GRANTS OFFICE
empowering communities

Sustaining Your Mission: Competitive Grants Designed for Nonprofits

Webinar Transcript • January 13, 2026

Presented by Elizabeth Evans and Meghan Jacobsen • Grants Office, LLC

Welcome and Introductions

Elizabeth Evans:
Hello everyone. My name is Elizabeth Evans, and I am the Manager of Research and Consultation here at Grants Office. Today we are talking about Sustaining Your Mission: Competitive Grants Designed for Nonprofits.

Housekeeping

Elizabeth Evans:
Before we get started, I've got a few housekeeping items. First and foremost, you can ask questions at any time during today's event using the question-and-answer interface on the right-hand side of your screen. Feel free to submit as many questions as you'd like throughout the presentation. We'll get to as many of them as possible toward the end of our little mini-webinar here. And if we do run out of time and don't have a chance to answer your question, just know you can email us directly.

If you don't see that Q&A box automatically on your screen, just look for the three little dots at the bottom of your screen to find more interface options. From there, you can select to have the Q&A and other features pop up.

Finally, know that the session is being recorded. The recording will be available for download at the Grants Office website starting tomorrow. Our amazing Multimedia Coordinator, Kate, will drop that URL in the chat box for you now. The PowerPoint slides presented here today will also be available at that same location, or you can send us a quick email request to education@grantsoffice.com. Kate will also put that email in the chat box for you.

Today's Speaker and Agenda

Elizabeth Evans:
Again, today we're talking about competitive grants designed for nonprofits. So on with the show. I am joined today by an amazing colleague of mine from the Grants Office team, Meghan Jacobsen, who is a Grants Development Associate on our Government and Community Services team. I'd like to say thank

you so much to Meghan for joining us to share her knowledge. If you do have any questions for Meghan, like I said earlier, please send those questions over to us using the question-and-answer interface on your screen. And again, don't be shy with those questions — we've budgeted plenty of time to answer them toward the end of the presentation.

We've got a jam-packed session for you today that's going to cover a lot of wonderful information in a short amount of time — we're aiming for about 30 minutes. We're going to start out with some basic steps talking about how to get grant-ready before moving on to what types of funding are available for nonprofit organizations, looking at both federal and state grants, and then spending a little time on foundation funding as well. Meghan's going to wrap up by talking about how to select the best grants for you, before passing things over to me to talk about the Grants Office services available and how you can engage us. With that, I'd like to now pass things over to Meghan to get things started. Take it away, Meghan.

Getting Grant Ready

Meghan Jacobsen:
Thanks a lot, Elizabeth. Hi everyone, thank you so much for joining us today. I'm going to dive right in with some tips on getting your organization grant-ready — but not just your organization, also your specific project that you're hoping to fund.

Getting Your Organization Grant-Ready

Meghan Jacobsen:
First thing first, when getting grant-ready, you really want to make sure that you have leadership support for your grant-seeking effort. Your organization's leadership is going to need to sign off on any grant submission, so ensure that they are behind you 100% before spending any significant time or resources on grant-seeking.

You'll also want to form an internal grants team. Creating a team like this ensures all aspects of a particular project are explored and therefore addressed in any future grant proposal. Folks from across your organization should really be included on this team — from senior leadership to finance, IT, project managers, project initiators, and of course, if you have them, any grants professionals. Not everybody is necessarily going to need to be actively involved in each step, but you really need that wide range of input to form a holistic project and ensure that nothing is left out or forgotten when preparing a proposal, when crafting it, when developing your project, or when developing your budget.

Also, take time to ensure that you have all appropriate registrations complete. Do your research to determine what platforms or portals are going to be required by each funder that you're likely to apply to, and ensure that your organization is registered and can access these portals well before that due

date. I can't count how many times that has actually stopped an organization I've worked with from applying. An example would be making sure that you have your federal UEI number well ahead of time. For example, New York State requires all nonprofits to go through a pre-approval process prior to applying for grants — so knowing those requirements ahead of time and getting those complete ahead of time is very important.

Then, begin to prepare for grants before they open. If it's available, you should always review last year's grant application guidance for the specific grant you're interested in. This is going to give you a very good idea of what is going to be required in the upcoming year. Many grants will require the same information every year, so reviewing that application guidance is going to allow you to at least start preparing many components of the grant application ahead of that application window. Basically, the more you can learn about a grant you want to apply for ahead of time, the better prepared you're going to be.

Also, do your best to stay on top of opportunities. If you're likely to seek grants from specific agencies, be sure to check their websites regularly, and if they have email alerts, definitely subscribe to those. Creating a grant-seeking documents folder is also going to help avoid a last-minute scramble to gather any required documentation for a proposal. Documents such as proof of tax status, mission statement, and financial documents are commonly requested in a proposal, and they should be easily accessible to people on the grants team who are actually submitting proposals.

Building a grant-seeking calendar is going to give you and your team a visual of when certain milestones need to be met in order to stay on track. It also ensures that everybody knows their roles and deadlines.

Finally, it's good to start creating and maintaining relationships early. For example, if there are partners you work with who can help you carry out your project, they could possibly be partners on a grant application — you really want to get them on board early. If you're seeking foundation grants, begin to build that relationship with the foundation early, so that they know who you are and the work that you do before you submit a proposal.

Getting Your Project Grant-Ready

Meghan Jacobsen:
When it comes to getting your actual project grant-ready, that is equally important. While there's never a guarantee of funding, having thought out the project prior to applying for a grant goes a long way in helping you create a competitive proposal.

We first recommend that you craft your needs statement. The purpose of a needs statement is to communicate why your proposed project is needed, and it's also an opportunity to present specific data

that provides a broader context behind your project. The goal is to confirm that there is an urgent need that exists and that your proposed project addresses that need.

Having demonstrated the need for your project, it's now time to think through how to carry out the project. What do you plan to do? When do you plan to do it? Who will do what? What is the resulting output? Those are questions you should be able to answer. Next, it's helpful to formally document your project goals, ensuring that each one can be tied back to project activities.

Once you've thought through your project plan and goals, it's also a good time to think through what resources are going to be required to implement the project within a specific timeframe. Start thinking through what personnel, equipment, supplies, travel, and other direct costs are going to be required for implementation. That's really something you should know ahead of time — it's going to help you select the best-fit grants, and it's also going to help you a long way in the development of your budget.

Then, continuing through the various project components, continue to drill in on the who, what, where, when, why, and how of your project. The reality is that funders aren't necessarily going to understand the unique challenges that your organization or the community you serve faces, so really take time to draft that compelling story about your need and the resulting project to build a better understanding between you and your funder, and why they should fund you.

Finally, select your grants strategically. For the best chance of success, you want to apply only for the best-fit grants — and we are going to discuss a little bit later on how to select best-fit grants.

The Grants Timeline

Meghan Jacobsen:
Here you see a visual of a timeline of the grants process. This can also be the basic starting point of a grants calendar. You'll see that this starts nine months out, and that may seem excessive — and it may be excessive for your organization, depending on your prior grants experience and your organization's capacity. But what I really want to drive home here is that it is best to start early rather than later.

Keep in mind that we have seen grants with much shorter timelines from opening date to submission — especially federal grants. Some of them are as little as two weeks. So really, starting this process early is going to ensure that you're even able to submit at all, let alone a competitive proposal.

Here you see that same timeline from four months all the way until the submission deadline. We recommend that you start finalizing application components one month to maybe two weeks before that application deadline. That gives you a little bit of wiggle room in case there's any kind of last-minute realization of something that you're missing. It gives you time to be able to look it over again and make sure that everything's there. Basically, it could mean the difference between, “Oh gosh, we're missing this and we're not going to be able to submit,” or, “Yes, we're super prepared and we're going to submit

the most competitive proposal." Again, I just want to drive home with this that that time is important — make sure that you're not doing this last-minute.

Types of Grant Funding

Meghan Jacobsen:
Alright, so let's move on to talk about the types of grant funding. First, grants are funds given by an entity — like a federal, state, or foundation grant fund — to another entity, such as your nonprofit, for a specific purpose linked to public benefit.

Grants are not just free money. It's important to keep in mind that these funders expect a return on investment, and they have stipulations to this money. It's important that you understand what their priorities are, and it's important that you understand post-award requirements. This may be the first time I say it in this webinar, but not the last: always read that application guidance, so that you are going in with your eyes wide open, understanding what is involved in a particular grant.

Federal, State, and Foundation Funding

Meghan Jacobsen:
You're going to see here that there are three main types of grant funding. The first are federal grant opportunities. These are grants that are administered and funded from the federal level by federal agencies — for example, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Department of Education, or the National Endowment for the Arts. There are many agencies. Federal grant programs tend to be the most competitive, but they are an excellent source of funding for the right project. The application requirements for these grants tend to be more complex, and the award amounts also tend to be higher than other funding sources.

Next we have state grants. These grants are administered and funded at the state level. Sometimes they are actually funded through the federal level but administered on the state level — we'll get into that in a minute. Generally speaking, they tend to be less competitive, just because you're competing against other applicants within a state rather than across the entire nation.

Lastly, we have other sources of funding like corporate, private, or family foundations. Foundations vary greatly in what areas of interest they'll fund, where they will fund geographically, or the types of support they offer. Applying to foundations tends to be a little bit easier — a lighter lift compared to federal and state grants — and you usually get a quicker decision and funding turnaround time. That's a benefit of foundations. One thing to keep in mind, though, is that funding amounts tend to be lower than federal and state grants.

You'll see here that federal grants have the largest bucket of money, followed by state, and then finally foundations. This really illustrates that there's a lot of money out there to be had — and not going for grants means you're never going to get grants. So if you're brand-new to this, it's worth it to just get started, because becoming grant-savvy is really going to allow you to take on more projects, expand existing projects, and ultimately serve more people.

Funding Trends for Nonprofits

Meghan Jacobsen:
I want to take a minute to talk about some funding trends for nonprofits, especially in this upcoming year. I've seen it in the last year, and I definitely anticipate this to continue. First, again, I can't stress enough how important it is, especially right now, to read that application guidance — to really understand the funder's priorities and what's expected should you be awarded and accept these grant funds.

On the federal level, with the current administration, there has been a priority of increased immigration enforcement and eliminating DEI policies, and that is affecting grants. If your organization has DEI policies or works with immigrants, it may mean that at this time, federal grants might not be the best fit for you. But it also means that state grants — depending upon the state — may be picking up some of that slack, for lack of a better term, and possibly offering more money to existing grant programs or even creating new grant programs. So depending on your state, it may be a good time for you to start looking to state grants.

It also means that foundations are becoming more popular, and therefore a bit more competitive. An example of that: I recently spoke to a nonprofit that is very familiar and experienced in receiving grants. They applied to a foundation that they have received funds from for many years, and were actually declined this last year — just because of the uptick in applications that foundation has seen. It's just become more competitive. I don't say this to discourage you, but rather to encourage you to just keep trying and potentially consider expanding your search.

Federal and State Grant Opportunities

Direct Funding vs. Pass-Through Funding

Meghan Jacobsen:
Let's take a quick minute to talk about federal and state grants and some options that are out there. First, I just want to clarify the difference between the two types of grants: direct funding and pass-through funding.

Direct grants are administered directly from the funding agency. For example, you would apply directly to the Institute of Museum and Library Services for the Museums for America grant — it is funded by them and administered by them.

Pass-through grants are funds that are passed to an intermediary agency to then administer the grant. For example, the federal government may pass funds down to states to administer the grant. A state may place state-specific priorities on the pass-through grant, but those federal priorities still remain. So that's important to know. An example of this type of grant is the Nonprofit Security Grant Program — a grant where federal funds from FEMA are allocated to states, and then the states sub-award those funds to nonprofits that apply for the program. While the grant is federally funded, it is a grant that you would apply to through the state.

Look Beyond the Obvious Agencies

Meghan Jacobsen:
There are 26 total federal grant-making agencies, and this is just a handful of them. I do want to say: don't just limit your search to the agencies that you think most pertain to your organization or your project. You might be surprised at what's out there that other agencies offer. For example, the Bureau of Justice Assistance offers grants for educational and vocational services for recently incarcerated individuals. The Department of Agriculture has programs geared toward rural communities. You really want to search sites like Grants.gov or Grants Office Communities — you might be surprised at what you find, and what's out there that you never thought of looking into for this agency, but they have the perfect grant for you.

Specific Grants of Interest

Meghan Jacobsen:
I'm going to take a minute to review some specific grants of interest. I mentioned earlier the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Again, this is a pass-through grant funded by FEMA, and because it is pass-through, the deadlines vary by state — states determine their own deadlines. This is a grant that focuses on physical and cybersecurity for nonprofit organizations that are deemed at a higher risk of foreign or domestic terrorism due to their mission, belief, or ideology. A large recipient of this grant is houses of worship, but private schools, sometimes museums, and healthcare centers are all eligible as well. This is an extremely popular program. Again, the deadlines vary by state.

Then we have the Continuum of Care Program. This is a federal grant administered by HUD. It supports community-wide initiatives to end homelessness, with the goal of promoting self-sufficiency through a variety of services, such as addiction treatment, mental health counseling, et cetera. This is a federal grant that comes around every year, with a current deadline of February 25.

Then we have YouthBuild — another federal grant, administered by the Employment and Training Administration. This is a workforce development and education grant for at-risk youth between 16 and 24 years old who have dropped out of high school. It has two components: it has the workforce training as well as the goal of participants leaving the program with either a GED or a high school diploma. This is a grant that is extremely partnership-encouraged and partnership-heavy, because it does have wraparound services requirements — services that may ultimately help participants be successful, such as housing services, community violence intervention, childcare services, et cetera. This one also has an annual deadline, with the next upcoming deadline of March 2.

Finding State Grants

Meghan Jacobsen:
This just kind of gives you a few ideas of state grants that are out there. The types of grants available are obviously going to vary state to state. One way of finding state grants is to check your state's official government website. Some states have a centralized grant portal where you can search all the grants that the state offers, while for others you need to dig a little bit deeper and look into specific agency websites to see what grants they offer. If it's available, again, I always recommend that you subscribe to email lists so you can be the first to know when a state grant does open. But you can also utilize Grants Office Communities to search for state grants.

Foundation Funding

Benefits of Foundation Funding

Meghan Jacobsen:
Let's shift our focus a little bit to foundation funding. There's a lot of benefits to foundation funding. Aside from the benefits listed here, foundations are really a great starting point if you're brand-new to grants. They can serve as an easier introduction into just the whole grant proposal process. Many foundation applications are less complex, less intensive as far as time, and you also, as I said, tend to get those quicker decisions and quicker funding turnaround times than the state and federal counterparts.

Another thing to keep in mind is that for foundations, it's extremely important that your organization's goals and your project goals fit in with that foundation's mission. Foundations are also really big on relationships, so relationship-building is extremely important here. If you have the option, you should reach out to foundations of interest ahead of time — introduce your organization, explain your project ideas, just to kind of get that relationship going prior to submitting an application.

Different foundations have different priorities, so it's important to identify foundations that, as I said before, align with your mission and your priorities. Foundations also vary on what types of support they

offer, whether it be project support, capacity building, or general support. You really want to make sure that not only do you have that mission and priority alignment, but that the foundation is also offering the types of support that you are seeking in order to better complete your project or initiative that you're planning.

Building Relationships with Foundations

Meghan Jacobsen:
As I said earlier, the federal funding landscape is a little bit uncertain right now — between the shifting priorities and delayed appropriations. This has made a lot of nonprofits hesitant to pursue federal, and in some cases even state, grants. But foundations remain stable and responsive, and ultimately, as I stated, that is making them a little bit more competitive — but still an extremely valuable funding resource to focus on. So with that in mind, I just want to highlight some key practices for building those strong relationships with foundations.

First, begin by emphasizing mission alignment. Foundations want to know that you're not just seeking the money, but that you share their values and their long-term goals. When outreach focuses on that genuine partnership rather than just the dollars, it can really set the tone for a more collaborative relationship.

Second, keep your communications straightforward and respectful of their time. Really have that elevator pitch ready if you're talking to them in person. If they don't accept in-person communications, make that letter of introduction very short, to the point, and concise. And of course, some foundations will outline how they want to be contacted — definitely follow their wishes.

Third, transparency is going to build credibility. You don't need to just highlight your successes — be honest about the challenges that you've faced and the lessons you've learned from those challenges. This kind of openness is going to demonstrate integrity and better build trust that you're going to be a good steward of their money.

Finally, make sure that the relationship doesn't just end once the check is written. It's really important that you stay connected, giving them quick updates on progress and impact. That's going to show the foundation that their investment makes a difference and that you're committed to that ongoing partnership.

Selecting the Best-Fit Grants

Meghan Jacobsen:
With all of these options, how do we go about selecting the best grants? Obviously, you want to dwindle down a long list — because there are a lot of grants out there — to the absolute best-fit grants. That's

where your time is going to be best served. You already have a gazillion things to do; it's not going to be worth your time to apply for every grant that you come across. You really want to focus and hone it down to where your energy and focus is best served.

Looking at this list, I would say if any of these are iffy when you're looking at a specific grant or a specific funder — and you really feel like you need to stretch or maybe change some of your values as an organization to fit in with the funder — it's probably not going to be worth your time to apply for that grant. Most of these are logistical considerations like your runway until deadline, whether you are eligible, whether you can meet the match requirements, et cetera. But you really want to hone in on point number three and find those funders that align with your priorities so that you can have a really good working relationship. Grant funders, as I said, have missions, and they accomplish their missions through providing funds to others for activities that align with their goals and objectives. So do you align? That's a very, very important question to ask.

Key Alignment Checks

Meghan Jacobsen:
Generally speaking, the best-fit grant is going to be where there is perfect alignment in all of these areas. Are you even eligible to apply? You really want to look at, obviously, whether they accept applications from nonprofit organizations, but also from your geographical area. Really reading that guidance on eligibility is important.

Do your funding priorities align with the funding entity? Look at what their priorities are for population or geographical location — those are other important things to note. Are there any restrictions on the types of expenses that you can use the grant money for? Things like salaries, vehicles, construction, or technology are often going to be outlined in the allowable and unallowable costs, and you want to just make sure that those allowable costs measure up or fit well with what you actually need to complete this project.

You also want to understand what the partnership requirements are. There are some grants out there that absolutely require a partnership, and you're going to want to have that partnership in place well ahead of time. Look at the cost-sharing requirements and whether or not your organization is able to fulfill that obligation. And does your organization even have the capacity to carry out the actual project, and the capacity to apply? That's considering: do you have enough time before the deadline? Do you have the team in place that can actually finish and carry out a competitive proposal? All of these are important things to consider.

Tips for the Most Competitive Proposal

Meghan Jacobsen:
Once you've found that perfect-fit match, I want to give you a few tips on creating the most competitive proposal that you can. First, I want to point out that grants fund projects and not products. Technology and other equipment or products that your organization may need have to tie back to the project, and everything should be linked to the project — because funders care about projects that improve the community and improve people's lives. For example, if you need new computers for your nonprofit, that's really not in and of itself going to be enough for the funder. This is why a strong needs statement is so important. You want to start with your goal and then figure out what you need to accomplish it. You're going to lead, as I said, with the project first, and then follow with the product.

Learn everything that you can about the grant prior to applying. I'll say it again: always read the guidance. We just run into it so many times where people don't fully understand the guidance and then sometimes they regret that once they are awarded. It's really, really important that you understand what you're getting into — not only for post-award management, but for what's required in the proposal. Oftentimes guidance is going to give very detailed instructions on how they expect that proposal to be formatted, et cetera. You want to follow all of that.

You also want to use SMART goals while developing your grant proposal. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-focused, and Time-bound. Avoid being vague, and instead be clear and direct about how you intend to implement the project, what the outcomes are going to be, and how those outcomes are going to be measured.

Finally, always get a second set of eyes to look over the application before hitting that Submit button. Getting that fresh set of eyes can catch errors, can catch things in your narrative that wouldn't make sense to the average person. It can catch if you're missing components or any typos. Receiving that objective feedback is going to give you a leg up on your application and potentially catch things that may have made your application be denied. So it's extremely important that you have that second set of eyes. With that, I will pass things over to Elizabeth to talk about Grants Office and Grants Office Communities.

Grants Office Services

Grants Office Communities

Elizabeth Evans:
Thank you so much, Meghan, for that wonderful information. For our audience today, again, if you do have any questions for Meghan, please do feel free to drop them in the Q&A box at the bottom right-hand corner of your screen. I'm going to give Meghan a quick minute to grab a sip or two of water

before we start our Q&A session, and while she does that, I want to quickly share some information about Grants Office Communities, which you've heard her mention a couple of times throughout the presentation.

This is a new search and collaboration platform for grant-seekers that Grants Office has just launched. We've been live since the fall and have had a great time seeing folks log in, make projects, find grants, and work through their grant application processes together. For those who haven't had a chance to explore yet: Grants Office Communities is a grant search and collaboration platform. It's basically a single site where you can come up with the ideas for your grant-funded projects, find grants to support those ideas, and even bring your project partners in to help you apply for these opportunities together.

When you're in the platform, there's really no limit to the number of projects where you can start to build your vision out — whether you're looking to just jot down some initial ideas on what you would like to do someday, or get into the weeds with very meticulous details about your proposed work plan. You can invite anyone from your accounting team to see your proposed budget, to your boss to help supervise progress, or even your colleagues that you need to assign tasks to in order to keep the project planning process moving forward. You can also set up separate spaces to work on proposal pages together.

Essentially, Grants Office Communities provides you with virtual collaborative spaces where you can turn tasks, documents, conversations, and other grant-seeking activities into a completed grant application together. The best part is that the collaborators that you bring in — be it your boss, your finance team, maybe an external partner, or a vendor that's helping you with drawings or specs for construction — don't actually need to have a paid subscription to Grants Office Communities to see the project and contribute toward that work.

As I hinted at earlier, standing behind all of these collaborative spaces is a robust database of available grant funding opportunities for your consideration as well. In fact, right before the holidays, we added around 10,000 federal, state, and foundation funding opportunities from the U.S. to that database, and the numbers are growing every single day. The humans here at Grants Office are constantly looking for more grants to add to the database — whether that's at the federal, state, or foundation level — and we're always keeping watch on those existing grants already in there to ensure you're getting the latest and greatest information.

For example, Meghan talked about NSGP grants earlier in the presentation. If this grant was of interest to you for something you're cooking up as a Grants Office Communities user, you could find this grant in the database, link it to your project space, and then invite potential project collaborators to review that grant, so you can easily decide as a group whether or not you want to apply.

Consulting and Proposal Development Services

Elizabeth Evans:
Behind all of this is the Grants Office team. If at any point you have a question or you're feeling like you need a little extra assistance, we are here to help you with any steps of the grant-seeking process. We offer funder prospecting research and project development consultation services, where your team can chat with grant funding experts like Meghan about your interests and learn about potential opportunities specifically relevant to your proposed effort. We also have specialists that can help you with developing a more competitive proposal, drafting the proposal by actually putting pen to paper on your behalf, or even reviewing the documents that you or your colleagues have written to make sure you didn't miss anything.

We definitely want to encourage you to engage us if you need us. You can contact us at any point in time, at any step in the grant-seeking process — whether you are not sure what grant opportunities are out there for a specific effort or in general, or if you're looking to start working on a specific application and want a little extra help to get over the finish line. We are happy to help wherever you are in your grant-seeking journey.

With that, I have hopefully given Meghan enough time to catch her breath and get a sip of water. I also want to say we've got a lot of other great videos available on our Guidance for Grant Seekers section of the website — check that out. With that, I'm now going to pass things over to Meghan so we can get our Q&A session started.

Q&A Session

Q1: How can I approach a foundation I have never worked with before?

Elizabeth Evans:
Kicking off our Q&A, our first question is: how can I approach a foundation I have never worked with before?

Meghan Jacobsen:
In that case — especially if you're brand-new to grant-seeking and brand-new to foundation grant-seeking — what's best is, first off, to find out who you know who they know. For example, if you have a board, it's an excellent idea to go to your board and say, “Hey, does anybody here have a connection to anybody with the foundation? This is a project that we're interested in having funded.” You may be surprised at who people know that could get you that warm introduction.

Another thing I would suggest is to really start local. A lot of communities, counties, and regions will have community foundations that are very tied into what's going on in the community. They're a little

bit easier to cold-call and to talk to because they are very familiar with your community and the needs that are within your community.

Another suggestion: a lot of businesses have foundations. You would be surprised. For example, your local bank that maybe your nonprofit banks with — many banks have foundations where they support community efforts. You already have an account with them; they already know you. So that's a really great place to start. It's just going into your bank or your local store and asking them if they would be interested in supporting your project. Just a little local, who-you-know type of way to get your foot in the door.

Q2: How do I get to the Grants Office Communities platform?

Elizabeth Evans:
Excellent. Thanks, Meghan. We've got another question here, which I'm just going to quickly answer myself. Someone has asked how they can get to the Grants Office Communities platform and give it a try.

There are three different ways you can get there. First of all, you can always go to grantsoffice.com, which is featured on the footer of the slide on your screen — our main company webpage — and on there, there is a link to Grants Office Communities. Or, you can go to communities.grantsoffice.com and be taken to the platform directly. And of course, as a third option, there is always Google-searching for "Grants Office Communities." We have made sure to be the first result to pop up when you search for the platform by name.

I will also add: we're currently offering a free 14-day trial for all attendees of this event. So if you're not sure if you want to commit to a new way of grant-seeking just yet, that's totally okay — I encourage you to make use of the 14-day trial period to hop in and just poke around.

Q3: What do I do if a foundation only accepts applications from pre-approved organizations?

Elizabeth Evans:
Now on to our next question, and this one's for you, Meghan: what do I do if a foundation says that they only accept applications from pre-approved organizations?

Meghan Jacobsen:
Oftentimes, you will find organizations that say invite-only or must be pre-approved. That's really where your best bet is to begin with relationship-building. That could be connecting with them on LinkedIn or social media to get that initial introduction. This is also where you're kind of playing the long game. Oftentimes they're planning on who they're going to invite to apply maybe a year ahead. As with grants in general, it's a marathon, not a sprint.

You really need to hone in on that relationship — whether it's connecting with them on LinkedIn, connecting with them on some other social media platform, or potentially giving them a call or an email to discuss your project, kind of just giving them that little seed of who you are. But it is going to be playing that long game of building that relationship and making them understand better what you do, what you're all about, and what successes you've had.

Q4: Any unique strategies for corporate vs. family foundations?

Elizabeth Evans:
Thank you, Meghan. I see one last question on here — people are really interested in foundation funding today, it seems. They wanted to know if you had any suggestions for unique strategies that they can deploy when seeking funding support from a corporate foundation versus a family foundation.

Meghan Jacobsen:
My biggest recommendation: generally speaking, when you're talking about corporate foundations versus family foundations, corporations will usually have a website outlining their priorities, what they're looking to fund. They'll give you a ton of instruction on how to apply. My recommendation is always to follow that instruction.

Family foundations can be a little bit different because oftentimes they don't have websites — they don't give very much information on how to approach them or what they require. In that case, it's really a good idea to look at their previous year's 990s, so their tax forms. Their tax forms are going to give you a lot of information. They're going to give you information on their deadlines, on whether or not it's invite-only, and on how to contact them. But most valuable: they're going to give you information on their prior funding. You're going to get a list of who got funded in the last year. It's going to give you an idea of the types of organizations and the types of projects that they do fund.

Doing that research prior to connecting with a family foundation, I think, is really important, because that information is usually not easy to find. However, with corporate foundations, they usually will have a portal online or contact information online, and it's a little bit easier to know what to expect and what their process is. I hope that answers the question.

Closing

Elizabeth Evans:
Thank you so much, Meghan. As Meghan said, Grants Office is here to help — just like this webinar. We have several no-cost grant-seeker support services available on our website at www.grantsoffice.com or by scanning the QR code you see on your screen. We invite you to check out our free Guidance for Grant Seekers library to find short how-to videos, articles on various grant-related topics, and other resources to help you in your grant-seeking journey.

Also know that we're here for you whenever you need us. We're always happy to work with you to right-size our assistance. We are a full-service grants intelligence, consulting, and proposal development firm, so if you're ever feeling out of your element or overwhelmed, we're always happy to help. You can engage with us by filling out a contact form on our website or scanning the QR code you see on your screen. From there, we'll set up a meeting to discuss your goals, determine next steps, things like that. It might be that you're looking for a detailed report of various funding opportunities of relevance, a one-on-one consultation with one of our experts, or maybe even jumping right to grant writing or proposal editing and review services. Like I said, whatever you need, we're here for you, and we'll right-size our services to best fill your gaps.

With that, that's all the questions we have for today. If your question didn't get answered, or you think of one later, please don't hesitate to email us at education@grantsoffice.com and someone will be in contact shortly. Thank you again to Meghan for sharing her expertise with everyone in attendance today and watching the recording.

Speaking of recordings — the session is going to be available on the event's resources page within the next 24 hours. So if you did miss anything, had to step away for a quick moment, or if you want to share this event with a colleague or an acquaintance, or even come back later for a refresher on something that we covered, you can always go back and review today's content at your convenience. We hope you found today's event to be a valuable use of your time, and we do look forward to seeing you on future GrantsCasts. Have a great rest of your day, and thank you for joining us.

— End of Transcript —

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