

Getting a Grip on Grants: A “How-to,” Presentation for Trail Providers

California State Trails Conference

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Part 1: Training Objectives

- Provide overview of grant basics
- Describe getting organized
- Three approaches to pursuing grants
- Time-saving research and organizational tips
- Trends worth watching for future funding

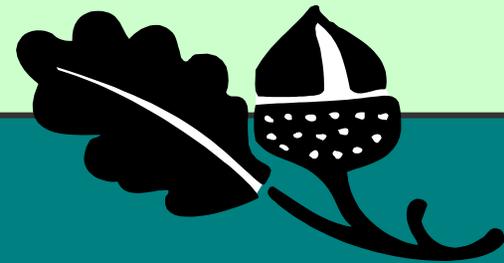
What are grants?

- Grants are supplemental funds to an agency's budget.
- Grants come in a variety of forms: per capita, block, competitive, reimbursable, seed, loans and/or line-item.

Today's focus is on Competitive grants

Grant Funders include:

- Individuals
- Public and private foundations
- Corporations
- Charitable organizations
- Governmental



Grants that are publicly financed can be:

- Formula or “Block” grants
- Competitive, project, categorical and research based
- Grant guidelines and/or RFPs almost always governmental



Grant Programs Administered by the Department of Parks and Recreation

- Land and Water Conservation Fund*
- Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program
- National Historical Preservation Fund
- Habitat Conservation Fund*
- 2000 Bond Act (Proposition 12)*
- 2002 Resources Bond Act (Proposition 40)*
- Off-Highway Fund
- Recreational Trails Program*

* OGALS may be able to provide information on these programs,
916 653-7423, www.parks.ca.gov

Now we know *where* grants come from, but *how* can they be used?

- Capital projects, such as trail interpretive signage and bridges.
- Programs
- Difficult finding grants for planning, administration, CEQA compliance and operations and maintenance.



First Step - Get Organized

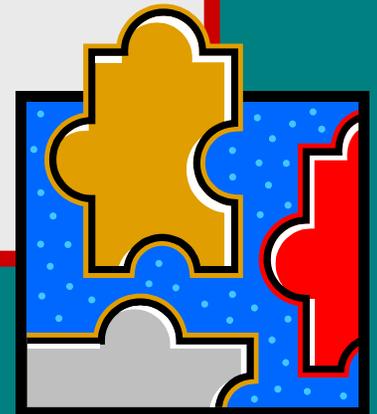
- Decision to pursue grants requires deliberate action and often is a team decision.
- Decide if benefits outweigh cost of time and effort in applying.
- Remember to factor time in for accounting and project management.

Three Approaches to Pursuing Grants

1. “*Master Proposal*” submitted in parts or phases.
2. Focus on location, programs or project type.
3. Focus on funding programs available.

Grant Research...

- Review funder's goals, mission, policies and key words
- Colleagues and professional groups
- Project officer and how your project fits with their goals
- Non-profit Resource Center
- Grant web search sites



Website Search Engines and Sites

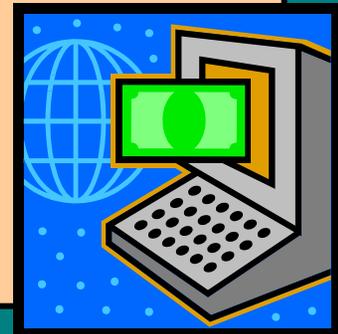
1. Governor's Office of Innovation in Government
http://www.iig*
2. Federal Programs <http://grants.gov/natural.html>
3. TechSoup <http://www.techsoup.org>
4. N-Power <http://www.npowermichigan.org>
5. Coyote Communications <http://www.coyotecom/tips>
6. GuideStar <http://www.guidestar.org> &
<http://www.guidestart.org/news/newsletter>
7. Network for Good <http://www.comsearch.net/usa>

* Site links need research or may not entirely be up to date.

Researching Program Funding at Foundation Centers and Libraries

Foundation resources include:

1. Nonprofit Resource Centers
2. The Foundation Directory <http://fdncenter.org>
3. The National Data Book of Foundations
www.nonprofits.org
4. The Foundation Grant Index CD-ROM
5. The FC Search CD-ROM database



Professional Grantwriter?

- Research/prepare the grant yourself or hire someone?

Contact the **Nonprofit Resource Center**,
916 264-2772 for references
or speak to colleagues for suggestions.

More on Grant Funding Research

- Funders want you to fulfill their mission by having you provide a solid proposal that helps them meet the mission of their organization.
- Be aware of submittal requirements such as deadlines, CEQA, ADA, attachments and format.



Trends Funding Will Surely Follow

1. Obesity
2. Terrorism and Homeland Security
3. Vanishing Landscapes
4. Graying of Californians
5. Continued Demand for Outdoor Recreational Activities
6. Partnerships



1. Obesity

“Poor diet and lack of exercise may be killing more people than tobacco use accounting for 400,000 deaths in 2000.” *USA Today, March 10, 2004*

“Obesity and unhealthy lifestyles are now the most important public health problems of this century.” *Samuel Klein, Center for Human Nutrition, Washington University School of Medicine*

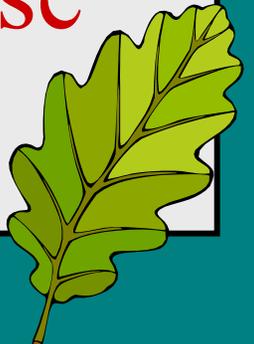
2. Terrorism and Homeland Security

As providers of trail facilities, we possess knowledge, skills and abilities to provide interesting, safe and healthy programs and experiences for trail visitors near where people live.

3. Vanishing Landscapes

Of California's 101 million acres, as of 2002, land trusts have protected 4.7 million acres.

As trail providers, we work effectively with land trust partners to preserve, protect, and manage these linkages and public lands.



4. Graying of Californians

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

We will constantly need to reevaluate our program and facility relevancy.

5. Continued Demand for Outdoor Recreational Activities

Demand will continue to be high for traditional recreational activities and programs, such as walking, attending outdoor events, picnicking, trail hiking and camping.



6. Partnerships

Partnerships cannot be underestimated — in many cases they are essential to a winning grant proposal.

Part II: Training Objectives

1. Elements of successful proposals.
2. Key grant requirements.
3. Review the proposal evaluation process.
4. Effective project management tips after you received the grant.

Now for the Proposal itself:

"The best advice I like to give to grant seekers is to keep their 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.

Review Funding Program Intent

- Review program language in the guidelines.
- If applicable, review statutory language.
- Look and use “key criteria” statements and review how these terms are used.

Other Writing Considerations

- Use narrative to “paint a picture.”
- Address elements related to transportation, public access and impact on your community.
- Speak from your heart.
- Make sure to use eligible and realistic costs in outlining your budget. Provide sufficient detail.



Regarding Your Proposal

Best advice:

Be clear, concise and thorough; answer all questions with well thought-out responses; describe your methodology, and be ***absolutely*** clear with your budget, flow chart and time table.

Why the Proposal is Important

The proposal explains why a project is being undertaken, what will be accomplished, and who or what will benefit.

Be ready to document your agency's strengths in managing ongoing costs and conducting public outreach.

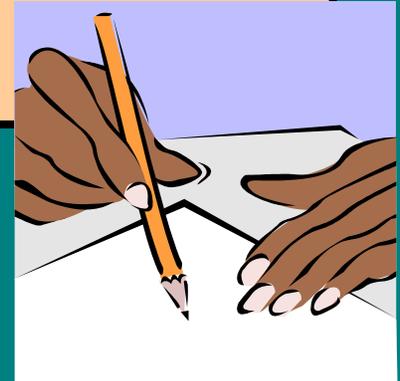
Nine Fundamental Proposal Components

1. Cover Letter
2. Proposal Summary
3. Project or Program Introduction
4. Defining the Need
5. Program Method or Activities, and Staff Qualifications

6. Project Evaluation

7. Identify Future and Long-term Funding

8. Budget Proposal



9. Appendices, such as:

Maps, tables, photos

Agreements, MOU's

Resolutions of Support

Letters of Support

Consistency with Site Master Plan

Flow charts and milestones

Articles of Incorporation

Nonprofit status 501 (c)(3)

Resumes

Glossary of Terms

Help with Key Grant Components:

- CEQA compliance documents
<http://ceres.ca.gov>
- ADA compliance <http://hr1.blr.com>
- Census and Demographics
www.census.gov/
- Land Tenure

Application Format

- Follow guideline directions (number pages, length, signed, font, etc.)
- Include Table of Contents
- Allow ample margins and avoid clutter
- Tabs or other section separators
- Keep binding simple
- Don't use professional jargon

Before you Submit your Application:

- Have someone unfamiliar with your project look over proposal.

Do they understand *why* it needs funding? Do they understand the *sense of urgency*? What questions do they have about *perceived 'gaps'* in materials? Is the request reasonable?

The Evaluation Process

Evaluators select projects with a clearly defined purpose that can be accomplished and are ready to go, rather than projects that attempt to address multiple priorities.

Nine criteria: clarity, completeness, responsiveness, internal consistency, external consistency, understanding of the problem, agency capability, accountability and realism.

Comments You Never Want to Hear an Evaluator Say:

1. “What the *heck* is this?”
2. “What a shame that this came in after the deadline.”
3. “This is a mess! Didn’t they read the RFQ?”
4. “Where’s the CEQA material?”
5. “This would have worked if they kept it under “x”dollars.”

10 Reasons for Successful Applications:

1. Project fits program intent.
2. Project addresses each criterion.
3. All supplemental material is included.
4. Narrative makes it easy for the reviewer to understand.
5. Project is consistent with each component of the grant narrative.
6. Budget is realistic.

10 Reasons (continued)

7. Project need is clearly defined and well outlined.
8. Agency/organization is able to clearly sustain the project.
9. The application is well organized.
10. A realistic and well-thought out time frame is clearly described.

Common Reasons Proposals are Rejected:

1. Applicant did not follow the guidelines.
2. Application lacked credibility.
3. Project or program was not adequately or clearly explained.
4. There simply was not enough money to go around.
5. Project appeared too ambitious for the projected cost; budget cost estimates were poorly supported and the applicant did not appear ready.

You Got the Grant, Now What?

The next step is administering the project and grant funds wisely — the *really* hard part!

Project Management Tips

1. Each agency explains what it needs for their records.
2. For contract amendments, be sure to get approval before work occurs and/or costs are incurred.
3. Reports fill several functions:
Accountability; project management; public relations and fundraising

Ten Tips for Staying Ahead of the Grant Record Keeping Process

1. Be honest — report errors as soon as discovered.
2. Meet with project officer.
3. Notes and photos.
4. Thank grant donor.
5. Save news articles and press releases.

Tips for Staying Ahead (continued)

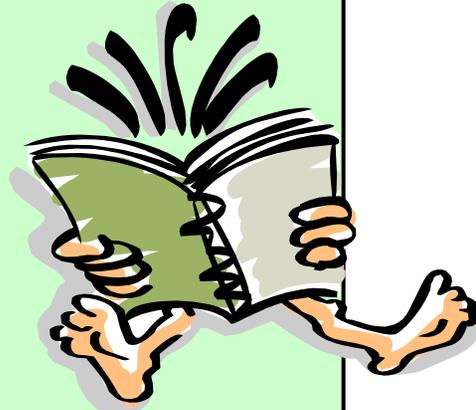
6. Follow instructions.
7. Keep correspondence simple.
8. Review project expenses each month.
9. Keep in touch with your funding agency.
10. Agency credibility is very important.

Articles and Publications

www.parks.ca.gov, click on Grants and Bond Acts or Planning (gray bar to the right of screen) Planning Division, Park and Recreation Technical Services

EEM

- Eligibility
 - State
 - Local
 - Federal
 - Non-profit
 - Partnerships with lead Agency designation



- Funding Guidelines

- \$10 million annually

- Max of \$250,000

- 40/60 split between north and south

- No match required

- Categories

- Highway Landscaping and Urban Forestry
- Resource Lands
- Roadside Recreation



Recreational Trails Program

- Eligibility
 - Cities
 - Counties
 - Districts
 - State Agencies
 - Non-profits with public land management responsibilities

- Applications due to the Resources Agency in November:
- Recommendations passed to CTC for first vote in July
- Second CTC vote follows for funding encumbrance

Recreational Trails Program

(continued)

- Funding Guidelines
 - \$3.2 million in FY 05/06
 - Split:
 - \$2.2 million non-motorized
 - \$1 million motorized
 - 40% or more for diversified trails

Recreational Trails Program

(continued)

- 20 percent match required
- Submission deadline to DPR /OGALS by first business day in October

Recreational Trails Program

(continued)

- Categories
 - Trail rehab, facilities and linkages
 - New trail construction with Federal/State approvals
 - Acquisition of easements or fee title

Statewide Transportation Enhancements (TEA)

- Eligible Applicants
 - Local/regional agencies
 - State agencies
 - Federal agencies
 - Non-profits when acting with state agency partner



Statewide Transportation Enhancements (TEA) continued

- Funding Guidelines (will be changing)
 - Four shares
 - Regional
 - CALTRANS
 - Statewide Transportation Enhancements
 - Conservation lands

Statewide Transportation Enhancements (TEA) continued

- Funding guide: pending changes
 - Safe and Flexible Transportation Efficiency Act of 2003 (SAFTEA)
 - CTC to have Transportation Enhancements programs through STIP
- Applicants now required to coordinate projects with CALTRANS Local Assistance Engineers