*internet resources*

Julie Flanders

# Grant writing on the Web

## Resources for finding and securing funding

**S**hrinking budgets. Layoffs. Stock losses. Everywhere you look, the news is grim. There's no getting around the fact that we are living in an era of belt-tightening, cost-cutting, and decreased spending.

The good news is that despite these difficult economic times, philanthropy is alive and kicking. Foundations, businesses, and government agencies are still giving, and persistent grant writers can still find opportunities to secure funding for their projects. But because the competition is stiffer than ever, grant writers must be even more diligent in their search for funding sources, and they must make sure that their proposal is the one that stands out from all the rest. Fortunately, the Web is filled with resources to help all grant writers, regardless of their experience level, do just that.

This column provides a selection of the Internet resources available on all aspects of the grant process. Resource categories range from general comprehensive sites that cover multiple facets of grant seeking, to directories, writing manuals, glossaries, and blogs. While this list is primarily aimed at librarians, it should also be an effective resource for educators, nonprofit workers, and anyone wishing to navigate the grant-seeking process and successfully secure funding. The list is in no way intended to be conclusive, but is an attempt to provide useful starting points for all grant seekers and writers.

### General

• **The Chronicle of Philanthropy.** As their Web site states, the mission of The Chronicle of Philanthropy is "connecting the nonprofit world with news, jobs, and ideas." The site includes features such as news and opinions on fundraising, statistics on top donors, and a guide to grants with a searchable database of funders. In addition, the site provides opportunities for members of the nonprofit community to interact with each other. While it is not required, users have the option of creating a free account to comment on articles and participate in the site's discussion forums. *Access:* http://philanthropy.com/section/Home/172.

• **The Foundation Center.** The Foundation Center's "Foundation Directory Online" is the "bible" for grant seekers, and the center itself is considered the leading authority on philanthropy in the United States. While the



directory requires a subscription for access, it can be used for free in many public libraries, and provides information on more than 98,000 foundations and corporate donors. The center's Web site also includes many resources that can be accessed without a subscription, including the "Find Funders" database, which allows users to search for basic information on funding sources. In addition, the site has an abundance of free tools, including lists of the

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top funders, links to common grant application forms, a proposal writing "short course" tutorial, and a guide to funding research. The Foundation Center is an invaluable tool for any grant seeker. *Access:* http://foundationcenter.org/.

## Directories

• **The ALA Awards and Grants.** While many are aware that ALA regularly confers honors on professionals and institutions through its awards program, the many grant opportunities which are also available through the association may not be as well known. The Grants and Fellowships page on ALA's site includes an outstanding directory, which can be searched by keyword, type of award, or ALA unit. Grant seekers will find a wide variety of opportunities, with eligibility ranging from library students and professional librarians, to academic, school, and public libraries. *Access:* http://www.ala.org/template. cfm?template=/CFApps/awards_info/browse. cfm&FilePublishTitle=Awards,%20Grants%20 and%20Scholarships&stype=GRNT.

• **Grants for Nonprofits.** Michigan State University maintains this excellent compilation of grants available for a variety of organizations from across the nonprofit spectrum. The site is updated regularly and covers a wide range of categories, from libraries and schools to animal welfare and disaster relief. *Access:* http://staff.lib.msu.edu/harris23 /grants/2sgalpha.htm.

• **LibraryWorks.** Run by the Library Resources Group, Inc., LibraryWorks is the home of The Librarian's Yellow Pages, and other resources of interest to the library community. The site includes a detailed listing of grants available for libraries, as well as for museums and

 o t h e r cultural institutions.

Users can also access a free monthly newsletter, INFocus, which includes information on grant opportunities. *Access:* http://www. libraryworks.com/.

• **Scholastic Grants for Librarians.** Scholastic provides a listing of grants available

to both institutions and individual librarians. While much of the focus is on funding for school and public libraries, grant seekers for academic libraries and museums will also find opportunities for their own institutions. The grant descriptions are detailed and include information on eligibility criteria, award amounts, and the intended focus of each program. *Access:* http://www.scholastic.com /librarians/programs/grants.htm.

## Government grants

• **Grants.gov.** The Grants.gov site is "one stop shopping" for grant seekers who want to both find and apply for all types of government grants. It is managed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and includes information on more than 1,000 programs. Users can search the database using keywords, or they can browse through funding categories and agency listings. Higher education institutions, libraries, schools, and nonprofit organizations are among those eligible for funding. In addition to the directory of available grants, the site includes general information on grants and the application process, a "frequently asked questions" section, and a PDF with step-by-step instructions on how to search for grant opportunities. *Access:* http://www.grants.gov.

• **The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).** IMLS is the clearinghouse for federal funding for libraries and museums across the nation. The site includes an annual "Guide to Programs and Opportunities," which provides an overview of the institute's programs, and the IMLS awards grants for projects such as conservation, research, and collection management. Grant seekers can search for opportunities by institution type, project type, and grant name, and are also able to view a variety of sample applications. In addition, IMLS maintains a searchable archive of all grants awarded by the institute, and publishes "Primary Source," a free monthly e-journal with articles about grant-seeking news and best practices. *Access:* http://www. imls.gov/index.shtm.

• **The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).** An agency of the United

States government, NEH is dedicated to supporting all aspects of the humanities. The agency awards several grants of interest to libraries and librarians, including the Humanities Collections program, the Reference Resources program, and Preservation and Access grants that focus on education, research, and development. In addition, the Endowment administers the Small Grants to Libraries initiative, which brings a new humanities-related traveling exhibit to libraries across the country each year. The NEH grant programs are arranged by category and can also be accessed through an alphabetical listing. *Access:* http://www.neh.gov/grants/index.html.

### Proposal writing resources

• **Corporation for Public Broadcasting Grant Proposal Writing Tips.** Although the tips provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting are geared towards public television and radio producers, they contain many useful suggestions for grant writers in any field. The tips cover each phase of the grants process, including preparing for and writing the proposal, and following up with the grant maker once the application has been submitted. These detailed instructions add up to a helpful blueprint of the entire grant-seeking process. *Access:* http://www.cpb.org/grants/grantwriting.html.

• **Grantproposal.com: Aesthetics & Technicalities.** Grantproposal.com is an excellent resource for grant writers who are new to proposal writing. The site provides an overview of grant writing, including the "four factors" of a successful proposal, and breaks down the components of the process with sample letters and proposals, and instructions on how to write both. Also included are helpful features, such as advice from funders and tips on getting started as a grant writer. *Access:* http://www.grantproposal.com/.

• **The Grantsmanship Center.** The majority of the services offered through the Grantsmanship Center are fee-based workshops and courses, but the site also includes an e-publication called "Centered," which is free and provides many practical tips on grant seeking. "Centered" is published monthly, and is archived on the site from 2008 to the present. In addition, the center provides information on funding sources, including corporate giving programs and the top foundations in each state. *Access:* http://www.tgci.com/.

• **The Minnesota Council on Foundations—Writing a Successful Grant Proposal.** While the focus of this site is on grants specific to Minnesota, the foundation also includes an excellent proposal writing guide written by a nonprofit management consultant. Available both on the site itself and as a downloadable PDF, the guide includes detailed information on the elements of a grant proposal, and answers several commonly asked grant-seeking questions. *Access:* http://www.mcf.org/mcf/grant/writing.htm.

• **Non-profit Guides.** First published in 1996, "Non-profit Guides" has been one of the best grant writing tools on the Web ever since, with all of its content available free of charge. The site is designed to guide users through each stage of the grants process, and includes examples of inquiry and cover letters, budgets, and both preliminary and full proposals. All of the samples are written by an experienced grant writer. As a bonus, the site also includes links to grant makers and other general grant-related resources. *Access:* http://www.npguides.org/index.html.

• **Proposal Writing Resources: Research Carolina.** The University of North Carolina's GrantSource Library provides an excellent compilation of resources to assist with

the proposal writing process. Topics include "do's and don'ts," budgeting, and elements of successful proposals, and the listed resources range from Web sites to downloadable e-books. *Access:* http://research.unc. edu/offices/grantsource/resources/proposal -writing-resources/index.htm.

## Glossaries

• **Marywood University Glossary of Terms.** The Office of Research at Marywood University in Scranton, Pennsylvania, publishes an outstanding glossary of grant-related terms. The site includes definitions of common terminology used in the grant-seeking process, and also defines the various types of grants, including project, matching, seed, and capital grants. *Access:* http://www.marywood.edu /orcc/glossary.html.

• **Scholastic Funding Connection Glossary of Terms.** As part of its Funding Connection for Technology and Curriculum, Scholastic provides a glossary of fundraising terminology. While the Connection is geared towards K–12 teachers, the glossary is comprehensive and useful for any grant applicant. *Access:* http://teacher.scholastic. com/products/fundingconnection/grant _resources/guidance_samples/index.html.

## Blogs

• **The Grant Hunter.** The Grant Hunter features tips on writing successful grant applications and getting started with a grants program, and includes suggestions for how to build relationships to enhance fundraising, and how to best navigate and use the world of social media. *Access:* http://www.thegrant-hunter.net/.

• **Grants Champion.** The Grants Champion blog is run by a professional grant writer, and contains a great deal of useful features that can be accessed at no charge. Resources include a guide containing action steps for submitting a proposal, and a selection of articles

on topics such as writing proposals and maintaining motivation through the fundraising process. *Access:* http://www.grantschampion. com/blog/.

• **Library Grants.** The authors of *Grants for Libraries and Winning Grants: A How-To-Do-It Manual For Librarians With Multimedia Tutorials And Grant Development Tools,* Stephanie Gerding and Pam McKellar, also maintain an outstanding and frequently updated blog. Gerding and McKeller list grants intended specifically for librarians, and their listings include project descriptions, eligibility criteria, and application deadlines for each opportunity. *Access:* http://librarygrants. blogspot.com/.

• **Pamela's Grantwriting Blog.** Billed as "the ultimate nonprofit newbie resource," Pamela Grow's blog provides information and ideas on all aspects of fundraising. The author updates regularly, and blog topics include what to look for in a foundation, news for grant seekers, and tips for using social media. *Access:* http://www. pamelasgrantwritingblog.com/.

• **SmartGrantWriting.** As its name implies, this blog is designed to provide tips and suggestions for developing smart grant writing practices. Run by Stephen Price, the blog is updated frequently, and Price often responds to questions from beginning grant writers. In addition, users can sign up to receive free grant writing tips. *Access:* http:// smartgrantwriting.com/.

## Professional organizations

• **American Association of Grant Professionals.** While the majority of this site is restricted to members of the association, it does include some freely accessible resources, including Take it for Granted, an e-newsletter that is published quarterly and contains helpful information for grant seekers and writers. Past issues of the newsletter are archived on the site. *Access:* http://grantprofessionals.org /Home/tabid/37/Default.aspx.



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is in a department store. Stroll over to Macy's, formerly the site of Wanamaker's Department Store, and enjoy a free recital on the world's biggest organ. The organ is hard to miss, just head for the "Eagle" (a landmark in itself) in the Grand Court and look up. Concerts are at noon and 5:30 p.m.

### Jazz

**Chris's Jazz Café** (1421 Sansom Street, www.chrisjazzcafe.com/). Chris's Jazz Café is only a short walk from the Pennsylvania Convention Center and presents live jazz music almost every evening.

**Zellerbach Theatre at Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts** (3680 Walnut Street, www.pennpresents.org/). On Friday, April 1, the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts will host noted jazz musician Nnenna Freelon. Visit www.annenbergcenter.org/tickets/ for tickets.

**World Live Café** (3025 Walnut Street, www.worldcafelive.com/). The World Live Café, six blocks east from the Zellerbach Theatre in the University City District offers two floors of jazz music.

**Philadelphia Clef Club** (738 South Broad Street, www.clefclub.org/). The Philadelphia Clef Club has a unique place in the history of American Jazz. An outgrowth of the last independent African American musicians' union, Local 274, the Clef Club at one time included American Jazz greats like John Coltrane and Dizzy Gillespie as members. Concerts for 2011 have not been scheduled.

**University of the Arts** (various locations, www.uarts.edu/see-do/galperf-spc.html) and **Temple University** (various locations, www.temple.edu/boyer/enp/schedule_of_events.htm). The University of the Arts and Temple University are known for their strong music departments and the

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cultivation of jazz musicians. Concerts or recitals sponsored by either institution provide jazz enthusiasts an opportunity to hear jazz artists of the future.

### Opera

Unfortunately for opera lovers, the **Opera Company of Philadelphia** (Academy of Music, Broad and Locust Streets, www.operaphila.org/) does not have any scheduled performances during our conference. However, fear not, there are two other venues that feature operatic performances. The **Victor Café** (1305 Dickinson Street, www.victorcafe.com/) and the **High Note Café** (1549 South 13th Street, highnotecafe.com/) are restaurants located in South Philadelphia known for serving excellent Italian cuisine with a side of opera. At the Victor Café for example, the wait staff are trained vocal artists who perform arias throughout the evening.

### World music

**The Tin Angel** (20 South 2nd Street, (www.tinangel.com/index2.html). The Tin Angel offers performances in an array of musical styles including world music, jazz, and salsa.

**Crossroads Music** (801 South 48th Street, crossroadsconcerts.org/). Crossroads Music specializes in world music and presents concerts at Calvary United Methodist Church and other venues in West Philadelphia. The 2010–11 concert schedule has not yet been posted. ♫

• **Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP).** With 30,000 members, AFP is a large organization that covers all aspects of the world of philanthropy. Free resources include blogs of interest to grant seekers and frequently published e-newsletters. *Access:* http://www.afpnet.org/. ♫