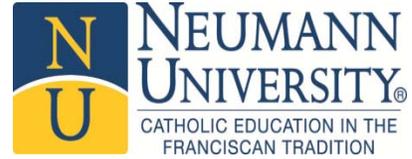


5 Tips for Nonprofits from Grantmakers



On February 21, 2013, leaders from the region's grantmaking community offered tips and advice on how to successfully identify and apply for grant funding to non-profit organizations that attended the program, "*Communicating with Grantmakers in the Current Economic Climate.*"

Panelists included: **Kim Flaville of The Connelly Foundation; Debra A. Kahn of Delaware Valley Grantmakers**, and **Michelle Montgomery of W.W. Smith Charitable Trust**. Tips offered by the panel include:

Read the grant guidelines before you apply! This may seem like the most self-explanatory piece of advice for grant seekers, but grantmakers frequently receive applications that are unrelated to their funding priorities. Other applications lack the proper documentation. Grantmakers have invested countless hours to ensure all grant guidelines and funding priorities are clearly listed on their websites. The panel advised that grant-seekers save time and look before they leap.

Create an open dialogue with grant makers year-round, not just at deadline time. Don't wait until a week or two before the grant deadline to build a relationship with a grant administrator. Call a few weeks after a grant deadline using this down time to begin a dialogue with the grantmaker. Pitch and discuss potential ideas for the next round of grants. When you are ready to apply for the next round, you will already have a properly vetted idea and a personal connection to the grant administrator.

Utilize free resources at your disposal. Philadelphia is well-known for its robust cultural infrastructure, but one of the most overlooked contributors to this is the **Regional Foundation Center**, which provides free resources for grant seekers. In addition to the RFC located at the Parkway Central branch of the Free Library in Philadelphia, there are cooperating collections located throughout the region. The Center provides access to online directories with comprehensive listings of foundations, prospective funders, and helpful staff. These resources cost thousands of dollars for yearly subscriptions, but are available for free at these local centers. Primarily located in local libraries, a full local list of Centers is available at http://libwww.freelibrary.org/rfc/rfc_partners.cfm.

Address your organizational problems, don't hide from them. Grant administrators are experts at reviewing financial records and reading between the lines of your proposal to gain a glimpse of organizational health. Deficits and problems will show themselves. So be honest in your proposal and address any ongoing or short-lived problems, then describe how you plan to fix them. Grantmakers will appreciate your honesty and may be able to offer tips in follow up discussions about how to best address these challenges.

Collaborate with your "competition." One of the hot emerging trends in grantmaking is community building through collaboration. Before you plan to apply for a grant, recognize your organization's place in the community by surveying the local non-profit landscape. Identify and approach similar organizations with a collaborative, non-competitive mindset. By partnering with another organization, you may find your community impact to be much greater, thereby warranting larger and more comprehensive grants.

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