Fundraising and grant writing skills are becoming more and more important as budgets are being cut and materials more expensive to obtain. With cuts to education increasing, and the pressures of “No Child Left Behind,” locating resources for alternative funding is very crucial to school libraries.

Resources range from government agencies on the federal, state, and local level, to public, private, and corporate foundations and private individuals. Each of these resources has its own set of criteria concerning the application process, the deadlines, and the reporting criteria after the grant is received. The Internet offers a variety of Web sites and strategies on how to locate funding. Many of the grants are highly competitive and require a well thought-out plan of your mission, how you plan to use the funding, and the population it will serve. The resources listed below are a combination of funding resources, guides on how to complete the process, and how to navigate the competitive world of fundraising.

Reference Books and Directories


This excellent resource provides a thorough guide to all aspects of researching, preparing, and submitting grants for all types of libraries. The book discusses the overview of the grant process cycle, how to design the grant project, organizing a team to work on the grant, understanding the resources that are out there and creating and following up on your proposal. In addition, the book also has a CD-ROM included, which lists different examples of RFPs, grant announcements, and grant proposals.

Web Sites

Foundation Center Online. Foundation Center. 19 July 2007 http://foundationcenter.org/.

The Foundation Center is an organization whose mission is to collect, disseminate, and publish information on public, private, corporate, and individual fundraising. They are the publisher of the Foundation Directory, a print directory of foundations and their giving interest and FC Search, which is their searchable database. The Web site offers some free searchable information including the Foundation Finder, which allows you to search for funders in your area, RFP Bulletin, which will send “requests for proposals” bulletins to your email, and Philanthropy News Digest. In addition, they provide links to many of the foundations who maintain a Web site.


The federal government posts grants that are searchable by category, agency, and advanced search to target possible funding opportunities. They state that they have over 1000 grant opportunities that are available by 26 federal agencies. In order to apply, you must register, which takes 3-5 business days to process. The database is searchable by a basic search, category, agency, and advanced search feature. Then you need to click on “How to Apply” and then download the application package for that funding opportunity.


This is the application and guidelines for the National Leadership Grants. These grants are used for libraries and...
“With cuts to education increasing, and the pressures of ‘No Child Left Behind,’ locating resources for alternative funding is very crucial to school libraries.”

museums and can be awarded over a three-year period. The deadline for this application is March of 2008. The web site includes the grant application and guidelines, the fill-in-forms, and the grants.gov instructions. In addition, a link is provided to a tutorial on how to complete this grant application at the following Web site: NLG Project Planning: A Tutorial http://www.imls.gov/project_planning/index1.asp. This Web site is helpful as it offers a step-by-step guide to writing and thinking about how to submit this grant request.


National Educational Association Foundation is offering Student Achievement, Learning and Leadership Grants, and NEA Books Across America, and “Drop Everything and Read” grant opportunities.


This collection of links to useful sites is arranged by category, including guides, awards, grants and databases, and journals, listservs, and newsletters.

Seacoast Web Design. *Non-Profit Guides: grant-writing tools for non-profit organizations*. 19 July 2007 http://www.npguides.org/index.html Free, Web-based tools, tips, and templates to help educators and librarians write grant proposals. The site also includes links to grants and funding resources and glossaries.

And also see:

Brooks-Young, Susan. “*Your Wish is Granted.*” *School Library Journal* 53.7 (July 2007): 36–39. This article provides an excellent listing of resources for technology grants for school libraries. The article provides a listing of school library grant opportunities from such companies as Target stores, HP Technology, ING North America Insurance Corporation and offers a description of the grants, their deadlines and the Web address. This article is a great resource for school libraries that have small budgets and require technology funding.  

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