

“How Are We Going to Raise the Funds?”

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Grant Sources

- Grant support from foundations, corporations and United Way is about 15% of total charitable giving
- Each source has its own priorities and eligibility requirements
- Foundations give primarily to new programs or expanding programs (restricted funds)
- Corporations motivated by community responsibility and self interest (public image, tax advantages, etc.)
- United Way can be a source for ongoing annual support of health and human care
- Government grant support is most restrictive but can provide the largest dollar support for specific programs

Steps in the Grant Application Process

- **Research/Identification**
 - www.norfolkfoundation.org/resources/community_foundations.asp - this is a complete list of community foundations in Virginia and contact information
 - The Directory of Virginia Foundations (www.grantsconnection.com)
 - Top Giving Foundations in Virginia - www.tgci.com/funding/top.asp?statername=Virginia&statecode=VA
 - Free 990 information – www.guidestar.org
 - Other non-profit annual reports, newspaper, search on the internet
 - Suggestions from current grant sources
 - Target industries that tie in with your mission
 - Board member and volunteer connections (are they on any boards? Do they work at any corporations that might be good prospects?)
- **Cultivation** – Determine who knows whom (look at foundation/corporate boards and employee lists to see if your staff, board members or volunteers have connections)
- **Involvement** – using the best contact, make an initial inquiry/personal visit or invite the prospect to make an on-site visit. If appropriate, ask them to get involved on a committee or your board.
- **Ask for the Investment (build the proposal)** – select project that matches the prospect’s interests. If appropriate, make an appointment to present your project idea, using your most influential volunteer contact to make the case.
- **Follow-up while waiting** – thank you letter for any meetings; updates on progress, new developments, grants received. Send annual report.
- **Acknowledgement** – If accepted, thank you. If rejected, thank anyway and ask why and determine future opportunity.
- **Recognition** – Ask them what type of recognition they want and follow it (i.e. annual report, announcement in local paper, etc.)

Strategies for Successful Grantwriting

- Avoid sending out “cold” proposals. Cultivation and connections are key.
- Build a board with a variety of community connections (local foundation and corporate leaders, local hospital and university executives, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Kiwanis, local physicians, volunteers, local TV and radio, etc)
- Make your program known in your community. Go around and talk to Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, etc. Get involved with your local Chamber. Seek out pro-bono PR from local radio and TV station.
- Once you get a grant, follow-up with good reporting on your program. Be honest if things change or you can't fulfill all the outcome requirements.
- Submit a detailed, well written proposal with a strong cover letter signed by most influential/connected volunteer and/or staff person.
- Demonstrate success. People give to successful efforts.
- Target your grant request to the interest/motivations of the donor.
- Write a strong cover letter that references any contacts you have had with the grantor and/or recognizes any past support.
- Closely follow the grant requirements and make sure you have submitted all the pieces on time. Check to see if the grant can be postmarked by the due date or if it has to be in hand. Some will only accept US mail delivery!
- Be clear, succinct and edit. Check budget figures. Have names spelled correctly and correct titles.

Strategies for Major Individual Donors (High Net Worth Individuals)

- Goal is to develop a base of loyal and involved donors who will upgrade their level of financial commitment over time.
- Use your board, volunteers, existing donors, staff to start a list of possible donors that they would be willing to contact.
- Look at other non-profits group's donor lists and board members to see if they might be interested in your mission. Social clubs. Church members. Corporate boards and foundation boards.
- Ask a volunteer(s) to host a luncheon or dinner for a small group of possible volunteers for your cause. Form a council or advisory committee (could be a women's committee) to affiliate and INVOLVE these prospects.
- It only takes one or two wealthy individuals that are committed to your cause to make it happen – they bring in their friends and the money! The key is identifying those one or two key volunteers interested in your work. Your board will be one of the best sources for finding these key individuals.
- Increase your visibility in the community so people are aware of your work through articles in the local paper, making presentations at local group meetings, getting involved in community events, etc.
- Major donor gifts take a longer time to secure. It usually takes 3 to 4 contacts before you can make the “ask” and it must be made by the “right” person who the donor will respond to.
- Once you secure a gift, THANK YOU! Continue to cultivate, involve and keep informed to prepare for a future ask.

