

Getting a Grip on Grants: A “How-to” Presentation for Park and Recreation Providers

2004 California & Pacific Southwest
Recreation & Park Training Conference
March 2004

Presented by:

Keith Demetrak, Chief, Planning Division

Betty Ettinger, Assistant Chief, OGALS

Nina Gordon, Manager, OGALS

Laura Westrup, Planning Division

California Department of Parks and Recreation

1416 9th Street; P.O. Box 942896

Sacramento, CA 95814

www.parks.ca.gov

Part 1:

Presentation Objectives

Participants will learn:

- ✓ Grant writing basics
- ✓ Time-saving research steps
- ✓ How to make your proposal, budget, and application more competitive

Covered in Part 1:

- ✓ Grant basics,
- ✓ How to best get organized,
- ✓ Effective grant researching skills; and
- ✓ “Hot topics” and how they could work for you!



Grant Basics — What are grants?

- ✓ Grants can be...per capita (sometimes called “Block” or “Formula”) competitive, and specified line item.
- ✓ Grants are supplemental funds allowing agencies to provide services, provide new and continuing programs, or to conduct research.

✓ Grants are not randomly distributed

Agencies must apply for them — even if they are a legislative line item.

✓ Providers include:

- Individual giving
- Public and Private Foundations, such as the Packard Foundation
- Corporations, such as Target, Teichert, Raley's-Bel Air
- Charitable organizations such as Lions, Soroptomists, and faith-based
- Governmental (publicly) funded - Federal, state & local

Typically, you have a better chance of getting a grant if:

- ✓ Your application demonstrate strong partnerships and collaborations*
- ✓ Your match is at or above what is being requested (can be volunteers, in-lieu or cash)
- ✓ You submit a memorable, well-prepared application

* Important note: Funding programs vary

How can grants be used?

→ Can grants be used for capital projects?

Absolutely, many are for acquisition, renovation and development purposes. Many governmental grants can be used to fund capital outlay projects such as trails, park structures and boat launching areas.

→ What about park maintenance?

Generally park maintenance funds are not available through governmental grant sources. You may have better luck finding funding through charitable grant sources.

Types of Foundations

- ✓ Private Foundations
- ✓ Corporate Foundations
- ✓ Operating Foundations
- ✓ Community Foundations

Source: Foundation Directory's web site
(www.fdncenter.org/learn)

Governmental or Public Agency Grants

In the 1960s, the federal government began to use grants aimed at specific categories or problem areas. For example the Land and Water Conservation Fund (1965) provides federal funding for statewide planning and for acquiring and developing outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

Public Grant Programs or Governmental Grants

- ✓ Formula or Block Grants
- ✓ Competitive, project, categorical, and research grants
- ✓ Grant Application Guidelines or Request for Proposals (RFP's)

Grant Programs Administered by the Dept. of Parks and Recreation:

- ✓ Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation Program
- ✓ Habitat Conservation Fund*
- ✓ Land and Water Conservation Fund*
- ✓ National Historical Preservation Fund
- ✓ Off-Highway Fund
- ✓ 2000 Bond Act (Prop. 12)*
- ✓ 2002 Resources Bond Act (Prop. 40)*
- ✓ Recreation Trails Program*

*OGALS may be able to help direct you to the right project officer, 916 653-7423, www.parks.ca.gov, [click on Grants and Bond Acts](#)

Pursuing Grants: Is it Worth It?

- ✓ It takes time and effort to research, write the proposal, prepare staff, and gather necessary documents.
- ✓ If successful, there is the accounting and project management which can be a lot of additional work.

The answer for many grant seekers is *YES!*

First Step: Getting Organized

Ask yourself:

1. Is this a one-time effort based on an immediate need?
2. Do we need to pursue grant funding for long-term projects?

Pursuing Grants - Three Approaches (often done simultaneously)

1. Send out a “Master Proposal” and submit parts or phases to various funders.
2. Narrow your focus based on geographic location, population, types of support and program/project ideas.
3. Locate funding sources available to your agency and identify potential projects for which you will be competitively well-matched.

Grant Research — Well Worth the Time

- Focus attention on researching appropriate funders.
- Speak to colleagues and professional associations
- Contact nonprofit resource centers



Save Valuable Time By Speaking to a Project Officer *FIRST!*

- Do some basic program research first!
- Project officers frequently offer solid advice and direction - by all means, speak to them to get advice!
- Review grant web sites such as the Governor's Office for Innovation in Government, <http://www.iig/>

The Internet — Today's Fundraising Frontier (be sure to *narrow* your search, such as “After-school funding”)

Suggested search engines:

- ✓ **TechSoup** <http://www.techsoup.org>
- ✓ **N-Power** <http://www.npowermichigan.org>
- ✓ **Coyote Communications**
<http://www.coyotecom/tips>
- ✓ **GuideStar** <http://www.guidestar.org> and
<http://www.guidestar.org/news/newsletter>
- ✓ **Network for Good** <http://www.comsearch.net/usa>

Foundation Centers and Library Resources

More and more grantwriters are looking to foundations to support their projects rather than to public entities:

- ✓ **The Foundation Directory** (<http://fdncenter.org>)
- ✓ **The National Data Book of Foundations**
(www.nonprofits.org)
- ✓ **The Foundation Grant Index CD-ROM**
- ✓ **The FC Search CD-ROM database**

Grantwriting Services

First, get a lot of help from the granting agency, such as an OGALS project officer.

You may *not* need a grantwriting consultant, but if you do, remember:

- ✓ Paid by the hour, project, or on a retainer fee.
- ✓ The Nonprofit Resource Center has a list of consultants, **916 264-2772** or speak to friends and colleagues for suggestions. (www.nonprofitresourcectr.org)

“Talking to a staff person at the potential funder’s office when preparing the proposal cannot be overemphasized. When you establish a good rapport with this person, s/he will not lead you astray. S/he will help talk you through the worthiness of the project in question and make suggestions for timing and the amount to request.”

Karen Wilson, Executive Director, WildCare

Link Your Project to the Grantor's Purpose

- ✓ Research goals, values and mission of agency. *This will save you lots of time in the long-run.*
- ✓ Document submittal requirements such as deadlines, format and contact names.

Watch for Politically “Hot
Topics” — Often Funding
Follows

1. **Obesity** - costs associated with overweight populations is estimated @ \$117 billion in 2000. Approximately 300,000 US deaths annually.*

Park and recreation providers are absolutely part of the solution!

*Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity.

2. Terrorism & Homeland Security

Knowledgeable park and recreation professionals know they can promote safe and secure park facilities as places for family gathering destinations.

3. At-Risk Youth Mentoring

Proposition 49, the After School Education and Safety Program Act of 2002 promises no earlier than 2007 to increase funding for schools.

As providers of before and afterschool programs, we can potentially apply for these funds.

4. Vanishing Landscapes

Park and recreation professionals recognize the long overdue public investment in open space and can work effectively with land trusts to preserve, protect, and manage these lands.

5. Graying of Californians

- ✓ California has the largest elderly population in the country; 10 percent more than Florida.
- ✓ By 2010, 1 in 5 will be age 60 or over.
- ✓ By 2040, the number is projected to grow by *154 percent*.

As providers of services to this group, we will constantly need to reevaluate program and facility relevancy.

6. Continued Demand for Outdoor Recreational Activities

Demand will continue to be high for traditional recreational activities and programs, such as walking, beach play, court games and picnicking.

7. Partnerships are no longer an option — they are a “Must Have”

Increasingly grant programs look for volunteers and collaborative efforts while reviewing grant proposals.

Improve your odds by presenting a solid, well-worded connection between your project and your agency’s volunteers .

“The best advice I like to give to grant seekers is to keep the grant proposal simple, make it concise, be sure it adheres to the funder’s guidelines and be sure that your proposed project meets the mission and goals of the funding agency.”

Jan Stohr, Executive Director, Nonprofit
Resource Center, Sacramento

Preparing the Proposal

The proposal explains why a project is being undertaken, what will be accomplished, where it will take place and who or what will benefit or change. It should also state your agency's ability and strengths related to ensuring success.

Part II

Critical Elements of the Grant Proposal and Grant Administration and Implementation