

February

Project Planning:

- Finish reviewing nonprofit grant applications
- Complete interviews/site visits by the end of February
- Start decision-making process – Which organizations should receive funding and why? This is a team decision! Be prepared to submit grant recommendations for review by OCF before spring break or by April 26!**
- Meet your funder. OCF will coordinate the funder visit with the teacher or lead student.
- Submit award ceremony date to Kim Whitney at The Oregon Community Foundation: kwhitney@oregoncf.org

Forms You Need:

- Grant applications you receive from nonprofits.
- Site Visit Interview Form. Students should bring this form to their site visit and take turns asking questions.
- Student photo/media waiver and release form

Smile! Your picture might be taken while you're volunteering and conducting site visits.

Don't forget to complete the photo release form.

Download forms and templates at www.oregoncf.org/c101

Activity: Student Site Visits & Interviews

A site visit is a valuable method for gathering information about a nonprofit organization. Site visits are useful because they can help you have a better understanding of what the organization does. They can also provide useful information when deciding to award the organization a grant.

Prepare for a site visit (or interview) by re-reading the application and supporting materials. Be prepared to articulate the Community 101 grant-making process and timeline. **You represent your school and peers at these visits!**

There is no single, correct procedure for interviews or site visits. Some students prepare an agenda, others prepare a list of questions and others ask for an informal description of the project and agency.

Be clear in communicating your expectations of the agency:

- Do you want to meet with a board member?
- With which staff members do you want to meet?
- How much time do you have scheduled?
- Are there any other written materials that should be made available to you before or during the visit?

When conducting interviews, **your role is one of an impartial investigator.** You are gathering facts. You are trying to understand the need for the project, the level of research and planning behind it, the capacity of the organization to carry it out, the reasonableness of the budget for the activities planned, and the extent to which community members have been involved.

Do not be afraid to ask tough questions. Your job is to gain a thorough understanding of the project and be able to present a clear picture of it to other Community 101 students. If a question is not answered, ask it in a different way. Probe for specifics; and if they remain unclear, request supplemental written information. It is acceptable to express admiration for the nonprofit's work, but be aware that too much enthusiasm will be misinterpreted as a "sure thing" in terms of getting the grant.

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

Write Clearly & Accurately	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop organized, well-reasoned, supported, and focused communications.• Write to explain, summarize, inform and persuade, including business, professional, technical and personal communications.
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.
Listen Actively & Speak Clearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen actively to understand verbal and non-verbal communication.• Give and follow spoken instructions to perform a task, ask and answer questions, and solve problems.• Present or discuss ideas clearly, effectively, and coherently, using both verbal and nonverbal techniques.• Use language appropriate to particular audiences and contexts.
Personal Management & Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate cooperatively and productively in work teams to identify and solve problems.• Exhibit work ethic and performance, including the ability to be responsible and dependable.
Social Science Analysis	SS.HS.SA.57 Define, research, and explain an event, issue, problem, or phenomenon and its significance to society. SS.HS.SA.59 Demonstrate the skills and dispositions needed to be a critical consumer of information.



Sample: Student Site Visit Interview Form

Your Name _____ Date of Site Visit _____

Community 101 at (Name of School) _____

Name of Nonprofit Organization _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ Web Site _____

Person Interviewed _____ Title _____

Email address _____

Organization Information:

Is your nonprofit a registered 501(c)(3) organization? Yes No What is your agency's mission?

What does your agency do? **How** do you achieve your mission? (Be sure you understand this!)

How long has your agency been in existence? _____ Years

Who works here? _____

Does your organization use volunteers? If so, how? Do you have volunteer projects for students?

What would funding be used for? (Be sure you understand this!)

What are the goals and purposes of this program?

For this program, what geographic area do you serve?

Who do you serve? _____

How many people does this program serve? _____

How do you know this program makes an impact?

Financial information:

Where does your organization get money to operate?

Where do the contributions come from?

What percentage of your budget goes to the program/supports our community? _____ %

What are your current fundraising activities? Have they been successful? _____

Download a Word version of the Site Visit Form at www.oregoncf.org/c101

Activity: Report-Out Meetings & Grant Decisions

After reviewing applications and conducting site visits or classroom interviews, your group conducts a “Report-Out Meeting.” This is a great way to share information and make sure everyone is included in the process.

Each student evaluator, or group of student evaluators, gives a brief oral report about the grant application and site visit. After the report, other students ask questions and help to determine funding decisions. The oral report of the student evaluator(s) should include:

- A brief description of the grant request and nonprofit applicant, including what the nonprofit does, who it serves and which project/program they are seeking money for.
- A description of the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal and its fit with the students’ Community 101 mission statement.
- A recommendation of the project’s urgency for funding (high, medium or low).

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

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.• Propose defensible conclusions that address multiple and diverse perspectives.• Evaluate the strength of conclusions, differentiating reasoning based on facts from reasoning based on opinions.
Listen Actively & Speak Clearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen actively to understand verbal and non-verbal communication.• Present or discuss ideas clearly, effectively, and coherently, using both verbal and nonverbal techniques.
Personal Management & Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate cooperatively and productively in work teams to identify and solve problems.
Social Science Analysis	SS.HS.SA.62 Propose, compare, and judge multiple responses, alternatives, or solutions; then reach a defensible, supported conclusion.

Student Decision-Making Models

Decision-making models help students decide, as a group, which organizations should receive funding. This exercise is done after the students review grant applications and conduct site visits and/or hear presentations by nonprofits requesting funds.

Consensus

Consensus is used to make sure everyone involved in Community 101 has a say in the outcome of which organizations will receive funding. Consensus-based decisions are achieved through discussion and must be approved by everyone at the meeting. A particular decision might be reshaped many times before unanimous consensus is reached. Groups that choose to use the consensus process often do so because voting on issues can divide membership and leave some people feeling unheard. Reaching unanimous consensus also may raise levels of commitment by group members because everyone is agreeing on a solution. The consensus-building process, however, requires time, discipline and patience on the part of meeting participants as well as a careful and attentive facilitator. Eventually, the choice is narrowed down and fine-tuned, until all the parties at the table agree.

Examples:

- Use red, green and yellow cards to express opinions. Red blocks the decision, yellow passes it with some hesitation and green passes the decision completely. The group cannot go forward if someone is holding a red card, and groups are encouraged to ask those holding a yellow card to express their hesitation. Everyone should have the opportunity to discuss why they are holding a particular card. After discussion, ask the students to hold up the cards again. Once everyone feels their voice has been heard, make a final decision based on everyone's input.
- Use the thumb method. Thumb up, thumb to the side, and thumb down. Thumb up means the student agrees with the decision, thumb to the side shows hesitation, and thumb down means the student does not agree with the decision. Everyone should have the opportunity to discuss why they are in agreement, hesitant or do not agree. After discussion, ask the students to come to a decision, as a unit, about which organizations they want to support.

Majority or 2/3 vote

This model usually works best. Make sure students know which organizations are being voted on and the details of the project which they are funding.

Examples:

- Ask students to raise their hand to vote.
- Post nonprofit and project names on the wall and ask everyone to place one or two stickers on the nonprofit for which they want to vote.

Scores/Ranking

Ask students to rank or score the projects or programs they are deciding on. The project with the highest score is passed or awarded the amount of money requested.

Examples:

- Use a scoring system of 1 to 5 to score items to be decided. Use criteria to score grant request.
- Use a recommendation system (highly recommend, recommend, undecided, hesitation, do not recommend) to help alleviate scoring discrepancies.