

Outcomes 2023 Workshop: Making Sense of Foundations

Overview

Adding or enhancing a focus on grants to your fund development strategy can have significant upside impact. In this session we will discuss topics like: when to add a grants program to your development strategy; what is the process of applying for and winning grants; what tools and system are required for a strong grants program; etc.

How does a grants program fit into the overall fund development strategy?

Through what we would call Strategic Focus, your organization can determine the top 1-2 fundraising strategies to which you should commit 80-90% of your capacity: Prospective strategies include:

Major Giving ~ Annual Giving ~ Grants ~ Events ~ Corporate Giving

	Sustainability	ROI	Return Horizon	Scalability	Needed Infrastructure
Grants	**	***	***	**	***

When should I start a grants program?

- You have a strong outcome-driven logic model fueled by clear program design
- You have a program model that appeals to multiple funding priorities (ie: workforce development funding, mental health funding, evangelistic or discipleship impact, etc.)
- You have strong evaluation and reporting infrastructure

What are the specific steps for a single grant?

- **Identify** a prospective foundation through research.
 - **Connect** with someone at the foundation to determine missional fit.
 - Submit a **Letter of Intent** (LOI) to receive proposal permission.
 - Complete any **Mid-Year Report**(s) required.
 - Complete and a **Final Report** per requirements.
 - **Repeat** process as necessary.

What kind of infrastructure should I build?

- An investment in evaluation
- A portfolio management process (grants calendar and CRM)
- A grant language sourcebook
- A process for field-generated reporting
- Staffing: Relationship manager, grant writer/report writer

What are the keys elements that will keep me on track to optimize a grants program?

- Develop close coordination with program and finance staff.
- Build up a bank of content from which to draw so you don't start from zero with each proposal.
- Organize your work with the calendar and systems you have created.
- Set grants as a development team priority.
- Maintain a strong pipeline process
- Monitor and adjust your grants program structure and impact regularly.