



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO

University Advancement

GRANT ACQUISITION GUIDE FOR PRIVATE FOUNDATION GRANTS

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO

Office of University Advancement and External Relations

Grant Acquisition Guide For Private Foundation Grants

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RESOURCES:

Resources documents are available online at <http://www.tamusa.edu/giving/grant-documents.html>



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO

University Advancement

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Dear A&M-SA Grant Seeker,

The Office of University Advancement is happy to assist you in finding a funding source for your project or program. This Grant Acquisition Guide was designed to familiarize you with the various components of the grant acquisition process and to help answer questions you may have about grant funding and the university foundation's role in supporting A&M-SA's funding needs.

We hope this Grant Acquisition Guide will be helpful as you begin your search for grant funding. Please contact our office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeanette De Diemar
Vice President for University Advancement and External Relations

SECTION I:

THE PRE-APPLICATION PHASE

A Grant Acquisition Overview: Planning and Preparation

INTRODUCTION

In its initial years of operation, the Office of University Advancement (OUA) at Texas A&M University-San Antonio (A&M-SA) sought to build a development team to implement more focused efforts for fundraising and stewardship. Fundraising efforts focused on annual appeals, special events, and major gifts. Most grant writing efforts were focused on federal funding with little outreach to private foundations.

In 2018, efforts were made to pursue private foundation grant opportunities to address University priorities. A more focused effort was made to develop a grant acquisition process and the following practices were established in order to improve A&M-SA's status as a "grant-ready" organization. The following activities were implemented:

- Creating structures to better manage the grant acquisition process
- Researching and identifying funding opportunities
- Developing relationships with family and corporate foundations
- Promoting increased awareness of A&M-SA in the grant-making community
- Setting up an annual calendar of grant opportunities to establish year-round applications
- Writing, submitting and tracking grant proposals to foundations and corporations
- Developing a Pre-Qualification process for selecting grant opportunities to increase possibility of being funded.
- Gathering and organizing information on the university's various educational programs and projects for background information when developing proposal copy.
- Following up with foundations about proposals that were denied funding

PURPOSE

OUA'S purpose is to raise funds for A&M-SA's funding priorities, including grant funding for programming, research, operations, specific projects, endowments, and special events and campaigns, in order to provide optimum service to our students and the community at large.

Our intent is to develop a network of grant resources that align with A&M-SA's mission with the potential to provide recurring funding by positioning the university as an excellent partner offering transparency, ROI, and the expertise needed to ensure effective outcomes.

The purpose of A&M-SA's grant acquisition efforts are four-fold:

- To meet the funding priorities of university's strategic plan.
- To find the resources needed to support programming, operations, and special projects.
- To address the changing needs of our growing campus and student body.
- To capitalize on opportunities for forging strong community partnerships

The Office of University Advance writes grants initiated through the advance office and provides the following services for faculty and staff:

- Review drafts of grant requests and make suggestions prior to their submission
- Assist in the research of possible funding sources for particular projects or programs
- Assist in determining if matching funds are available for grants
- Assist in contacting funders to initiate or advance funding conversations as necessary
- Assist in providing institutional documents necessary for submission of the request
- When archives are established, provide information about grant requests submitted on behalf of the college
- Manage the application process and providing support in the application process
- Monitor compliance with requirements of MOUs and Grant Agreements

The OUA will develop research strategies and will work with the OUA Database Administrator to secure required information to make grant acquisition decisions. The OUA works with various university agencies to complete the grant submission process. These may include the President's Office, Accounting, Provost's Office, HR, the Office of General Counsel, and others. The OUA seeks to work effectively with these offices to promote a more efficient operation and to facilitate grant acquisition efforts.

To optimize network operations with various internal agencies, the OUA will endeavor to:

- Meet with the University President, the office of the Provost, faculty leaders, and pertinent staff to discuss and pursue current and future funding needs
- Identify any obstacles to the grant acquisition process and determine possible solutions for facilitating channels of collaboration to advance funding efforts
- Serve as a partner of the university community by providing grant funding support

GRANT ACQUISITION CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A&M-SA is a young, growing organization with limited resources. While the University is still in the process of establishing its standing with potential funders due to a young history in grant acquisition and management, A&M-SA has a number of characteristics desirable to foundations with specific program goals in these areas:

- A&M-SA boasts a great potential for expansion and innovation, accomplishments in educational and support programs
- A desirable demographic profile that presents an opportunity to prepare Hispanic students for academic and career success and promote workforce development of great impact in the region and state
- An urban geographic location that continues to experience rapid growth, attracting new industry who seek abundance, well-educated workforce

Other factors that align with a program focus that many foundations want to fund include our underserved student population, the high percentage of first-generation and female students, a target population with a high percentage of low-income families, and our military-connected students.

SECTION II:

THE APPLICATION PHASE

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR GRANT ACQUISITION

The Grant Acquisition Process: Policies and Procedures outline basic practices for the grant acquisition process being used by the Office of University Advancement to procure grant funding. A flow chart showing the grant acquisition process and interagency collaboration can be found on page 17 of this guide.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

The university's funding priorities have been established and are supported by university leadership and foundation board members. They are not listed in order of priority. While the Office of University Advancement (OUA) will actively assist in pursuing funding for other purposes, available funding opportunities will be focused on these areas of priority.

- Student Scholarships and Housing Needs – Support for generation students, those with financial need and others are needed
- Institute for Emerging Leaders- Endowments for scholarships, endowed faculty, and other program needs
- New Construction Naming Opportunities
- Cyber Security Program – Support for program related costs
- Student Success Efforts - Support for internships, student career preparation, and student services and innovative learning opportunities
- Sustainability Program – Support for low-income students to assist with needs above and beyond tuition including books, emergency loans, health care, and basic needs like food, housing, and transportation
- Military Community Support – Program and scholarship support for military-connected students
- Student Pipeline – Support for Early College and Summer Programs, Demonstration School, and STEM Programs

FUNDING SOURCES

The grant acquisition function of the Office of University Advancement at Texas A&M University-San Antonio pursues grant funding exclusively from family, corporate, and community private foundations. Grant proposals are submitted for grant opportunities available through local, regional, and national foundations. This office does not process government grant opportunities. Government grant funding, whether, local, state or federal, is processed through the Office of the Provost.

APPLICANT

Most foundations require grant applicants to be a public charity with a 501(c)3 tax-exempt status. Therefore, the applicant for private foundation grant applications is the Texas A&M San Antonio Foundation. The University Foundation is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization and applies on behalf of the

various university agencies seeking funding. The Foundation was created to be the fundraising arm of the university. Its mission is to facilitate funding for Texas A&M University-San Antonio and to create a university that will empower our citizens with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide for a prosperous community. As such, the Foundation applies for grant opportunities on behalf of the various university agencies seeking grant funding.

APPLICATION CLEARANCE AND APPROVAL

The Office of University Advancement serves as a clearing house for all private foundation grant applications for the A&M-SA community. The grant office maintains a record of grant applications submitted to foundations and is aware of the various grant opportunities being pursued by university agencies. To avoid more than one university agency applying to the same foundation or for the same grant opportunity within a given grant cycle, university agencies are required to contact a Development Officer from the Office of University Advancement to ensure there are no application conflicts.

Internal approval is required for funding an academic project or program and for any projects that impact university finances or operations. A Proposal Submission Form is available from the Office of University Advancement for the purpose of securing approval from the appropriate offices. Detailed information on the approval process and a copy of the Proposal Submission Form can be online (see Resources Section of Table of Contents page for the URL).

FINDING A FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Your agency may have already identified a grant opportunity for which you want to apply, or you may need the OUA to search and identify some possible funding sources for your project or program needs. The OUA has access to tools and websites for this purpose. You may also find grant opportunities through industry newsletters, grant award announcements, and opting into email alerts on certain foundation websites. Contact an OUA officer to determine the best resource for your grant funding needs.

DECISION TO PURSUE A FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Applying for a grant takes time and resources. To improve the chances of success for funding, a process for determining the best fit for applying to a specific grant opportunity is helpful. Once you find some possible funders, decide which grant opportunity has the most likelihood of being funded. This requires a process of evaluation to determine the best alignment between your needs and your funder's goals. Refer to the "10 Top Questions to Ask Before Working on a Grant" for help in considering whether or not to pursue a grant opportunity. A Grant Application Checklist to assess grant readiness is also available. These resources are located online (see Resources Section of Table of Contents page for the URL).

BUDGET

The budget is a blueprint developed to include all revenue and income anticipated and needed to accomplish the project or program goals. The budget is a tool for internal management and an honest, ethical, accurate representation of resources and revenues are needed to achieve the targeted program outcomes

Your project or program budget is the source for deciding the amount of your grant request. Therefore, your budget should be a thorough and accurate assessment of the direct, and in some cases, indirect costs for your project or program. A mission-centered program budget is consistent with your organization's mission and program goals, vision, values, and ethics. The budget reflects how resources will be contributed by and shared among partnering organizations and builds on or extends past or current organizational capacity and values and should include the following:

- Partner contributions (Lets funder know that your organization/project/program has community support)
- Sharing of resources (Funders want to know applicants are carrying their fair share of the project/program expenses)
- Organizational capacity and values (The budget shows how much the organization applying is capable of investing and what elements of the program/project are a priority based on the amount invested)

The budget clearly and fully communicates your program's financial expectations and needs to the prospective funder. A good budget:

- Is realistic, not "padded"
- Provides a good mission-match
- Fits within the funder's typical funding range OR you have negotiated the amount of your request with the funder before preparing the proposal

The budget follows the requirements and guidelines of the private foundation to which you are applying. Preparing a detailed budget overview will give the funder a clear understanding of the project or program finances, resources available, and funding needed. Utilize the funder's required budget format, if provided, and include the required detail specified by the funder. A well-prepared budget reflects and supports your grant narrative.

Budget Narrative: The budget narrative is an explanation of how the project or program expenses are estimated and justifies the need for the cost. A good budget narrative tells a story that reflects the project or program purpose. The budget narrative may include tables for clarification purposes, especially in the case of large, complex projects.

Direct and Indirect Costs: All direct project and program costs are allowable as part of your proposal budget. Some funders allow applicants to include a certain percentage of indirect costs as well. Indirect costs include overhead expense such as facilities, utilities, and certain administrative costs. The percentage of indirect costs you can include in a grant varies from one funder to another and must be determined on a case by case basis. An OUA officer can assist you with this information.

Allocation of Personnel Resources: Contact HR for information on these expenses.

Allocation of Tangible Resources: Contact Procurement or other appropriate office for these expenses or contact a specific vendor.

Department/Office Budget: Contact Accounting for help with reports and/or information about your department or office budget. The Advancement Office will provide all financials for the Texas A&M San Antonio Foundation.

Matching Funds: Contact your College Dean or Office Supervisor for matching funds available for these expenses. If your grant requires matching funds and your College does not have any funds available, please contact the Advancement Office for consideration of other possible sources of funding.

APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS

Most funders require certain types of documents, certifications, statements, and/or letters to be attached to their applications. These attachments vary from one funder to another and are usually available through the OUA, prepared with assistance of an OUA officer, acquired through the applying agency, or with the assistance of another university agency. These documents include:

- IRS Letter of Determination for 501c3 tax-exempt status
- Legal organizational and financial documents for the Foundation
- University certifications for accreditation
- University non-discrimination policy
- University organizational Chart
- Official records of enrollment, student income status, demographics, etc.
- Non-discrimination statements
- Letters of support and/or commitment
- Personnel and/or management bios, CVs or resumes
- Vendor quotes with description of equipment or other tangible items being funded

For a list of grant documents available from the OUA, can be found online (see Resources Section of Table of Contents page for the URL).

THE GRANT APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION PROCESS

PREPARING AND SUBMITTING A GRANT APPLICATION

Refer to the Grant Application Submission Flow Chart found on page 17 which shows the various steps of the grant acquisition process and required interactions and checkpoints necessary for grant submission. Most grant applications are prepared and submitted online, but for those that are mailed, consideration for the timing of USPS delivery should be taken into account to ensure meeting application deadlines. If in doubt, contact the funder to verify acceptable postmark and/or online submission deadlines. It is always best to submit one or two weeks ahead of the funder's posted deadline. The earlier you submit, the more likely your proposal will be placed higher on the funder's application review docket.

CONCEPT PAPERS AND LETTERS OF INQUIRY

A concept paper is a short summary or overview of your funding need to initiate conversation about the viability of pursuing funding. You can access guidelines for developing a concept paper online (see Resources Section of Table of Contents page for the URL). Your department leadership will need a concept paper from you to determine if the proposal is viable for pursuing funding.

Some foundations will request that you submit a Letter of Inquiry (LOI), which is similar to a concept paper, before submitting a full application for a grant opportunity. The funder will usually give specific instructions for the content of the LOI. LOIs are a great way to test the waters and find out if your project or program is a good fit for the funder without investing a lot of time and resources into preparing a full application. If the funder likes your idea, you will be invited to submit a full application. A request for a full application increases your chances of being funded at some level. Funders may request that you submit your LOI online or by mail.

THE FULL PROPOSAL

While most foundations today provide a platform for submitting a grant application online, there are still some that only accept applications by mail. Regardless of the method of submission, full proposals require various types of information, forms, and support attachments. It's critical to follow the funder's guidelines for submission and create a checklist to ensure every component of the grant has been prepared and submitted as requested.

INTERNAL APPROVALS REQUIRED FOR APPLYING

Your project/program funding request will require internal approval for funding from certain university leaders and agencies. These administrative checkpoints outlining the following approvals are included in the Proposal Submission Form which can be found online (see Resources Section of Table of Contents page for the URL). This form will need to be completed and a copy sent to the OUA before your proposal is submitted to the funder.

Initial Approval

To present your funding idea to your department leadership, prepare a 1-3-page concept paper outlining your project plan and proposed budget (including institutional funding, facilities, technology, staffing, etc.). Include potential funding sources for review by your respective Department Leadership and the Vice Presidents for University Advancement and Business Affairs. Your department chair(s)/supervisor(s) should communicate your project intent to the Dean or Vice-President of your college or division prior to their signature. Additionally, your responsibility is to confirm the approval of the request and any dollar match required by the funding source; the VPUA must approve potential funding sources.

Full Proposal Approval

If your initial project is approved for funding, you will need to prepare your proposal according to the funder's guidelines, soliciting input from colleagues and assistance from University Advancement and/or the Business Office as needed. If the activities of your proposal will impact any of the University's departments and/or offices (technology and space requirements), please make them aware of your project. Your Dean/Department Chair/Supervisor is responsible for advising the Provost or appropriate Vice President of the pending project and her/his signature is required prior to submission of the proposal.

Final Review and Approval Before Submission

Submit your proposal for final review first to your Vice President or the Provost as appropriate, then to the Vice President for Business Affairs for budget, facilities and other institutional obligations or requirements. The Vice President for University Advancement will give the final approval for submission (a minimum of 72 hours before the proposal due date would be *greatly* appreciated!).

WORKING WITH THE OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

Coordinate with the Grant Writer to submit your proposal to the funding agency. All proposal and cover letters are to be signed by the President of the University or as appropriate, the Vice President for University Advancement. Final copies of cover letter(s), proposal(s) and supporting document(s) must be submitted to the Grant Writer for filing in the Office of University Advancement. The Grant Writer in the Office of University Advancement can help you every step of the way, but it is ultimately your responsibility as project director to comply with the appropriate approval process so that all of the University's administrative needs are met.

SECTION III:

THE POST SUBMISSION PHASE

THE POST-SUBMISSION PROCESS: APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

How an applicant complies with the requirements of a grant award will determine the likelihood of future awards from a particular funder. Progress and final grant reports should be timely, accurate, and thorough. Whether or not you are funded, there are some specific actions that must take place after a grant submission notification:

If Funded

- Any resulting MOU's need to be reviewed by the Office of General Council before contract signed and executed
- Submit copies of grant award letter and contract to the Grant Writer for review and filing
- Send thank you letter to granting agency. Submit copies to University Advancement
- Coordinate with Advancement Office regarding award agreement and/or check processing
- Set up project budget in the business office (Contact Sharon Otholt in accounting)
- Conduct project and submit interim reports to the funding agency as required with copies to the Advancement Office
- Close out project at the end of the grant agreement (most grants are for one year) and submit final reports to the funding foundation with copies to the Advancement Office

If Not Funded

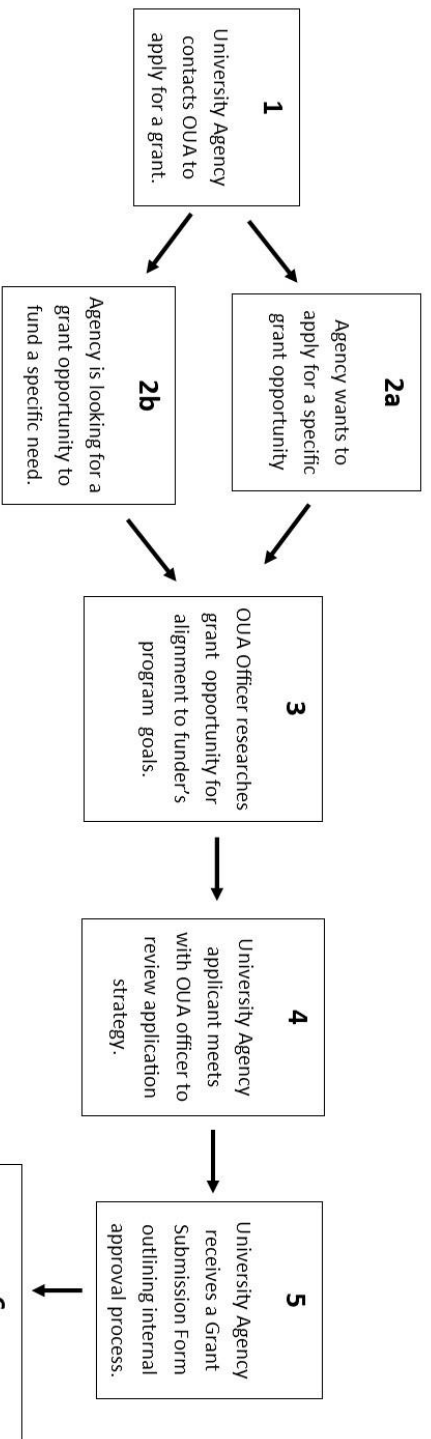
- Send thank you letter and request reviewers' comments.
- Revise proposal.
- Solicit internal review.
- Resubmit proposal to same or different source(s)

Award Notification: The Office of University Advancement may or may not be contacted by the funder when a grant award is approved. This depends on who is listed on the grant as the primary contact. If the agency applying receives notice of an award, the agency must contact the OUA and send copies of any grant agreements or MOUs for execution before funds can be disbursed. All MOUs and Grant Agreements will be processed through the Office of University Advancement.

If the OUA is the primary contact for the grant, a Development Officer will contact the agency receiving the award to notify them that the funding request has been granted, the amount of the grant, what stipulations, if any, are required for accepting the grant.

Executing MOUs and Grant Agreements: MOUs and Grant Agreements are legally binding documents that are to be reviewed and approved by the Office of General Council before signing. These documents will be executed and signed by the Texas A&M San Antonio Foundation Board Chair. An original signature is required, but an electronic signature can be used in certain circumstances if an original signature cannot be readily obtained to meet a deadline.

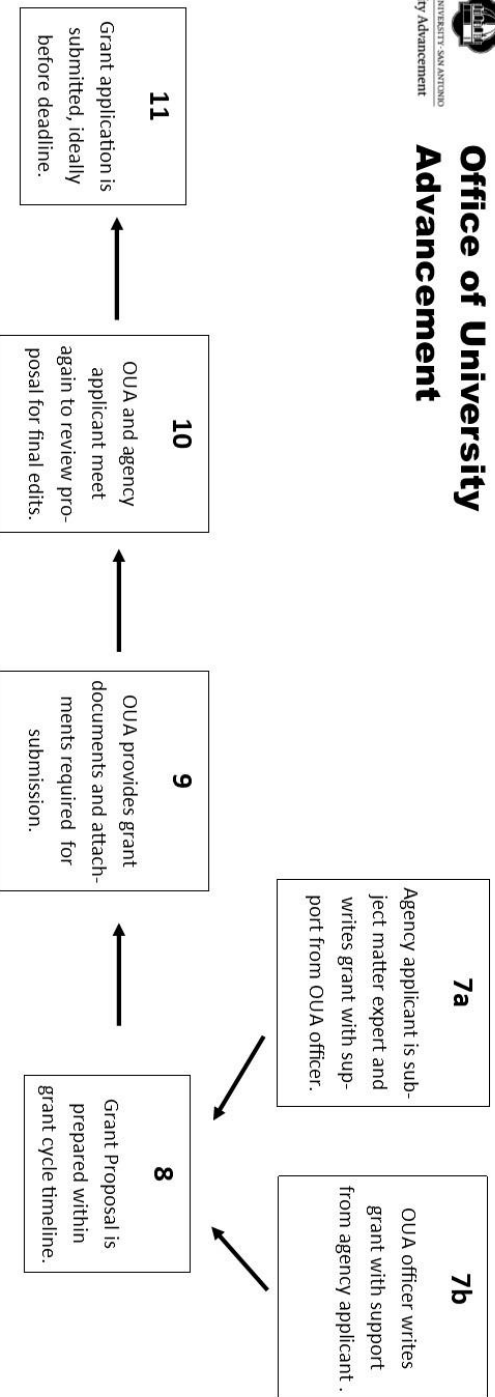
Grant Tracking and Reporting: Funders generally provide forms for evaluating and reporting the project/program outcomes and use of funds awarded. Each applicant is required to track the progress of their grant award against project timeline, goals, and spending in compliance with grant agreements for reporting purposes. The Office of University Advancement will track due dates for annual, semi-annual, and quarterly progress reports and contact agency awardees as necessary to ensure timely submission of required reports.



Grant Submission Process



Office of University Advancement



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