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Grant-writing Guide

Determine Who Funds Locally

Look in newspapers and online to determine who is funding local nonprofits, schools, universities and events in your community. Conditions that might indicate a funder interested in AVID:

- They support K-12 education, college readiness/access, or higher education
- They focus on underserved populations or minority students
- They support youth development or “21st Century skills” programs

Talk to other recipients of grants and donations, especially if there are similarities between their mission and AVID’s.

REMEMBER: Every school district and institution of higher education has its own internal protocols and systems to identify and apply for external funding. AVID district directors, liaisons and other advocates should work closely with school district leaders, grant writers, and development departments at colleges/universities to coordinate fundraising efforts.

Research Online

There are many helpful search engines and grants databases available today to help you to identify foundations and corporations that fund education in your community. The largest grants database in America is the Foundation Center, located at www.foundationcenter.org. For free access to this resource, check their website to find local Foundation Center Cooperating Collections.

Other search engines to check out:

- [eduTopia](#)
- [Grants Alert](#)
- [Carnegie Corporation - Philanthropic Resources](#)
- [Philanthropy News Digest \(PND\)](#)
- [Guidestar](#) - Research foundations and view their IRS 990 forms
- [Chronicle of Philanthropy](#)
- [Fundsnet Services](#)
- [Grant Watch](#)

Target Prospects

If a funder seems to be a potential match for your needs, follow the link to their website and read their Grant Guidelines and Application Procedures. They will provide vital information about deadlines, required forms, if any, and the desired format (i.e., letter, full proposal, or online application). Some websites offer a helpful online pre-qualification process to determine whether your organization fits their funding guidelines. You may need to work with your local nonprofit education foundation to qualify as an eligible 501(c)(3) organization.



Some tips to remember:

- Carefully review the funder websites and printed material
- Determine if you fit and how to design the proposal to meet their criteria
- Follow their instructions – do exactly as they ask
- Call if you have questions; request a meeting; follow up

Write the Proposal

- Know your funding source
- Follow the format
- Write clearly
- Be logical and balanced – Be thorough – Be positive
- Have someone who is not familiar with your school and program review your proposal before you submit it
- DON'T argue with funder's assumptions or requirements
- DON'T assume reviewers know the specifics of your issue and school

Online grant writing resources

- [Foundation Center](#)
- [Texas Instrument Grant Writing Resources](#)
- [GrantWriters.net](#)
- [Pearson School](#)

Build the Relationship

When you receive the grant, you are beginning a long-term, beneficial relationship with the funder. Always thank the funder sending a formal acknowledgement from your senior staff. Engage the funder in AVID accomplishments; invite them to visit a class or speak to a class about the work they do; and introduce them to the students who share their successes through AVID.