
Professional Certificate in Grant Writing

Building Relationships with Funders

Building Relationships with Funders is a key course in the Professional Certificate in Grant Writing. In this course, you will learn the importance of building and maintaining relationships with funders in order to increase your chances of securing funding for your organization. Here are some key terms and vocabulary you will encounter in this course:

1. **Funder:** A person, organization, or foundation that provides financial support in the form of grants to nonprofit organizations.

Example: The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation is a funder that supports organizations working on issues related to education, the environment, and global development.

Practical Application: When writing a grant proposal, it is important to research the funder's priorities and giving history to ensure that your proposal aligns with their interests.

Challenge: Identifying potential funders and building relationships with them can be time-consuming and requires a strategic approach.

2. **Grant:** A financial award given by a funder to a nonprofit organization to support a specific project or program.

Example: The grant from the Kresge Foundation will allow our organization to expand our after-school program to serve more students.

Practical Application: When applying for a grant, it is important to follow the funder's application guidelines and provide all required information.

Challenge: Competing for grants can be challenging, as there may be many other organizations applying for the same funding.

3. **Proposal:** A written document that outlines a nonprofit organization's request for funding from a funder.

Example: Our organization's proposal to the Gates Foundation requests funding to support our education initiatives in underserved communities.

Practical Application: A grant proposal should clearly articulate the organization's mission, goals, and objectives, as well as the project or program for which funding is being requested.

Challenge: Writing a compelling grant proposal that stands out from the competition can be difficult.

4. **Relationship Building:** The process of developing and maintaining relationships with funders to increase the chances of securing funding.

Example: Building relationships with funders involves networking, communication, and demonstrating the impact of the organization's work.

Practical Application: Relationship building can involve attending funder events, scheduling meetings with program officers, and providing regular updates on the organization's work.

Challenge: Building relationships with funders takes time and effort, but can ultimately lead to long-term funding success.

5. Stewardship: The process of managing and overseeing a grant after it has been awarded to ensure that it is used effectively and in accordance with the funder's requirements.

Example: Our organization's stewardship practices include regular reporting to funders, tracking expenses, and ensuring that grant funds are used for their intended purpose.

Practical Application: Good stewardship can lead to long-term funding relationships and repeat funding from the same funder.

Challenge: Managing and reporting on grant funds can be time-consuming and requires careful attention to detail.

6. Cultivation: The process of identifying and engaging potential funders, often before a specific grant opportunity arises.

Example: Cultivation can involve researching funders, attending their events, and building relationships with program officers.

Practical Application: Cultivation is an ongoing process that requires a strategic approach and a commitment to building relationships over time.

Challenge: Identifying potential funders and initiating contact with them can be challenging, but is a critical step in the grant seeking process.

7. Donor: A person or organization that provides financial support to a nonprofit organization.

Example: Our organization's donors include individuals, corporations, and foundations.

Practical Application: Donors can be cultivated and stewarded in similar ways to funders, with a focus on building relationships and demonstrating impact.

Challenge: Donors may have different motivations and expectations than funders, requiring a tailored approach to building relationships.

8. Prospect Research: The process of identifying and researching potential funders and donors.

Example: Prospect research can involve using online databases, reviewing giving history, and identifying common connections.

Practical Application: Prospect research is an important step in the grant seeking process, as it can help identify potential funding sources and inform the grant proposal writing process.

Challenge: Prospect research can be time-consuming and requires a strategic approach to ensure that time and resources are used effectively.

9. **Grant Writing:** The process of writing grant proposals to request funding from funders.

Example: Our organization's grant writer is responsible for researching funding opportunities, writing grant proposals, and managing the grant application process.

Practical Application: Grant writing requires strong writing skills, attention to detail, and an understanding of the funder's priorities and requirements.

Challenge: Competing for grants can be challenging, as there may be many other organizations applying for the same funding.

10. **Relationship Management:** The process of managing and maintaining relationships with funders and donors over time.

Example: Relationship management can involve regular communication, reporting on impact, and expressing gratitude for support.

Practical Application: Relationship management is an ongoing process that requires a commitment to building and maintaining long-term relationships.

Challenge: Managing relationships with multiple funders and donors can be time-consuming and requires careful attention to detail.

In summary, Building Relationships with Funders is a key course in the Professional Certificate in Grant Writing. Understanding key terms and vocabulary such as funder, grant, proposal, relationship building, stewardship, cultivation, donor, prospect research, grant writing, and relationship management is critical to success in this course and in the grant seeking process more broadly. By building and maintaining relationships with funders and donors, organizations can increase their chances of securing funding and achieving their mission.