

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE GRANT WRITING

WI OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND CLEAN ENERGY

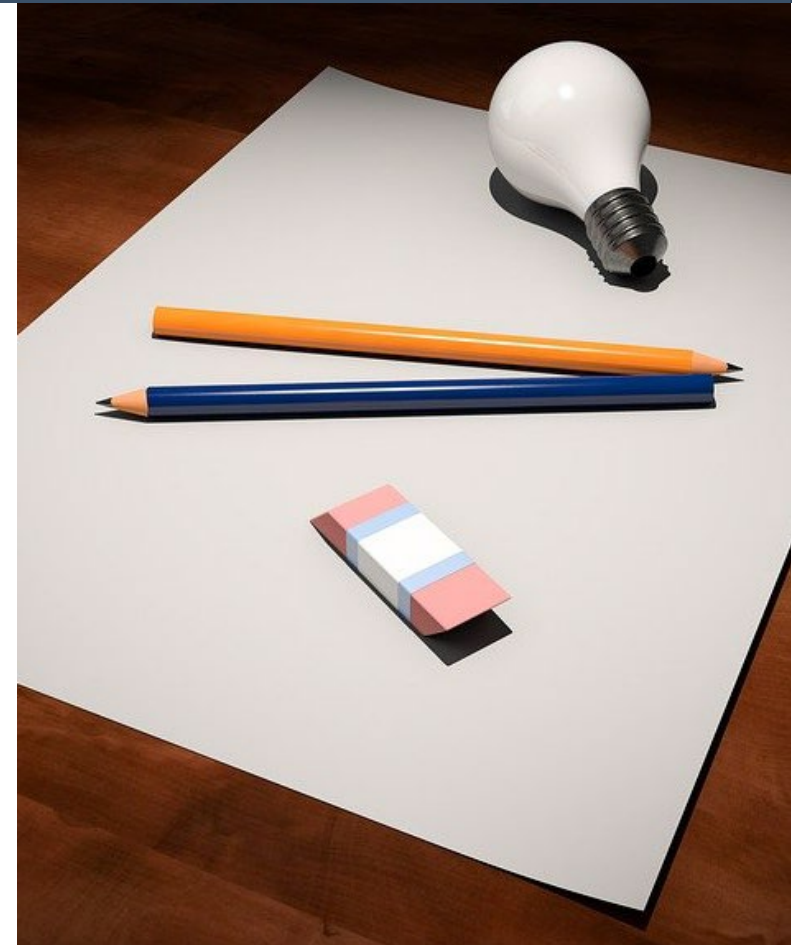




PRE-PROPOSAL

OVERALL TIPS

- Idea → → → → → → → → Proposal
- Do the necessary homework - figure out the feasibility of the concept
- Understand the needs required to write a proposal
- Articulate the organization's capabilities, the community needs and support, or the solution to the problem



OVERALL TIPS



- Address the needs of the funding agency
- Compliment strategic planning/organizational planning - proposed idea should further, enhance or strengthen a stated goal, either short-term or long term, of the organization
- Make sure there is internal organizational support throughout the process



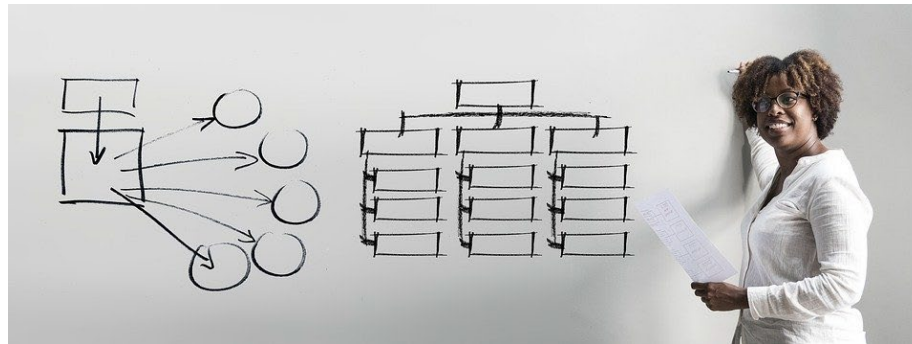
KNOW YOUR ORGANIZATION

- History
- Current Mission, Vision, Values
- Function and methodology of the organization



KNOW YOUR ORGANIZATION

- Leadership – board, parent organization
 - who makes the decisions? who can be held accountable?
- Who is charge and capable of taking on a project?
 - personnel specific to the proposal's success should be identified by position, expertise and credentials, and have the time!
- Overall Budget - information on the size, scope, financial stability, breadth of resources, and organizational commitments, restrictions
- Annual Reports - excellent way to communicate the success and capability of your organization



EXPLORE THE IDEA

- All proposals come from an original idea!
- Most successful proposals are concepts that have been dreamed of, discussed with others and carefully thought through before work on a grant proposal begins
- Clearly Identify Local Needs/Local Issues – breakdown of the problem and solution that address the need



EXPLORE THE IDEA

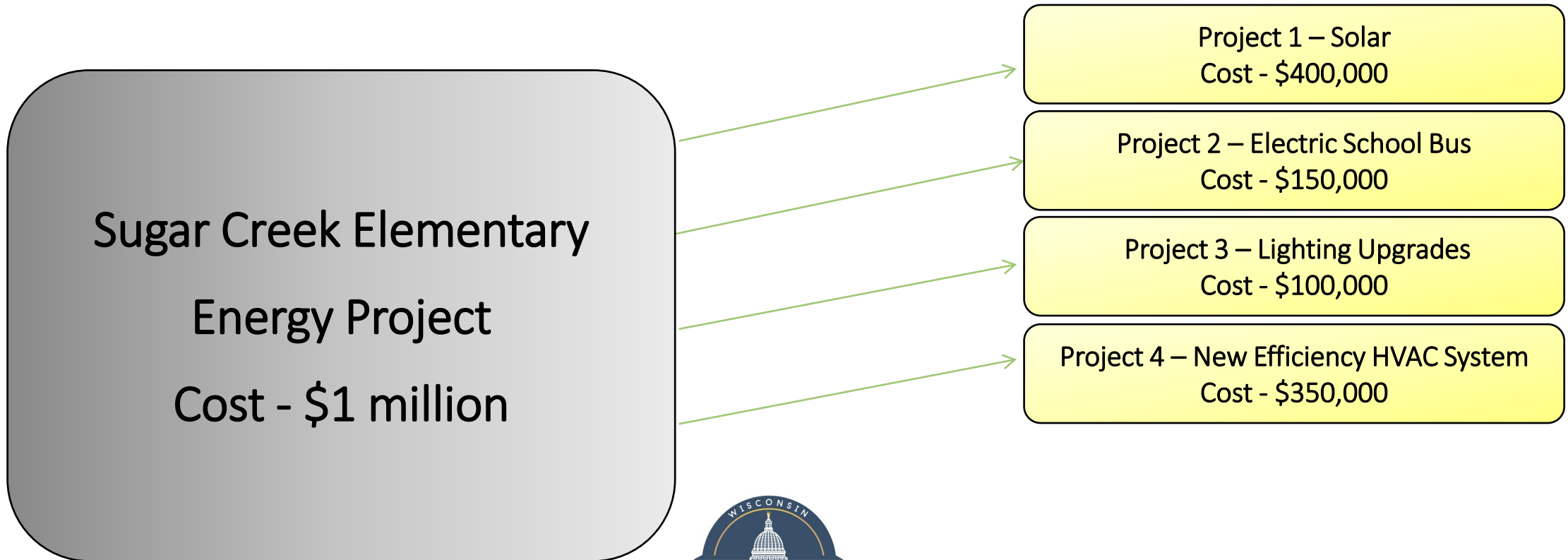


- Identify Gaps – could be services, information, funding
- Gather information:
 - Anecdotal information or statements generally are not sufficient
 - Basic information obtained from surveys, research, official records, etc. is essential to be able to develop the proposal and to demonstrate success of the funded idea



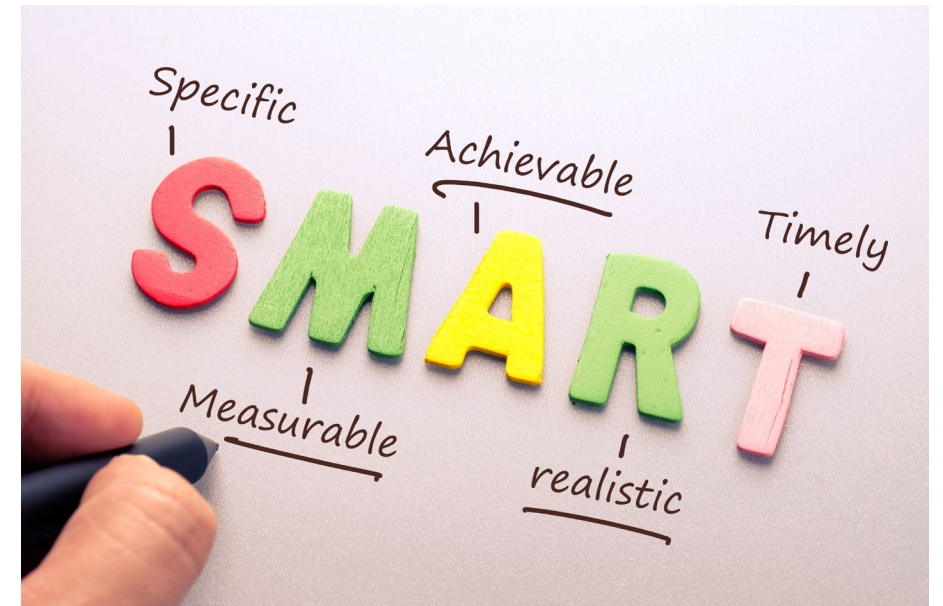
BREAKING DOWN THE IDEA

- Funders not likely to fund an entire project, break down project ideas into pieces



FURTHER DEVELOP THE CONCEPT

- Define the specific goals, for example:
 - Internal issues such as capital improvements, infrastructure development, staff growth or program expansion
 - External issues such as populations served, behavior modified, or community changes accomplished
- Goals should be SMART



FURTHER DEVELOP THE CONCEPT

Define Outcomes: generally, begin with a verb like increase, expand, or improve, how do you define success?

Quantitative vs. Qualitative

Changes in behavior or condition
that reflect a positive impact

Data available

Directly attributable to your idea



Achieving an outcome indicates fulfillment of purpose and program toward long-term impact



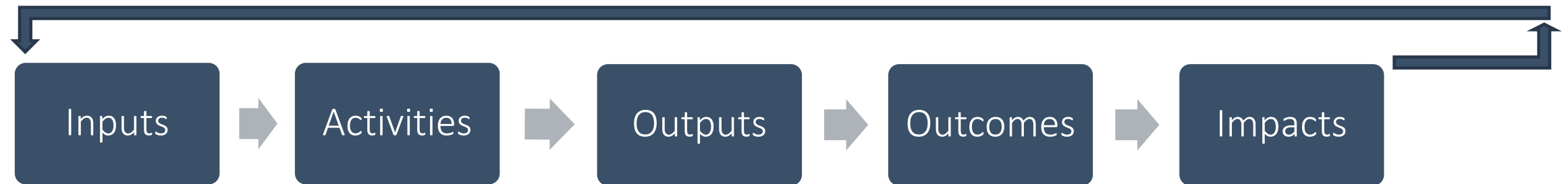
DEVELOP THE PROJECT'S BUDGET

- Clearly identify the gaps and needs
- Idea should coincide with the need
- Costs should align with the tasks and needs
- Develop a realistic project budget:
 - Personnel
 - Fringe (benefits)
 - Travel
 - Construction
 - Equipment
 - Contractual
 - Supplies/Services
 - Other
 - Indirect



PLANNING TOOL - LOGIC MODEL

- A tool to chart your organization's planned work and intended results for a given project



Inputs (Resources): The human, financial, and physical resources that support your grant-funded project or program. These include grant funding, cash and/or in-kind matching funds, staff and volunteer time, facilities, equipment, transportation, and community partners.

Activities (Strategies): What your project does with the inputs/resources. Your goals.

Outputs: These are concrete, quantified indicators of productivity. Delivering what you proposed.

Outcomes: The short-, intermediate, and long-term benchmarks for your target population during and after program activities.

Impacts/Impact Statement: The fundamental change that is anticipated as a result of your project.



PLANNING TOOL – GRANT PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- Contact Information
- Address/Website
- Project Specific Concept Paper
 - Title
 - Abstract/Executive Summary
 - Project Description (Short/Long)
 - Project Period
 - Logic Model
- Key Staff List with Credentials/Resumes
- Executive List (i.e. Board)
- Detailed Budget with Line Items
- Financial Statements
- Annual Reports
- Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation
- Tax ID (EIN, SSN)
- Status (i.e. 501c3 tax exemption letter, 990)
- Images
- Letter of Commitment Templates
- Board Resolutions, other Approval Documents



ADDITIONAL TIPS PREPARING FOR UPCOMING FEDERAL GRANTS

- Create/establish a collaborative network/ stakeholder team/ working group – be strategic, inclusive
- Rural and Limited Staff? Find a grant writing partner – i.e., County, Region, Regional Planning Commission, Economic Development Corporation, Consultant who can assist with organization, submit the grant and do reporting.
- Get your numbers together – i.e., annual energy use, carbon footprint, number of low- middle- income households, disadvantaged communities (Justice40 Initiative), etc.
- Seek assistance from your partners – i.e., utility(ies)
- What software does the grantor require you use, study it, and work to put your information into it.



TIPS FOR FEDERAL GRANTS – EECBG APPLICATION

- Energy Efficiency Block Grant
- 10 Tribal Nations, total \$118,220, Pre-award info sheet due 4/28/23
- Local Governments - 34 eligible counties and cities, total \$4,023,160, Pre-award info sheet due 4/28/23
- State - \$2.3 million, Pre-award information sheet due 4/28/23
- Pre-pre application steps:
 - Eligible entities may apply for a voucher or a grant, but not both. Determine eligibility and route
 - Organize and gather information – feeds into description of goals for increased energy efficiency and conservation in the jurisdiction - (GHG Reduction, Energy Use, Clean Energy Use, EV Adoption, Job creation, etc.)
 - Build network of partners (utilities, utilities, energy industry and financial companies, community-based organizations, labor unions, and other non-profit organizations)
 - Coordination with the state and connect with your neighbors on their plans
 - Benefits to disadvantaged communities and supporting Justive40 Initiative



HELLO

I AM...

PREPARED

WRITING THE
PROPOSAL

GRANT REQUEST

- Initiated by a Funder – foundation federal/state/local agency, business, or other non-governmental organization
- Specific set of criteria, unique to each funder
- If the writer has been diligent in the pre-writing phase, much of the background work has been done and what is left is to develop the idea to fit funders request
- No matter how much you like your own system/format - follow theirs!



SAMPLE GRANT PROPOSAL CONTENTS

- Introduction
- Purpose of Proposed Project
- Statement of Need
- Project Description
- Goals and Objectives
- Methodology
- Organizational Capability
- Budget
- Documentation of Support (letters of commitment, intent, leveraged funding)
- Approval forms and clearances (authority from you organization to move forward, if awarded)

PAY ATTENTION TO DETAILS

- Determine **Eligibility** first and foremost
- Format
 - Number of total pages, paper size, character limits margins, fonts and font sizes may be specified
 - Spelling, grammar, math
- Understandability
 - Do not try to impress the funding agency with an extensive vocabulary to the point of making the proposal unreadable
 - Also be careful with jargon, acronyms and “inside” terminology that persons outside your organization may not understand
- Completeness
 - Go over the package repeatedly to make sure that all the requested components are present



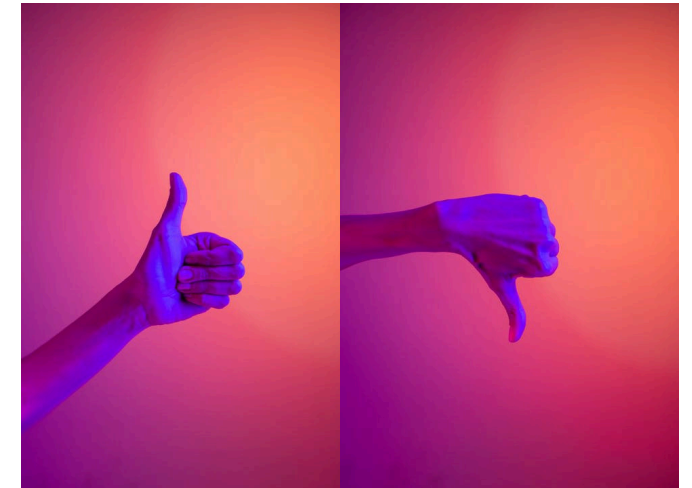
REVIEW & SUBMITTAL

- Understand how the funder wants to have it submitted
 - Via a online systems, physically mailed
 - File formats (pdf, excel, other file types)
- Make sure the proposal is attractive, organized - it is a reflection of your organization
- Create a Checklist – then Review, Review, Review
- Submittal – Don't be late!! Create a timeline that allows you to submit a day or two early. Unforeseen circumstances can make the effort you put into preparing the package futile
- Follow the funders rules for submission
- Make sure to receive a response from the funder – application has been received on their end



THE RESPONSE

- Positive – Congratulations!
 - Now comes the work!
 - Period of budget negotiation, contract development, possible site visits, establishment of accounting procedures and financial reporting
 - Establishment of a reporting system to measure the progress of the funded project
- Negative – It's Okay!
 - If the response is negative do not give up
 - If possible, request a debrief from funder to look for ways to improve
 - Re-evaluate your process and, at the appropriate time, try again
- Either result – Write another one!



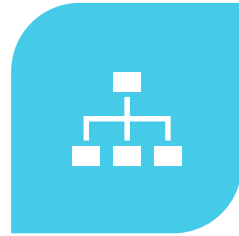


LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCES

FUNDERS



MISSION DRIVEN



DIFFERENT LEVELS OF
ACCOUNTABILITY &
REQUIREMENTS



WITH EVERY GRANT
THERE WILL BE
RESPONSIBILITY AND
WORK – DON'T TAKE
ON MORE THAN YOU
CAN HANDLE



STAY ORGANIZED TO
BE ABLE TO RESPOND
QUICKLY AND
EFFECTIVELY



BE AWARE OF
REGISTRATION TIME
– DAY OF VERSUS
DAYS/MONTHS OR
SPECIAL
REQUIREMENTS



■ Federal

- BIL Guidebook - <https://www.whitehouse.gov/build/>
- IRA Guidebook - <https://www.whitehouse.gov/cleanenergy/inflation-reduction-act-guidebook/>

■ Wisconsin

- WEDC Rural Prosperity - BIL Help Page (includes grant writing resources) <https://ruralwi.com/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/>
- OEI Federal Funding Page - <https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/ServiceType/OEI/FederalFunding.aspx>
- OEI Technical Assistance Page - <https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/ServiceType/OEI/TechnicalAssistance.aspx>
- RENEW Wisconsin - <https://www.renewwisconsin.org/inflation-reduction-act-breakdown/>
- Wins for Wisconsin in the IRA - <https://collaborative.evergreenaction.com/fact-sheets/The-Inflation-Reduction-Act-and-Wisconsin.pdf>

■ Other Resources

- REPEAT Project – section-by-section breakdown of both the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act provided by Princeton University Zero-carbon Energy Systems Research and Optimization Laboratory - <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1X2PORZp5JzP2yWbdUSbXphEIIGPEOIJNI-T12gz7n1s/edit#gid=313301748>



FEDERAL

- Federal Agency Grants - Grants.gov
 - 7-10 days to register in this system
 - Use the above to track specific grant programs and search
 - Some federal agencies allow you to apply through this system



The screenshot shows the Grants.gov website interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the Grants.gov logo and the tagline "FIND. APPLY. SUCCEED.®". Below the header is a navigation bar with three buttons: "HOME", "LEARN GRANTS", and "SEARCH GRANTS". The "SEARCH GRANTS" button is highlighted in blue. Below the navigation bar, the breadcrumb "GRANTS.GOV > Search Grants" is visible. The main heading is "SEARCH GRANTS". Underneath, there is a section titled "BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA:" with three input fields: "Keyword(s)", "Opportunity Number:", and "CFDA:". Each input field has a small "x" icon in the top right corner. Below the input fields is a "SEARCH" button.



STATE RESOURCES

- Samples of State funding for businesses and local governments:
 - Main Street Bounceback Program (WEDC) - <https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/mainstreet-bounceback-grants/>
 - Community Development (WEDC) - <https://wedc.org/community/>
 - Global Business Development Program - <https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/global-business-development-program/>
 - Rural workforce and economic development grants (WEDC) <https://ruralwi.com/>



STATE RESOURCES

- State Funding cont'd
 - Energy Innovation Grant Program (PSCW) - <https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/Programs/OEI/EnergyInnovationGrantProgram.aspx>
 - Grants available from many agencies Wisconsin
- Additional State Resources
 - Wisconsin Small Business Development Center - <https://wisconsinsbdc.org/>
 - Center for Technology Commercialization - <https://wisconsinctc.org/>
- Focus on Energy - <https://focusonenergy.com/>
- Agencies receiving Federal Formula Funding & Competitive Funding



LOCAL RESOURCES

- Marquette University Foundation Funding Guide (fee) - <http://www.wifoundations.org/>
- UW Madison Memorial Library Grants Information Collection - <https://www.library.wisc.edu/memorial/collections/grants-information-collection/>



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Welcome to Fou

Marquette University's Funding Information of the 37th edition of *Foundations in Wisconsin*

Available in an online version, the director of grantmaking foundations in the state of Wisconsin

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Have a question? Our contact information button above.

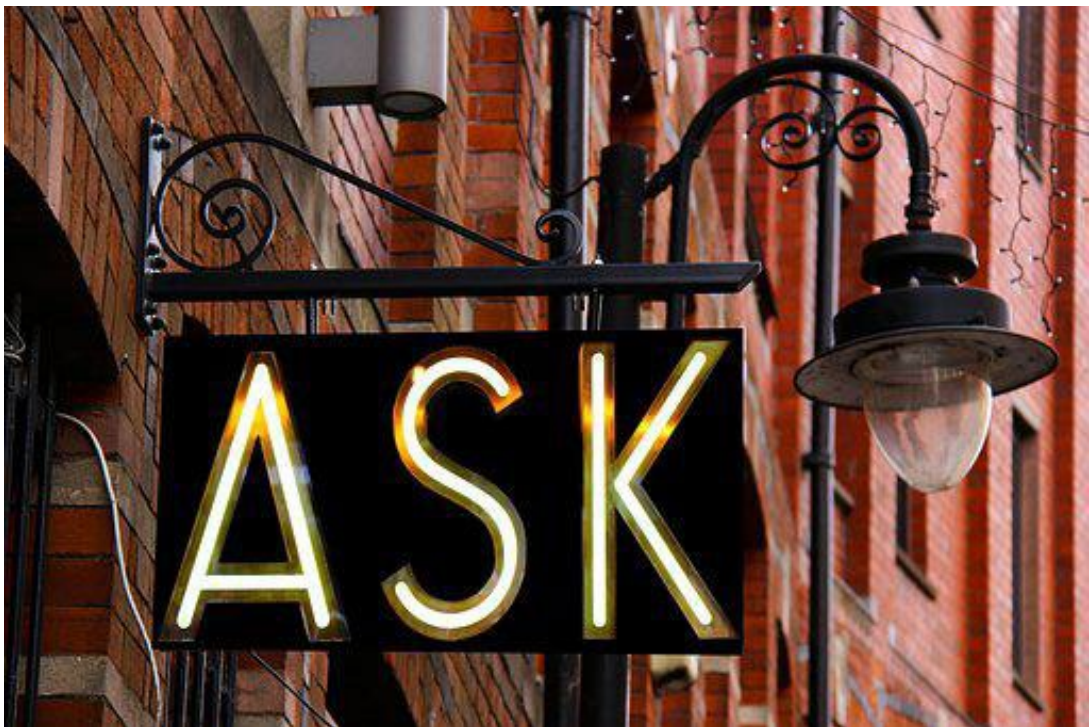
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ADDITIONAL TIPS/RESOURCES



- Subscriptions services and consultants available – generally at a cost
- List of organizations/business that offer grant services - <https://lwm-info.org/1655/Grants>





QUESTIONS?

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