

December/January

Project Planning:

- Nonprofit grant applications are due to you by January 25. Students ought to make phone calls to remind nonprofits of the deadline.**
- Review Nonprofit Grant Applications.
- Schedule site visits or classroom interviews with nonprofits.
- Meet your funder. OCF will coordinate the funder visit with the teacher or lead student.
- Teachers – take a class period for students to reflect on their participation in the program.

Forms You Need: (www.oregoncf.org/c101)

- Grant Application Score Sheet
- In-Class Student Reflection Activity

Grantmaking Guidelines

- Your class or group has \$5,000 to grant to nonprofit organizations.
- The \$5,000 is distributed as follows: at least \$4,000 must be granted to nonprofit organizations in Oregon, and up to \$1,000 may be granted within your school and school district to support educational programs and/or projects. Students may choose to give the total \$5,000 to nonprofit organizations.
- Funding must be granted to programs that inspire change and encourage potential in one of four focus areas: arts and culture, education, the environment, or the promotion of healthy families.
- Funding must be used to help people in Oregon, not animals, unless those animals are helping people, i.e., guide dogs.
- All organizations receiving Community 101 grants must be 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations located within Oregon.
- The funds must go directly to the nonprofit organization and not pass through any other organization, unless that organization is a fiscal sponsor.
- Funds cannot be used for lobbying or for promoting any specific religion.
- Funds cannot be given to any organization that discriminates on the basis of race, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, age, disability, gender or sexual orientation.

Activity: Grant Application Evaluation

- **Make grants only after you consider the priorities that you want to address with your funding.** Are there unmet needs today, or will there be future unmet needs if services are not available?
- **Learn all you can about the organization(s) that you want to support.** What is their mission? How do you know this program is successful? Who else in the community is supporting them? **Do not feel compelled to make a grant to support a program or organization that does not meet your own mission statement, needs or values.** Read and understand the cost of a program. How much of each dollar actually goes to provide the needed service?
- **Help as many people as possible** with the grants you award.
- **Talk with the person or people who will actually be doing the work you are supporting.** Are they excited about their work and the value the grant will bring to the project? Can they tell you exactly how your grant will make a difference in the operation of their program?
- **Get a written proposal** from the organization about exactly what they plan to do with their project, the goal(s) they hope to achieve and how they plan to spend the grant funds.
- **Conduct a site visit in advance of making a grant** or to monitor how a previous grant is being used.
- **Inform the grant recipient that they are required to complete a final report** to tell next year's Community 101 class about the successes and failures of the funded project as well as details about how the grant money was spent. The grant evaluation form for nonprofits is included with the grant check, which is distributed at the awards ceremony in April or May.

Oregon Department of Education Essential Skills and Social Science Standards for this activity:

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| Read & Comprehend Text | Summarize and critically analyze key points of text, events, issues, phenomena or problems, distinguishing factual from non-factual and literal from inferential elements. |
| Think Critically & Analytically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and explain the key elements of a complex event, text, issue, problem or phenomenon. • Develop a method to explore the relationships between the key elements of a complex event, text, issue, problem or phenomenon. • Evaluate the strength of conclusions, differentiating reasoning based on facts from reasoning based on opinions. |
| Personal Management & Teamwork | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate cooperatively and productively in work teams to identify and solve problems. • Plan, organize and complete assigned tasks accurately and on time. • Exhibit work ethic and performance, including the ability to be responsible and dependable. |
| Social Science Analysis | <p>SS.HS.SA.58 Gather, analyze, use and document information from various sources, distinguishing facts, opinions, inferences, biases, stereotypes and persuasive appeals.</p> <p>SS.HS.SA.59 Demonstrate the skills and dispositions of what it means to be a critical consumer of information.</p> |

Student Tips for Reading Grant Applications

As you read, you should take notes in the margins of the grant applications or on a separate pad of paper. As questions arise, jot them down. Some questions will probably be answered further along in the application. If they are not, put the questions on a more permanent list for follow-up.

Throughout the reading, you should search for the following:

Credibility. The proposal will indicate whether the organization appears to be a reliable potential grantee. Ask yourself: Does the organization know what it wants to accomplish? What is the evidence that the organization is currently achieving its goals? What kind of reputation does the group enjoy within its community and beyond?

Capability. What skills do the organization's staff and board bring to the project? Are they relevant to the project's goals? Has the organization succeeded in similar projects of equal size and scale to what they are now proposing? In short, you want to find out if the staff and board of the applicant organization can carry out the project or program effectively.

Feasibility. You will be trying to determine whether the grant application is advancing a worthwhile project built upon a good idea that can be successfully implemented by the organization. Simply put, can the project be done? You will need to consult the budget to make certain that the organization has allocated sufficient resources to execute the various tasks and strategies described in the grant application.

Importance. Beyond the very sensible question of can and will a project be completed, you will necessarily ask yourself: Should it be done? Is the project significant? Is there evidence that the project will trigger action or work that the community wants? Will the project make a difference in the community it claims to aid or resolve the issue it addresses? Given the other opportunities for funding, is it the right one to support at this time?

Impact. How much of an impact will this project have? What's the cost-per-student/house/meal ratio? Additionally, if your mission statement is focused on creating lasting community change, it's good to consider what the long-term impact of your grant will be.

Comparison Exercise: Traditional foundations craft grant evaluation criteria closely tied to their mission and the needs they're working to address. Think about the needs you identified through your student body survey and the mission that came out of that and adapt these guidelines and the Grant Application Score Sheet to be in line with those.

Sample: Grant Application Score Sheet

Students can use this form to evaluate nonprofit grant applications. Encourage students to come up with their own questions to ask. After the student completes this form, the entire group can discuss the pros and cons of each application. This is a launching point for the decision-making process.

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| Nonprofit Organization: | |
| Project: | |
| | |
| Questions: | Your Score: Possible score: 10; total 100 |
| 1. Project promotes healthy development of young people and provides youth with a safe environment. | |
| 2. Project is viable and realistic; has a realistic plan, timeline and budget. | |
| 3. Project provides opportunities for young people to give back to the community in meaningful ways. | |
| 4. Project involves youth and adults in project planning, grant writing and implementation. | |
| 5. Project brings together diverse people and organizations in proposal and project development. | |
| 6. Project develops skills in young people. | |
| 7. Project promotes positive relationships between youth and adults. | |
| 8. Project shows creativity and innovation. | |
| 9. Project is a vehicle for positive social change. | |
| 10. Project has elements of sustainability. | |
| | Total score: _____ |
| Your Name: | |
| Comments: | |

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