



Establishing Relationships with Grantmakers

It's a grantmaker's job to award money — it's *your* job to convince them to award it to *your* organization

1. **Do your research and obtain basic information** — Before making personal contact, learn the grantmaker's history. What types of organizations does it tend to fund, and for what kinds of programs? This will not only help you tailor your approach, but also show them that you care about more than money. The goal is to initiate a dialogue with them.

2. **Make contact and introduce your organization to the grantmaker**
 - Start with “Do you have a minute?” or “Is this a good time for you?”
 - Let them know that you've done preliminary research and you think there are reasons to explore further
 - Let them know you understand that a good “match” between the two organizations is important

3. **Show them you understand and respect their application process** — Discuss the information that will give your organization the best chance of success:
 - Does your needs fit the grantmaker's priorities?
 - Tell them the amount and likely use of request
 - Timeline — when's the best time to submit?
 - Are there any updates in terms of their process?

4. **Cultivate a relationship**
 - Show them you're sincere about a partnership, not a one-way street
 - Put the grantmaker at ease by sharing information about your organization before there's a solicitation on the table
 - Determine how your organization can help the *grantmaker's* needs
 - Invite them to visit your program
 - Follow through based on the instructions you receive

5. **Maintain the relationship after you succeed**
 - Say thank you (even if you're turned down) and acknowledge their grant
 - At a minimum, follow their reporting requirements
 - Invite them to see or learn about the positive effects their grant beyond the required reporting — grantmakers like to know that they're making a real difference