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Grant Resources and Guidance for Law Enforcement

Dr. Stephenie Slahor

You have a project or need, but not enough money to fund it. Does that sound familiar? A federal, state, local, corporate, private or foundation grant might finance training, equipment, a project, or a process.

To follow are ideas for researching grant applications and sources. It is strongly advised that you do your “homework” because you likely won’t be the only one applying for that grant money. Your application must stand out from the crowd and that’s where care about eligibility; where, when and how to apply; how to request; and how to administer a grant become critical elements.

On the federal side, use the ever growing www.Grants.gov and its immense collection of grant opportunities and information about programs, eligibility, policies, terminology, and applications. Register and start researching. You can even create a “workspace” to edit online forms and to apply with other colleagues.

The Catalog for Domestic Assistance (www.CFDA.gov) lists over 2,300 federal assistance programs which can be researched by number, agency, archive, or new/added programs. While not comparable to Grants.gov, the CFDA catalog can lead to program searches and the appropriate administrative office and links to application instructions.

Also, use your favorite Internet search engine to locate state, local, corporate, private, nonprofit, or foundation grant sources.

Starting Out

Competition for grants can be intense which is why it’s important to know what the grantor funds and whether your project matches it. Be aware that some grantors prefer “new” projects or “regional” approaches to a need.

If it’s a match, be thorough in your efforts and applications. Comply with all the grantor’s requirements for its forms – even those about font, grammatical correctness, and background or supplemental information.

Keep a computer file or notebook of grant sources, Web sites, deadlines, limits, and trends. Know your project and its benefits, how much money it needs and which grantors match. If you speak with or E-mail a grantor, record the name(s) and information, and what was discussed about suggestions or clarifications. When writing, use correct grammar, spelling and syntax because they indicate your degree of carefulness. Use job titles, not personal names, when discussing personnel. If equipment must be purchased, avoid brand names unless the grantor requires it. Research first and don’t rely on “exploratory” phone calls or E-mails because many grantors dislike such contact.

Your application’s first draft probably won’t be the final draft. Revise it as necessary to meet what the grantor requires. Allow someone unfamiliar with the project to read the grantor’s requirements and your application, checking for clarity and correctness.

You’ll likely need a Dun & Bradstreet® “D-U-N-S® number.” Apply at www.dnb.com. It’s an identifier to both establish a credit file and predict reliability and financial competence. If necessary, obtain an Employer Identification Number at www.irs.gov.

What Most Grant Applications Need

- A “summary” of the project, correctly placed on the application where the grantor requires it – usually at the beginning. Utilize two or three paragraphs to state the project’s outline and entice the reader/reviewer to read on.
- An “introduction” which tells about your agency, goals, personnel, people to be involved in the project, previous grants, successes, and why your project matches the grant-

At grantors' Web sites, look for items which they've funded in the past, their priorities, new or changed focus, geographic restrictions, frequently asked questions, and informational online tutoring.

The Foundation Center at **www.FoundationCenter.org** has philanthropy-related research and training programs, library learning centers, search tools, tutorials, and regularly updated information.

At **www.GuideStar.org**, the world's largest information source on nonprofit organizations, you'll find what grantors fund along with grant money trends.

The Grantsmanship Center at **www.tgci.com** has resources for planning projects, researching grants, proposal writing, and grant management.

At **www.PoliceGrantsHelp.com** is a database of federal, state, local, and corporate grants.

The Web site **www.1hawthorn.com** has consulting and training opportunities in grant writing and administration, planning and budget.

The Justice Technology Information Network at **www.justnet.org** has grant information for equipment, testing and technology.

The Library of Congress Web site, **www.loc.gov**, is an excellent resource for background or supplemental information.

The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council's Web site at **www.npstc.org** focuses on public safety and communications interoperability for broadband, software defined radio, rebanding, and other technical education.

For grants by name, subject or applicant/agency, or guidelines for successful grant writing, log on to **www.federal-grantswire.com**.

Training courses in successful grant writing and grant management are offered by **www.GrantWritingUSA.com**.

If partnering with a nonprofit organization, **www.techsoup.org** has helps for obtaining donated and discounted technology products.

For training, podcasts and webinars in financial crime, cybercrime and intelligence data, go to **www.nw3c.org**. Some of its programs are grant-related.

For demographic facts or statistics, use The US Census Bureau's "American Fact Finder," **www.factfinder.census.gov**, or crime statistics from state or federal crime data Web sites.

For projects intersecting with community service or jobs, use the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Web site at **www.bls.gov**.

The US Government Printing Office at **www.gpo.gov** has information from and about the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government, and information about the goals and purposes of federal agencies.

When practical, add survey results and/or interviews or anecdotes which further show how your project meets a need or solves a problem.

Corporate grant processes are usually much quicker than government grant processes. Private foundation and nonprofit organization grants may fluctuate in amounts of funds granted, but they can be good matches for the right project.

Mini-grants from corporate or nonprofit groups usually have an easy application form and a quick answer/turnaround. Of course, the funds are small, but they may be all you need for a particular project or purchase.

Although you may be registered at **Grants.gov** and created a profile at that Web site, for some grants, you may be required to register through **SAM.gov** (System for Award Management) and designate an e-business point of contact (E-Biz POC) and an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) in SAM.



or's preferences.

- A "problem statement" or "needs assessment" which tells the focus and necessity of the project, who will benefit, how it will be administered, and how it will continue once the grant expires.
- The "objectives" will describe broad goals and specific project outcomes, and perhaps the process of carrying out the project.

measured, who does the measuring, time involved and needed modifications to keep the project on track.

- The "budget" will describe existing resources; anticipated expenses at each phase of the project; and details about salaries, training, insurance, transportation, equipment use/purchase/rental, supplies, utilities, communications, rental space, indirect costs, and any matching funds.

Verify any cited facts or statistics.

- The "method" or "program design" provides details of the project's stages and the resources, people and actions needed to begin, run and, if applicable, end the project.
- The "evaluation" describes the methods which will judge the success, effectiveness and results of the project, including how progress is

Grant Research Internet Resources

The Web sites **www.grants.gov** and **www.cfda.gov** are good starters. Here are some additional grant resources:

www.foundationsearch.com – This has information about more than 120,000 grant foundations. Register for research tools in grant types, value, year, recipient, and trends, plus webinars and online education in grants.

www.dhs.gov – Use the search box for "grants" and links with the Depart-

ment of Homeland Security for grants in preparedness and response planning, equipment, training, exercises, and administration.

www.fema.gov/grants – Federal Emergency Management Agency focus is disaster-specific situations, but its grants also fund environmental/historical preservation, hazard-related projects and non-disaster programs.

www.tsa.gov – The Transportation Security Administration offers grants for safety and security in intercity buses and transit systems and ferry services.

www.phmsa.dot.gov/hazmat – These grants are mainly for pipeline and hazardous materials safety projects or HAZMAT emergency planning and training. There are also links to training seminars with the US Department of Transportation.

www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services – Grants from The US Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Program are meant for rural area facilities, equipment, housing, utilities,

GRANT RESOURCES AND GUIDANCE FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

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facilities, equipment, housing, utilities, cooperative projects, telecommunications, and community development.

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding – The Office of Justice Programs in the US Department of Justice Web site's funding resource center has information about the grant process and current and past funding opportunities. Guides cover overviews and tips for grant applications. Most grants are for projects in training, crime prevention and emergency management.

www.usa.gov/benefits-grants-loans – This easy to use, streamlined Web site has lists of Federal government benefits, grants and financial aid. Although designed for citizen use, it may benefit your grant research.

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/grants – The US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Web site grants page lists available grants, announcements and HUD's grant system.

www.hrsa.gov – The Health Resources and Services Administration agency Web site has a "grants" link to grant policy, current and archived grants, and a registration form for E-mail notices about new grants.

www.macfound.org – The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's grants focus on societal challenges in a topic or a geographic area covered by the grant opportunity, and funding for general operating support, research or program support to assist the grant making strategy.

Service Clubs/Community Organizations

While a government grant may be your first thought, consider your community's service clubs, small business groups and nonprofit organizations for grants. Generally, these yield

smaller amounts of money, but they may suffice for protective vests for K9s, or police/community programs for youth as examples. Such lesser-known sources may also have much less competition for that funding. They also give an opportunity for enhanced liaisons between your community and your agency.

http://psfa.us/ – The Public Safety Foundation of America primarily focuses, at present, on grants for public safety communications.

www.wkkf.org – The Kellogg Foundation has grants for projects which usually involve enhancing conditions for a community's children. If you're partnering with a community organization with that goal, you may find funding with this foundation.

www.research.ucla.edu/ocga/sr2/Private.htm – This University of California at Los Angeles Office of Contract and Grant Administration Web site maintains a detailed list of foundations and organizations, most of which provide project grants.

www.kresge.org – The Kresge Foundation offers grants for community projects and social investing.

www.mountedpolice.org – This organization supports the health and welfare of police horses and horse and rider training. They may be able to provide information about funds available for mounted police units.

www.k9s4cops.org/apply – This 501(c)3 foundation was formed specifically to fund the purchase of police K9s and believes that the lack of funds should not be an obstacle for police agencies seeking support for police K9 units. **P&SN**

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Glossary of Terms

501(c)(3) – an Internal Revenue Service code section dealing with “exempt” organizations (a public charity, private foundation or other nonprofit organization benefited by exemption from Federal taxation) establishing a cause for which they raise money, incorporate as a nonprofit group and have tax exempt status. Some fund projects which promote particular causes. Their donors usually obtain a tax write-off. Government agencies are not 501(c)(3) organizations, but can form an affiliated organization that has tax exempt status which could possibly seek and obtain private foundation grants. No tax write-off is given to donors giving to a government agency (with the exception of a few units of government whose purpose is exclusively for the public good).

RFP, SGA, NOFA – Respectively, these abbreviations stand for Request For Proposal, Solicitation for Grant Application and Notice Of Funding Availability, describing who can apply for what. The grantor sets eligibility, how the money can be used, deadlines, etc. Mandates in the RFP, SGA or NOFA must be carefully followed or else the application is rejected and the grant opportunity is lost. Grantors want all of the applications to be similar so that no one applicant has an advantage by making his/her application look better than the others. Also, the grantor is able to determine if the applicant is careful about following directions. Grantors will not trust an applicant who cannot do so. Because the grant application is the preliminary indication of cooperation and responsibility, first impressions are important.

Administrative Costs – the direct and indirect costs of managing the project which usually have a cap at a certain percentage of the grant

Allowable Costs – expenditures permitted by law or other authority

Amendment – a modification if a grant application is changed or revised

Application – the formal request for grant money. Most are online forms, but the application must follow all the grantor’s requirements and be in the proper online (or paper) format applicable.

Block Grant – formula funding not allocated to a specific category. Most block grants go to state or local governments.

Challenge Grant – a grant which requires that the grantee raise additional funds for the project and no money is given until the challenge is met. Additional parameters or limitations may be geographic area preferences or deadlines. Meeting a challenge grant can be a prelude to future grants because the applicant has demonstrated the ability to raise money.

Community Foundation – a foundation for a specific geographic area in which the foundation receives money primarily from local or regional donors for long-term, charitable management of the money for local or regional projects. While community foundation grants do not usually yield a great deal of mon-



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GLOSSARY OF TERMS, *Continued from page 61*

ey, they are sources of smaller amounts of money and may renew in subsequent years if the grantee proves reliable and trustworthy.

Corporate Foundations and Giving Programs – Occasionally, a percentage of corporate profit is put into a charitable fund to be spent in a specific geographic area in which the corporation has a major presence. These grants may have special requirements or “strings attached,” such as advertising space or the corporate name on the vehicles of the grantee as a publicity payback for the grant.

Discretionary Funds – Federal grant money sometimes moves from federal to state, or federal to local. Federal to state to local channeling is usually a pass-through grant in which a state subawards the grant money through competitive RFPs. Formula grants are based on a national assessment of what a state needs in relation to its number of residents and

are awarded at the discretion of a particular federal or state agency. Private discretionary funds are distributed at the discretion of an organization’s trustees or a full board of directors.

Funding Cycle – Grantors set defined annual, short or long cycles for the steps in a grant, including application review, decision-making and notification. RFP deadlines must be met for each step.

In-kind Contribution – a contribution of equipment, supplies, staff time, office space, or other resources (When tracking the work of volunteers in your agency, and in need of a dollar value for that contribution, use www.independentsector.org to learn the value of the volunteer’s work.)

Letter of Intent, Letter of Inquiry, Preliminary Proposal – If appropriate, a brief letter of intent or inquiry to the grantor can indicate interest in later submitting

a full application. The focus is on where the grantee is today and where it wants to be in the future, stating its intent to the grantor to show how the grant will move the grantee to the next goal.


Memorandum of Understanding – an agreement about the roles and timelines of all the project’s partner-participants

Ongoing Support, General Support – Not found often, this funding covers such things as day-to-day expenses, salaries, utilities, office supplies, rent/mortgage payments, insurance, or accounting costs. The grantor looks at the overall impact and wants to evaluate how a proposed project will serve the greater good.

Set-aside – a fund reserved by the grantor for a specific purpose

Unallowable Cost – This is a cost not allowed because it conflicts with the grant’s cost principles or conditions.

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