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Facts:

- There are currently more than **84,000 grant making foundations** with assets of more than \$682 billion in the country today.
- Giving by these foundations has remained steady over the last few years and was estimated at **\$41 billion in 2008**.
- Among individual states, Maine, Arizona, Oklahoma, and Nebraska reported the greatest percentage increase in foundation assets.
- Total giving in the country for 2008 has been estimated at \$307 billion, this figure was considerable given that the country was in the beginning of a recession. The drop was a mere 2.5 percent, from the \$314.7 given in 2007.
- **Individual giving**, which is always the largest component of charitable contributions, was an estimated \$229.28 billion, or 75 percent of the total, in 2008. This is a decrease of 2.7 percent compared with 2007 numbers.
- **Corporate giving dropped by 4.5 percent to \$14.5 billion, representing 5 percent of overall giving.**
- The *Giving USA 2009* survey and data collected by the Council for Aid to Education report that **giving to education sector dropped 5.5 percent and was 13% of all giving.** All sectors saw a decrease in 2008 except religion, international affairs, and public-society benefit. **The health sector saw the greatest drop with a 7 percent decrease in donations.**

The National Center for the Learning Environment

Finding Money for Your School

Funding for schools is available from a variety of sources including local, state, and federal governments; private donors and fundraising; corporations and community partnerships; private foundations and community foundations. Most surprisingly, 76% of all donated funds come from individuals.

Getting Started

Grant research and application is a process. There are many resources and tip sheets that can give you direction about what to do or what not to do. Most of the information shared in the books, articles, websites, and other resources is similar in nature and is transferable to a variety of grant applications.

Successful grant programs involve the coordination of many important tasks:

- relationship building and networking,
- fundraising feasibility plan,
- grant research,
- project development,
- proposal writing,
- submission package preparation, and
- on-going communication and follow-up.

REMEMBER! Carefully read every guideline before completing a new application – grant reviewers will disregard grants that do not follow written instructions.

Hiring a Grant Consultant

You may choose to hire a grant consultant. Fees will vary widely depending on the TYPE of grant application you are submitting. In general, government grants require a lot more time to prepare the package due to all of the additional forms. Also, total costs will depend on the amount of time that is committed to developing the relationship with each funder, and how much time is required to identify funders, develop a grant seeking plan, and for program development. Relationship building can be a large part of the process as well; many foundations will not take applications without an invitation.

A grant writer will need information and documentation from the organization in order to complete the grant. The organization should assign a liaison who can respond to requests quickly – unmet deadlines and incomplete proposals will not be accepted by the funding agencies.

According to national grant writer's standards, proposal writing and research work is should not be tied to the

receipt of a grant. Therefore, if a school is planning to go after grants regularly, it is suggested that the organization enter into an annual contract with the consultant and pay for hours worked and invoiced. Eventually, the costs associated with finding grants will be offset by grant monies received.

Where to Find Information

With the advent of the internet, although grant information has become easier to access, it can easily become overwhelming to the novice. It is important to monitor all of the sites you can, some will be up to date, some will not.

The more prominent sites will give out additional information such as new program announcements and events. Some of the sites require a monthly fee to access their centralized dbase, only pay this fee if someone in your organization is dedicating the time to monitor, explore and research ALL of the information available. Half of the battle will be recognizing the opportunities that are right for you and throwing out those that aren't. Sometimes the requirements don't warrant the amount being granted.

Choose how you spend your time wisely!!

Sample of Grant Research Sites

The Foundation Center

<http://foundationcenter.org/>

A gateway to philanthropy on the Web. Highlights include electronic library, an online search database (fee to use), and an email system for grant deadlines and news.

Grant Opportunities from the U.S. Dept. of Education

<http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister/index.html>

Recent notices inviting applications for grant opportunities from the U.S. Department of Education (published in the Federal Register).

Grants.gov

Provides federal grant seekers with an important new resource for accessing and applying for all available federal grant opportunities.

Guidestar

<http://www.guidestar.org/>

Information on the activities of more than 650,000 nonprofit organizations and charities.

Just Grants! Arizona

<http://www.azgrants.com/>

A one-stop source for news, tools, and resources for and about Arizona's grants community.

You can find more information and grant resources on our web site at www.spacesforlearning.org