

INFOSHEET

Preparing Grant Applications for Foundation Support

Foundations vary in size and types, from family and volunteer-managed foundations to large foundations with staff members that help researchers work through the application progress. It is important to understand the backgrounds of the foundations before moving forward. The different kinds of foundations are as follows: (1) **Family Foundations:** narrow focus based on the family's intentions. Many of these grants do not accept unsolicited proposals because they are too small of a foundation to review and manage the applications. (2) **Independent Private Foundations:** small number of staff members but might have roots as being a family foundation. These roots means that the family's wishes must remain respected in deciding the priority areas. (3) **Federated Funds:** Funds like the United Way benefit the community through supporting non-profit organizations. Health foundations can be considered a part of this category. (4) **Corporate Foundations:** Company-sponsored foundations that receive proposals for grants and adjudicate them. The areas they fund normally are tied to the corporations' own goals and may involve giving programs championed by staff members. (5) **Community Foundations:** Also referred to as Community Trusts or Community Funds, these types of foundations administer pools of funds from individual donors who want to benefit their community. The types of expenses covered could be, but not limited to, operating, research, project, start-up, and so forth (Burke Smith & Works, 2006; Karsh & Fox, 2009; Wason, 2004).

Getting Started

- Check the foundation's website or call for the annual report – this may contain information about priority funding areas (Karsh & Fox, 2009).
- Make note of the current contact person's name, address and phone number and how the foundation wishes to be contacted (Karsh & Fox, 2009).
- If it is observed that grants have been within a specific amount, do not ask for more what is usually given out (Karsh & Fox, 2009).
- Let the foundation see why you chose it, the amount of research on the foundation that you completed, that you studied the annual report, and that this is a careful decision (Karsh & Fox, 2009).
- Contact foundations with a specific project and not to just “cold-call” them with an idea. Call to receive answers to questions that are not offered on the Foundation's website. Making an in-person meeting with a foundation can produce a great deal of guidance and information (Burke Smith & Works, 2006).

Please contact the Office of Research Services if you would like to access a Canadian and international directory of foundations so that you may begin this form of outreach.

References

Burke Smith, N. & Works, E.G. (2006). *The complete book of grant writing: Learn to write grants like a professional*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, Inc.

Karsh, E. & Fox, A.S. (2009). *The only grant-writing book you'll ever need* (rev. ed). New York, NY: Basic Books.

Wason, S. (2004). *Grant writing handbook*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

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