
Applying for Foundation Grants

Libby Chenault

To support their programs, libraries have traditionally relied on the monies allocated locally and by state and federal agencies. In the face of ever increasing costs and shrinking governmental/institutional allocations, the librarian specialist may be forced to seek resources from private foundations to provide necessary services.

There are no quick and easy answers as to where to go for support or magic formulae for writing proposals which will win grants. The intent of this paper is to provide a starting point for those entering the "foundation game." The sections which follow will provide tips on preparing grant proposals, information on North Carolina foundations which have supported library programs, and an annotated bibliography of materials which describe foundations or offer suggestions on proposal writing. It is beyond the scope of this, or any, paper to provide for all eventualities in the "foundation game," but the sources and strategies introduced here should allow the rookie librarian to begin playing. Good luck!

Tips on Preparing Foundation Grant Proposals

A proposal is a plan for acceptance. According to Webster, the word proposal is derived from the Latin word *pro*, meaning for or in favor of, and the French word *poser*, meaning to set forth. A proposal, therefore, is a positive statement about a program or set of activities.

According to Robert Lefferts, a proposal serves five functions:

It is a written representation of a program, it is a request, it is an instrument of persuasion,

it is a promise and a commitment, and it is a plan.

It is useful for the proposal writers to be aware of these functions, since each function has certain implications for the preparation and presentation of the proposal.

A proposal may have as many as seventeen component parts including:

Letter of introduction or transmittal

Title page

Table of contents

Abstract or summary

Introduction

Statement of need

Purpose

Objectives, goals, or strategy

Conceptual framework or rationale

Methodology, program design or activities

Organizational/Administrative plan

Staffing plan

Timetable

Budget

Evaluation

Appendices or supporting documents

Key elements of an effective grant proposal are the abstract, statement of need, objectives, methodology, qualifications, budget, and plans for evaluation. When writing, remember the best proposals follow foundation guidelines and are clear, concise, and to the point.

Letter of Introduction

The letter of introduction submits the proposal to the foundation or granting agency. It should be brief (one to three pages), properly addressed, and include: the name of the institution submitting the proposal; a concise summary of the problem, need, objectives, and proposed program; a brief statement of the institution's interests, experience, and capability; and the name and address of the project director.

Title Page

For proposals of over five pages, a title page may add clarity. The title page states the name of the proposal (with a descriptive subtitle if necessary), the name of the foundation to whom it is being submitted, the name and address of the institution submitting the proposal, and the date of preparation or submission.

Table of Contents

In lengthy proposals, a table of contents will follow the title page. The table of contents should

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be in outline form and can provide the reader with an overall picture of the topics covered in the proposal.

Abstract

The abstract is a brief summary (one paragraph to one or two pages) of the project, usually written after the proposal has been completed. The abstract is designed to stand alone. Because granting agencies make initial judgments based on the abstract, it must present a strong case. The abstract states the purpose, importance, and scope of the projected work and should be consistent with the needs, objectives, methodology and budget considerations which are expanded in the body of the proposal.

Introduction

The introduction provides basic information including the title of the project, the name of the funding source, the name of the applicant institution, and the funding program to which the application is being made. The introduction also briefly describes the proposed program, the nature and scope of the problem being addressed, the setting in which the project will take place, the persons

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or groups who will benefit from the proposed program, and the importance or significance of the program. An effective introduction is to the point but written in a way that will heighten the reader's curiosity and interest him in reading further. The introduction sets the tone of the proposal and provides the theme which will be expanded and clarified in the more specific proposal components which follow.

Statement of Need

The object of all proposals is to attract funds to meet needs or solve problems. In this section of the proposal, the writer focuses on the particular problem's importance, relevance, and capability of being solved. It is important to define and limit the scope of the problem, to discuss logically and document the problem's history—why this need has not previously been met, what work has been done either in your own institution or in others, why you can best meet the need, why now is the right time to address the problem—and to indicate to the granting agency why this particular problem merits attention and support.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose represents the broad goal of the

project. It is a general statement of the expected achievements and/or benefits of the proposed program. The objectives are specific, short-term, realistic, and measurable statements of what an applicant expects to accomplish. In other words, this section of the proposal states what results are expected from the project, the amount of time needed to produce the desired results, and the acceptable level of project service or competency.

Conceptual Framework or Rationale

This information is often part of the introduction or statement of need. The rationale provides the philosophy or perspective behind the project, discusses any assumptions that are being made, states the significance and relevance of the project, and documents work done by others in this field.

Methodology

The methodology provides a logical sequence of methods/procedures/activities for accomplishing the objectives. In essence, this section states who will do what how, when and why. The *who* will be expanded in the qualifications section. The *what* is what will be done. The *how* provides criteria for effective performance. The *why* suggests that methods have been thoughtfully selected in terms of past effectiveness or applicability to the existing problems and objectives. Finally, the *when* provides the time frame for each objective and for the overall project.

Qualifications

It is important for the granting agency to have confidence in those to whom it plans to contribute funds. This section provides a record of the applicant institution's (library's) past accomplishments. Be sure to include here successful administering of any special projects. Included in this section are brief explanations of the project personnel, their duties and responsibilities. The applicant should provide a defense of the qualifications and/or competencies of the individuals who will be participating in the project. It is a good idea to include, usually in an appendix, resumes for all key personnel. The qualifications section is sometimes broken down into more specific groupings of information. (See Organizational/Administrative Plan and Staffing Plan, below.)

Organizational/Administrative Plan

In most instances, a project will be part of a larger operation. It is necessary in a proposal to outline administrative units and to define the broader organizational plans. This information may be presented as part of the introductory or qualifications sections, in a separate narrative

section, by means of organizational charts in the appendices, or in some combination of the above. The point is to demonstrate that the applicant institution has the stable, effective administrative abilities necessary to manage the project.

Staffing Plan

This section, like the previous one, may appear as part of the qualifications section or it may stand alone. Wherever it appears, the staffing plan should include a brief description of each staff position, the necessary qualifications, and the amount of time allocated for the position (e.g., full-time, part-time, 40 hours, etc.).

Timetable

Timing is generally discussed in the methodology section, but it may strengthen a proposal to provide a timetable which will demonstrate graphically the applicant's ability to provide effective program management.

Budget

The project budget is a realistic financing scheme growing out of and corresponding closely to the objectives of the project. The annual budgets include projected income or contributions (if any) by source and expenditures usually grouped in the following categories:

Salaries: Anticipated salaries and fringe benefits for the fiscal year(s) in which the project will be accomplished.

Materials: Media resources for use by patrons, including cataloging/processing costs for these materials.

Operating expenses: This line is frequently combined with materials and includes consumable supplies, communication expenses, staff training and materials, and contracted services.

Equipment: This line is generally considered capital expenditure and includes such things as furniture, office equipment, hardware, and some supplies with an expected life of more than five years.

Indirect costs: Many institutions assess the project for some indirect costs to cover office space, heat, light, and the administration of grant funds. The indirect costs are usually based on a percentage formula. (For example, the present rate negotiated by UNC-CH with HEW is 41.6%).

Items in the budget should be specific so that those reviewing the budget can see how each figure relates to the project. The applicant should state the length of expected foundation support (two or three year projects are preferred and many foundations have a five year limit); the program for eventual self-support; and/or where,

when, and how support will come from sources other than the foundation.

Evaluation

The library, community, and granting agency must be able to evaluate the effectiveness of a program and to determine that the stated objectives have been satisfactorily met. Evaluative criteria should be objective and, where applicable, quantifiable. Evaluation should be built into the ongoing work of the project. At the end of the

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project, and usually at specified intervals, the granting agency should be provided with a summary evaluation which states how each objective was met and records how the project successfully met community needs and/or solved a problem. The final evaluation should be available for dissemination, reemphasize why the project was important, and recognize the contribution of the granting agency. Foundation requirements will vary, so it is important that the applicant state from the beginning the purpose and level of evaluation and how information about the project will be disseminated.

Appendices

The appendices are made up of pertinent supporting documents. These might include activity plans, time tables, job descriptions, organizational charts, vitas, financial reports, research results or any related forms. The appendices should be easy to locate and should relate specifically to the text.

Proposal Criteria

Proposals are as different as the projects they suggest, the people who write them, and the audience for which they are intended. The preceding sections serve only as suggestions for the novice proposal writer. Foundations and foundation staff offer guidelines, which must be followed, concerning what is to be included and how proposals should be formatted. Expertise comes with careful needs assessment, study of foundations, and practice in writing proposals. The questions which follow should help the applicant to review and strengthen his proposal by providing some criteria which reviewers use as they examine a proposal.

Foundation Criteria

Each foundation reviewer will consciously

and unconsciously evaluate a proposal in light of certain questions or criteria. Each foundation or agency has its own stated criteria but these can be said to fall into seven broad areas: purpose, need, accountability, competency, feasibility, clarity and completeness, and consistency. After completing each draft of a proposal, the conscientious applicant should check his work to make sure the proposal is answering the following questions:

Purpose

How closely does this project match the interests of the foundation?

Where does the proposal fall in the priorities of the foundation (and for that matter, those of the applicant organization)?

Need

Does this proposal address a significant need?

Whom will it benefit, how, and to what degree?

Is it part of an existing program?

Does it duplicate or overlap with past or existing projects in its field?

Does the project approach a need or a problem in a new or innovative way?

Is its purpose to conserve a beneficial service which might otherwise be lost?

Could the project be carried out more effectively elsewhere or by other persons?

Are federal, state, or local funds available?

Are other private sources more appropriate?

Accountability

Can the applicant institution successfully implement the proposed program?

Does the proposal include a detailed time table?

Has the cost of alternative programs been explored?

Has the cost-benefit of the proposal's program been examined?

Have provisions been made for recording and analyzing appropriate data?

Will project personnel maintain appropriate records to demonstrate project success and weaknesses?

Competency

What is the track record of the applicant organization?

Does the institution demonstrate familiarity with the problem, relevant literature, service-delivery methods, and other similar programs?

Are the project personnel sufficiently experienced in the field and appropriately prepared to implement the project?

Feasibility

Is the project properly timed?

Is the proposed action adequate to meet the stated needs?

Are the proposed facilities and staffing levels appropriate for the plan of work?

Is the applicant institution enthusiastic about the proposal?

Have the appropriate levels of funding been sought?

Clarity and Completeness

Is the proposal clearly written and organized so that it can be readily followed and easily understood?

Has the writer avoided complicated sentence structure, abstractions that are not clarified by examples, use of jargon and excessive verbage?

Does the proposal cover all relevant points leaving no unanswered questions about purpose, objectives, need, activities, staffing, organization, timing or budget request?

Consistency

Are all parts of the proposal related and consistent with each other?

Are the program approaches, activities, and methodology consistent with recognized ideas and methods in the particular field?

Are the statements of need relevant to the proposed program activities?

Are the proposed activities logically consistent with the program's objectives?

Is the staffing sufficient to implement the proposed program?

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North Carolina Foundations

Below is a directory listing of North Carolina foundations which in the past have made grants to support library programs. There are many other North Carolina foundations and, depending on the scope and purpose of a library's proposed program, these are also potential sources of funds.

There are many foundation directories and data bases currently available (see Selected Foundation Reference Sources, below). Most are indexed or arranged by subject or by geographic area. These directories provide a good starting

place in the search for potential foundation support. It is important to find out as much as possible about a foundation, its purpose, its interests, and its levels of support before making an application. In addition to directories and data bases, published annual reports, tax records, and foundation personnel and guidelines are good sources of this information.

The foundation summaries which follow illustrate the type of information generally found in directories and have been selected because of their interest to North Carolina school media coordinators.

Babcock (Mary Reynolds) Foundation, Inc.

William Bondurant, Executive Director

102 Reynolda Village

Winston-Salem, NC 27106

(919) 748-9222

High: \$300,000 Low: \$500

The Babcock Foundation funds programs in education, social services, support of the environment, the arts, and for the enhancement of citizen participation in the development of public policy. Grants are made chiefly but not exclusively to North Carolina and the Southeast. The Babcock Foundation does not make grants for building or endowment funds, or for matching gifts. Grants are not made to individuals or for local community efforts. A program policy statement and grant application guidelines are published in the annual report.

BarclaysAmerican Foundation, Inc.

Robert V. Knight, Jr., Treasurer

201 South Tryon Street

P.O. Box 31488

Charlotte, NC 28231

(704) 372-0060

High: \$100,000 Low: \$100

BarclaysAmerican funds programs for education, community support, youth activities, and the arts. Grants are made in the areas in which the company operates. Grants are not made for endowment funds or loans, to individuals, for scholarships or for research programs.

Bryan (The Kathleen Price and Joseph M.) Family Foundation, Inc.

Allan M. Herrick, Associate

P.O. Box 21008

Greensboro, NC 27420

(919) 378-2242

High: \$50,000 Low: \$250

The Bryan Family Foundation makes grants, primarily in North Carolina, to educational and

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religious institutions and for those community projects of interest to the family. Grants are not made for endowment funds, matching gift, or loans, to individuals, or for scholarships.

Ferebee (Percy B.) Endowment

P.O. Box 3099

Winston-Salem, NC 27102

(919) 748-5269

High: \$10,600 Low: \$1,500

The Ferebee Endowment makes grants for the educational, cultural, and civic development of western North Carolina. Grants are also available for individual scholarships.

Hanes (James G.) Memorial Fund/Foundation

E. Ray Cope, Vice-President

c/o Wachovia Bank and Trust Company

P.O. Box 3099

Winston-Salem, NC 27102

(919) 748-5269

High: \$226,000 Low: \$2,000

The James G. Hanes Memorial Fund makes grants for local and regional education and health programs, emphasizing art schools and museums, secondary and higher education, conservation,

art, cultural and community programs. Grants are not made to individuals. The program policy statement and grant application are available upon request from the foundation.

Hillsdale Fund, Inc.

Sion A. Boney, Administrative Vice-President
P.O. Box 20124
Greensboro, NC 27420
(919) 274-5471
High: \$35,000 Low: \$500

The Hillsdale Fund makes grants in North Carolina and the southeastern states for programs in education, religion, and the humanities. Grants are not made for operating budgets or to individuals.

McAdenville Foundation, Inc., The .

W. J. Pharr, President
McAdenville, NC 28101
(704) 824-3551
High: \$100,000 Low: \$50

The McAdenville Foundation is a private foundation which operates the local community social and recreational facilities and provides grants to local public schools, local churches, and church-affiliated colleges. Grants are not made for endowment funds, matching gifts, for research, to individuals, or for scholarships. This foundation does not encourage grant applications.

McClure (James G.K.) Educational and Development Fund, Inc.

James McClure Clark, Secretary
P.O. Box 1490
Woodfin Street
Asheville, NC 28802
(704) 254-3566
High: \$10,000 Low: \$100

The McClure Educational and Developmental Fund makes grants to educational projects, for scholarship funds, and to programs which benefit the people of western North Carolina. Grants are not made for endowment funds, loans, or to individuals. Grant application guidelines are available upon request and an annual report is published.

Reynolds (Z. Smith) Foundation, Inc.

Thomas W. Lambeth, Executive Director
101 Reynolda Village
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
(919) 725-7541
High: \$1,320,000 Low: \$1,250

The Reynolds Foundation makes grants for colleges, libraries, the arts, health care, recreation, and the improvement of criminal justice in North Carolina. Grants are not made to individuals. The

grant application guidelines are published in the annual report.

Richardson (H. Smith) Charitable Trust

c/o Piedmont Financial Company
P.O. Box 20124
Greensboro, NC 27420
High: \$100,000 Low: \$700

The Richardson Charitable Trust is primarily interested in higher education but also makes grants to educational organizations, schools, social agencies, and hospitals.

Selected Foundation Reference Sources

Computer Access

COMEARCH Printouts #23: Libraries and Information Services. New York: The Foundation Center, 1979- .

A directory listing those grant programs directly related to libraries and information services.

Foundation Directory.

This data base provides current data on more than 250,000 non-governmental foundations having assets of \$1 million or more or which make grants of \$500,000 or more annually.

Foundation Grants Index.

This data base indexes more than 400 American foundations. Approximately 10,000 new grant records are added to the data base annually.

Grants.

This data base, updated monthly, provides data on 2200 available public and private grants.

National Foundations.

This data base, revised annually, provides information concerning over 21,000 private U.S. foundations which award grants for charitable purposes.

Directories

Annual Register of Grant Support. Los Angeles: Academic Media, 1969- .

A guide to grant support programs of government agencies, public and private foundations, corporations, educational and professional associations. Subject, geographic, organization, and personnel indexes.

Corporate 500. The Directory of Corporate Philanthropy. San Francisco: Public Management Institute, 1980.

A directory of the top 500 U.S. corporate foundations.

Corporate Foundation Profiles. New York: The Foundation Center, 1980.

Detailed profiles of 221 of the largest company-sponsored foundations in the United States. Information from the *Foundation Center Source Book Profile*.

Federal Funding Guide 1975-76 for Elementary and Secondary Education. Washington, DC: Education Funding Research Council, 1975.

An extensive directory of federal programs to support elementary and secondary education. Caution: Very out-of-date.

The Foundation Center Source Book Profiles. New York: The Foundation Center, Aug. 1977-

Detailed information in loose-leaf form on approximately 500 foundations awarding grants of \$200,000 or more each year.

The Foundation Directory. New York: The Foundation Center, 1960-

A directory of 2,818 non-governmental, grant-making foundations of the U.S. having assets of \$1 million or more and having made grants of \$100,000. Arranged by state with subject index.

The Foundation Grants Index. New York: The Foundation Center, 1970/71-

An annual cumulative listing of foundation grants of \$1 million or more awarded by private foundations.

Foundations That Send Their Annual Reports. New York: Public Service Materials Center, 1976.

An alphabetical listing of over 400 foundations having assets of over \$1 million and/or making grants of more than \$200,000.

Foundation 500. New York: D. M. Lawson Associates, 1978.

A guide stating where and to what programs the largest 500 foundations contribute.

A Guide to Foundations of the Southeast. V. 2. Williamsburg, KY: Davis-Taylor Associates, Inc., 1975.

A directory based on the 1973 and 1974 IRS returns. Main section arranged alphabetically by foundation within each state. Index of officers.

International Foundation Directory. Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1979.

An international directory of foundations which lists purpose, activities, and financial information.

Leonard, Lawrence E. and Buchko, Michael, Jr. *Federal Programs for Libraries: A Directory.*

2d ed. Washington, DC: HEW, 1979.

A now-dated directory of federal sources for library funding.

List of Organizations Filing as Private Foundations. New York: The Foundation Center, 1973.

A listing of approximately 30,000 organizations registered as private foundations with the IRS.

National Databook. 5th ed. New York: The Foundation Center, 1981. 2 vols.

A computerized guide, by state, of information on 22,484 private foundations including amount of grants awarded, assets, IRS number, and principal officer.

The 1980-81 Survey of Grant-Making Foundations with Assets of Over \$1,000,000 or Grants of Over \$100,000. New York: Public Service Materials Center.

A guide providing such information as the best time to submit applications, to whom to direct grant requests, and whether the foundation makes grants out-of-state.

North Carolina Foundation List. 1978.

A listing of North Carolina private foundations listed with the Foundation Center in 1978.

Taft Corporate Foundation Directory, 1979-80. Washington, DC: Taft Corporation.

This guide provides 321 corporate foundation files. Subject index.

Taft Trustees of Wealth: A Biographical Directory of Private Foundation and Corporate Foundation Officers. Washington, DC: Taft Corporation, 1979-80.

A personnel approach to major U.S. foundations.

Where America's Large Foundations Make Their Grants. New York: Public Service Materials Center, 1980.

A listing by state of over 600 foundations, including amount and purpose of grant.

Government Documents

Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget. *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*. Washington, DC: GPO, 1981.

This document is the largest single source of grant fund information. Published annually, it includes over 1000 government funding programs administered by over 60 federal departments and agencies.

U.S. Office of Education. *Educational Programs That Work: A Resource of Exemplary Educational Programs Developed by Local School Districts and Approved by the Joint Dissemination Review Panel in the Education Division of the Department of HEW*. San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1978.

A guide to school, including media, programs which have been governmentally funded.

Guides and Handbooks

Bartlett, Debbie and Tom Martin. *All Aboard the Grantsmanship: A Bibliography on Government and Foundation Grants and Proposal Writing*. Freehold, NJ: Monmouth County Social Service Library, n.d.

An annotated bibliography of resources in the grant field relating to human service programs.

Boss, Richard W. *Grant Money and How to Get It: A Handbook for Librarians*. New York: R.R. Bowker, 1980.

A popular guide for librarians seeking and writing grant proposals.

The Bread Game. San Francisco, CA: Pacific Change, 1974.

A guide with strategies for winning foundation grants.

Corry, Emmett, O.S.F. *Grants for Libraries: A Guide to Public and Private Funding Programs and Proposal Writing Techniques*. Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1982.

A guide for proposal research and writing aimed specifically at the library population.

Dermer, Joseph. *How to Get Your Fair Share of Foundation Grants*. New York: Public Service Materials Center, 1973.

This guide to proposal writing includes nine

essays on "Approaching Foundations," "Writing The Foundation Proposal," and "What a Foundation Expects from You."

Dermer, Joseph. *How to Write Successful Foundation Presentations*. New York: Public Service Materials Center, 1977.

A general guide to securing grants.

Freeman, David F. *The Handbook on Private Foundations*. Cabin John, MD: Council on Foundations, 1981.

A guide to creating and running a private foundation.

Hillman, Howard and Karin Abaranel. *The Art of Winning Foundation Grants*. New York: Vanguard Press, 1975.

This guide presents "10 steps" to winning foundation grants.

Human Resources Network. *User's Guide to Funding Resources*. Radnor, PA: Chilton Book Company, 1975.

A guide to obtaining individual and institutional grants from public and private sources.

Jacquette, F. Lee and Barbara I. *What Makes a Good Proposal?* New York: The Foundation Center, 1976.

A brief guide to what should be included in a proposal and what foundations will be looking for.

Katz, Lee. "Perspectives on Grantsmanship," *Michigan Librarian* 41 (Summer 1975): 7-9.

A brief guide outlining "Development of the Concept," "Approaches to a Funding Agency" and "Formulation of a Proposal."

Kiritz, Norman J. *Program Planning and Proposal Writing*. Los Angeles: The Grantsmanship Center, n.d.

An eight page guide to basic ingredients of a program proposal.

Klevens, James. "Researching Foundations: An Inside View of What They Are and How They Operate," *Chronica*, 11, no. 2 (March-April 1977).

Guidelines for identifying foundation resources. Stresses the importance of initially approaching foundations with a brief letter explaining the proposal.

