FOUNDATION GRANTS TRAINING OUTLINE

Prepared for Des Moines University

OVERVIEW

The outline below details the content of the faculty and staff training Hanover will present via webinar to Des Moines University in October, 2016. **Please send any feedback or requested changes by Thursday, August 25.**

Audience: Early and middle career faculty with limited to moderate grants experience.
Goal: Participants will learn how foundations work, what makes a competitive foundation grant, and how to develop one.
Seminar Title: Know Your Funder: Private Foundations
Content: A guide to the foundation grantseeking process.

TRAINING OUTLINE

1) Overview of grantseeking
    a) What is a grant?
        i) A grant is a contract to perform work that advances the funder's mission.
        ii) The importance of mission alignment in grantseeking
    b) Who makes grants?
        i) Types of funders
    c) Why do they make grants?
        i) Reasons for grantmaking
    d) How do they make grants?
        i) Types of grants
2) Foundation grantseeking overview
    a) The foundation landscape
        i) Funding statistics
    b) How foundations work
    c) Foundations vs. public grantmakers
    d) Foundation solicitation: the need for cultivation
        i) Balancing traditional fundraising and formal grantseeking approaches
    e) Types of foundations
        i) Overview of types
        ii) Small family foundations
            (1) Mission
            (2) Grantmaking
            (3) Cultivation opportunities
        iii) Local and regional family foundations
            (1) Mission
            (2) Grantmaking

(3) Cultivation opportunities
iv) National family foundations
    (1) Mission
    (2) Grantmaking
    (3) Cultivation opportunities
v) Community foundations
    (1) Mission
    (2) Grantmaking
    (3) Cultivation opportunities
vi) Corporate foundations
    (1) Mission
    (2) Grantmaking
    (3) Cultivation opportunities
vii) Mission-driven foundations
    (1) Mission
    (2) Grantmaking
    (3) Cultivation opportunities
viii) Research foundations
    (1) Mission
    (2) Grantmaking
    (3) Cultivation opportunities

3) The foundation grant process: from potential to partnership
    a) Process overview
        i) Evaluating foundation relationships
        ii) Preparation: goals, prospects
        iii) Relationship development: connect, cultivate, ask, steward
    b) Preparation process, step 1: Goals
        i) Develop a basic mission statement
        ii) Identify partnership opportunities
            (1) Imagine pie in the sky: What would you do if funding were not a barrier?
            (2) Look for pain points: Where is your work hampered by lack of funding?
            (3) Capture ideas: What specific fundable projects can you identify?
        iii) Evaluate project ideas
            (1) Desired impact: What will the funding accomplish?
            (2) Type of funding: What will you spend the money on?
            (3) Reality check: Would the project be of interest to a foundation?
        iv) Develop concepts to sell
            (1) Structure: How does the idea work?
                (a) Good structure makes a project competitive
                (b) Use logic models to develop concepts
                    (i) Outcomes
                    (ii) Outputs
                    (iii) Activities
                    (iv) Inputs
                    (v) Assumptions
            (2) Verbiage: What are the most important aspects of the project?
                (a) What aspects of the project are likely to capture a funder's attention?

           (b) Develop a Concept Paper
              (i) Summary
              (ii) Needs
              (iii) Goals and Objectives
              (iv) Activities
              (v) Impact
           (c) Concept paper language: balance selling and telling

c) Preparation process, step 2: Prospects
    i) Who is funding similar work?
        (1) Identify similar projects
        (2) Determine funding sources
        (3) Investigate sources
    ii) Who says they want to fund this work?
        (1) Prospecting resources
           (a) Foundation Directory Online
           (b) Iowa Council of Foundations
           (c) Search engines

d) Which foundations should you pursue?
    i) Analyze funders
        (a) Gather information
           (i) Stated priorities
           (ii) Funding history
           (iii) Funding process
           (iv) Personnel
        (b) Examples
           (i) AHA
           (ii) Local foundations
    ii) Evaluate opportunities
        (1) Answer key questions
           (a) Are your mission and the funder's mission well aligned?
              (i) Fully aligned
              (ii) Partially aligned
                  1. What is the nature of the partial alignment?
                    a. Funder's mission is broader
                    b. PI's mission is broader
                    c. Missions are fundamentally different, with a segment of overlap
                  2. How might the partial alignment affect the relationship?
           (b) What is the long-term potential of the relationship?
              (i) Funder grantmaking capacity
              (ii) Funder work style
              (iii) Funder role in the field
           (c) How challenging will it be to develop a relationship with the funder?
              (i) Funder openness to communication
              (ii) Funder organizational structure
              (iii) Funder desirability / competitiveness
                  1. PI's place in the applicant field
        (2) Prioritize opportunities

(a) Prospects to pursue
    (i) Good mission alignment
    (ii) Good potential ROI: relationship development worth the effort
        1. Low-medium potential? Development should not be challenging.
        2. Challenging development? Potential should be high.
(b) Prospects not to pursue
    (i) Mission alignment is not good: don't force it
    (ii) ROI is not good: too much effort required for too little potential return

e) Development process, step 1: Connect
  i) Identify existing connections
    (1) Who do you know? Who do they know?
    (2) What is your history with the foundation?
    (3) What is DMU's history with the foundation?
  ii) Identify potential avenues for connection
    (1) Colleagues, friends, acquaintances
    (2) Social media
    (3) Events (workshops, conferences)
    (4) Direct outreach to funder staff (email, phone)
  iii) Gather intelligence to support cultivation
    (1) Reach out to connections
    (2) Review social media accounts
    (3) Research foundation personnel

f) Development process, step 2: Cultivate
  i) Assess current relationship stage
  ii) Make a plan
    (1) Cultivation goals
    (2) Cultivation steps
      (a) Examples
  iii) Implement plan
    (1) The art of funder conversation
    (2) Exercise
      (a) Read [The Pitch is Dead. Long Live the Conversation.](#)
      (b) Role play funder conversation in pairs
      (c) Debrief: what did you learn?
  iv) Assess progress / relationship stage, determine next step
    (1) Continue cultivation?
    (2) Proceed to "ask" step?
    (3) Drop prospect?

g) Development process, step 3: Ask
  i) Moving from Cultivation to Ask: from general to specific
    (1) Based on conversations with funder, identify specific project(s) for funding
    (2) Confirm project fit with funder
    (3) Design project
      (a) Use logic models to drive project design
        (i) Flesh out concept logic model with details
        (ii) Begin at the end: use outcomes to drive design
        (iii) Set SMART targets

        (b) Use budgets to drive realistic project design
           (i) Identify budget restrictions and requirements
           (ii) Draft a basic budget
           (iii) Map the budget onto the logic model: Does it work?
        (c) Evaluation design
           (i) Understand the funder's evaluation goals and requirements
           (ii) Involve evaluators early in the design process

ii) Proposal Development: the formal Ask

    (1) Confirm parameters with funder
        (a) What is required of the formal request?
           (i) Format
           (ii) Information
        (b) When and how should the formal request be submitted?
           (i) Deadlines
           (ii) Submission mechanism (online, email, paper)

    (2) Develop Letter of Inquiry (LOI) if necessary
        (a) Format
        (b) Style
        (c) Developing an LOI from a concept paper

    (3) Develop proposal
        (a) Make a grant development plan
           (i) Timeline
           (ii) Checklist
           (iii) Templates
        (b) Write the narrative
           (i) Elements of strong narratives
           (ii) What makes a compelling narrative?
           (iii) Narrative sections
                1. Why: Statement of the Problem; Literature Review
                2. What: Conceptual Framework; Hypotheses / Research Questions
                3. How: Methodology / Strategy; Scope of Work; Management Plan; Evaluation Plan
                4. Who: Staff and Institutional Qualifications
           (iv) Refine the narrative
                1. Know your audience
                2. Write clearly
                3. Provide all requested details
                4. Use SMART goals
                5. Provide logic models where appropriate
                6. Present information in tables and figures as appropriate
                7. Seek feedback from peers and grant professionals
                8. Draft and edit
        (c) Develop attachments
           (i) Budget
                1. Develop budget in excel
                2. Complete funder budget forms
                3. Write budget justification

              (ii) Funder required forms
              (iii) Abstract / Project Summary
              (iv) References
              (v) CVs / Biosketches
              (vi) MOUs and Letters of Commitment
              (vii) Letters of Support
              (viii) Funder-specific attachments
- (4) Submit grant
  - (a) DMU internal approval
  - (b) External submission
- h) Development process, step 4: Steward
  - i) If not awarded, assess and determine next steps
    - (1) Read between the lines: why was the grant declined?
      - (a) Remember the three-legged stool of competitive foundation grants
        - (i) Good relationships
        - (ii) Strong programs
        - (iii) Impeccable proposals
    - (2) Is this funder still a good prospect?
      - (a) Use the decline as a cultivation tool: Return to Step 2
  - ii) If awarded, set yourself up for success
    - (1) Grant management
      - (a) A grant is a contract
        - (i) Set yourself up to do what you said you would do
        - (ii) Keep communication lines open with funder
        - (iii) Communicate early in case of challenges
      - (b) Set up systems before you begin
        - (i) Accounting systems
        - (ii) Management systems
        - (iii) Tracking and information systems
        - (iv) Reporting systems
    - (2) Strategy for further funding and relationship development
      - (a) Good implementation is the first step toward future funding
      - (b) Good communication is key
      - (c) Reporting is not enough: involving funders in project work
      - (d) "Thank you" as a funding strategy
- 4) How Hanover can assist DMU
  - i) Hanover's foundation grantseeking system
    - (1) Preparation process
      - (a) Goals
      - (b) Prospects
    - (2) Relationship development process
      - (a) Cultivate
      - (b) Connect
      - (c) Ask
      - (d) Steward
- 5) Questions and wrap-up