

# DIALOGUE

*A Periodic Newsletter for Development Officers*

-- Bill Somerville, Editor --

---

*Dialogue* is published to help improve relations between funders and development officers. For this issue of *Dialogue* the Editor contacted funding resource libraries to find what are the most commonly asked questions.

---

**Q: We are applying to a local foundation for funding and one of our sponsored projects wants to apply in the same round – what do we do?**

**A:** Since both requests to the foundation will be made in the name of your organization, it is up to the Executive Director to decide who goes first, or both requests can be combined into one request. It is not good to send in competing requests, as this appears that nobody is in charge.

**Q: We just got a binding machine; should we bind our proposals?**

**A:** No. The Editor encourages foundations to ask for only one copy of a proposal and then to duplicate as necessary. If the proposal is bound, it means someone is required to unbind it in order to make copies. The Editor has broken many scissors doing so. Likewise, don't send the proposal in a plastic folder, a presentation folder, etc. A paperclip is the best bet.

**Q: Should we accept/how do we handle donations of cars?**

**A:** A car donor occasionally contacts the Editor. The Editor finds a prospective recipient for the car – an individual or an agency, and has the donor deal directly with the recipient. In the case of an agency, it gives a receipt reflecting bluebook price to the donor and sells or gives away the car.

**Q: As nonprofits look to the future, long range funding must include an endowment. Will foundations support this method of ensuring future funding?**

**A:** Probably not because the nature of the request is asking the funder to give large sums for future use. Most funders give for the here and now. The Editor has suggested to some large foundations the idea of giving endowment grants to outstanding agencies and having the endowment held by a community foundation

and requiring the agency to match the grant and deposit the match at the community foundation.

**Q: Sometimes foundations state “applications not accepted.” Do I forget about applying or trying to gain their attention? Does this mean the funder chooses what they want to fund?**

**A:** One way to deal with such foundations is to research what they do fund and their areas of interest. If you fall into one of those areas, send the foundation information about your work in such a fashion that you might spark their interest i.e. share your progress report with the foundation.

**Q: Are “meet the grantmakers” sessions worthwhile?**

**A:** If the session is designed for frank interchange where anything goes in questions and answers, this can be very useful to grant seekers. The Editor encourages people to contact their local funding library or community foundation and request that such sessions be held regularly.

The Foundation Center in New York has a Cooperating Collections Network. This network is an ever-expanding list of funding libraries that can be very useful to development persons. Over 200 collections are listed nationally and internationally. A listing of the Network can be obtained by calling Richard Romeo, Director of Cooperating Collections, at (212) 620-4230.

**Q: Do foundations give to people they know?**

**A:** If the applicant has a relationship with the funder, there is a far better chance of being funded.

**Follow up question: How can I get to know funders?**

Attend meet the grantmakers sessions. Send a letter of intent to a funder. Share a report of your work with a funder that presents some facts that would be useful to the funder. Try to get introductions through a grantee of the funder e.g. a lunch.

**Q: What do funders want to see in the evaluation component?**

**A:** Specifically, how was the money spent; a narrative report of your progress with regard to the funded program; pictures with citations; maybe a note from a staff person or a client; an invitation to visit your program.

**Q: How do I handle a failure i.e. when the program didn't work?**

**A:** Be honest. A failure can be a good learning experience. A foundation staff person who has knowledge of why some programs fail could be a wonderful resource to applicants. Ideally, we ought to have a few failures each year – it means you are out there trying new approaches.

**Q: How do foundations feel about other medium e.g. CD Rom, Video, Press Kits?**

**A:** Most foundations still communicate with written correspondence with regard to requests for funding. Sending a computer disk, a video, or a press kit is risky primarily because they take so much time to review. One can offer to send such items when talking with the foundation officers but to send them unsolicited is expensive and not recommended.

**Q: Do foundations fund internet projects?**

**A:** Foundations have funded web pages, computers, expenses related to computing such as subscribing to the internet. The Editor is of the belief that foundations and agency personnel spend far too much time relating to their computers versus serving their publics.

**Q: What is a PRI?**

**A:** PRI – program related investment. Example, a foundation can use some of its endowment money to invest in a minority run bank or an economic development program. These are programs the foundation would like to see succeed and in addition to a grant or in place of a grant the foundation invests in the program. Indications are that more foundations are willing to consider this type of support.

**Q: What is a health conversion foundation and what do they fund?**

**A:** When a hospital is sold to a for profit entity or a health plan such as Blue Shield is taken over by a for profit entity, the resulting pool of money is converted to a foundation such as the California Endowment or California Wellness Foundation. Usually such foundations focus on health related issues in a broad sense of the term.

Past copies of *Dialogue*, Number 1 (February 1996) to 13 are available as a unit for \$5 to cover the cost of copying and mailing. For a complete set send \$5 to:

**Philanthropic Ventures Foundation  
1212 Preservation Park Way  
Oakland CA 94612**

---

## Do you want to continue receiving Dialogue?

---

If you want to continue receiving *Dialogue*, you must fax this page immediately to (510) 645-1892.

Yes, I want to continue receiving *Dialogue*.

---

Your Signature

We will drop from this mailing list those who do not respond before the next issue comes out. Presently, Dialogue is mailed to approximately 800 persons in almost all the 50 states.

### *Dialogue*

Philanthropic Ventures Foundation  
1212 Preservation Park Way  
Oakland CA 94612

Non Profit Organization U S Postage PAID Oakland CA Permit 962
---

---

---

**Fax your questions or comments for *Dialogue* to: (510) 645-1892**

---

---

---

---

---

---