (800) 424-9836 or access their web site at http://www.fdncenter.org.

Foundations accepting the NNG Common Grant Application:*

A Territory Resource Abelard Foundation-East Abelard Foundation-West Acorn
Foundation
Jennifer Altman Foundation Amazon Foundation Angelica Foundation
Susan A. & Donald P. Babson Charitable Foundation Beldon Fund
Ben & Jerry's Foundation Boehm Foundation Boston Globe Foundation
BridgeBuilders Foundation
C.S. Fund
CarEth Foundation Changemakers
Chicago Resource Center Chinook Fund
Discount Foundation Episcopal City Mission
FACT Services Company, Inc. for the French American Charitable Trust
Foundation for Mid South Fund for Nonviolence
Fund for Southern Communities Fund of the Four Directions Funding Exchange
Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation Greensboro Justice Fund
HKH Foundation Jadetree Two Foundation Larson Legacy
Liberty Hill Foundation Libra Foundation Marianist Sharing Fund McKay Foundation
Bert & Mary Meyer Foundation Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Stewart R. Mott Charitable Trust
Stewart R. Mott's Building Organized Community Program
A.J. Muste Memorial Institute Needmor Fund
Nokomis Foundation
Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation Ottinger Foundation
Peace Development Fund Prospect Hill Foundation Public Welfare Foundation Rockefeller
Family Fund
San Diego Foundation for Change Seva Foundation
Seventh Generation Fund Shefa Fund
Ralph L. Smith Foundation Solidago Foundation Southern Partners Fund Stern Family
Fund
Sun Hill Foundation Tides Foundation
Unitarian Universalist Funding Program Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock
Rose & Sherle Wagner Foundation Women's Peacepower Foundation

*CONTACT FUNDERS BEFORE SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Application Format – Please use the following format to create your own proposal. This is not a fill-in-the-blank application.

I. COVER SHEET

Organization Name:

Tax exempt status:
Year organization was founded:
Date of application:
Address:
Telephone number:
Fax number:
Director:
Contact person and title (if not director):
Grant request:
Period grant will cover:
Type of request (general support, start-up, technical assistance,etc.):
Project title (if project funding is requested):
Total project budget (if request is for other than general support):
Total organizational budget (current year):
Starting date of fiscal year:
Summarize the organization's mission (two to three sentences):
Summary of project or grant request (two to three sentences):

II. NARRATIVE (maximum of five pages.)

A. Introduction and Background of Organization (Incorporating the following points:)

1. Briefly describe your organization's history and major accomplishments.
2. Describe your current programs and activities.
3. Who is your constituency (be specific about demographics such as race, class, gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and people with disabilities)? How are they actively involved in your work and how do they benefit from this program and/or your organization?
4. If you are a grassroots group, describe your community. If you are a state, regional or national organization, describe your work with local groups, if applicable and how other regional and/or national organizations are involved.

B. Describe your request (Incorporating the following points:)

1. Problem statement: what problems, needs or issues does it address?
2. If other than general operating support, describe the program for which you seek funding, why you decided to pursue this project and whether it is a new or ongoing part of your organization.
3. What are the goals, objectives and activities/strategies involved in this request? Describe your specific activities/strategies using a timeline over the course of this request.
4. How does your work promote diversity and address inequality, oppression and discrimination within your organization as well as the larger society?

5. Describe systemic or social change you are trying to achieve: How does your work address and change the underlying or root causes of the problem?

III. ATTACHMENTS/REQUIREMENTS

A. Evaluation

1. Briefly describe your plan for evaluating the success of the project or for your organization's work. What questions will be addressed? Who will be involved in evaluating this work—staff, board, constituents, community, consultants? How will the evaluation results be used?

B. Organizational Structure/Administration

1. Briefly describe how your organization works: What are the responsibilities of board, staff and volunteers? And if membership organization, define criteria for membership. Are there dues?
2. Who will be involved in carrying out the plans outlined in this request? Include a brief paragraph summarizing the qualifications of key individuals involved.
3. Provide a list of your board of directors with related demographic information.
4. How is the board selected, who selects them and how often?
5. Include an organizational chart showing decision-making structure.

C. Finances

1. Most recent, completed full year organizational financial statement (expenses, revenue and balance sheet), audited, if available.
2. Organization's current annual operating budget (See attached budget format).
3. Current project budget, other than general support (See attached format).
4. Projected operating budget for upcoming year (See attached format).
5. List individually other funding sources for this request. Include amounts and whether received, committed or projected/pending.
6. Describe your plans for future fund raising.
7. A copy of your IRS 501(c)(3) letter. If you do not have 510(c)(3) status, check with the funder to see if they are willing to fund through your fiscal sponsor or are willing to exercise expenditure responsibility. Additional information may be required to do so.
8. Other

D. Other Supporting Material

1. Letters of support/commitment (up to three).
2. Recent newsletter articles, newspaper clippings, evaluations or reviews (up to three).
3. Recent annual report.

4. Videos/cassettes are accepted ONLY if this box is checked.
5. Other

Guidelines for applicants (completed by funder)

- Send ________ number of complete copies: cover sheet, five page proposal and attachments that are checked off.
- Use a standard typeface no smaller than 10 points and no less than .25 in margins.
- Please check to see what kind of paper to they specify and whether they specify that they accept or do not accept proposals in Spanish or other languages.

IV. BUDGET

If you already prepare organizational and project budgets that approximate this format, please feel free to submit them in their original forms. You may reproduce this form on your computer and/or submit separate pages for income and expenses.

Budget for the period: from ________ to ______________

EXPENSES

Salaries & wages (breakdown by individual position and indicate full or part-time)
Fringe benefits & payroll Taxes
Consultants & professional fees
Travel
Equipment
Supplies
Training
Printing & copying
Telephone & fax
Postage & delivery
Rent & utilities
In-kind expense
Other (specify)
TOTAL:

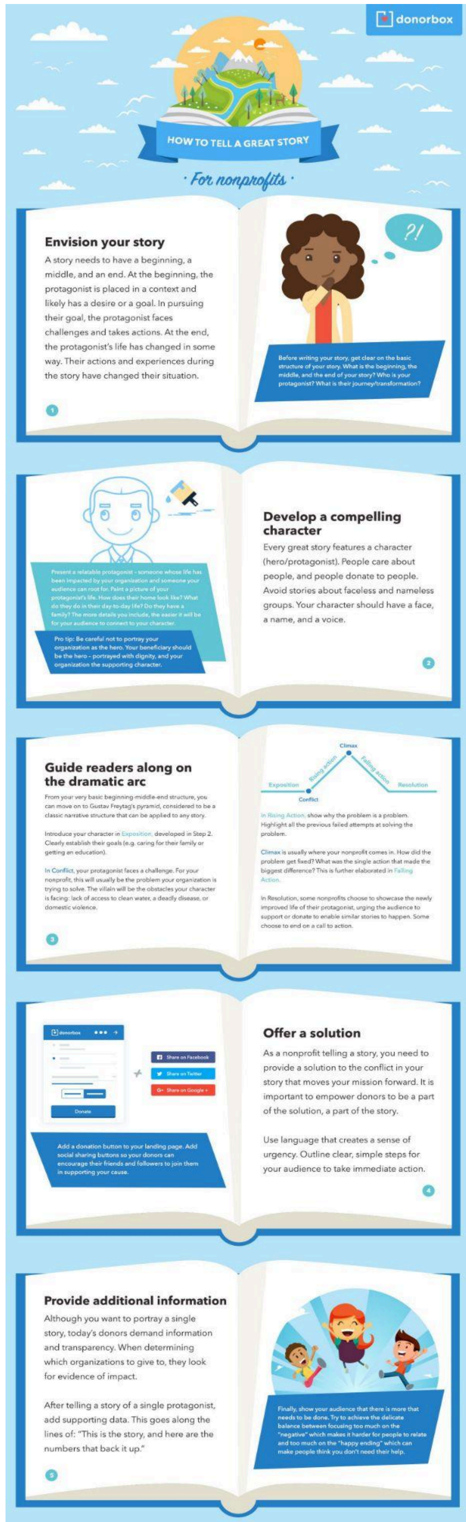
INCOME

Government grants & contracts (specify)
Foundations (specify)
Corporations
Religious institutions
United Way, Combined

Federal Campaign & other federated campaigns
Individual contributions
Fundraising events & products
Membership income
In-kind support
Other (earned income, consulting fees, etc. Please specify)
TOTAL:

BALANCE

—---



[Donorbox: Nonprofit Storytelling Tips]

[DonorBox: Nonprofit Storytelling Tips]
Here are the 30+ best tips to take your storytelling to the next level:

1. Be clear and succinct

Stories are captivating, but there is a limit to human attention. Make your story clear and succinct and focus on why your organization exists, what it hopes to accomplish, who you're doing it for, and why should the reader/viewer care.

2. Stay away from facts and figures

This is not to say your story can't include any facts and figures, but you shouldn't make those the centerpiece of your story. Talking about how many tons of food you distributed or how many families you've helped is not a story. It can help a story, but it's not a story. A story needs to emotionally engage and move to action. On the other hand, completely staying away from data can make your story seem like fiction.

Data comes next: "This is the story, and here are the numbers that back it up."

3. Have a beginning, a middle, and an end

A part of what makes stories so enticing is their structure. Every good story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Make sure your story, at the very least, has these three key components.

Beginning: The protagonist is placed in a context and likely has a desire or goal.

Middle: In pursuing their goal, the protagonists faces challenges and takes actions.

End: The protagonist's life has changed in some way. Their actions and experiences during the story have changed their situation.

Of course, this is the most basic structure and there are many modifications to it.

4. Build characters

In addition to having a beginning, a middle, and an end, perhaps the only other essential element to a story is a character. Characters give the audience something to identify with, root for, or root against (in case of a villain).

5. Be specific

People relate to people (and donate to people). Make your story about a specific person (or family or animal) to help people empathize. Make it about the plight of a single person. People are more likely to relate to a story of an abandoned dog than a statistic like "a million of dogs are abandoned annually." Help your audience understand some of the individual, emotional stories that your organization can tell first, and then talk about thousands you helped.

6. You can change your story

Sometimes, nonprofits inherit stories and they feel "obliged" to keep telling them. You can change your story at any point, as long as it's aligned to your mission.

7. Know your audience

Although stories are pretty universal and the most basic story structure generally works across cultures and backgrounds, there is still a lot of value in investing time to understand your audience.

Always ask yourself "Who am I talking to? And how am I going to tell them this story in a way that most resonates with them?" You can tell the same story in many different ways. You can tell one story from many different perspectives, with different protagonists, in different formats.

8. Have a system in place

Good stories don't just always 'come' to you. You have to look for them. Have a system or people in place that will systematically capture stories that you can later use. Assign someone to ask others in the nonprofit about their stories on a regular basis, or create an online form such as a Google Form or Google Document that can be filled out by anyone.

We have a very useful resource to help make this process easier for you. Watch this Donorbox webinar in which **social media marketing and digital storytelling expert, Julia Campbell,** talks about the 6 types of stories your nonprofit should be telling on social media!

9. Use stories everywhere

Collecting stories is only one part of the process. Using the stories consistently and diligently comes next. Stories can be used as a fundraising tool, as a recruitment tool, as a business development tool,

and so much more.

For example, you can tell stories to breathe life into your values and mission (e.g. what does "responsibility" as a value even mean)? You can tell stories about mistakes you made and how you learned from them – showing vulnerability.

10. Be genuine and authentic

People are increasingly aware of when a brand or an organization are appealing to them or trying to sell something to them. This can cause adverse reactions in which the individuals are put off and they don't donate or buy as a result. Always share genuine stories in a way that is authentic to your nonprofit.

11. Stay away from the "salesy" language

Stories should be human, as much as possible. Using salesy, clinical, or too much of an industry- specific language can impede individuals from understanding, connecting, and empathizing – almost defeating the purpose of storytelling. It's important to make sure your story is easily understood and digested by readers.

For example, one authentic story of a human being in need is a lot more relatable than a demographic like "lower-income families."

12. Keep the balance of light and dark

Nonprofits work on solving big world issues, and telling the stories about those can be very dark. To balance the dark out, bring in some positivity (e.g. how your beneficiary managed to overcome their issues or end up in a better place).

Focusing too much on the struggle can cause unease and make it harder to relate, but too many happy endings can make people think you don't need their help. This is a very tricky balance to achieve.

13. Engage all the senses

When telling a story, think about: smell, taste, touch, sight, hearing. Whether those are conveyed via video, audio or in a written format – all of these can help your audience connect and engage.

14. Include a call to action

If you told a good story, your audience will be motivated to give. At the end of every story, place a call to action. Make sure this call to action is relevant to the story you just told. In case the call to action is a donation button, make sure the donation button leads the individual to donate to the person from the story or someone in a very similar situation.

15. Use your website

On your website, each page is a chance to tell a story. Nonprofits often use their website to show supporters the big picture – their mission. However, this can be strengthened by using this space to highlight detailed, individual stories as well.

16. Use your blog

Compared to a website, blog posts provide more space to dive deep into the individual stories – giving your supporters a chance to learn more and read more details. Having a proper content strategy on your nonprofit blog that shares impactful stories also matters a lot.

This also brings us to the concept called "Content Optimization". If the content is crisp, clear, and compelling, your supporters would understand and align with your story much better.

Here's an in-depth guide on Content Optimization by Team Wordable.

17. Use your social media

Storytelling is vital in today's attention economy. Social media values stories. Social media tools are the perfect avenues to share stories and to get instant feedback, as well as to lead potential donors straight to your donation page.

Facebook and Instagram are good places to start. Have a set schedule for posting fresh content, invest in creating good visuals, and share stories in the format most appropriate for the social media channel you're posting on.

18. Use real-time storytelling

Planning, gathering, and crafting well-told stories is crucial to your storytelling strategy. However, today's donors crave authentic human connection. To do this, consider telling real-time stories on Snapchat, Instagram Stories, and Instagram and Facebook live. This allows for in-the-moment involvement and engagement which builds a sense of connection and trust.

19. Find fresh perspectives

Storytelling using your "organization's voice" can be powerful. However, finding new and fresh perspectives can be even more powerful. Have the beneficiary tell the story of their life through their eyes – no one knows it better. Alternatively, consider having an employee, a contributor or a volunteer share their perspectives.

20. Use visuals

Visual storytelling has exploded over the past couple of years. According to a study conducted by SimplyMeasured, videos are shared 12 times more often than links and text posts combined, and photos are liked twice as often as text updates.

Consider visual mediums such as videos, photography, infographics, and even cartoons or drawings to stand out in a sea of text. If you're operating on a smaller budget, this doesn't have to mean producing super high-quality videos with a videographer. Videos shot on phones can be just as, if not more, authentic. Naturally, knowledgeable video storytellers can help you frame the story and make your organization look professional, and create a video that you can use for years to come. But producing a great video doesn't always mean you're telling a great story.

21. Be mindful of patronizing

In their spirit of goodwill and in their expertise, nonprofits often fall into the trap of speaking too much in the name of their constituents. Allow the people you help to have a face, a name, and speak for themselves and about themselves. Use quotes, interviews, and testimonials to achieve this.

22. Grab attention

Your story has to captivate the reader's/viewer's attention from the very start. Regardless of how good the story is at its core, our attention span is short – so make sure to get to the message pretty fast. Need inspiration? Browse Poynter's online gallery of **award-winning leads**.

23. Cultivate a storytelling organizational culture

Even with a system in place, a storytelling organizational culture won't just "appear" just because one or few staff members are passionate about it. Storytelling needs to become embedded into the very fabric of your nonprofit's organizational culture (from executives to volunteers).

Make sure all of your staff, board and volunteers understand how and why stories are used in fundraising. Identifying and collecting great stories to use should fall under everyone's job description.

24. Make stories an integral part of every meeting

This is another way you can ensure storytelling becomes part of your nonprofit's organizational culture. Start out a staff or board meeting with 15 minutes of people sharing client, staff or donor stories they witnessed from the previous week.

25. Choose messages

Whenever you write/record a story, make sure you're clear on the message you want to send. A key message is the main point you want your audience to take away from your story. For example, if your organization runs a special fundraising campaign in the fall for period supplies for girls in Kenya, an example of a key message for this might be: "Period supplies provide girls with opportunities to attend school and improve their chances of a better future."

26. Plan your storytelling

Although you will capture some stories spontaneously and they will arrive at your doors unexpectedly, it's still important to plan your storytelling. Create a document of important moments and events throughout the year (e.g. Christmas or Women's Day), then think about what key messages you want to share throughout the year. These key story messages should highlight the opportunities to reinforce your organization's messaging. Next, plan what kind of stories can convey those messages and then plan how you will collect them.

27. Make your audience feel emotions

It's essential that you make your audience feel when reading or hearing your story. Whether they feel sadness, joy, anger, hope, pride – it doesn't matter. What matters most is that your story evokes

emotions. Emotions evoke action. "XY Nonprofit celebrating 50 years of existence and winning 20 awards" doesn't evoke emotion. Protagonists, real people, do. Here's a great example of making the audience feel emotion.

28. Keep the stories relevant

Once you embark on the journey of becoming a storytelling organization, you might start gathering a very large number of stories. However, it's still important to only share the relevant ones. Choose stories that best reflect your organization's mission.

29. Communicate donor impact

You can combine storytelling with impact reporting. Tell stories that directly showcase the impact your nonprofit's had and directly highlight how the donor's contribution was used. This not only helps retain donors but attracts new ones – since they get to see how their gift was/will be used.

30. Get the word out

You've planned your storytelling, you worked hard on creating a storytelling culture, and you gathered amazing stories in various shapes and forms. Now is the time to distribute them! Discuss distribution early. At the beginning of a project, assess which assets you've been using and how you can add to them in order to achieve your goals. Combine several multimedia storytelling approaches, and your story gets stronger!

31. Track and evaluate

When sharing stories, track their success: the number of clicks, likes, favorites, retweets, claps, vote ups – whatever the key performance indicators are for the channel you're using. Evaluate your efforts, and re-plan your marketing strategy accordingly. What worked for your audience? Video or text? Images or lives? Twitter or Pinterest? Track, evaluate, adjust course.

Section 3: Supporting the Story

The case statement or narrative is the heart of your grant application. That said, funders often welcome or invite you to submit attachments to back up your narrative. That's what this third section is all about.

Measuring Outcomes

In the world of grantwriting, we talk about the outcomes we are trying to achieve through this work. Funders care deeply about the outcomes you are hoping to achieve as that tells them whether their social investment will be worthwhile.

Your outcomes should follow a basic "if, then" logic:

- If we do these activities (what you are seeking funding for)
- Then, we expect to see these outcomes

It is important to remember that there are assumptions built into this logic framework. You are assuming you will see those outcomes — this is a hypothesis you are testing, and like a scientist, funders want to know you have thought this through.

They want answers to the basic question "How will we know this investment worked?"

We highly recommend a book called ***Finally Outcome Measurement Strategies Anyone Can Understand*** by Laurel Molloy. In this book she explains how to think about outcome measurement for people who are new to this.

On the next page is a simple framework to get you started:

Activities in the Project
• • • • • •
What Does Success Look Like? (Try to be specific)
• • • • • •
What Could You Measure to Determine Success?
• • • • • • •

Building A Budget

The budget is a very important part of a grant proposal. If we go back to the notion that funders see themselves as investors in your work, this is their prospectus.

It is how you show them that you know what you are doing, it tells them how much of the total cost they are being asked to support, and it tells them where the other money is coming from.

Funders are looking for your budget to not only add up and make sense financially, but to support and reflect the story you tell in the narrative.

- The first question they will ask is if it fits in their general range of giving. If this is a funder who typically makes $10,000 grants and you are asking them for $100,000, that tells them you did not do your homework.
- Is it consistent with the instructions in their guidelines - for example, if they clearly say they don't support conferences, your budget should not be for anything conference related.
- Does it reflect what you said in the narrative? Do the expenses reflect what you talked about doing?
- It is reasonable - not too lean and not too inflated?
- Are the numbers based on actual estimates and not just made up?
- Are the expenses clear and justified - does the budget narrative offer good explanations for the expenses
- Will it be a good social investment - make sense for what you're hoping to achieve?
- Does it add up? Don't let yourself submit a budget with math errors - that is annoying and disrespectful to the reader.

On the next page is a basic template for building your budget:

THE LENFEST INSTITUTE | JOURNALISM INNOVATION DEMOCRACY

PENN creative strategy

BUDGET OVERVIEW

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT **BUDGET PURPOSE**

PROJECT SUPPORT **BUDGET PERIOD START & END DATES**

INCOME		EXPENSE	
SOURCES	AMOUNT	USES	AMOUNT
REVENUE		GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT	
TOTAL		TOTAL	
		NET INCOME	

Sample Budget Narrative

Once you've built the budget (or as you are building it) you need to also create a budget narrative. The budget narrative is meant to explain in words how you arrived at the figures in the budget. It is the background explanation for your calculations. Below is a sample budget narrative to give you a sense of what they typically contain.

SAMPLE - Budget Narrative – **SAMPLE**

(NOTE: The Budget Narrative is the justification of 'how' and/or 'why' a line item helps to meet the program deliverables.)

A. Salary – Total: $54,818.00 Program Director currently oversees the program and will spend 100% of their time hiring, supervising and training staff. This individual's annual salary is $26,596.00 and will be covered for the 12 months of the contract.

Program Coordinator will spend 100% of their time providing direct service to the participants (describe services). This individual's annual salary is and will be covered for the 12 months of the contract totaling $22,000.00.

Program Assistant is a part-time assistant which will provide (describe services). This individual's annual salary is $9.15 per hour for 20 hours a week for 34 weeks of the contract year totaling $6,222.00.

B. Fringes – Total: $18,629.00 FICA will be paid for all salaries: $54,818.00 x .0765 = $4,194.00.
Unemployment cost is $17,300.00 x 3 x .03 = $2,855.00.
Retirement for full-time employees: $48,596.00 x .06 =$2,916.00.
Health Insurance cost for full-time employees is the following:
Director: $357 x 12 months= $4,284.00.
Coordinator: $365 x 12 months= $4,380.00.

C. Staff Development – Total: $300.00

The Program Assistant will attend Classes at the local community college to continue their education in the area of social work and administration for two semesters. 2 semesters x 2 classes x $75.00 per class=$300.00.

D. Travel – Total: $1,689.00 The staff is expected to travel around the county/State to visit sites, attend meetings and trainings/conferences, meet with county partners, visit families etc. The agency reimbursable rate is 0.445 and not the Federal rate of 0.585.

Program Director 300 miles x .0445 = $134; Daily Subsistence $91.75 x 5 days =$458.75; Total 593.00. Program Coordinator 200 miles x 0.445 = $89; Daily

Subsistence $91.75 x 5 days= $458.75; Total $548.00.
Program Assistant 200 miles x 0.445 = $89; Daily Subsistence $91.75 x 5 days =$458.75; Total $548.00.

E. Equipment Purchases – Total: $1,200.00 One computer package including printer, scanner, and Word Programs will be purchased. The computer will be based in the administrative office and will be used to develop and maintain client databases in addition to performing administrative work connected to this program.

F. Transportation-Recipient – Total $4,380.00 Due to the lack of transportation services in the county, transportation is provided for families and children to participate in activities.
Gas: $100.00 a month x 12 months= $1,200.00
Insurance: 0 Automobile Liability per year for $480.00
Repair and Maintenance: Routine Maintenance for Van (oil change, tires, etc.) as needed $300.00. Van Rental For use of County Transportation Vans ($200.00 a month x 12 months) =$2,400.00.

G. Medical Supplies and Expense – Total: $100.00 4 First-aid kits will be purchased in case of a medical emergency. 4x $25.00 =$100.00

H. Cost of Space – Non Residential – Total: $7,133.00
Monthly rent and utilities cost is necessary for the site location to provide the services and activities. The cost is pro-rated at 50% for Rent and Utilities because the Department of Education Contract covers the other 50% of the cost.

Rent: $600.00 a month (pro-rated 50% of usage) $300.00 x 12 months= $3,600.00.
Utilities: $300.00 a month (pro-rated 50% of usage) $150.00 x 12 months= $1,800.00. **Repair/Maintenance**: $50 a month x 12 months= $600.00.
Janitorial Supplies: $30 a month x 12 months = $360.00.
Liability/Property Insurance: $1,546.00 per year (pro-rated 50%) = $773.00.

I. Room and Board- Residential Treatment – N/A Total: $0 J.

Service Payments - N/A Total; $0

K. Other – Total: $11,751.00

Meeting Supplies: to provide supplies for administrative meetings, workshops, etc. $75.00 x 12 months = $900.00.

Employee Training: to provide supplies for professional development and orientation for staff. $41.67 x 12 months = $500.00.

Dues and Subscriptions: to maintain memberships to organizations $10 x 12 months = $1,200.00

Flex Funds: to provide financial support to participants pay bills, provide clothing etc. $ 91.66 per month x 12 months = $1,100.00.

Office Supplies including binders, file folders, printer paper, toner, staples, etc. $100.00per month x 12 months = $1,200.00.

Phone and Internet Service: This service is needed to stay connected to funding sources, parents, community collaborators and staff. $ 125.00 per month x 12 months = $1,500.00.

Postage: Includes mailing, postage of flyers, program announcements, fiscal reports etc. $100 x 12 months =$1,200.00.

Printing: to include flyers, registration forms, handouts, workshop information, binding etc. $41.67 x 12 months = $500.00.

Advertising: To include hiring notices, meetings, special events $50.00 x 12 months=$600.00.

Sub Contracting for Lawn and Parking lot: to maintain the appearance and safety of the outside area of the organization. $83.33 x 12 = $1,000.00.

Curricula Cost: (Name Curricula and population it will serve): $1,200.00.

Snacks: provided for meetings, participants, etc. $70.92 x 12 months = $851.00.

L. Indirect Costs – N/A Tota: $0 Total: $100,000.00.

Attachments

Finally, you may want to consider submitting attachments (in addition to the regularly required ones: 990 tax return, approved budget, project budget, audited financial statements, board list) to accompany your narrative and bring it to life. Often these include things like video or audio, photographs, etc. Below are some of the common attachments and considerations for each:

Video/Audio	Make sure it is cued to the right start point and indicate how long the segment is to be viewed/listened to
Photographs	Make sure they are clearly labeled with your application or project name and that all key information is provided
News Articles	Make sure they are labeled with your application or project name and highlight the pertinent sections
Audited financials	Make sure you got a clean[1] audit!
Annual Reports	Label them and flag the appropriate sections

[1] A "clean" audit is when the auditor's letter at the beginning has a pargraph that says *"In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of [organization], and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."*

Section 4: Letters of Inquiry

The letter of inquiry is a short summary of your entire application. It is submitted before you submit the application as a way of seeking permission from the funder to submit a full application. Funders don't want to have to wade through a long proposal only to find out your project is not of interest to them or not a good fit, so many funders ask you to submit a letter of inquiry or intent (LOI) first.

Format for Letter of Inquiry

A letter of inquiry typically follows a standard format:

- **Introduction**: Your introduction needs to be strong and clear. This is where you lay out all the parameters of what you will be asking the foundation to support. If you remember from first learning to write an academic paper, this is where you say what you're going to say. This is the basic overview - they can tell from this one paragraph if your request fits with their practices.
- **Why You?**: The next section answers the question — why you? Why is your organization a good bet — worthy of investment in this project? We covered how to articulate this in earlier sessions, but basically this is where you convince the funder that your organization is well positioned to address this need. The important thing to remember here is to be concise - this is a brief paragraph!
- **Description of Need**: Then you need to talk about why the project is needed – you didn't just make it up – there is some justification for why it is important to do this project. You need to articulate the need in a way that tugs on the heart strings of the donor, without belittling the target audience for your organization's work. Try to describe them like they're the protagonists in your story, and are facing some challenge you are trying to help them overcome.
- **Your Approach:** This is where you will answer the question about HOW you will help them address this challenge - it is where you summarize your approach to this work.

- **Funding Sources**: Funders like to know they are not the only ones you are asking to support this – so it is important to share with them who else you are approaching or what funding has already been raised. They want to know you will not be solely dependent on them if they decide to stop funding you later.
- **Summary**: At the end you summarize your request and express your gratitude for their consideration. You may want or need to attach the budget with your letter of inquiry. In academic writing the formula is: say what you're going to say, say it, then say what you said. This is the where you say what you said, along with your expression of gratitude for their consideration of your request.

Here is a checklist to help you vet your LOI draft:

- ☐ Did I state the name of the project and the amount of money I'm seeking in the first paragraph?
- ☐ Does my second paragraph elaborate adequately about the project and any related projects?
- ☐ Did I include our mission statement?
- ☐ Did I lay out the need for the project?
- ☐ Have I been clear about the outcomes the project will achieve?
- ☐ Is the implementation of the project clear?
- ☐ Have I made a case for a good fit between this project and the foundation's priorities?
- ☐ Did I include information about any funding already committed?
- ☐ Have I included the contact details for a particular person who can answer questions?

On the next page is an LOI for you to critique. Look for what is wrong with the LOI given everything we've described:

Sample LOI

John Hunter
Program Officer
Anywhere Community Foundation
625 Smith St.
Any City, XN 28905

Dear Mr. Hunter:

Thank you for reading this letter of inquiry to your Anywhere Community Foundation. We hope to determine your interest in receiving a full proposal for our Hometown News Network investigative journalism series called “Covid-19’s Unequal Toll.” We are respectfully requesting your consideration of a grant of $35,000.

This project is our first foray into investigative journalism, which is often beyond the reach of small local news outlets. Since our journalists have been winning awards and acclaim for their work, the time has come to bring this kind of much-needed in-depth reporting to our community, when there is no such local coverage elsewhere.

We plan to launch our initiative with this series of 8 segments, providing a detailed understanding of how this national pandemic is affecting our local community specifically.

Given that our pilot program is this series on “Covid-19’s Unequal Toll,” it fits squarely within your Foundation's areas of interest: public health information.

Hometown Network News, our local public access station, was established in 1975 to provide local access television coverage for the Hometown community. In 2015, given the difficulty in attracting advertising support, we shifted to a nonprofit model and have become a public television network, serving more than 12,000 viewers each day.

Our mission is to ensure our local community is informed on issues that affect them directly, as well as on developments on the national stage. This investigative journalism initiative aims to connect those two goals.

Our viewership is immensely loyal – we have seen single digit attrition rates and in fact, our viewership is in growth mode, which is somewhat surprising as our community has many lower income areas (60% of our homes are at or below 70% of Area Median Income).

As cable television stations become more expensive for consumers and single subscription channels only add to that monthly cost, it becomes harder for local stations to access advertising dollars to offset subscription income. This is why we chose to become a public station – to raise support and not require our viewers to pay an extra subscription in order to have access to quality news reporting.

Expanding our coverage to include investigative series will bring our residents the same level of high impact reporting they may find on the more expensive national networks. We believe people with limited means deserve equal access to in-depth news coverage of local and national events.

Consequently, we are proposing the Hometown News Network's "Covid-19's Unequal Toll" series to highlight the ways this pandemic is affecting people of color in our local community disproportionately, as it is nationwide. These are their neighbors and we believe this kind of reporting can increase the social bonds of our community.

We have focused our pilot series on the pandemic because it is affecting us all, no matter who we are or where we live and is of equal concern to all of us. If the pilot proves successful, we would, of course, want to expand our investigative series to other topics such as the effects of climate change on our local community, and the shift in national consciousness on race, and how that is expressing itself within our Hometown community.

Our one-year pilot program objectives include:
1) Deploying 3 award-winning journalists to conduct in-depth research on 2 or more topics within the series;
2) Editorially curating the order of the series, and using that to inform edits to the work so it builds sequentially
3) Airing the series over an 8 week period, timed to air in winter when viewership is highest.

The total cost of our pilot program for one year is $70,000. Half of that has already been committed from both the county government and other funders.
Your investment of $35,000 will complete the funding we need to implement the pilot project fully. Our board of directors is enthusiastic about the project, and we already have several journalists who have expressed interest.

We look forward to partnering with your foundation on this exciting project.
If you have any questions or would like to receive a full proposal, please feel free to contact me at 490-982-1157 (or by email at jfeelgood@hnn.org).

We appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Janet B. Feelgood
Executive Director
Hometown Network News

P.S. I enclose a video of our latest award winning piece on the sanitation worker strike and how it affected our local community.

What worked well in this LOI?

What did not work well?

If you would like to see a better example of this LOI, click here to download a strong LOI.

Session 5: Communication & Stewardship

Once you get your final decision from the funder as to whether they will give you a grant or not, it is natural to feel all kinds of emotions. As you've ascertained by now, grantwriting is a lot of work for the possibility of getting a grant. It takes a lot of effort and thought and planning to write each proposal. And in the end, it all comes down to a final decision, so it is understandable if your judgment in this moment is clouded by emotion.

An important note here: It is helpful for your organization to create a gift acceptance policy that you will include with your acceptance letter. This policy states clearly that the grant does not give the funder any undue influence over your content or the topics you write about. As an example, here is The Lenfest Institute's gift acceptance policy.

Here are two letter formats to help you navigate this emotional moment:

Acceptance Letter Format

Here are the things you need to focus on in your acceptance letter:

- Write a letter to thank the donor within 48 hours of receiving the news.
- When you get the check, write to thank the donor again within 48 hours of receiving the check.
- Note the amount of the check in your letter so your letter serves as a formal receipt and paper trail for them.
- In your letter, be sure you clearly state what the check is for - the project for which you requested funding and what you will do, specifically, with this grant.
- Include an offer to come visit your office and tour your newsroom
- Provide a name and contact information for their main contact

- Finish the letter with a handwritten personalized thank you. That is part of ensuring you are stewarding the relationship and making the donor feel recognized.

Dear [name]:

Thanks to you, we will soon be launching our series on "Covid-19's Unequal Toll" – an 8 article series on the inequities associated with the impact of Covid-19 on people of color in our community.

Thank you for your recent generous gift **of $10,000** to the Hometown News Network. Your commitment to helping [keep local news alive] or [inform our community about public health issues] is deeply appreciated by our hardworking news staff as well as our community, which relies on us to provide them with critical information to help them stay safe and well.

Because of our generous supporters, the Hometown New Network er has provided high quality journalism from award-winning writers to our subscriber base of 12,000 local and neighboring residents and businesses.

Your donation will be used to help underwrite a new series of articles on **"Covid-19's Unequal Toll"** so we can investigate and inform the ways in which Covid-19 is being felt by different residents in our community, which our early research tells us is related to both skin color and area of residence. This series is part of our investigative journalism initiative, which is meant to provide a deeper, more human level of news to make it more impactful and relatable to the average reader.

We invite you to take a tour of our newsroom and meet some of the award-winning journalists on our investigative team as they discuss early research findings. We are always delighted to show off our newsroom and have our supporters enjoy a first hand glimpse at news in the making. Just let us know when you might be available.

Misty Smith, our newsroom manager, is always available to set up a tour for you, or to answer any questions you may have. Don't hesitate to call her at 801-555-1212, or email her at msmith@hnn.org.

Meanwhile, we will keep you updated on the series and our investigative journalism campaign. Again, thank you for your ongoing support.
Sincerely,

[Use a real signature, not a stamp or computer generated signature]
Jim Brewington
Publisher

[Put a personal handwritten note here]

Rejection Letter Format

Here are things to focus on in your letter in response to a rejection:

- First, try to remember that they get more requests than they can possibly fund. No doesn't mean never, it just means not now.   You can try again.
- Be sure to follow up in writing promptly and thank them for their consideration
- Politely ask for feedback on the proposal
- If it feels comfortable, you might ask them for the name of other funders who they think might be interested in this project
- Invite them to come visit your newsroom anyway
- If they do take you up on that offer, remember this old adage - when you want advice, ask for money, when you want money, ask for advice. Sometimes, the best way to warm up a potential donor is to ask for their advice. That makes them more inclined to fund you the next time you ask.
- Keep the relationship going with them - send them updates periodically
- Do what you can to keep the door open

Dear Mr. Doe:

On behalf of Hometown News Network, I want to thank you and the XYZ Foundation for taking the time to review our recent grant proposal for the "Covid-19's Unequal Toll" investigative journalism series. We appreciate your consideration of our request and value the work that you do for [journalism] or [public health].

The "Covid-19's Unequal Toll" series is an integral part of Hometown News Network's ability to provide in-depth, investigative articles to our readers, which give them a deeper glimpse into the ways national concerns are affecting us here in Hometown. We are actively seeking funding from other partners to support and sustain our efforts in the coming year. In the meantime, we welcome your suggestions as to how we could strengthen our program and our proposal.

While we could not partner with you at this time, we invite you to visit our newsroom and see firsthand the difference that philanthropy can make for [quality journalism] or [public health] in our community. Our news staff would welcome you and your colleagues at your convenience.

Thank you again for your consideration. I will plan to follow up with you soon to explore ways Hometown News Network can improve our proposal in the future.

Should you require any further information, please feel free to contact me at 212-555-1234 or flspeakin@hnn.org.

Warm regards,
Frank Lee Speakin
Executive Editor

Considerations for Site Visits

We recommend inviting the funder for a site visit whether or not you got funding. This is a great way to continue to nurture the relationship for the future. Following are some key considerations for planning your site visits.

You want to plan who they will see – it should be people closest to the project

- Be sure to also show them things you have done that have earned you special acclaim.
- They will want to meet your journalists – it's fun for them – so think about who is personable and understands how important this is.
- Make sure they meet your leadership staff - your editor
- Control for the unexpected – some editorial crisis that might throw the newsroom into a tizzy or renovation projects they might trip over, etc.
- Last but not least, know when to talk and when to shut up and listen! You're building a relationship – everyone wants to be heard, most of all your funders. Plus they may have some really great things to share.

You might also offer a virtual site visit. In this case:

- Give them a tour of your website - where they can find key information
- You might even show them the office on your camera
- Be sure to have the right people on the call
- Rehearse ahead of time

Common Report Form for Reporting on Grants

Common Report Form

The purpose of the Common Report Form (CRF) is to help nonprofit organizations in your area (look for one of these in your state - i.e. the Pennsylvania Common Report Form) to save time in grant reporting. If several funders have given your organization support for a particular project, only minor changes in the report information will need to be made for each funder. Please note the following important points:

- Every funder has different report deadlines and timetables.
- The list of funders who will accept reports in this format continues to grow. If a funder is not on the list, call to confirm that the funder will accept it.
- Any funder that has agreed to accept this report form may request additional information at any stage in their reporting process.

Common Report Form Cover Sheet

Funder receiving report: Name of the funder

Name of organization completing report. Please list exact legal name.
Address of organization:
Telephone number:
Fax number:
E-mail address:
Executive director:
Contact person and title (if not executive director):

Have there been any changes to your organization's IRS 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit status since your request for this grant?:
If yes, please explain:

Project name or brief project description:

Name whether your grant was for general operating support, project support or other.
Grant amount: $
Grant Period: from / to
Date of report:
Report due date:
Dates covered by this report:
Indicate whether this is an interim report or a final report

Report Format

I. NARRATIVE: Two to five pages.

- If reporting for a general operating grant, please address the following:
  - Organizational and/or programmatic achievements and setbacks; significant board and/or staff changes.
  - How you measured the effectiveness of your activities; what you learned; and how you used or will use this information.

- If reporting on a specific project grant, please address the following:
  - The project description and how the project relates to your organization's mission.
  - The project's goals and the success you had in meeting them. Have the project's goals been modified in any way? Describe the population served and how that population was affected by the project. How were other stakeholders affected? Any problems your organization faced when implementing this project, and how you resolved or attempted to resolve them.
  - How you measured the effectiveness of your project; what you learned; and how you used or will use this information. Were there any unexpected results, positive or negative?
  - Any changes in the original staffing pattern for the project.
  - Any significant changes in your organization while implementing this project.

II. FINANCIAL

- If reporting on a general operating grant, please submit the following:
  - Your organization's statement of income and expenditures for the year in which the grant was used.

- If reporting on a specific project, please submit the following:

- Your organization's statement of income and expenditures for the year in which the grant was used.
- For final reports, please provide project income and expenditure information compared to the approved project budget. If there are any major discrepancies, please explain.
- For interim reports, please provide project income and expenditures-to-date compared to the approved project budget. If there are any major discrepancies, please explain.
- A list of all sources of income for the project with amounts.

- Financial Attachments:
  - Most recent audited financial statements, if not already provided.
  - Most recent annual report, if not already provided.

III. ATTACHMENTS (optional)

- Publications, educational materials, news articles, videotapes, or other relevant materials about your organization or the funded project.

Leverage Your Success

If you have the good fortune to win a grant, you'll want to nurture the relationship with the funder so you can leverage that grant into expanded support. Try to meet with them to assess their willingness to entertain another request from you. You might consider asking for multi-year funding (this is a commitment to renew their grant at the same level for the next couple or several years in a row). Ask them to fund the project again over the next two years and ask them for double the amount. This helps you plan your budget from year to year with a bit more consistency.

Alternatively, you can ask them for names of other funders who might be interested in your work – this is really a warm up to asking them to make the introduction. Since they've supported you, that usually means they are more than happy to introduce you to others in their network. Remember, funders don't want you to be entirely dependent on their funding, so they have a vested interest in helping you attract other funders to this work.

Resource List

Tools & Resources

- **Impala** - this is a fairly new database which helps you search funders
- **Candid's Foundation Directory Online** - this is a (somewhat expensive, though monthly subscriptions are available) online directory of all funders in the United States and many global funders. It is an extensive database, which you can search by subject, type of grant, recipient location, etc. They have links to each foundation's page or website, where you can read their guidelines. We strongly recommend using a resource like this for your research. Many public libraries carry this database if it is outside your organization's budget.
    - Media Impact Funders Map (within Candid Database)
- **Guidestar** - If you create an account, you can look up any nonprofit or foundation on Guidestar for free. You will then click on their Form 990 tax return for the most recent fiscal year to see more information on the grants they have made (a summary is on Part I line 25, and the detailed schedule of grants is usually an attachment). You can supplement this research by scanning their guidelines on their website.
- **Pro Publica's Nonprofit Explorer** - This is an online free search engine that helps you pull up the recent tax returns and sometimes audited financial statements of foundations. In there, you can find detail on which organizations they funded and on their grants. You can supplement this research by scanning their guidelines on their website.
- **Instrumentl** - this is a subscription-based service company that will do everything from do the research for you, to creating your list of top prospects, to even writing your proposals. They offer each of these services a la carte and have some educational resources as well.

Fiscal Sponsorship Resources

- Fiscal Sponsor Directory https://fiscalsponsordirectory.org/
- Summary of fiscal sponsorship benefit models https://fiscalsponsorship.com/the-models-summary/

Suggested Reading

- The Case for Media Impact, Tow Center for Digital Journalism
- CREATIVE FUTURES: 40 Provocations to Reimagine the Arts, Documentary, and Journalism Creative Futures / Ford Foundation
- Decolonizing Wealth by Edgar Villanueva
- Finally – Outcome Measurement Strategies Anyone Can Understand by Laurel Molloy
- Nonprofit Storytelling, Donorbox
- New York Times Giving Tuesday article about news media

Solutions Journalism:

- The Keys to Powerful Solutions Journalism
- New Research Puts Solutions Journalism to the Test
- Solutions-Focused News

Studies on how Journalism is Good for Democracy:

- Democracy Fund List of Studies

Decline in voting participation/divide if news orgs fail:

- Who is Hit Hardest by the Decline in Local Journalism
- The State of Local News
- Local Journalism in Crisis

American Views on Journalism:

- American Views on Journalism

Websites & Blogs

- Community-Centric Fundraising
- Journalism's Theory of Change, Josh Stearns blog
- Nonprofit AF, Vu Le blog
- Solution Set, Lenfest Newsletter

- The Trust-Based Philanthropy Project