Grant Writing for Artists

EM Alumni workshop
Presented by EM Faculty and Assistant Dean, Andrew Worden
Basic Principles

Aligning Priorities

Track Record + Relationship Building

Clear + Compelling Writing
The Landscape

Who gives grants? Who gets them?
# The Landscape

## Foundations
- Non-governmental entity that is established as a nonprofit corporation or a charitable trust, with a principal purpose of making grants to unrelated organizations, or individuals.

- There are two broad categories of foundations:
  1. Private foundation
  2. A grant making public charity

## Governments
- Grants that are dispensed through government agencies.

- Examples:
  - National Endowment for the Arts (Federal)
  - Mass Cultural Council (State)
  - Boston Cultural Council (Municipal)

## Non-Profits
- Despite their name, many nonprofit organizations have grant programs of various types (cash grants, fellowships, etc.).

- Examples of non-profit organizations that give grants include:
  - Universities
  - Local service and arts organizations

## Corporations
- Many local and international corporations have grant-making programs for individuals (scholarships) and organizations.

- Examples: Target, Coca Cola Foundation, Bank of America
Who’s applying?

**Organization**

Many foundations and government agencies only give grants to recognized nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) status.

**Individual Artist**

While some grants are open to individual artists, many will require that an artist have a fiscal sponsor.
501(c)(3) and Fiscal Sponsorship

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Researching Grants
Where to look, what to look for.
Increasing your literacy:

Increase your general literacy by taking notice of which foundations, government organizations, etc. fund artists in your discipline.
Search online for specific opportunities:

Create a matrix of possible funding opportunities for your project along with deadlines, application process, and eligibility requirements using the resources listed:
Foundation Directory Online

**Grantmaker Profiles** - information about foundations and other grant makers

**Grant Information** - detailed grant information, including past recipients, descriptions, and types of support

**Key Decision Makers** - names of staff, board members and trustees

**Searchable 990** - keyword search Forms 990 to find recently awarded grants and other key information
Check for eligibility:

When reviewing possible funding opportunities, check the following criteria to assess your eligibility:

- Tax exempt status (orgs/projects)
- Geographic location
- Funding priorities
- Nationality (individuals)
- Stage of project/org/career
- Size of org/project (annual budget, staff, etc.)
- Affiliations or memberships
Look at past funding patterns:

Once you have identified a specific grant opportunity, seek out information about projects/orgs that have been funded in the past (and at what level).
Access important financial records:

Use GuideStar to access a foundation’s 990 form to see assets, past grantees and staff/trustee information.

GuideStar gives you free access to the most recent tax filings for non-profit organizations. You can find out important information about the grants organizations have made in the past several years, and use this information to assess whether your project is a match, and what level of funding you should request if it isn’t made clear in the application guidelines.
Relationship Building

People give money to people.
Get to know funders in your community by attending:

• Workshops + Training Programs
• Networking Events
• Public Programs & Concerts

Also,
• Join the conversation via social media
• Get updates via newsletters!
Ask questions! Don’t be afraid to initiate a dialogue.
Writing a Grant

The nuts and bolts
# What is a letter of Inquiry?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Name, $ requested, short description of project and how it fits the funder’s priorities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Org. Description</td>
<td>Brief history, demonstrate capacity for meeting need and past successes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Need</td>
<td>What need can be met by your project, concrete examples, statistics, precise target population, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>How will you solve the need? Describe major activities, key project collaborators, objectives, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Funding</td>
<td>Who else has funded your project? Who else are you approaching?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Restate the intent of the project, list any requested attachments, and a thank you!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project Overview:
Refer to Handout for examples.

1 / Succinctly describe the project you are undertaking
- Tell us what you plan to do before you explain why.

2 / Target audience: who does the project serve or engage?
- Be specific. Music lovers in Boston is not specific.

3 / Rationale for the project: why is it needed?
- Use data, research studies & reputable articles to build a compelling argument.

4 / Leadership: who is on your team?
- Show us you (and your collaborators) are qualified to do the work.
Goals & Outcomes:

1 / Overarching vision for the impact of your project. What problem is your project addressing? What change will it affect?

- Stay planted on firm ground
- Fight the urge to get lofty

2 / What are the finite, quantifiable results of your project? How will these outcomes advance your larger goals?

- Be specific! Number of people reached, new products or programs created
Evaluation:

1 / What does success look like? What criteria will you use to measure the impact of your project?

- Do not be aspirational.
- Create a workable system to measure the outcomes/goals you’ve set.
- Bullets are your friend.

2 / How will you sustain the project after the grant money is spent?

- What will it take to keep succeeding?
- Create a plan for ‘after the grant’ now.
- Your plans can always change.
Budget:
Refer to Handout for examples

1 / Create levels of information in your budget so a reader can scan, evaluate, or dig deep.
- Break your budget down by expense categories so the funder can see how much $ goes to staff, marketing, program expenses, etc.

2 / You will likely be asked to provide a project budget and an organizational budget.
- Be as precise as possible in your project budget. Research and don’t over-pad.
- If you are a fiscally sponsored project, create a projected annual budget.
Track Record

Building a record step-by-step
Apply for an EM Alumni Award!

https://necmusic.edu/em/alumni-award

Register with NEC’s Alumni Office to receive more alumni resources!