

7 Common Myths That Hinder Your Grant Proposals

Navigating Go To Webinar

Managing Your Audio and Screen

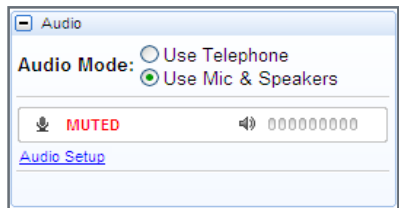
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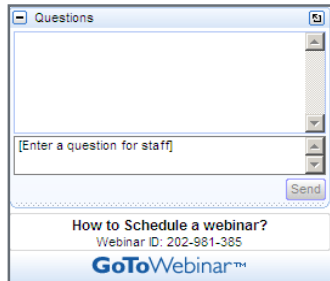
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Asking a Question

To ask the presenter a question, type it into the question panel and press send.

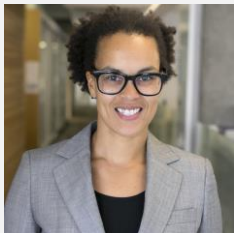


Minimizing and Maximizing Your Screen



- Use the orange and white arrow to minimize and maximize the GoToMeeting panel.
- Use the blue and white square to make the presentation full screen.

Today's Presenter



Meacie Fairfax

Senior Analyst

EAB

WASHINGTON, D.C.



**Community
College Student**



**High School
Success Coach**



**Grant Funding and
Application Expert**

1

Introduction: Why Study Myths?

2

Busting Common Grant Myths

3

Q & A

Leave No Stone Unturned

Top Ten Reasons Provide Two Key Areas for Improvement

1 Funder Research

-  *Inaccurate or poor research efforts*
-  *Unaware of funding cycles and timelines*

October 24, 2017

=====

DENIED

Dear Vanguard Community College:

Thank you for your recent request to XYZ. Your proposal has been carefully reviewed, and it is with regret that we must **decline your request for the following reasons:**

- Content guideline errors
- Outside targeted geographic area or funding priorities
- Allocation of grant funds is complete

- *Insufficient grant track record**
- Inaccurate budget
- Inadequate project plan
- Unmeasurable program objectives
- Generalized evaluation plan
- Unrealistic sustainability plan
- Lack of local/regional collaborators and partnerships

2 Project Plan Development

-  *Inadequate processes*
-  *Planning staff doesn't account for essential staff*

**Consider joint proposals to build a solid track record.*

Not Just Staffing, but Efficiency

Grant Staff Are Often Few, and Have Few Campus Advocates

Typical Grant Development Office



2

FTE Staff
members



\$9M

Average fund
dollars managed

Grant Review Process



Common Concerns

↓ Crucial staff excluded from decision process

↓ Reduced capacity to support requests

↓ Lower quality of proposals

Many Sources of 'Truth' for Winning Grants



7

The collage features several overlapping elements:

- Purdue University Extension EC-737**: A banner at the top with the text "PURDUE EXTENSION EC-737".
- Star: Blog**: A blue banner with the text "Star: Blog" and "BETTER WORLD".
- Office for Institutional Effectiveness**: A section from Kapiolani Community College with "ANNOUNCEMENTS" and "PLANNING" links.
- Resources for Grantseekers**: A section from OFIE mentioning a library of proposal resources.
- Writing**: A section titled "Writing" with authors Maria I. Marshall, Aaron Johnson, and Joan Fulton, all from the Department of Agriculture at Oregon State University.
- How to Evaluate a Grant Development Professional**: A document snippet with a "Printer-friendly version" link.
- How to Write a Grant Proposal: Step by Step Writing your Proposal**: A document snippet created by Deborah Dysart-Gale using TED Ed, from William Goldsmith's YouTube channel.
- Impossible**: A large, bold, black word "Impossible" written on a white surface, with a pen tip visible above it.
- The One Secret to Winning Foundation Grants**: A document snippet at the bottom.
- Other elements**: Various smaller snippets of text, links, and logos, including "RTRE Professional Development", "Plugins", and "Deeper".

The Acceptance of Half-Truths

Four Reasons Myths Remain Embedded in Society

Control Natural Forces

Justify Social Structure

Explain Natural Phenomena

Set Examples for Human Behavior



“

“If the path before you is clear, you are probably on someone else's.”

Joseph Campbell

”

1

Introduction: Why Study Myths?

2

Busting Common Grant Myths

3

Q & A

The 7 Grant Myths

Avoid Disruptions to the Grant Development Process



FUNDING LANDSCAPE

- 1 'The availability and frequency of grant opportunities is shrinking.'
- 2 'Competition is too great—its not worth it to apply.'



PLANNING PROCESS

- 3 'To win, apply often.'
- 4 Grant strategy is the responsibility of the proposal writer or project owner.'



FUNDER ASSESSMENT

- 5 'Grant reviewers tend to favor select institutions.'
- 6 'Institutional need is the greatest factor in the review process.'
- 7 'Funders only give to institutions they know.'

Myth #1

The availability and frequency of grant opportunities is shrinking.

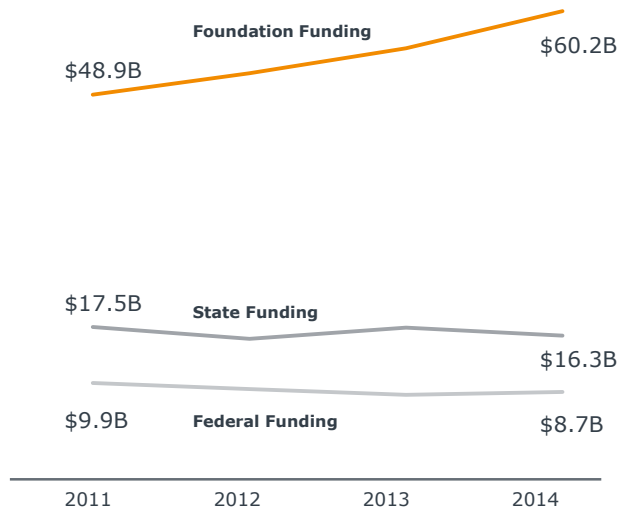


'Available Grant Sources are Shrinking'

Equating Declines in State and Federal Funding to Competitive Grants

Funding Declines, Shape Perceptions

Change in Public Funding, 2011-15



Higher Education Cuts

Feeds Fallacy Of Grant Cuts

21%

Percentage decline in state level general-purpose appropriations, 2013

47

Number of states that have cut spending per student, between 2007- 2014

Source: Federal and State Funding of Higher Education, Pew Trusts, <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2015/06/federal-and-state-funding-of-higher-education>, Department of Education Budget, Foundation Stats: Foundation Center, EAB interviews and analysis.

Ain't No Stopping Us Now

Major Foundations Increasing Money Available for Innovative Programming

2017-2018 Philanthropy Funding Trends

- Persistence, Completion, and Transfer
- **Student Services and Supports**
- Development Education
- Workforce Education
- High School to College
- Adult Basic Skills
- Performance Metrics



DILLARD
UNIVERSITY



Lumina
FOUNDATION



\$666,600 over three years



Addresses Student Barriers:

- First generation college students
- Students with unmet financial need
- Freshman <2.0 GPA

SECTOR
IMPACT ▶

\$4.2B

Estimated additional dollars
available over the next 2 years

+6.3%

Increase in higher
education grant dollars

+10%

Grants available for access and
opportunity for students

Follow Your Funders

Opportunities To Learn More about Funding Priorities from Social Media

Grantors Want to Connect with Innovators

How Funders Interact Online

74%

Utilize social networks as a megaphone to announce new funding opportunities

53%

Post issue-centric content around issues they care about



Community Blog

Weekly posts on federal funding opportunities and grant FAQs

- ✓ *New Federal Grants for Post-Secondary and Special Education*
- ✓ *Ensure Mission Alignment*
- ✓ *Infographic: How Federal Grant Application Forms Are Developed*



🔄 3 🔄 93 ❤️ 105

Grantors Share Focus Areas

BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation



Most Popular Forums



LinkedIn

facebook

Myth #2

Competition is too great for available grants—it's not worth the effort to apply.

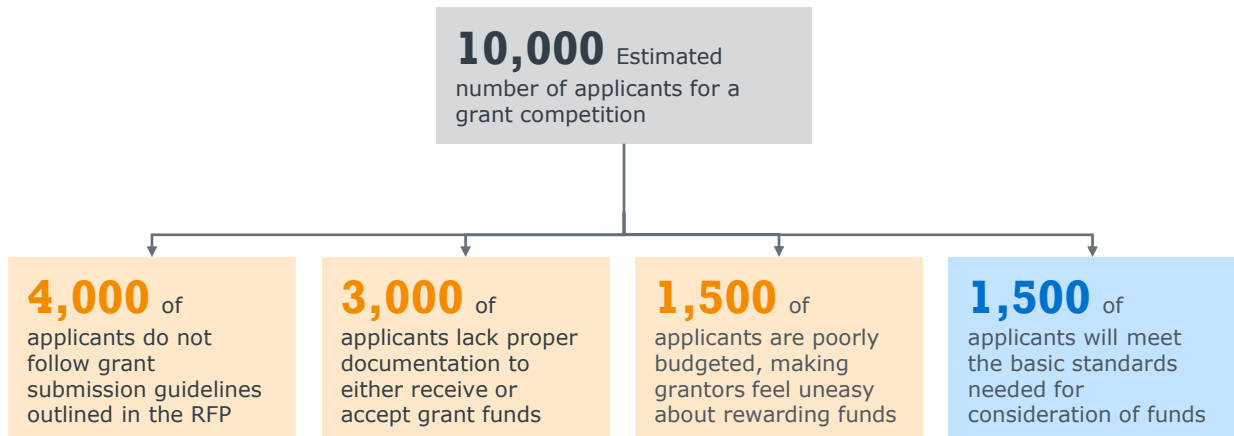


Not All Competition Is the Same

Quick Math for Grant Hopefuls

Who's Your Real Competition for an Average Grant Award?

Based on National Averages



Place Your Bets

Sinclair Community College Matrix Focuses Efforts on Biggest Potentials



Factors
reflect
grant
readiness
and
ability to
compete

Project Title and Agency:													Decision: ☐ Bid ☐ No Bid	
Bid Factors	Weighted Decision Criteria												Estimated Rating	
	Negative				Neutral			Positive						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
1. Fit with Sponsor Mission (through discussion with program officer or web site)	Not aligned with mission				Marginally aligns with mission			Aligns with mission						
2. College Fit (fits mission, aligned with strategic plan, high priority)	No college alignment, low priority and low impact				Moderate alignment, related to priority and moderate impact			High college alignment, major priority and high impact						
3. Need (clear documented community need, internal need from Research Findings, etc.)	Only anecdotal qualitative information				Some data to document need, however not strong information			Multiple qualitative and qualitative third party data sources						
4. Proposed College PI Expertise & Credentials	PI is not experienced in area, improper credentials				PI has some experience in area, related credentials			PI has extensive experience in area, exceptional credentials						
5. Proposed College PI Time Commitments	PI has no time to commit; no support to release/reassign				PI has some time; some support to release/reassign			PI has time to commit; support to release/reassign						
6. Team Members (college's partners and major subcontractors)	Have no known partners and major subcontractors				Known potential partners and major subcontractors			Have longstanding relationships with partners and subcontractors						
7. Financial Potential (generates new revenues, additional credit and non-credit students)	Poor short-term and long-term financial potential				Moderate short-term and long-term financial potential			Excellent short-term and long-term financial potential						
8. Faculty Development/Dissemination (will develop Sinclair faculty/staff)	Does not develop Sinclair personnel, externally focused				Provides development for a few individuals			Provides professional development for many individuals						
9. College Resources (Space, renovations, IT resources, RAR resources, other personnel, matching funds, etc.)	Requires significant investment of college resources				Requires marginal investment of college resources			Requires minimal investment of college resources						
10. Other Resources (Space off campus, students, SMEs, customers, matching funds from partners, etc.)	Requires significant investment of external resources				Requires external investment of college resources			Requires minimal investment of external resources						
11. Cost of Ownership After the Grant Period	Low interest from college on sustaining project with college				Medium interest from college on sustaining project with college			High interest from college on sustaining project with college funds						
12. Capability to Effectively Develop Credible Proposal	Do not have staff time to adequately respond				Stresses staff time, but are able to respond			Have staff time to develop highly competitive proposal						
Total Score (Sum of scores for each factor evaluated)														

Decision is
based on
weighted
criteria

Myth #3

To win, apply often.



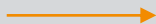
‘To Win Grants – Apply Everywhere’

Playing the Numbers Game

The Idea

1 in 11

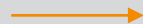
Chance of winning a grant award in any competition



The Decision

10x

Increase the amount of grants we receive by applying to more competitions therefore increasing yield



The Reality

1 in 15+

Due to the economic law of diminishing returns, outputs would start to decrease as more inputs are put in

Key Failures in This Model



Cost of Valuable Resources

Cost of staffs' time and resources are not accounted for



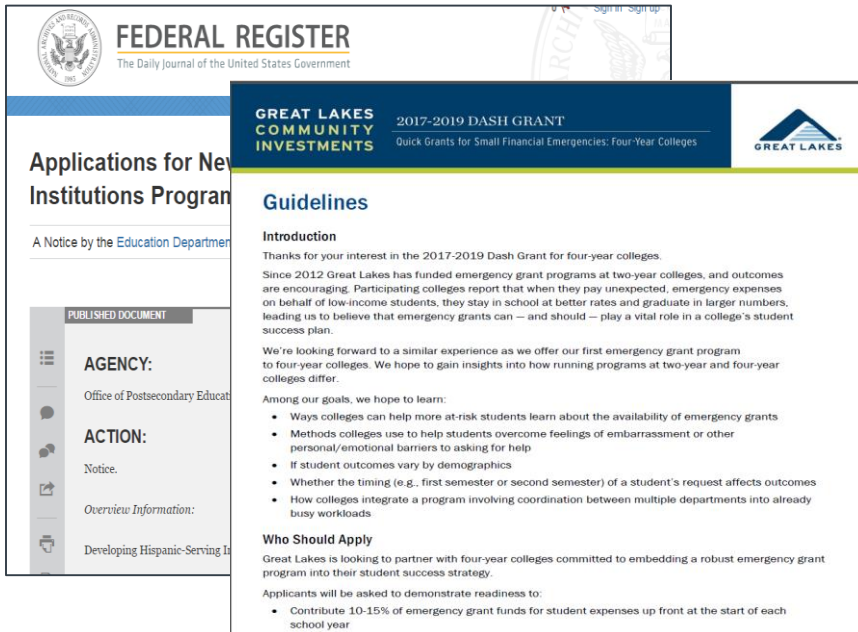
No Improvements to Proposal

Proposal is weakened by its exhaustion among funders

Mission Alignment Yields Higher Results

Focus on Grants That Align with Priorities

Applications Require Tailored Responses



The screenshot shows a web page from the Federal Register. The top header includes the Federal Register logo and the text 'FEDERAL REGISTER The Daily Journal of the United States Government'. Below this, there's a blue banner for 'GREAT LAKES COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS' with the title '2017-2019 DASH GRANT' and subtitle 'Quick Grants for Small Financial Emergencies: Four-Year Colleges'. The main content area is titled 'Applications for New Institutions Program' and is described as 'A Notice by the Education Department'. It includes sections for 'AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education', 'ACTION: Notice.', and 'Overview Information: Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions'. A 'Guidelines' section follows, starting with an 'Introduction' that explains the purpose of the grant and lists several bullet points: 'Ways colleges can help more at-risk students learn about the availability of emergency grants', 'Methods colleges use to help students overcome feelings of embarrassment or other personal/emotional barriers to asking for help', 'If student outcomes vary by demographics', 'Whether the timing (e.g., first semester or second semester) of a student's request affects outcomes', and 'How colleges integrate a program involving coordination between multiple departments into already busy workloads'. A 'Who Should Apply' section states that Great Lakes is looking to partner with four-year colleges committed to embedding a robust emergency grant program into their student success strategy. It also lists a bullet point: 'Contribute 10-15% of emergency grant funds for student expenses up front at the start of each school year'.

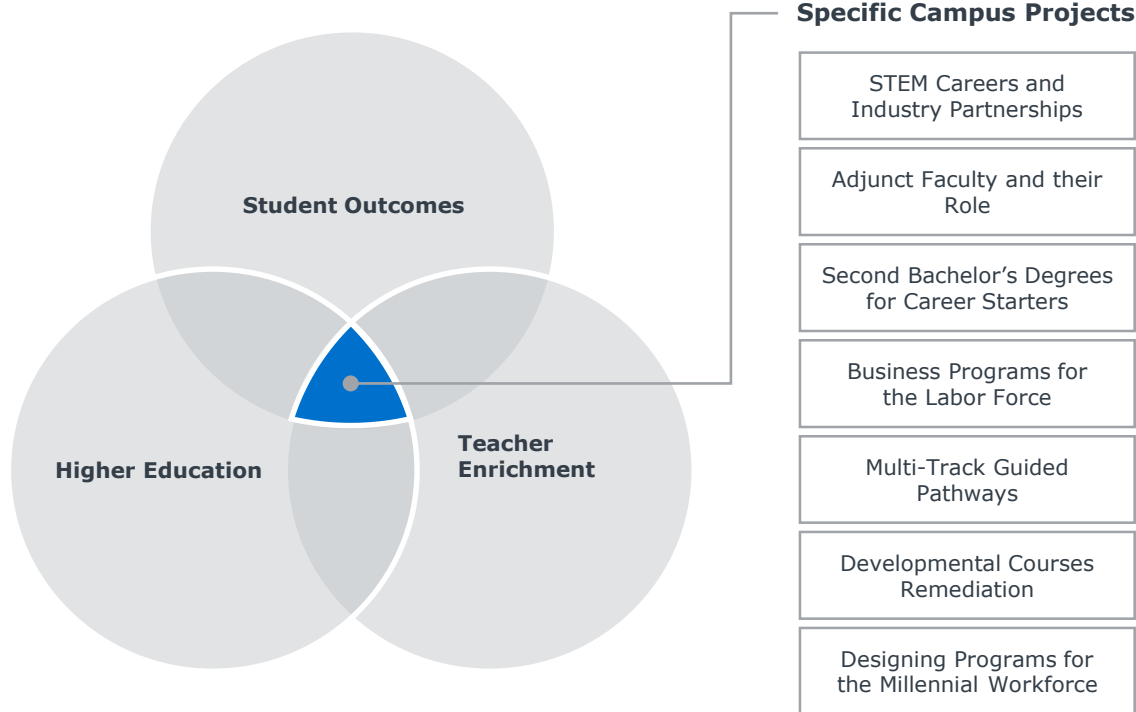
Increase Your Odds

1 in 5

Average success rate for grants that are mission aligned

Start Big To Go Small

Ways to Improve Your Grant Research By Segmenting Larger Parts



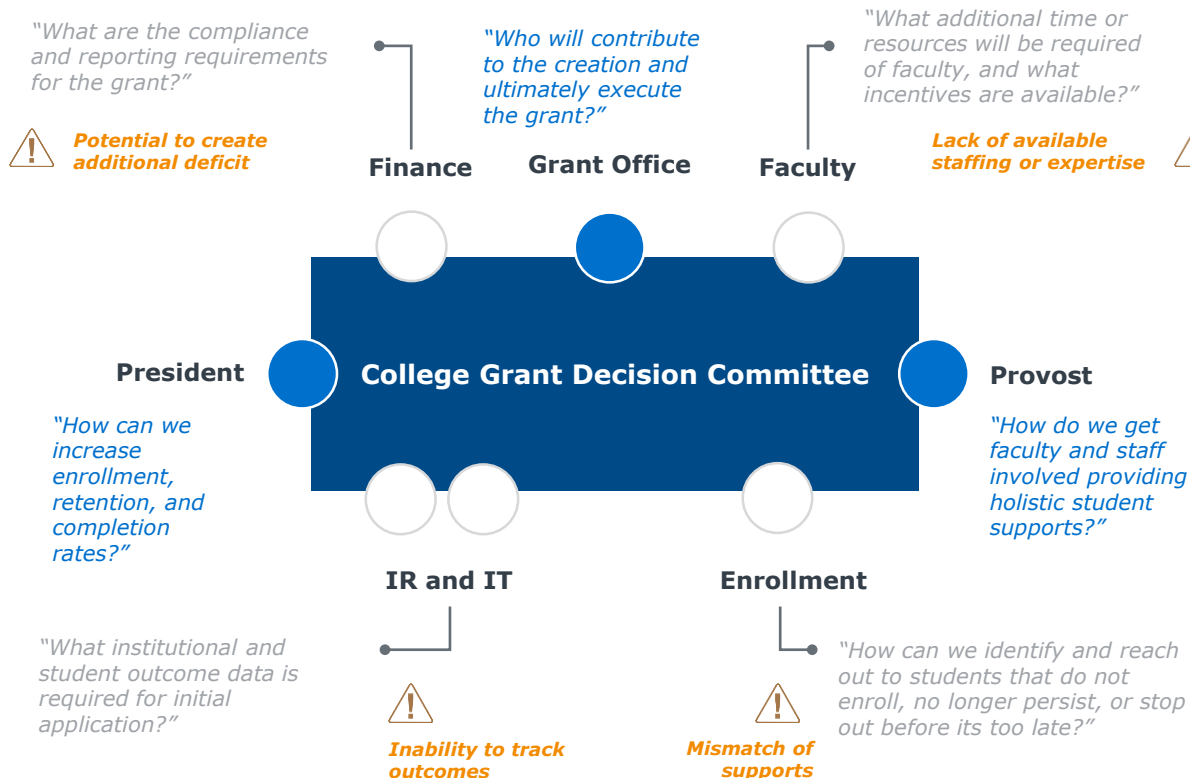
Myth #4

Grant strategy is the responsibility of the proposal writer or the project owner.



(Lacking) A Seat at the Table

Important Perspectives Often Missing from Grant Development Decisions



Cross-Departmental Grant Strategy Team

Build Consensus and Create Transparency in Grant Submissions

1

Identify

Department-level contacts

- ❑ Choose staff grant leads from each center, division, or department
- ❑ Establish meeting schedule to discuss grant opportunities and support needs
- ❑ Develop internal rubric to determine whether to proceed with grant funding



2

Decide

Grant feasibility and strategy

- ❑ Offer staff grant leads an opportunity to assess resources and capacity to assist in a grant proposal
- ❑ Tabulate results with cross-departmental team
- ❑ Decision based on collective assessment of grant readiness matrix



3

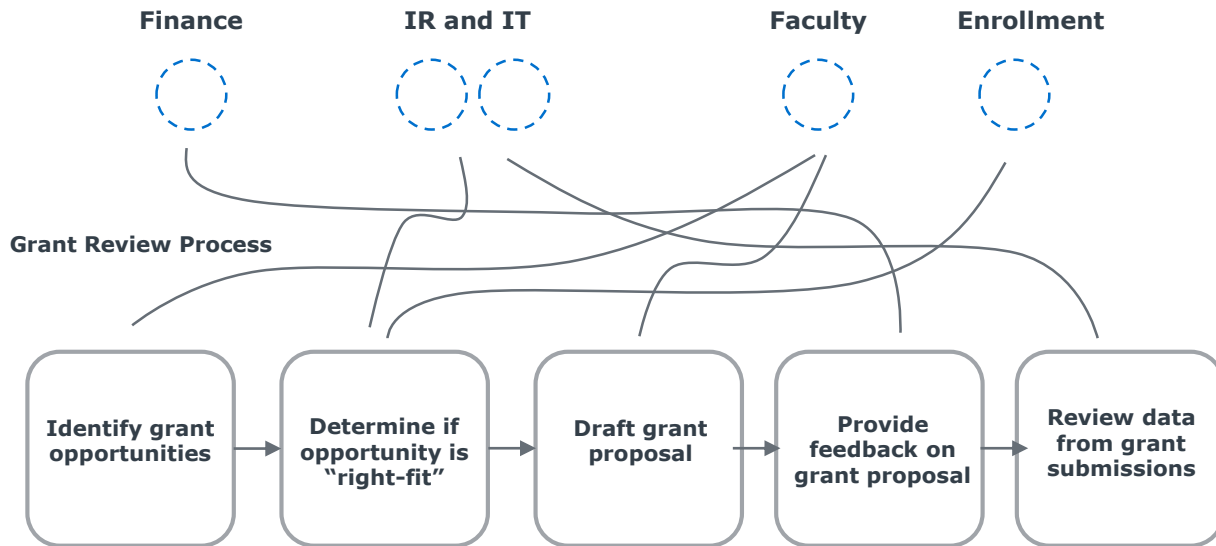
Utilize

Input to inform proposal and process improvements

- ❑ Seek input on your internal grant development process
- ❑ Include key staff and coordinators in grant development discussions
- ❑ Identify and measure metrics to determine success



Building Your Cross-Functional Grants Team



Myth #5

Grant reviewers tend to favor select institutions.



'New Grantees Don't Have A Chance'

The Usual Suspects in the Winner' Circle



Winners

Lake Area Technical Institute
 Santa Fe College
 Santa Barbara City College
 Valencia College

Finalists with Distinction

Broward College
 Indian River State College
 El Paso Community College

Rising Star Award

Odessa College
 San Jacinto College



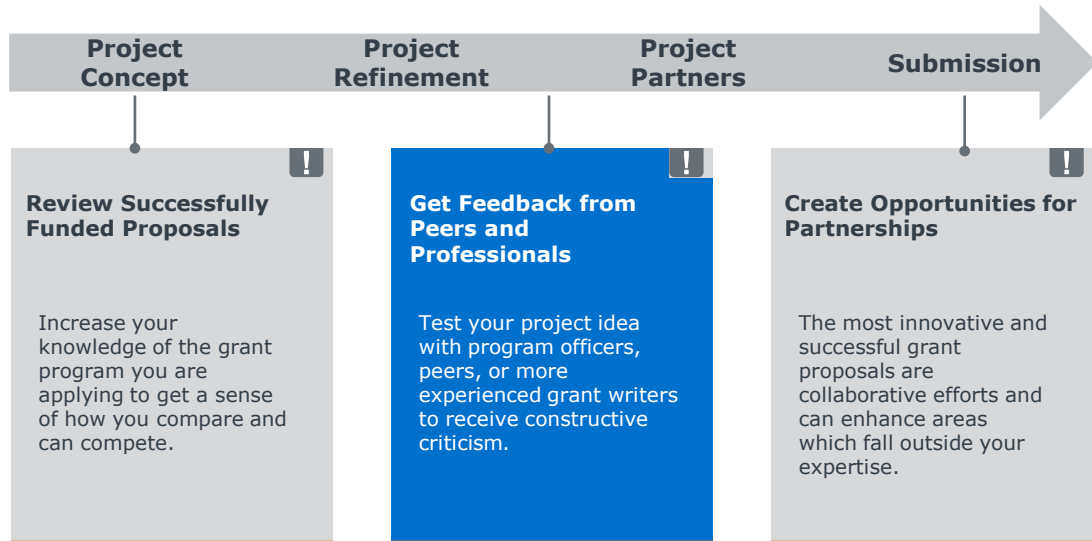
Selected Colleges

Alamo Colleges
 Bakersfield College
 Broward College
 Cleveland State Community College
 Columbus State Community College
 Community College of Philadelphia
 Cuyahoga Community College
 El Paso Community College
 Front Range Community College
 Indian River State College
 Irvine Valley College
 Jackson College
 Lansing Community College

Linn-Benton Community College
 Monroe Community College
 Mt. San Antonio College
 Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
 Paris Junior College
 Pierce College District
 Prince George's Community College
 St. Petersburg College
 San Jacinto College
 Skagit Valley College
 Stanly Community College
 South Seattle Community College
 Tallahassee Community College
 Tulsa Community College
 Wallace State College
 Western Wyoming Community College
 Zane State College

Take Note of Successes to Create Your Own

Increase Your Chances By Sourcing Available Information



Use Your Lifeline

Ask for Assistance and Feedback During the Grant Process

Tips from A Game Show and A Foundation Program Officer:

Learn About the Grant Review Process and Improve Your Proposal



Phone call

Reach out early in writing process to pose questions and get reaction to ideas



Email

Email if you have guideline specific questions or concerns



Respond to rejection letter

Get feedback on why you did not get funded, it may make your next proposal successful

Optimizing Grant Strategy to Inspire Innovation

A New Service for Navigate Members


EAB

Student Success Collaborative

Grant Opportunity and Development Service

Supporting Members in Research and Application Strategy

Colleges cannot increase completion without transformative student success initiatives and the funds to execute on these plans. As such, EAB is pleased to provide members of the Student Success Collaborative—Navigate a new service to identify grant funding sources and offer guidance during the application process. EAB supports our members' student success-focused grant efforts by providing research, proposal development strategy, and written letters of commitment to help colleges secure grants that could off-set membership costs. Further information on EAB service deliverables are below. On the second page is a detailed overview of the timeline and commitment for this engagement.


Initial Grant Prioritization Meeting

- Review portfolio of current grant funds and history of application outcomes
- Discuss personnel capacity at the college to support grant applications, including faculty and staff
- Ideate potential project concepts


Customized Grant Report

- Identifies best-fit public and private grants based on college needs, such as ongoing initiatives and projects
- Provides expert strategy and partnership recommendations


EAB-Issued Letter of Commitment

- Supplies written support of college's student success initiative based on EAB research expertise and best practices
- Differentiates the colleges' approach and collaboration efforts


Final Content and Guideline Evaluation

- Access to external review for readability prior to submission
- Creates guideline checklist to college to review against proposal
- Offers information and tools for selecting external evaluations


Declining State Support

Decrease in state funding per student, 2007-2012

9.2%


Urgent Success Needs

Decrease in credit hour activity at public two-year institutions, 2012-2013

4.8%

19%

Three-year graduation rate for Fall 2010 entering community college cohort

...But Funding Available

\$1B+

Estimated grants funds to improve student outcomes

Services Offered:

-  Recommended Grants List
-  Proposal Application Strategy
-  Letter of Commitment
-  Final Content Review



Interested in our services?

Email MFairfax@eab.com for more information or if you have additional questions. The deadline for Spring cohort consideration is 4/4.

Myth #6

Institutional need is the greatest factor in the review process.



'Need is the Biggest Factor in Grant Reviews'

The 'Needs Assessment' Has Received Lots of Attention

Compelling Piece of Overall Proposal

Accentuates the case for support

Key Elements



Problem



Data and trends



Illustrates the need



Solution to the problem



VirginiaTech

**Writing Effective Impact
Statements: Who Cares? So
What?**



MARSHALL
UNIVERSITY.

**The Heart of Your Grant
Proposal: Developing A
Strong Need Statement**



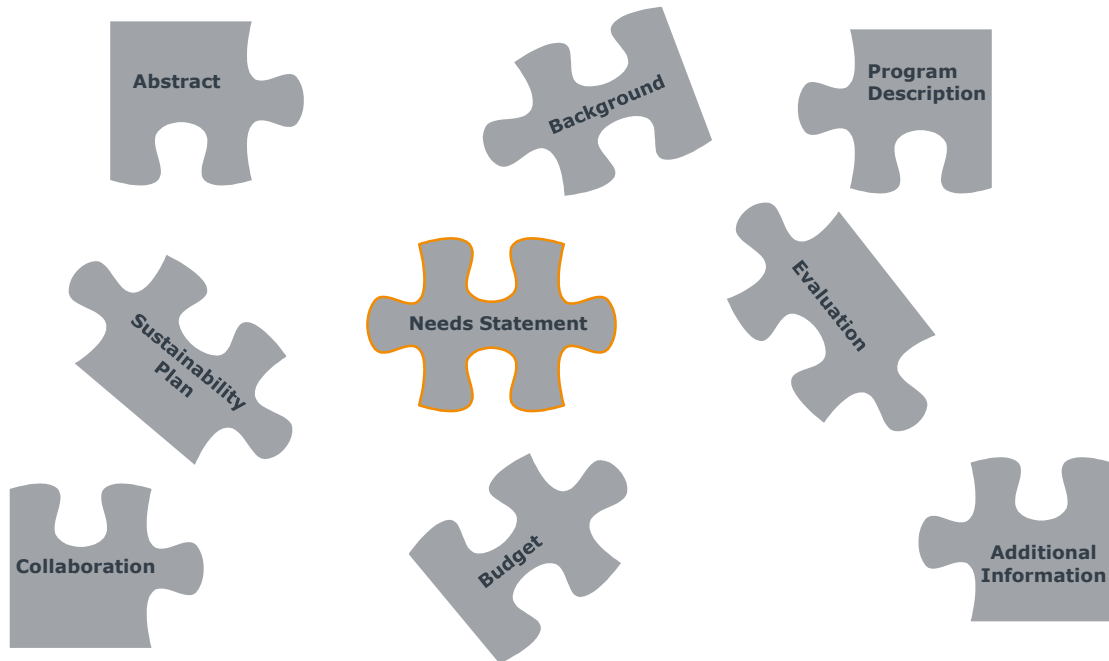
FOUNDATION
CENTER

Knowledge to build on.

**Grant Writing Toolkit: The Needs
Statement**

One Piece of the Puzzle

Key Elements Build Your Case for Support



You may be denied funding if you do not provide all the necessary pieces of support for your grant proposal.

Address All Factors in A Grant Application

Ways to Make Your Proposal Compelling, Concise and Complete



Audience

Write for the layperson



Accuracy

Check and double-check facts, figures, and budgets



Format

Organize to include requirements in statute, regulations, or guidelines from funding agency



Visuals

Illustrate your points and note their importance in narrative



Style

Avoid common mistakes and increase readability by using:

- Active voice
- Shorter sentences
- Facts and statistics
- Simple language
- Specific and concrete terms



Proofread

Read and reread each draft and enlist colleagues to review and comment – especially those outside your field



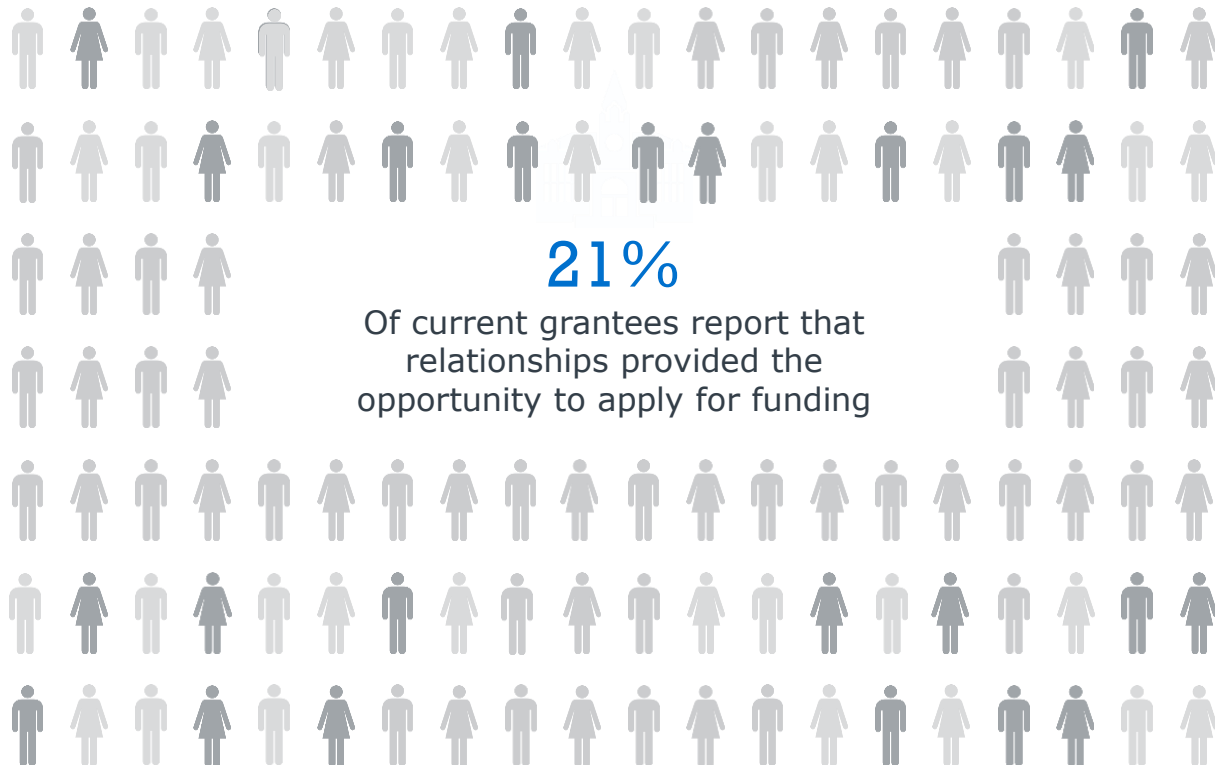
Tool: [Gunning Fog Index](#)

Myth #7

Funders only give to institutions they know.



‘Apply for Grants Where a Relationship Exists’



Relationships Provide Insight, Not Grants

Ensuring Match Between Funder and Proposal Is Even More Critical

Funding agency solicits grant proposal based on “relationship”

Funding agency allocates funding

Potential Barriers to Funding



Mismatch with Current and Future Priorities



Overlooked Guidelines



Reliance on Relationship to Gain Approval



Lack of Partnerships



Impartial Peer Reviewers

Create New Connections with Funders

“Each foundation has its own strategy about how it is trying to make a change in the world. Nothing is more important when applying for a grant than having the right information.”

*Debbie Rey, Grant Processor
– W.K. Kellogg Foundation*

Putting It All Together

Find, Utilize, and Build Relationships That Support and Strengthen Mission

Prospective Funders

Current Funders

1

Find Best-Fit Grant Opportunities



Engage in regular online and in-person research to unearth new funders

- Grants.gov
- Association Grant Resource
- State and local resources
- Peers

2

Intro and Provide Program Updates



- Create program collateral that demonstrates program impact
- Send progress reports
- Offer firsthand visit experience

3

Share Key Lessons Learned



- Share higher education resources that relate to your program
- Offer to connect via phone or in person to report on progress
- Form a local affinity group

4

Receive Grant Opportunities



- Invitation to apply from private foundations
- Shared knowledge of upcoming relevant grants
- Conferences
- Funder roundtables

1

Introduction: Why Study Myths?

2

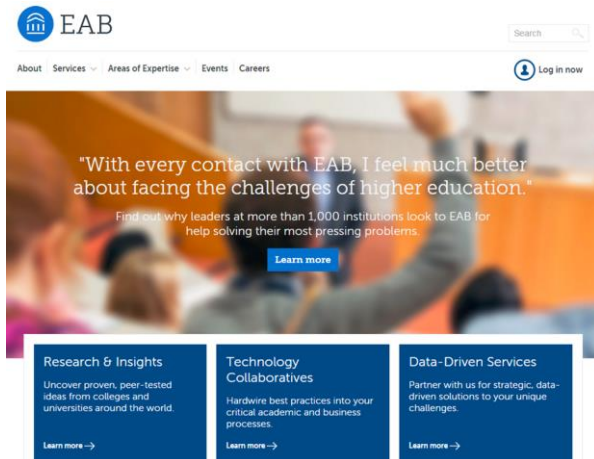
Busting Common Grant Myths

3

Q & A

Thank You for Your Time

Please Contact Us with Questions



www.eab.com

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Senior Analyst

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EVALUATIONS

- Once you exit the webconference, you will be led to an evaluation that will automatically load in your browser.
- **Please take a minute to provide your thoughts on the presentation.**



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