Office of Foundation Relations

Supporting Innovation and Creativity: A Conversation with the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Presented by:
Janelle Weatherford, Director
April 9, 2013

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Office of Foundation Relations

Who we are:

- Two foundation relations professionals
  - Janelle Weatherford, Director
  - J. Barlow LeVold, Associate Director

- One support staff
  - Cinda Dalton, Office Manager
Office of Foundation Relations

What we do:

• Assist with proposal preparation and submission
• Monitor major foundation activities for changes in giving priorities, staffing, board and leadership
• Provide foundation contacts where appropriate
• Conduct sponsor research and identification
• Conduct/arrange foundation visits on behalf of campus
• Host foundation representatives on campus
• Offer seminars and training on foundation philanthropy and proposal writing
Types of Support

• **Program support**: specific projects or programs as opposed to general purpose grants; also called special project grants

• **General/Operating Support**: the day-to-day personnel, administrative, and miscellaneous expenses of a consistent project or organization; also referred to as unrestricted support

• **Student Aid**: educational grants, loans, or scholarships

• **Fellowships**: faculty and graduate students

• **Research**: investigations and clinical trials, including demonstration and pilot projects.

• **Capital Support**: for endowment purposes, buildings, construction, or equipment
What Are Foundations Looking For?

- High impact
- Measurable outcomes
- Quick results
- Cost-effectiveness
- Partnerships with multiple organizations and funding agencies
How Do Foundations Operate?

The foundation grantmaking process:

• May or may not use RFPs to seek proposals and may or may not have proposal guidelines to assist applicants
• May accept proposals on a rolling basis
• Often precludes submission of unsolicited proposals
• Often favors programs and institutions already known for their quality
• Uses information obtained by staff and board members that does not appear in the application
• Is not open to public scrutiny and uses selection criteria not always clearly defined
• Rarely provides feedback on declined proposals.

Source: Disability Funders Network, *Foundation and Corporate Grantseeking for Employment Networks*
How You Can Work Successfully with Private Foundations

• Be sure that projects fit with foundations’ priorities

• Consult with past grant winners

• Understand how foundations operate
  o What is their timetable for accepting and reviewing proposals?
  o Is a letter of inquiry required before submitting a proposal?
  o Do they encourage or discourage telephone contacts and visits?
A few reminders about…

- Overhead/indirect costs (facilities and administration)
- Time frame—proposal submission process
- Grant reports
Getting started

- Office of Foundation Relations website – foundations by topic area
  http://vcia.illinois.edu/FoundationRelations/resources/sponsor_id.html

- Grant Forward
  http://www.grantforward.com/index (net ID required)

- Foundation websites

- Guidestar (Tax Form 990)  http://www.guidestar.org/

- Google searches

- Consult with Office of Foundation Relations
Letter of Inquiry/Pre-proposal

- A condensed version of the full proposal, generally 2-5 pages long that:
  - Is clear and concise
  - Describes objective
  - Describes method
  - Addresses budget needs & timeframe
  - Describes organizational capability
  - Demonstrates fit between proposed project and agency needs
  - Is often submitted online
A Good Proposal . . .

- Starts with a good idea
- Is carefully researched
- Matches a particular sponsor’s priorities
- Is neat and well written
- Follows guidelines carefully
- Describes need for the project
- Outlines clear objectives
- Shows how project will be managed
- Shows how funding will help strengthen an already excellent program or service

- Identifies expected outcomes and a timeline for accomplishment
- Develops an evaluation plan
- Shows how the project will be sustained
- Demonstrates cost-effectiveness
- Demonstrates organizational capability
Where to Reach Us

Office of Foundation Relations
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Champaign, IL 61820
Tel. 217/265-5322

foundationrelations@illinois.edu
http://vcia.illinois.edu/foundationrelations/
Workshop: “Applying to Private Foundations”

April 16, 2013 • 2:00 p.m.-3:30p.m.

LOCATION: Graduate School of Library and Information Science Auditorium (Room 126)
501 East Daniel Street, Champaign, IL
(wheelchair accessible)

REGISTER @ FOUNDATION RELATIONS WEBSITE!