

Private Funding Sources

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Private funding

Private funds can help projects in many ways:

- Provides additional funding over and above institution support and federal /state grants
- Can be used to match or provide cost sharing for federal and state grants.
- Can fund project activities not directly related to editing (publicity, educational services)
- Provides a great way for your audience to participate!

Finding Private Support

- First stop is your institution!
- Help with proposal submission and management
- Internal grant opportunities
 - Equipment, student help, digitization grants
- Access to alumni connections and individual donors
- Publicity
- Competition and Clearance

Finding Private Support

- Foundation Center
 - Check to see if your institution is already a member
- Local Historical Organizations
- American Philosophical Society
- American Council of Learned Societies
- Andrew Mellon Foundation
- Alfred Sloan Foundation

Finding Private Support

Pitching your project

- What problem does your project address?
- What kinds of people can your scholarship affect?
- How does your project contribute to the history of a place or a topic?
- How can your project help students and/or teachers?
- Will your project enable more people to access unique resources? to understand them better?

Appealing to Foundations

- Familiarize yourself with the categories that foundations use.

The screenshot displays the 'Search Grantmakers' interface. On the left, under the heading 'Fields of Interest', there is a search box with the placeholder text 'Type here to filter the list'. Below this is a list of categories with their respective counts: Abortion (15), Abstinence-only sex education (4), Abuse prevention (896), Academic libraries (40), Academics (41299), Activists (22), Adaptive sports (126), Addiction services (850), and Adolescent parenting (47). A vertical scrollbar is visible next to this list. To the right, the main search area is titled 'Search Grantmakers' in blue. It contains three filter sections: 'Fields of Interest' with a 'view index' link and an empty input field; 'Geographic Focus' with a 'view index' link and an empty input field; and 'Grantmaker Location' with a dropdown arrow and a 'More location options' link, followed by an input field containing the text 'e.g. country, state/province, county, city, metro area, congressional district, zip/postal code'.

Appealing to Foundations

- Look at what they **don't** fund -- “academic research,” “publications.”
- Look for their geographic focus. Some foundations will make exceptions, but many won't.
- Look at the grants they have made.
 - Who funds other editing projects?
 - Who funds projects on the same topic as yours?
- Look for people related to your topic or whom you might know. As in life, connections are everything.

Appealing to Foundations

- Many foundations “do not accept unsolicited proposals” or “Only contributes to pre-selected organizations.”

Read their guidelines carefully-- they might accept letters but not unsolicited *proposals*.

Find another way to get on their radar-- newsletters, contacting board members, whatever it takes.

Organize Your Prospects

- If they have due dates, make sure to organize your work so that you have a month or so to prepare the proposal.
- Clump similar kinds of appeals together so that you can draft them once and send to several places. Always make sure to customize the appeal.
- Use the major proposals you write for NEH and NHPRC as the basis of other, shorter proposals.
- It is well worth it to spend one day a month looking for prospects and sending out requests.

Making the Approach

- Read guidelines carefully; check websites for the latest information.
- LOI - Letter of intent - 1-2 page proposal, often with a rough budget. Some foundations will provide grants after reading a LOI, others use it as a first cut, and then invite a full proposal
- Generic proposal - 5-10 page, more detailed, including staffing, work plan basics. Tailor it to the specific program you are applying to.

Individuals and Corporations

- Foundation Center also lists corporate funders
- How to build a potential donor list
 - Alumni
 - Political contributions
 - Google News Searches
 - Website signups
 - Relations of your topic
 - Historians/Scholars working on your topic
- Communicate!
 - Blogs, newsletters, e-mails, social media

CrowdFunding

Sites that allow you to put out a pitch to fund your work. Usually need to set a goal and if you do not reach it, none of the donors have to pay. Try to come up with a snappy graphic, video, or plan for a specific bit of work. Then you need to advertise it on all your social media platforms

- [Kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com)
- [Gofundme.com](https://www.gofundme.com)
- [Indigogo.com](https://www.indiegogo.com)
- [Patreon.com](https://www.patreon.com)

Beware of Mission Creep!

Many times the foundation guidelines do not mesh neatly with your goals. You could start a new program at your project that would meet their goals, but should you?

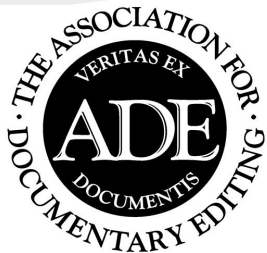
- To accomplish more, you need more people. Don't attempt to do more with the same amount of staffing.
- Can a new project bring attention to the editing project?
- Be cautious--there are a lot of great ideas and you don't have to do them all at once.

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