**Grantseeking for Libraries: Strategies and Tips**

<https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/grantseeking-for-libraries-strategies-and-tips.html>

Grant funding can provide your library with the opportunity to offer programs and services to the community which may not fit into the library’s regular budget. If the process of evaluating opportunities and applying for a grant feels overwhelming, consider using one or more of the strategies for success that have been covered in the webinar. Remember, funders are often interested in a diverse set of applicants and communities to distribute their funding to, and using the approaches and tips covered in the webinar may help you feel more confident and empowered to pursue these opportunities for your library.

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| **What are your goals for viewing this webinar?** | |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |
| **Seek and evaluate grant opportunities** | |
| While you may receive notices about grant opportunities through various channels and networks, **researching** opportunities is key to successful grantseeking. Candid’s [Visualizing Funding for Libraries](https://libraries.foundationcenter.org/) data tool can help you learn about different foundations’ interests, priorities, and even the size of the grants they have awarded.  Research which foundations provide funding in your geographic area. Find out which funders support the kinds of programs you might be interested in getting funding for (such as summer learning programs), or for the populations you serve (such as jobseekers or small business owners). Your library’s strategic plan can be one resource to review when looking at potential alignment between funding opportunities that are out there and your community’s and library’s needs.  See additional resources collected in WebJunction’s [Budgets and Funding](https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/budget-funding/see-also-links.html) section. | |

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| **Alignment of the library and the funder’s mission** |
| When asking for funding, it’s important not to frame the ask by leading with the needs of your library. Instead, once you’ve selected a funder to explore, spend additional time **researching that funder’s mission** and look for alignment with your library’s mission.  As with any kind of relationship building, understanding what’s important to the funder and finding alignment with your organization’s goals and intentions can set a solid foundation for building the story around your library’s commitment to meet the changing needs and interests of your community.   List key aspects the funder’s mission and your library’s mission, and highlight or draw links between overlapping or related areas.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Key to funder’s mission | Key to library’s mission | | 1. | 1. | |  |  | | 2. | 2. | |  |  | | 3. | 3. |   Tip: Every grant application will need to be customized to each funder, so revisit this step each time! |
| **Review past awards and projects** |
| Has your library applied for any grant funding in the past five years? A lot can be learned from **previous applications**, whether or not the project received funding.  If you are newer to your library or position, who might know and be able to provide details about past grants and applications? Understanding how the library has been able to use grant funding in the past can be helpful to paving the way to future projects, so review any documentation or grant reports to glean any lessons that were learned from previous projects. Program officers in a foundation may be interested in details about past awards, as well.  Seek out information from records or from colleagues about past projects.   * When was the proposal submitted? Is the documentation still available? * Was it funded? * If the project was funded, can you review any interim or final reports? * Do any colleagues remember the experience and if so, what can they share? |
| **Submit a strong application** |
| Using the tips shared in the presentation, consider each of these **steps to submitting a strong application** and consider the strengths within your library team, as well as within your professional network. This can help when you look to identify roles and responsibilities across your team for a grant submission.  Here are a few considerations:   1. Read the requirements. Seek out a partner to review the application requirements with you, this can help avoid misunderstandings and create clarity. 2. And then read the requirements again! 3. Create a schedule and checklist. This is a good task for someone who likes to organize steps and activities to document all of the requirements 4. Get some outside perspective. Ask someone not familiar with the project who can be a critical reviewer and provide feedback. 5. Funder review. This step is depended on whether the funder encourages and supports reviewing proposal before officially submitting. 6. Proofread. Ask for help from someone with a strong eye for word usage. Also consider asking someone who can look at the formatting in the proposal for consistency. 7. Authorize submission: Who would this be in your organization? Would a grant proposal require approval from a board or a city official? Make sure authorizing staff are well informed of deadlines. 8. Submit all requirements. Clarify who will do the actual submission. Is there an internal process that may need to be followed? 9. Celebrate! Anyone involved can be part of the celebration, be proud of the accomplishment. |

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| **Action Plan: (include next steps, who, when, etc.)** |

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