

## Some Important Definitions

- ❖ A **Grant** is a sum of money awarded by a funder. Most grants are awarded to 501 (c) (3) organizations.
- ❖ A **Grant Application/Proposal** is a request for monetary support, submitted in writing to a government agency, foundation or corporation. They may range from 2-40+ pages, depending on who you're applying with.
- ❖ An **Annual Report** is a document issued by foundations, corporations and other non-profits that details their year's activities, income and expenses. These are valuable to grant seekers for providing information about funders' interests and priorities, as well as the average amount of their awards.
- ❖ **501 (c) (3)** is that part of the IRS tax code which sanctions the majority of tax-exempt organizations. It is the commonest kind of non-profit designation. Donations made to a 501 (c) (3) organization are tax-deductible.
- ❖ Many areas of the U.S. have a **Regional Association of Grantmakers** that includes many, if not all, local funders. They may publish membership directories, common application forms and other helpful information about their association members.

## Church Grants Information

### **Winning grants is a bit like hitchhiking.**

Grant makers aren't just a school of fish, swimming aimlessly in a giant, grant making pond, ready to be bated and hooked.

Every government agency, foundation or corporation has a vision and purpose of its own. They're going somewhere, and you won't get picked up unless you're going in the same direction.

The good news is, there are thousands of agencies, foundations, and corporate giving programs, racing toward myriads of goals and objectives: your own goals are bound to line up with some of them.

Most of them aren't dedicated to the propagation of any certain faith, however. If you're a church group who wants to do a church thing, you may only find funding with denominational funds programs.

That does not mean don't bother looking, but grant makers may ask how your initiative will help others in your community that don't necessarily share your faith. Be creative: there are scores of opportunities to serve your community and share God's Truth at the same time.

**It can be done.**

## Who Awards Grants?

1. **The Government:** "Your richest uncle" has many opportunities waiting for the capable grant-seeker. There are also grant opportunities available at state and local levels. Contact your state and federal legislators' local offices to get information regarding funding programs available to you. BE ADVISED: Government grants often have strict guidelines including page limits, that must be followed meticulously in order for an application to be considered.
2. **Foundations:** Start with [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org) to discover an extensive list of foundations and grantmakers across the nation. Many foundations accept a common application format, published by the National Network of Grantmakers, to save you time. Even if a foundation doesn't accept this format, it contains much basic information that may be copied and pasted.
3. **Corporations:** A lot of big businesses will set aside 5% or more of their profits for grants to local initiatives in the community where their headquarters are located. Corporations also require some of the simplest proposals: sometimes as simple as a 2-3 page letter! Furthermore, your proposal will look all the more attractive if you can demonstrate how your program will help bring recognition and publicity to the sponsoring business.

## 10 Grant Writing No-No's

- **Don't Forget to Get Permission and Input:** Seeking a grant must be a team effort. Don't just send out "rogue" applications without board approval, community input and thorough research of funding sources.
- **Don't Look Stupid by Making Errors:** It is one thing to be a new non-profit without history or experience, but mailing out typos is simply careless. Have a capable person to proofread your application at least twice.
- **Don't Overlook the Importance of Stakeholders' Input:** Funders look for evidence of input from the constituency you propose to serve. Without it, you won't get funded.
- **Don't Include Audio or Visual Attachments:** Unless the funder asks for it, many of them don't keep VCR's or tape/CD players as standard office equipment.
- **Don't Do Show-&-Tell Too Soon:** Don't release a full copy of the application for public reading until it has been mailed out and the deadline is passed. A one page summary will suffice until then. The community may not understand some of the language used in the full application.
- **Don't Submit a Rejected Grant Application without Making Major Changes:** DO NOT dust off a rejected proposal, and resubmit it to another funder (or worse, the same one!) If you don't have

©ChurchGrants.org 2011

access to the reviewer's comments, ask for help from an experienced grant writer.

- **Don't Assume the Funder Has No Changes from Year to Year:** Funder's personnel and priorities are ever-changing. Keep up-to-date publications handy at all times.
- **Don't Ignore the Printer:** Most funders will never see you, your building, or your constituents. In general, your application or proposal is your ONLY representative before their eyes. Make sure it looks good!
- **Don't Get Caught by Murphy's Law—If it Can Happen, It Will:** Make DOUBLY SURE that it's all there, and all in place...all the way down to the page numbers. Begging, crying, and kissing up will not get funders to overlook errors made because of a hastily prepared application. You WILL be met with rejection.
- **Don't Celebrate for Too Long; the Funding Ends Soon:** Plan to start looking for continuation funding at the end of the second quarter of current funding. Make no mistake: the money is going to run out. You need to be ready with more when it does.

---

The information in this brochure was drawn from:

Grant Writing for Dummies, by Bev Browning,  
© 2001 by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis,  
Indiana

&

The Only Grant-Writing Book You'll Ever Need,

by Ellen Karsh and Arlen Sue Fox  
© 2003, 2006 by Ellen Karsh and Arlen Sue  
Fox, First published by  
Carrol and Graf in 2003

**Find these books for more information!**

## Critical Research

Getting lucky isn't really about luck: it's about doing your homework.

DO:

- Find foundation/corporation websites
- Subscribe to newsletters like *Philanthropy News Digest* or *NonProfit Times*
- Plan to spend at least 4-8 hours searching out all potential funders
- Request application guidelines, an annual report, and any other literature from your potential funders.
- Follow all the funder's directions to apply.

DON'T:

- Trust publications over one year old for contact information
- Buy anything you get free online or at the library
- Call the funder with a list of questions
- Send out an application without doing serious research first.
- Broadcast your sources to your colleagues from other non-profits: they may beat you to the money!

**After you've compiled a list of possible funders:**

1. Scan their profiles to weed out ones you haven't got a chance with.
2. Prioritize your "cropped" list according to deadline, and start with funders that accept the standard format from the National Network of Grantmakers to save time.
3. Keep all papers and information well organized and neatly filed!