

INFOSHEET

Preparing Grant Applications for Industry Support

It is becoming a growing trend for corporations and local business to provide grants and sponsorships to community organizations. Although this trend tends to fluctuate based on the state of the economy, there can be some financial and/or in-kind assistance available to researchers. In the corporate sector, the decision to fund projects varies; it could come from top management, marketing, or an internal corporate giving association. Philanthropy is a main goal for corporations to give to non-profit organizations, but there are also business concerns as well. Researchers might need to show how the business will benefit as a result of the partnership, through improved productivity, commercialized products, or broad, public recognition. Ensure that the benefits of the mutual collaboration are at the fore of the discussion. Do not expect large gifts straight away, but focus on carefully building the relationship in a way that is similar to foundations (Karsh & Fox, 2009; Wason 2004).

Getting Started

- Call each major business in the community about their giving program and then continue the search until you locate a match for your research interests (Karsh & Fox, 2009).
- Understand the department's specific aims, as they could be different based on their unique mandate. For example, an international division might be concerned with specific activities taking place in foreign locations where there are offices (Wason, 2004).
- Sales departments might be of assistance by way of providing products and services to help strengthen the research project (Wason, 2004).
- Consider foundations and/or government grants as a tri-agency partnership over the research project. Some grants recommend or require a university-industry partnership as part of the project application (Wason, 2004).
- Consider "policy-marketing" whereby the research project will address a new government policy. This will situate the industry partner as a lead agency on a certain issue (Wason, 2004).
- Include job training as part of the research project so that job productivity can increase as a result of the partnership (Wason, 2004).
- In moments of an economic downturn, try cutting some of the expenses, such as administrative and staff costs, so that the project looks more attainable and realistic to the current market. Try devising higher-impact research projects to make the investment worthwhile (Wason, 2004).
- Of concern to researchers should be the way in which intellectual property is handled through corporate sponsorship. This requires extensive dialogue and an agreement in place prior to the research (Berry, 2010).

Please contact the Economic, Development and Innovation Office if you would like support and further advice on this form of outreach. The Office of Research Services also has a database of corporations that are interested in funding research and/or related costs.

References

Berry, D. (2010). *Gaining funding for research: A guide for academics and institutions*. New York, NY: Open University Press.

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.

- *Compiled by Robert C. Mizzi*