

Section 4.4

Foundations: How To Get Their \$\$\$ in 7 Easy Steps

REMEMBER: 1) Foundations have to give away money, and 2) they usually have a pretty clear idea of what they want to support.

Step 1: Identify prospect foundations, through electronic data bases, senior colleagues, your development officer, and Research and Sponsored Programs. Think broadly and interdisciplinarily about your research and its potential impacts.

*Remember: foundations look at the world differently than you do. They see such problems as poverty and illiteracy as complex and requiring multi-disciplinary solutions.

Step 2: Read enough about your prospect foundation so that you don't ask a foolish question in Step 5. (Annual Reports, guidelines)

Step 3: Clear your prospects through your development officer and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. What we call the clearance process has three goals:

- 1) making sure you don't upset your dean (e.g. cost sharing, overhead);
- 2) making sure that your budget meets accounting requirements.
- 3) creating a blue routing sheet (MUST be done before a proposal can leave campus)

Step 4: Write a two- to three-page summary of your idea, paying particular attention to the broader implications of your proposed research or program, and to the benefits the donor will receive. Remember, ask not what your foundation can do for you, ask what you can do for your foundation. EVERYONE WHO DONATES MONEY EXPECTS A BENEFIT IN RETURN. You will receive money not because you need it, but because you are helping the donor achieve her or his goals.

Step 5: Call the contact person (usually a program officer) and discuss your idea with her or him, listening carefully and taking notes on your two page draft.

Step 6: If you and the program officer identify a possible match, you will typically be asked to submit a two page pre-proposal, which, of course, you have already prepared in Step 4. If their foundation is not interested, ask the program officer which other foundations might be interested in your work.

Step 7: If, based on a review of your two pager, the foundation requests a full proposal, you have a good chance of being funded.