Hi everyone,
I'm Alyse Dunavant-Jones, and I'm the Assistant Director for the Community Virtual Library.
https://communityvirtuallibrary.org/
I have a BA in Writing and an MLIS in Library and Information Science.
In 2018, I took a Grant Writing course as part of my MLIS coursework.
Since then, I've continued researching grants and grant practices--especially in the context of virtual world organizations.
Is there anyone here who has written a grant proposal? Feel free to put a Y in the chat and as many or as few details as you'd like!
If you have any favorite grant resources you'd like to share, please feel free to share those in the chat as well.
~
I'll start by defining grants.
Grants are NOT donations. You must apply for a grant and use it for a specific purpose/project--whereas donations are more flexible.
A grant requires applicants to give exact details of how you will use the money, when you will use it, and who in your org will use it.
Once you obtain the grant, you also have to report back in detail with feedback.
If you misuse the money or don't meet your goals, your organization's reputation may be at stake.
You need to submit a budget, timeline, specific goals and objectives, a plan for how you will meet them,
how you will measure your success/progress, and how you will report back.
You also need to submit the names and credentials of your board and anyone leading the project ahead of time.
There are rare grants with unrestricted funds, but I have yet to come across one!
~
This slide highlights steps you should consider before grant-seeking.
If you find any of these intimidating, contact CVL for assistance. A librarian can help walk you through them.
Collect and organize your Admin Docs/Info (incl. partner/parent orgs)
This means you should know who your board/leaders are in SL and the physical world and have their 1st life contact info.
Know your budget and tax info or know who to go to and ensure they are available to answer your grant-relevant questions.
If you have documentation re: your users/community, organize this info as well! If not, you will need to collect this information.
You can do this on your own before searching for a grant.
Or you can search for an "exploratory research grant"; its purpose would be to research and define your community.
Establish a regular fundraising routine (ideally both in-world and out-world)
However, even if you are only receiving regular L$, you may still have a case for your grant if most of your expenses are in-world.
Establish a person(s) dedicated to grant-seeking, writing, submitting, and following through with a grant.
This can be an org leader, an intern, or an especially dedicated volunteer.
But this person must commit to the long-haul, be willing to conduct research, write and edit, partner with and work with others--
(including contacting potential grant orgs for clarifications), and stick with the

project to the end.
Is there another organization(s) with similar goals to you?
Partnering with another org can offer benefits such as additional funds, tax status, man-power, and knowledge.
Brainstorm your org's needs and potential projects your org would like to use grant funds for.
It is tempting to create a project based on a grant's requirements. But you should always search for grants based on your needs.
Strive for an 85-90% match, and you will be more likely to land the grant *and* you will be more successful in executing the grant.
~
The largest barrier against grants for small nonprofits is manpower. So recruiting volunteers is my #1 recommendation before grant seeking.
Of course, this is easier said than done!
New Media Arts and the Community Virtual Library are both desperately in need of volunteers.
Two resources I've stumbled upon are:
Taproot Foundation (https://www.taprootplus.org/nonprofits) and VolunteerMatch (https://www.volunteermatch.org/recruit-volunteers).
Taproot Foundation is a free online platform that connects nonprofit organizations with skilled volunteers.
Volunteers share their expertise pro bono in areas like marketing, HR, tech, finance, and strategy.
They can do a consultation call or lead a specific project.
The volunteer's commitment is time sensitive (for example, the duration of one consultation or event/project).
So a nonprofit posts a project or need on the site, selects the volunteer they'd like to collaborate with, and the volunteer completes the project.
They host free webinars on how it all works, so keep an eye on the website for their next date.
To use Taproot, you must belong to a 501(c)(3), be sponsored by one, or be a public school organization.
Verified charities in the U.S., India, U.K., and E.U. are eligible. For more info: https://www.taprootplus.org/faq#nonprofits-faq-0
VolunteerMatch is similara to Taproot. But the volunteer's commitment is not time sensitive (they can stay long-term).
They also host free webinars: https://learn.volunteermatch.org/
VolunteerMatch's rules for use are more lenient than Taproot's.
For more details:
https://vmhelp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/214623768-Types-of-organizations-that-can-register
If you've used either of these resources (or recruitment sites like this), please share your thoughts in the chat.
This topic could take up an entire presentation on its own.
Once I've learned more and successfully recruited volunteers using these resources, I'd be happy to share what I've learned.
And if anyone else has experience in volunteer recruitment, I strongly encourage you to host a presentation of your own.
~
Back to grants!

I've collected all of CVL's grant resources in a webpage:
https://communityvirtuallibrary.org/grant-resources/
Resource #1: Grant Service Subscription
Thanks to AvaCon, Inc., CVL librarians can search an extensive grants database.
Anyone in the Nonprofit Commons or CVL communities is can use this service for free.
Unfortunately the resource (GrantStation) has a strict copyright and use policy, so
we cannot share login credentials.
Instead, a librarian will meet with you, share their screen via Zoom or Skype, and
search the database for you.
You can also work with a librarian asynchronously via email.
The service also provides other grants resources, like guides for writing grants.
If you are interested in those resources, a librarian can locate and download them
for you.
I am the main grants librarian for now, but as interest grows, we can train other
CVL librarians in this resource.
I also offer free grantwriting assistance. However, I can only work with one org at
a time. And I am currently working with 3D Web Worldz :D
If you are interested in grantwriting assistance, feel free to reach out anyway.
There are other grant writers in virtual worlds, and I'd be happy to share your
information.
Additionally, if your needs and org are similar to 3D Web Worldz, you may be able to
partner on a grant.
I'd also like to encourage folks to explore the grant resources in CVL's Nonprofit
Resource Library:
https://communityvirtuallibrary.org/nonprofit-commons-resource-library/
One resource that I've highlighted on CVL's website is my 2020 grants presentation.
In particular, there is a list of grant seeking and writing resources that I
developed based on the grant writing course I took:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1noUX4rXaQnLb46Wz9c2gTHPmY6orludXAVUGiAauxag/edit
?usp=sharing
~
Thank You for attending this presentation highlighting CVL's grant resources!
Please contact me if you would like to meet with a CVL librarian for grant seeking
assistance.
alyse.dunavantjones@gmail.com
alysedunavantjones in SL
AnteMeridiem DiscJockey (virtual world alt)
Thank you!