The Real Life of Grants: Finding, Writing, and Fulfilling

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Step 1: Connect with your organization’s grant filing department liaisons

They know the tools and policies re:
- foundation databases
- reimbursement grants
- indirect costs, cost shares, tax status
- who else is applying
- whatever you haven’t thought of

Step 2: Research potential grants and the grantors

Public Agencies
- Institute of Museum & Library Services
- LSTA

Private Foundations (Foundation Directory)
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Mellon Foundation

Professional Associations
- AALL/SISs
- State Bars
Step 3: Consider partners...
- Public libraries
- Local governments
- Bar associations
- Social services
- Other schools
- Departments within your institution

... and find your match
- Strict rules about what qualifies
  - Cash expenditures paid by the library
  - Combination of local or state funds or funds from non-governmental agencies
  - Must be spent for allowable expenditures
  - Must be ready when you sign grant agreement
  - Must be spent during the grant period

Step 4: Write the narrative & crunch the numbers
- Articulate and justify the need from your patron’s perspective
- Align your goals with the grant’s goals (use its buzzwords)
- Identify clear deliverables
- Specify your match
Example:

- **Not from the Patron’s Perspective:**
  - The Library’s computers are old and use dial-up to access the internet.

- **From the Patron’s Perspective:**
  - Since the I.R.S. has placed all documents online, 65% of our patrons use the Library’s computers to access these documents. Our patrons, however, are not able to access these documents because the Library’s computers do not support the new Adobe platform.

More “write the grant” basics

- Statement of Work
- Need
- Concrete solution with deliverables
- Budget
  - Direct costs
  - Indirect costs
  - Cost sharing/Matches
- Budget justification
  - Explain line items

Match formulas:

For a 25% Match

\[ \text{Project Total} / 5 = \text{Match Amount} \]

\[ \$15,000 / 5 = \$3,000 \]

Reimbursement Formula:

\[ \text{Project Total} - \text{Match Amount} = \text{Reimbursable Amount}^* \]

\[ \$15,000 - \$3,000 = \$12,000 \]

To Check:

\[ \text{Reimbursable Amount}^* \times 0.25 = \text{Match Amount} \]

\[ \$12,000 \times 0.25 = \$3,000 \]

\[ \text{Match Amount} + \text{Reimbursable Amount} = \text{Project Total} \]

\[ \$3,000 + \$12,000 = \$15,000 \]
Step 5: Monitor and document your progress

- Communicate with local grants office
- Review the reporting requirements
- Set & track milestones & timeline
- Do not miss any deadlines

For Public Institutions: LSTA Grants

Project Grants- Multi-year >$25,000
(Requires Letter of Intent and invitation to apply)
- Digitization Grant
- Library Outreach and Innovative Services Grant
- Technology Grant

EZ Grants- Single-year < $25,000
- Library Outreach and Innovative Services Grant
- Planning Grant
- Strengthening Public & Academic Library Collections Grant
- Technology Grant

Recap:
- Find your organization’s grant department and inform them of your intent
- Research your grant options
- Determine need from grantors’ & patrons’ perspective
- Consider collaborative partners. Find your match
- Write the grant (narrative and budget)
- Monitor progress. Make all milestones or justify
- Complete and submit final report to granter
- Repeat! Successful grants to lead to future grants