

“How to Find Great Grants” Checklist

1. Use Google to get you started:

[] Brainstorm a list of 20 key words or phrases that describes your organization or non-profit (examples "youth programs" or "community gardening in Arizona")

[] Spend 10-15 minutes searching the web using each of these phrases PLUS "Funding for" or "Grants for" in front of EACH key word or phrase.

[] Spend about 30 seconds to 1 minute scanning each website that looks like a good match. Then, write it down on a list for further research in the near future.

Pro Tip: *Don't get too caught up reading the specifics of each possible funding opportunity. This is just a list to get started with and for you to look back on once you have a complete picture of all the funding opportunities.*

It's easy to get caught going down a rabbit hole and feeling overwhelmed if you fully research each name as you come across them. Trust me, generating the list and researching them all after you've generated a good list will be less overwhelming.

2. Research similar organizations:

[] Make a list of 5 - 8 organizations in your community or nationwide that have a similar mission and goals as you.

[] Review each organization's website and blog posts to see if they list previous grant awards or large funders.

[] Reach out to the organizations and see if you can ask them questions about their funding sources and any advice that they might have for you.

Pro Tip: *The best organizations to reach out to are ones that have similar missions but with whom you wouldn't usually compete for funding. For instance maybe the organization has already completed a similar project so they won't be*

seeking the same funding sources as you.

**Note that some may not want to talk about their process. That's okay! For every organization that won't, there are 3 more that are more than willing to help, so stay positive on the search.*

3. Area specific donors:

[] Meet with the staff at your local community foundation and ask them about grant opportunities they offer or if they are aware of other local grants.

[] Meet with or call and talk to City and/or County officials and educate them about your organization or project.

[] Attend local networking events and educate others about your organization and specific projects.

[] Contact your local Chamber of Commerce and see if they are aware of any local grant opportunities.

Pro Tip: *If you are getting a good feeling of support from the people that you meet with, ask if they would be willing to provide you with a letter of support that you could attach to grant applications you submit.*

The more people know about your organization, the more likely you are to secure private donors as well. Ask if they have any resources available to assist you beyond monetary contributions.

****Email me (breanna@dottedifundraising.com) and ask for my tips on gathering letters of support when you get to this point!***

4. Grant databases:

[] Review opportunities posted on grants.gov

[] Review opportunities posted on the Grantsmanship Center

[] Register for an account with Grantstation and/or the Foundation Center

Pro Tip: *Many grant or nonprofit related associations offer bonuses such as free access to Grantstation for being a member. I receive free access to Grantstation through my membership with Grant Professional's Association and the Montana Nonprofit Association.*

Check with your local college and see if they have free access to grant research databases that are available to the public.

5. Funder contact:

[] Review final list that you drafted in step 1 and research each opportunity more in depth.

[] Contact funders and introduce yourself and your organization. Ask questions about the opportunity (as long as the answers have not already been provided to you in the FAQs on their website or in the funding opportunity announcement).

[] Thank the staff member for their time spent educating you!

Pro Tip: *Funding agencies are made up of people with emotions just like you and I. If you have a good relationship with the agency staff, they are more likely to choose your project over another one if it comes down to having to select just one.*

I am Breanna Polacik and I assist nonprofits and small companies find foundation and government grants. I have been assisting organizations with grant writing and management for the past 8 years.

My mission is not only to do the heavy lifting for non-profits and mission-based organizations (that is, grant research and grant writing), but also to help teach them how to find grants on their own so that they can increase their funding year after year.

Want to know how I can help your organization? Contact me to set up a free 30 minute consultation at breanna@dottedifundraising.com or at 406-600-2921.

*Be sure to sign up for my monthly newsletter to receive additional helpful tips at www.dottedifundraising.com.

