

# Grant Writing 101

## Supplemental Handout Package

Community Development Unit

**Chestermere**

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# Grant vs. Proposals

## Grant:

Funder's perspective:

- a sum of money given by an organization for a particular purpose.
- a grant award is an investment in positive change.
- is not FREE money

## Grant Proposals

Nonprofits perspective:

- a request for money
- a grant proposal is a tool non profits use to address an important issues within their communities.
- a grant proposal is a call to action
- a grant proposal is a cogent, persuasive, well-supported argument for change.

Proposal writers submit proposals and receive grants. Funding sources give (or do not give) grants.

What if you think about a grant as a partnership opportunity instead of an opportunity to make money?

Many government grants come out as a "request for proposal" which literally means they are asking for your help to solve a community problem?

Does this perspective shift the focus of your grant? How would thinking of it that way change the way you approach proposal writing?

Source: The Grantmanship Centre <https://www.tgci.com/what-grant-proposal>

# Grant Application Process



# Research & Preparation

Identify the need or opportunity you are trying to address in your community.

## **NEEDS** (Issue identification/deficit perspective)

- What is your idea? Is the idea or project based on an identified need in your community or communities?

## **OPPORTUNITIES** (asset perspective)

- What is your idea? Is the idea or project based on an identified opportunity?

How do you go about identifying needs? Look around your community/scan your environment. What's happening?

What **EVIDENCE** (qualitative and/or quantitative) do you have that shows this need/issue/opportunity exists? How do we know this to be true?

## **Why should your project/program exist?**

- What will be different in the community because of this project/program
- Who else is working in this area? Is this a duplication of services? If not, great. If so, what makes the program, project that you are proposing unique and stand alone?
- What rationale do you have for "duplicating services"? Is there opportunity to partner or collaborate?

## **What does your program/project expect to do? Describe the future...**

- What will the impact look like? What are the anticipated outcomes? Who will benefit?

## **What resources will you need/use?**

- Do you have the capacity (i.e. existing dollars, staffing, goods, volunteers, etc.)?
- Community: Supporters, Stakeholders, Beneficiaries? Who are your partners?
- Do you have defined roles and responsibilities? What's required of those involved?
- To whom are individuals/groups accountable?

## **How and when will the project/program operate?**

- Do you know anticipated start times? If it is a "short-notice" or "emergency" project, why? Why now?

## **What support is needed?**

- Long-term vs. short-term
- Cash vs. Time
- Grants? Or other income streams? Is matching funding required? If so, to what percentage?

## **Sustainable**

- Funders want to see legacy as well, what their impact will look like long before the funding runs out. How will you sustain the project?

# Proposal Writing

## The Proposal

### Basic Components of a Proposal Package:

- Proposal / Executive Summary
- Introduction / Organization Information
- Problem/ Need / Situation Description
- Goals / Objectives
- Activities (methods or design)
- Outcomes (impact of activities)
- Evaluation
- Conclusion
- Future Funding
- Project Budget
- Appendices / Supplemental Materials

### Writing Sequence

- **Problem statement**
- **Goals / Objectives**
- **Activities (method or design)**
- **Outcomes**
- **Evaluation**
- Future funding
- Budget, time table
- Introduction
- Title (cover) page
- Summary
- Appendices

## Problem Statement / Statement of Need

The most important component for writing a grant proposal is the problem statement

- It answers the question ““What community problem or issue does my project or program solve?”
- It briefly explains what needs to change
- Relates to purpose and goals of your organization
- Is or reasonable dimensions
- Is supported by evidence
- Doesn't make assumptions
- Most people try to place the solution into the problem statement. DON'T

## Goals & Objectives

- Goals are outcome-based statements that describe what results the organization wants to accomplish.
- Objectives describe how you will work to achieve your goals. They should be concrete, precise and measurable
- Does not describe your methods

## Activities

- Flows naturally from problems and objectives
- Clearly describes program activities and reason for stated activities
- Describes what you will be doing to achieve your results
- Describes how you will accomplish objectives
- Should be feasible, logical and tie into objects and align with the problem, issue or opportunity statement
- Describes the clients
- Presents a reasonable scope of activities that can be accomplished within the program timelines and within existing organizational resources and capacity.

## Outcomes

- Outcomes are the product or result that occurs when the goal is achieved. Outcomes describe the benefit or change for an individual during or after participating in your program or services.
- There are three levels of outcomes:
  - Change in skill or knowledge
  - Change in attitude or behaviour
  - Change in status or condition

## Examples

- Women in the prenatal class know the daily nutritional requirements for a pregnant woman.
- Babies of teenage moms are born healthy.

### Tips: Writing Outcome Statements

- Put the program participants as the “**doer**” of the outcome.

## Evaluation

- Plan for determining the degree to which goals and objectives are met and methods are followed
- Covers both the product and process
- Should describe who will be performing the evaluation and how evaluators will be selected
- Defines evaluation criteria
- Describes data collection processes and process for analysis
- Includes how results will be used for program improvements (if appropriate)

## Budget

- The budget that accompanies the text in your application should tell the same story.
- It describes all project costs and explanation for each expense and how they are related to your project.
- It should be easy to see the links between your proposed activities and the budget.
- It should be realistic. Figures should be 100% accurate and based on quotes.
- Describes all sources of income, in-kind (dollar value), etc.

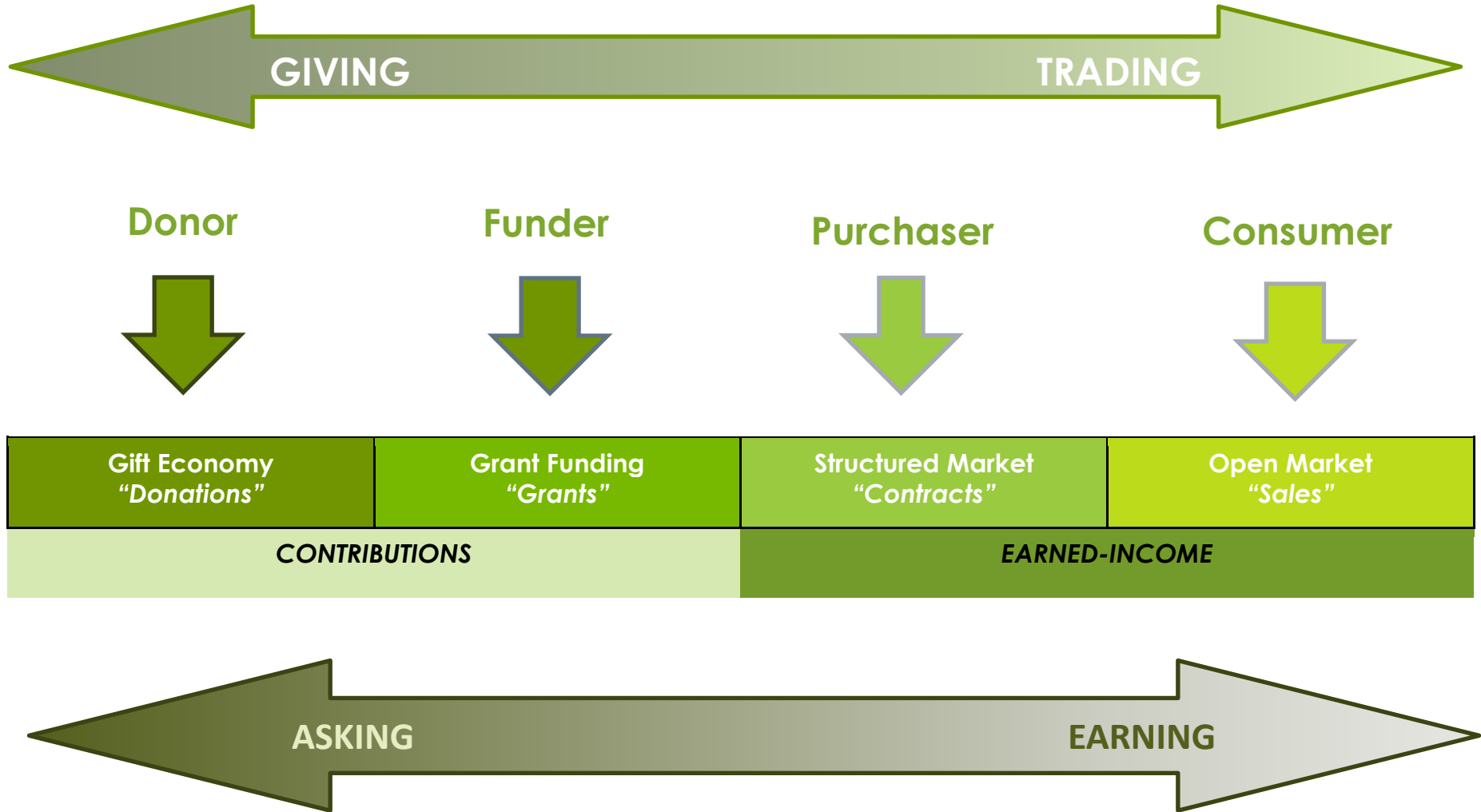
Adapted from:

Program Planning and Proposal Writing – The Grantsmanship Centre

[www.snowballfundraising.com/grant-writing-tips/](http://www.snowballfundraising.com/grant-writing-tips/)

<http://www.content-professionals.com/grants.php>

# Income & Funding Sources



Adapted from the National Council of Voluntary Organizations, *Introductory Pack on Funding and Finance: Guide to Sustainable Funding*, 2006, p 13. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/188860093/Guide-to-sustainable-funding>, accessed March 17, 2014.



	Donations	Grants	Contracts	Earned-income
<i>Description</i>	Gifts to further the mission of the organization. Often unrestricted. Donor trusts org. to spend as needed.	Restricted funding to deliver mutually agreed outcomes. Often an application process, the funder has clear expectations.	Payment for provision of products or service to agreed terms with a third party purchaser. Often a tendering process	Selling products or services to customers on the open market. Surplus income is unrestricted
<i>This type of income is best for:</i>	General income to further cause	Specific programs with defined outcomes	Delivery of a public good or service	Product or service with clear value proposition/ market demand
<i>Providers</i>	Individuals, private organizations	Public or private organizations	Public or private organizations	Individuals and public or private organizations
<i>Decision Makers</i>	Many Individuals	Few Individuals	Few Individuals	Many Individuals
<i>General Approach to acquiring this source</i>	Developing and managing effective <b>communications/</b> campaigns	Cultivating and managing <b>relationships</b> with key decision makers	Effective <b>bidding</b>	Developing, selling and managing the <b>value</b> of your core product/ service
<i>Skills that Help</i>	PR, campaign management, online tools	Sales, Proposal Development/ Grant writing	Proposal Development/ Contract Management	Business/ Marketing

# Categories of Grants

**GENERAL PURPOSE:** The funder supports your organization's overall mission and trusts you to make good use of the money. RARE

**PROGRAM OR PROJECT:** Generally a restricted grant and must be used for that project.

- **Planning grants:** This grant supports initial project development work. Planning a major new program may need to spend a good deal of time and money just figuring out what it will look like.
- **Seed money or start-up grants** A start-up grant helps a new organization or program in its first few years. Such grants are often for more than one year, and frequently decrease in amount each year.
- **Management or technical assistance:** Might help hire a marketing consultant or pay the salary of a new fund-raiser position.
- **Facilities and equipment grants.** Not only interested in applicant's current activities and financial health, but will also ask about financial and program plans for the next several years. No funder wants to help pay for a new building, only to have it close in four years because it is too expensive for the charity to maintain.
- **Endowment grants:** is commonly found within charities with large physical plants, such as hospitals and colleges. Funder wants to be sure that its gift to an endowment will stay in the endowment earning interest, and not be drawn out of the endowment to meet annual operating costs.

## Get to Know the Funder

### WHO ARE THEY?

- Review the funding guidelines.
- What is their mandate? What are their priorities?
- What are their eligibility requirements?
- How, what, when do they fund? (timeframes, amounts, frequency, sectors)
- Whom have they previously funded?
- What are the eligible and ineligible expenses? How does this impact your project?
- What are the submission timelines / deadlines?
- Are there matching requirements?

### WHO ARE YOU?

- What is your mandate? How well does it align with the funder?
- Does the funder seem like a "good fit" with your organization? (culture, philosophy)

CONTACT THE FUNDER **before** you write your proposal. Be sure to clearly understand their guidelines and eligibility criteria.

**Be honest in your assessment of whether your project or idea truly meets the eligibility requirements as it will save both you and the funder time in the long-term.**

## Organize Your Research

Funder	Mandate	Alignment	Application Deadline	Requirements	Application Process/Format

# Applying for Funding

The first step in applying for a grant is to get organized:

- Fully read the call for proposal, grant guidelines, funder mandate, and what is on funder's website.
- Print the application even if it's an online application - read through it and make notes
- Download or create a checklist for all of the application requirements
- Do they have templates you need to use i.e. budget?
- Who must sign the application/agreement?
- What are the matching requirements (if any) and what documentation do they require confirming the matching funds?
- Identify the submission deadline and plan backwards to identify key dates to you need to get things done i.e. when do you need to present to board for approval to meet the submission deadline.
- What are their reporting requirements?
- Know what you are committing to i.e. is the application the legal agreement or is there a separate one if successful?
- Who, within your organization, is responsible for what?
- If you're not sure ask (and ask again)

## Writing Tips

- Always operate under the assumption the funder knows NOTHING about your organization, project or initiative.
- Answer the questions - Answer the questions realizing you will be scored! You can use the elements of your proposals to inform the response to the grant application questions but you need to answer their questions.
- "See attached" or "view masterplan" are not adequate responses. Answer the question and then, if necessary, refer them to additional information. Make it as easy as possible to find the information i.e. what document, which page, even the paragraph, table, figure, etc.
- Paint a very clear picture - ensure it is a consistent story from start to finish including the budget.
- Apply the 3 C's: Clarity, Conciseness, and Coherence**

### Clear writing

- Easy to understand and read
- Uses active voice – present tense, use action verbs instead of passive verbs

### Conciseness

- It is direct
- Uses short sentences, short paragraphs, lists
- Limits jargon, clichés and redundancies

### Coherence

- Logical order
- Sentences link together
- Discernable threads of thought

## Use Business Writing Style

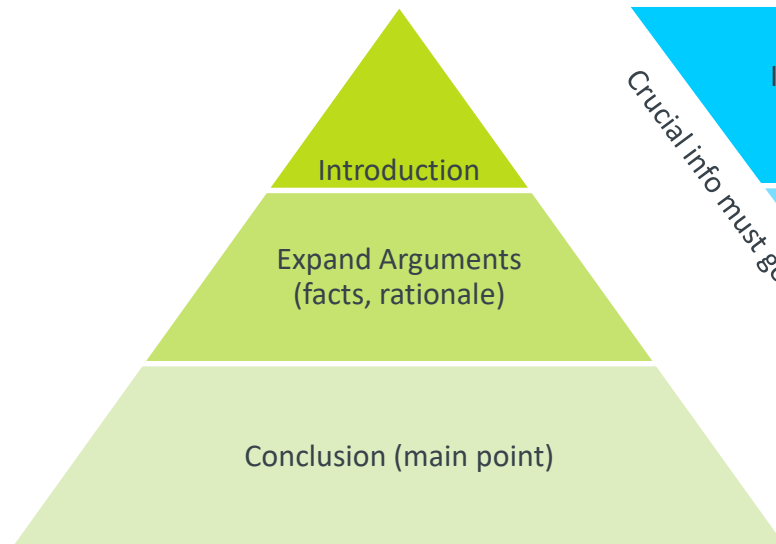
Many of learned to write using Essay style where we introduce our topic, provide facts, rationale, etc. for the topic and finish with our conclusion, key message, or main point.

You will note that many RFP and Grant Applications limit the number of pages or even number of words you can use. So we need to rethink how we write.

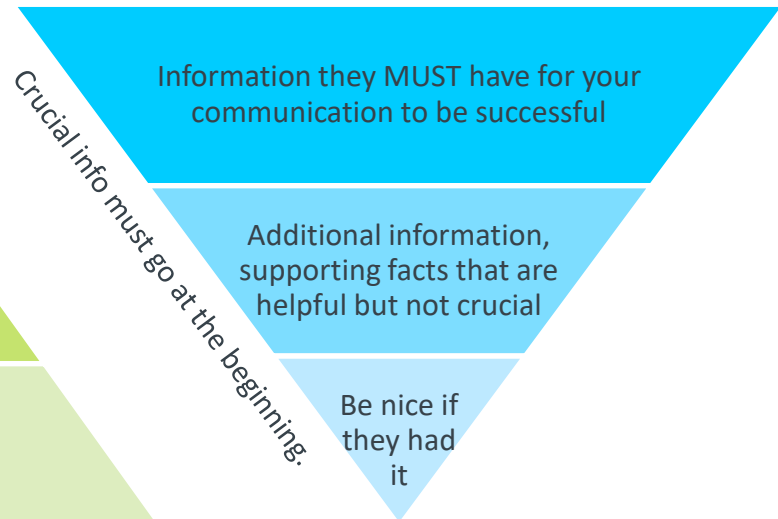
Think of a newspaper article – they start with the key message or most important info (headline) then provide more detail, ending with the least important information at the end.

Your proposal even your answers to specific application questions should mirror this style.

### Essay Style



### Business Style



## Good and Not So Good Examples

### The good

- Partnerships/collaborations
- Long term legacies
- Community investment
- Benefits many
- Being able to read your writing
- Having measurable outcomes
- Letters of support
- All questions are answered succinctly
- All mandatories are provided
- Documents are signed- by the appropriate person

### The not so good

- Incomplete answers
- Referring to other documents that are not included, linked to, or attached
- Benefitting few
- Handwriting that is hard to read
- Having no outcomes/benefits listed
- Using contact information that is outdated (old board members, typos)
- Blank questions
- Too little or too much info i.e. 1 sentence answers vs. a novel
- Documents aren't signed or are not signed by the appropriate person

## General Tips

- Give yourself time to complete the proposal.
- Check spelling and grammar.
- Ask someone who isn't familiar with the project or your organization to proof read your proposal or application. If the proposal or application make sense to them then there's a good chance it will make sense to a funder. If they are confused then it's a good chance the funder will be to.
- Do not hide mistakes
- Return calls and email promptly
- Always know who your contact is
- Be honest with yourself about your capacity to deliver before you receive funds
- Don't use short-term dollars for long-term plans

## Accountability & Follow-Up

From this point forward, everything you do or don't do could impact future funding opportunities:

- Know what you promised in your application
- Know what the funder requires and when
- Remember that checklist: Hang somewhere prominent for all involved to use
- Give MORE than required

Grant applications are legal documents and either form the foundation of a legal agreement or are a legal agreement. You are accountable to do what you said you would do in the application.

- Follow through with implementation.
- Make sure you adhere to any deadlines
- If there is a problem, let your funder know
- Make sure to track your expenditures and revenue the way the funder requests it
- Monitor progress. Learn from clients and beneficiaries. Track successes and failures to help share your story.
- Continually communicate with your stakeholders/community /board about your progress along the way. Invite funder to openings or events
- Complete the final accounting forms, evaluations & reports on time
- Assess and adapt. Ensure you still comply with conditions of grant and/or are in regular communication with the funders to update them on changes or shifts to methods.
- Prepare for transition from grant to sustainable mechanism.
- Document your project using pictures, video, etc. Share & include in final documents
- **Celebrate Success!**

# Summary



- Understand needs, opportunities and capacity in your community.
- Research funding sources and determine eligibility.
- Build relationships and find the right fit.
- Create a compelling story with both text and numbers.
- Review, revise and submit complete application/proposal.
- Follow through on implementation and plan for the future.

## GOA Resources

- Alberta Culture & Status of Women  
<https://www.alberta.ca/grants-for-non-profits.aspx>
  - Community Initiatives Program (CIP)  
<https://www.alberta.ca/community-initiatives-program.aspx>
  - Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP)  
<https://www.alberta.ca/community-facility-enhancement-program.aspx>
  - Enhanced Capacity Advancement Program  
<https://www.alberta.ca/enhanced-capacity-advancement-program.aspx>
  - Faith-based and Cultural Facility Relaunch Grant  
<https://www.alberta.ca/faith-based-and-cultural-facility-relaunch-grant.aspx>
  - Multiculturalism, Indigenous and Inclusion Grant Program  
<https://www.alberta.ca/multiculturalism-indigenous-and-inclusion-grant-program.aspx>
  - Other Initiatives Program  
<https://www.alberta.ca/other-initiatives-program.aspx>
  - Stabilize Program  
<https://www.alberta.ca/stabilize-program.aspx>
  - Stabilize Program - Phase 2  
<https://www.alberta.ca/stabilize-program-phase-2.aspx>

## Other Resources

- The Grantsmanship Centre - <https://www.tgci.com/>
- The Fundraising Authority - <http://www.thefundraisingauthority.com/>
- Network For Good <http://www.networkforgood.com/>
- Wealthy Bag Lady <http://www.wealthybaglady.com/>
- Charity Village - <https://charityvillage.com/app/>
- Capacity Canada - <https://capacitycanada.ca/>
- Imagine Canada - <http://www.imaginecanada.ca/>
- Canada Business Network <https://canadabusiness.ca/programs/#/?page=1>



# Appendix 1: Databases and Directories of Grants and Funding

## Grant Connect

Housed by Imagine Canada, this resource indexes 3,100 foundations and businesses in Canada. This is a subscription service and is located on the web at <http://www.imaginecanada.ca/grant-connect>

## Charity Village

The easiest place to get free information on government, corporate and some 155 foundations in Canada is at <https://charityvillage.com/cms/knowledge-centre/fundraising/funder-directory>. This page contains links to online databases and directories of funding agencies and foundations of interest to Canadian individuals and organizations, plus online tools and resources of value to those involved in prospect research and other areas of fundraising.

## Big Online Canada

A comprehensive source of information on grants from foundations, governments and businesses. Subscription fee. This is a for-profit organization. For more info, check <http://www.bigdatabase.ca>.

## Canadian Donor's Guide

This guide offers a fully searchable, online database of thousands of the more established and active charitable organizations across the country. Search by name, location, or type of activity. <http://www.donorsguide.ca/>

## Municipal Grants

Inventory of Municipal Grants within the Government of Alberta. <http://municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/municipal-grants-web-portal>

## The Business Link Service Centre

Offers a list of federal and provincial government funding sources at: <http://canadabusiness.ca/grants-and-financing/government-grants-and-financing/>

## Community Foundations of Canada

Provides a good source of information related to funding and how Community Foundations can assist their local regions. The links page on this site is very good. <http://www.cfc-fcc.ca>

## Philanthropic Foundations Canada <http://www.pfc.ca>

PFC is a **national non-profit member association of Canadian grantmaking foundations and a registered charity**. Information on grantmaking resources, funder networks, etc. The website also lists their 81 member foundations.

## Alberta Association of Fund Raising Executives (AAFRE)

AAFRE may be able to provide you with information on members of their organization who are professional fund raisers. Websites: Edmonton Chapter <http://www.afpedmonton.ca/> South Chapter <https://www.afpnet.org/About/ChapterDetail.cfm?ChapterID=CNG>

## Fundsnet

This internet site provides a list of grants and funders in Canada at <http://www.fundsnet.com/searchresult.php?sbcid=29>

## The Foundation Centre

Information on foundations in the United States. This site offers a database of more than 48,000 foundations. It also offers an orientation to grantseeking and a guide to funding research and resources. Check out: <http://foundationcenter.org/>

## Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

Research grants from the federal government's SSHRC department.  
<http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/index-eng.aspx>

## Grant Research and Tips

### Charity Village <https://charityvillage.com/cms/knowledge-centre/fundraising>

Canada's supersite for the nonprofit sector --- 3,000 pages of news, jobs, information and resources for executives, staffers, donors, and volunteers.

**Non-Profit Guides** – American website containing grant writing tools for non-profit organizations. An excellent grantwriting outline by the SeaCoast Web Design staff (U.S.). Includes sample grant applications and links to grantmakers. <http://www.npguides.org/guide/index.html> Specific grant tips can be found at <http://www.thenonproffitimes.com/grants/>

**Voluntary Sector Knowledge Network** <http://web.uvic.ca/psyc/skelton/VSKN%20Tour.htm> The VSKN provides information on how to get grants from foundations. This website also serves as an online resource that assists non-profit organizations in many other topics. It is intended to be of specific interest to smaller, organizations such as those that are volunteer led and those in rural and remote areas.

**Center for Nonprofit Management** <https://www.cnmsocal.org/the-answer-guide> Online access to "Grantseeking Fundamentals Handbook: A Guide to Finding Grant Funds"

## The Grantsmanship Center

Here are a variety of useful publication for purchase <https://www.tgci.com/publications-for-purchase> or archived articles <https://www.tgci.com/archive> from The Grantsmanship Center, a U.S. based nonprofit organization created to help the voluntary sector secure grants. They do this mostly via training courses but the articles from their member publication are available online.

## GrantStation <http://www.grantstation.com/>

**Grant Station** is an interactive website that allows grantseekers to identify potential funding sources for their programs or projects, and mentors you through the grantseeking process.

## Other Grant-related Links:

- <http://staff.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/> American Grants and related resources
- <https://foundationcenter.org/> Foundation Center in the USA.
- <https://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/proposalwriting/websites> Grants Information Collection at the University of Wisconsin, Madison