

a companion to the Grant Writing Workshops, presented 2/28/23 and 4/13/23

Prospect Research Tools & Databases

Where to look for potential funders, basic organization information, and Form 990s (tax forms nonprofits & foundations are required to file with the IRS, which list grantmaking activity: organizations, amounts, and often general purpose of the grant).

Free	Paid
Nonprofit Explorer, from ProPublica https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/	Foundation Directory Online (FDO) https://fconline.foundationcenter.org/
GuideStar (now part of Candid) Guidestar.org	GrantWatch
CauseIQ - https://www.causeiq.com/	GrantStation
FDO Quick Start fconline.foundationcenter.org/welcome/quick-start	GuideStar Pro Guidestar.org
...the internet & public libraries. La Pintoresca Branch Library has a subscription to FDO, for example.	

Arts funding opportunities (an incomplete list)

Municipal/Local governments

National Endowment for the Arts [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov) PEN America (for writers) [pen.org](https://www.pen.org)

National Endowment for the Humanities [neh.gov](https://www.neh.gov) California Arts Council [arts.ca.gov](https://www.arts.ca.gov)

Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture (LACDAC) <https://www.lacountyarts.org/> Artist

Communities Alliance Residency Programs Database: [artistcommunities.org/directory/residencies](https://www.artistcommunities.org/directory/residencies)

ProFellow (Fellowships Database & Newsletter) <https://www.profellow.com/>

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Sample google search results for organization & individual arts funding:

- <https://kindful.com/blog/funding-grant-resources-for-nonprofits-focused-on-arts-culture/> •
- National Funders for Individual Artists: <https://artisttrust.org/resources/list-of-national-funding-for-individual-artists-by-discipline/>
- <https://www.artworkarchive.com/blog/7-individual-artist-grants-that-will-make-you-stop-drop-and-apply>
- <https://www.artworkarchive.com/blog/7-artist-residencies-with-career-launching-power> •
- Article from “Candid Learning” on finding grants for individual artists, including filmmakers, musicians, performing artists, visual artists, and writers:
<https://learning.candid.org/resources/knowledge-base/funding-for-individual-artists/>
- Article from *Art Business Journal*, “Effective Grant Writing for Emerging Artists”
<https://artpreneur.com/journal/artbusiness/effective-grant-writing/>

Where to find RFPs (Request for Proposals)

[Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)

Philanthropy News Digest (by Candid) - <https://philanthropynewsdigest.org/rfps>

Individual government agency websites & associated e-newsletters

Listserves (email alerts) – professional organizations often have this type of resource

The RFP Database (& similar) -

<https://www.rfpdb.com/view/category/name/creative>

Budget Resources

Center for Nonprofit Management - *offers seminars and consulting services*

<https://www.cnmsocal.org/learnconnect>

Webinars: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_wYvX9tgKeemHiENyeEFOIKO6Ctt49kq

Candid

<https://learning.candid.org/training/courses/introduction-to-project-budgets/>

<https://learning.candid.org/resources/knowledge-base/budget-examples/>

The Nonprofit Partnership - *offers workshops and other resources*

<https://www.tnpsocal.org/>

Tips to Strengthen Your Grant Budget: getfullyfunded.com/8-tips-to-strengthen-your-grant-budget/

Types of Grants: Foundations & Corporations

General Operations

One of the main types of grants that a lot of nonprofit organizations look for is called general support, or **general operations**. This is unrestricted funding that the organization can use for any of their programs, as well as any other expenses that the organization has. For a while, these were the holy grail—a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow that you had to weather fifty storms to find. But over the past few years, these unrestricted general operating grants have become more common. This is for a few reasons, one being a movement toward trust-based philanthropy, as well as increased understanding among foundations that nonprofits thrive when they have some flexibility and don't have to piece together dozens of project-based grants to cover their yearly budgets. Another big reason these have become more common is the pandemic, which inspired a lot of foundations to convert their project-based grants to general support so that nonprofits could survive the anticipated drop in individual donations and the increased demand for services.

Project/Program Support

This means that the foundation is directing the grant towards a specific program within the organization, usually for a period of time. Meaning the organization has to spend the grant money within a year on that program. Sometimes there's a certain percentage that can be used for administrative expenses related to the program, but the vast majority of the funding needs to go specifically to program expenses. Vu Le, who is a thought leader in nonprofit world, talks about this in terms of a bakery that makes cakes, and one person offers to pay for the flour. So you still need someone to pay for the eggs and sugar and whatever else you need to bake a cake. Flavor? Actual bakers? Unfortunately, this is still the most common type of grant that private and corporate foundations like to fund.

Capital Needs

Another type out there is **capital needs**. These are usually related to construction projects—needing to raise a substantial amount of money to build or repair facilities. Examples of this are a new wing for a hospital, or a truck to deliver durable medical equipment, like the ones Convalescent Aid Society uses. Capital needs grants are usually a component of a larger capital campaign that the organization undertakes to fund these projects.

Capacity-Building

This refers to a grant that helps to boost a nonprofit's internal systems or infrastructure. The idea is that after investing in a nonprofit's capacity to do its work, the organization will be able to do it more efficiently, or maybe even scale up its operations. Capacity building grants often cover things like fundraising costs, technical training, purchasing new equipment or software, or professional development for staff. Capacity-building grants are usually related to an area of focus, or a project. You're not trying to improve everything at once.

Types of Grants: Foundations & Corporations (cont.)

Contests or Competitions

Next we have grants that are structured like a **contest or competition**. One example is the My LA 2050 Grant Challenge, which was started by the Goldhirsch Foundation. They changed the process this year, but when I applied on behalf of an organization a couple of years ago, they had an open submission period where nonprofits submit proposals. Then a committee vetted them, selected the top ones to progress to the next stage, where the amount of funding was determined by a public vote. There are lots of different variations when it comes to contests and competitions like this, mostly involving social media. But ultimately, the style of funding the organization ends up with is a type of grant. It is a bit of a gamble, and when it's based on popular vote like LA 2050, it can depend on the organization's capacity to run an effective social media campaign.

Fellowships & Artist-in-Residency Programs

Organizations and institutions will sponsor fellowships and artist-in-residence programs for individuals who show promise in their chosen creative or intellectual field. These are often highly competitive, especially if they provide cost-of-living expenses in addition to a stipend or other award, with the potential to elevate one's career prospects.

Types of Grants: Government Agencies

Formula (block grants)

Formula grants are also known as block grants. For example, at the federal level, funding may be available to the States, and the distribution or the size of that grant is determined by a particular formula. The formula could be based on population size, density, or average income. All kinds of factors can go into the calculus for figuring out how much money a particular state would get through that grant. So it's not a competitive process—each state gets some of the chunk of money, but how much they get is based on the formula they come up with to divide that particular chunk. Another way to think about it is as mandatory funding—certain organizations are entitled to formula funding or block grants based on the type of work they do. There is often still an application process, but funds are allocated based on statistical criteria.

Discretionary

Discretionary grants are much more competitive. Federal discretionary grants in particular can be really tough. Applications are reviewed, usually by a panel of subject matter experts, as well as by government employees of the funding agency, who then make recommendations based on the panel's and their own assessments. So several layers of review, measured against criteria and fit with the program or initiative. Examples would be research grants from National Institutes of Health, or grants for arts projects from National Endowment for the Arts.

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Types of Grants: Government Agencies (cont.)

Cooperative Agreements

You can think of these as pilot programs, where a government entity wants to try out a program, and they partner with nonprofits to effectively run an experiment and see what effect the program has. A cooperative agreement will often detail a list of program elements that the nonprofits have to comply with and then participate in a learning circle, as well as quarterly evaluation measures and such. The government is authorizing the nonprofit to carry out a public purpose authorized by law, rather than administering the program directly. The government agency is still involved, though. So a nonprofit entering into a cooperative agreement is helping the government learn what works and what doesn't based on promising research or best practices.

Earmarks

Often derisively referred to as pork, which is insulting to swine, who are obviously adorable, earmarks are funds that come through pieces of legislation. An elected official might write into a bill how much money will go toward an organization or company in their district in order to do something that is related to the subject of the bill...but not always. They are flagging an amount of money and setting it aside for a project.

Subcontracts

The most common type of grants from government sources tend to be **subcontracts**. This is where a government agency at the federal, state, or local level does not have the capacity to provide particular services that they are responsible for. So they invite nonprofits to submit proposals, to be able to be contracted, to do that work. Often nonprofits are paid a lower rate than what it actually costs to run these programs, so they have to cover those costs with other types of funding, but the benefit of government contracts is a steady income stream.

Types of Funders

Government Agencies – federal, state, county, local/municipal

Private Institutional Foundations

Your Fords, your Ralph M. Parsons, your Kecks. These are often founded by captains of industry who've made a boatload of money, realize one day that you can't take it with you, and set aside some of it for society. Initially, these are usually affiliated with a company, but they often separate themselves later—they are no longer affiliated with the company, or the family of the founder of the company. This is true of the Ford Foundation. And Parsons. Keck's a little fuzzier—there are family members who sit on its board of directors, for example.

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Types of Funders (cont.)

Corporate Foundations

These funders are still very much affiliated with their company. While they are a separate legal entity, oftentimes their funding priorities will be associated with the field or market that the corporation is in. Another way they'll determine their funding priorities is going through a social responsibility scan. Or their founders or CEOs have particular philanthropic interests. For all philanthropies, funding priorities can shift over time, responding to new socio-economic or environmental realities, or driven by new people in power within the organization.

Corporations

Other **corporations** will keep their philanthropy in-house. In those cases, corporate grants will often come from their marketing or PR departments—or increasingly, corporate social responsibility departments. They may provide in-kind support, for example a software company providing technology. Other common funding channels include buying tables at fundraising events in exchange for their logo being displayed. These types of funds often come through marketing or PR because the company is trying to appeal to certain market segments or demographics, and they select nonprofits that serve those populations.

Family Foundations

In terms of the number of foundations in the United States, most are what we'd categorize as **family foundations**. They are very much still tied to the wealthy family that provided the original endowment funding to establish it.

Community Foundations

Community foundations serve a multitude of purposes. They are kind of like banks in that they accept deposits and set up funds for people who are interested in local philanthropy but don't necessarily want to set up their own family foundation. (California Community Foundation was a bank before it became a community foundation.) In some cases, people will designate what causes their money should go toward, sometimes with the help of the foundation's program officers. Program officers will then seek out nonprofits that fit the family's charitable interests within a designated geographic area. These are often called Donor Advised Funds.

Some community foundations also run grant programs and invite nonprofits to apply in a competitive process. For example, Pasadena Community Foundation manages a variety of different funds, for individuals, families, and other organizations, like Altadena Library Foundation. And then a number of funds support the overall grantmaking of the Community Foundation, which has its own broad funding priorities, like education and seniors.

So a community foundation will also engage in fundraising, soliciting funds from individual donors as well as other foundations, combine it and then run their own grant programs. Their websites will have pages that appeal to potential donors and pages that outline the grantmaking programs for which nonprofits can apply.

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Types of Funders (cont.)

Trade Associations & Employee Funds

Two types of funders that are similar to one another are **trade associations** and **employee funds**. Whereas corporations may have their own pots of money that they set aside for charitable purposes, they might also encourage their employees to make small donations—maybe out of their paycheck toward an employee fund. They might have boards comprised of rotating employees that decide which nonprofits will receive a donation or grant from their pooled employee contributions. Trade associations and unions also sometimes give funding out this way as well.

Patrons (wealthy individuals)

Some folks have all the luck.