Video Transcript

Grant Writing Essentials for the Field
Elaine Katz

Rebecca Martin: My name is Rebecca Martin, and I am a graduate assistant with the grant facilitation team at the Rutgers University Edward J.

Bloustein School of Policy and Planning, and I'm working to coordinate the New Jersey Inclusive Healthy Communities training series and IHC Academy trainings. We're thrilled

you could join us today for a grant writing training by Elaine Katz, Senior Vice President of Grants and Communications at Kessler Foundation.

We are so fortunate to have her here today to educate us about how we can create successful grant proposals and to support our important work. Before we begin,

I have a few housekeeping notes. We would like to make sure you're aware that we will be recording today's training.

We have enabled captions for today's event and are thrilled to have Alison, our interpreter, with us.

If you would like to find her, to pin her to your screen, look for her listed as interpreter Alison, and you can locate her in the gallery.

Click on the menu that appears in the top right hand corner

when you hover your mouse over her image, and you can pin her there.

There will be time for questions and answers toward the end of the conversation today,

so please feel free to add any questions that come up in the chat, or hold them until the end when you'll be free to unmute and ask directly.

Given your interest in today's training, we'd like to send you updates about future

IHC training opportunities. If you would like to opt out of receiving information about the IHC program and training opportunities, you can indicate this in the chat or email me, and I'll place my email in the chat in a moment.

Finally, I'd like to take a moment to express our deep appreciation to Peri Nearon and her team at the New Jersey Division of Disability Services for making this training series and the IHC grant program possible.

Now I will give the floor to our presenter Elaine Katz. Elaine,

thank you for coming today.

Elaine Katz: Thank you so much it's really a pleasure to be here, and I want to thank you

New Jersey IHC for inviting me to speak with you today. So today what we're going to do really is pull away the curtain on grant making, trying to be a little bit transparent about the process and help you become better informed when you apply for grants. I just wanted to tell you a little bit about

Kessler Foundation for those of you who may not be familiar with our work.

We're located in East Hanover, New Jersey, and our mission is to change the lives of people with disabilities through rehabilitation, research, improving

cognition and mobility for people with all kinds of disabilities, and we do that by testing new interventions and by gathering data that can help with daily functioning.

We are also known as a leading funder for employment grants and innovation, and over the past 14 years we've invested close to $15 million in the field of employment, trying to increase the participation rates of people with disabilities. Through these projects, we hope to create change in

workplace and culture, so that more people can be employed.

So for today, in today's agenda, we're going to talk all about the specific components about grant-making.

However, we're not going to find, talk about where to find actual funding.

I have some resources at the end. We're going to
be speaking today from the private foundation or private corporate foundation perspective, not about getting grants from the public sector, which would be federal grants or state grants or city grants,

for example. I really know best about, you know, the private foundation area, although we're a public charity,

so we give away money and we raise it. Okay. So let's get started.

So you know grants are not really a slam dunk
for when you, when an organization needs money because they are risky and they are chancy,
and you're not always going to get those funds.

Grants can be time consuming in scope. They really do take a lot of time, and they often require
some expertise and strategy and writing.

They're mainly different types of proposals.

They range from a simple ask to really a more complex letter, or maybe a two-step

application. And today we're going to give you a whole overview of the process.

We're going to help you identify the key components,

learn a little bit about how funders do select those grants, and understand how the funders
work and collaborate with grantees. To make sure that we're all on the same page,

I'd like to go through a little bit about the terminology in grant-making and defining some
terms.

So it's pretty obvious. The grant award is the money you will get.

It's not a loan, so it's not expected to be paid back. We're not talking today about grants to
individuals,

which is a whole separate category. But really there is an expectation,

if you will, that it's going towards a certain purpose and has a positive impact on the
community.

When we're talking about the grantor, the funder, that's the organization that's giving you the
money. And grants are typically managed by a grant officer, a program officer, some other
formal title.

If you want to think about them, think of them as a salesperson,

the middle person, middle man. It's really the individual that is driving or moving your proposal
along in a foundation or granting organization.

The grant period is the time the grant takes place and

grant evaluation grant reporting is really the due diligence of the grant.

What's been accomplished? What are your objectives?

This could be a self-report, an informer report, or it could be a more formal grant evaluation.

So let's talk a little bit about the myths about funders.

I would say foundations and grant-makers are typically the target of a myth. And there's a lot of them.

There's a book by Joel Fleishman called The Foundation:

A Great American Secret. How Private Wealth Changed the World, and he discusses a lot of these myths,

generalizations. Some are unfair, some truly are fair, and you've probably experienced some of these

yourself that, you know, foundation people are hard to reach. They don't take phone calls.

They don't often have open calls for proposals,

called requests for proposals. Sometimes it's a failure to communicate. They could let months go by without you hearing from them.

They drag out their decision-making. They may not write you or reply to any of your inquiries.

Sometimes you'll find they're even discourteous or rude, like, who are you to apply to me,

to my foundation, to try to get some funding? You know, and again you don't find out any information because you can't get a hold of them. And I would say most of the time a lot of people who apply for funding,

I think they're arbitrary grant decisions made by the foundations.

And truly I would say, most of the people I know at foundations are trying to make strategic choice and rational grant-
making to move ahead their funding.

They're using rubrics or different kinds of scales to evaluate the applications

that come in. But it is a subjective process. You know, it's not, it's an art rather than a science.

Sometimes foundations don't explain the grant-making process.

So those applying are really in the dark. But there are organizations, such as grant makers for effective organizations, which are in some other very very large foundations, that are trying to make this a little more transparent.

So briefly, I'm going to go through the grant process so that everybody is on the same page.

And I do have some very short videos. These are older videos from the Foundation Center in New York, which is now candid.

Most of the people have left where they are that you'll see in the video, although they are real people.

Hopefully, it works. If it doesn't work, we can talk through the information on the video.

So let's see and get going. [Video plays]

For organizations approaching us for the first time, generally we encourage you to first visit our website, read our funding guidelines, and approach. The next step would be a letter of inquiry, and all of those get a screen by program staff and if there's something that looks like it would be a fit

for us we will reach out to have an initial conversation.

Organizations that are approaching us for the very first time should really make sure that what they're doing, the programs and the project that they're involved with, match up pretty pretty closely with the programs that we kind of that we support that's listed on our website. So we have three very specific

grant-making areas, and their project really aligned with those three areas.

I think grantees are most successful when they've done their homework in advance of a meeting.

They know what the foundation is interested in funding. They've been to our website. They've looked at what our other grantees are doing.

And then take the time in their first meeting to use it as an informational interview.

To understand further what we're interested in, to understand what the state of our funding is, and frankly, what my needs as a program officer are in finding new opportunities to fund their work.

Okay. So you heard a little bit from the funders that it's a, you know, you should have a letter inquiry if you really don't know the funding source just to get some outreach, find out what they're all about.

When you're applying, try to make sure that there's a right fit in the program match, do your homework in advance of a meeting or talking to any foundation officer, and really use those information interviews to learn more about their processes. And again, it's always best to connect with funders when you're not

seeking a grant. You can find those opportunities to network with them.

Sometimes there are community events where they're invited and you're invited. People on your board may know somebody at a foundation.

You may meet them in different places. You know, at a minimum

you can connect with people on social media, such as Linkedin.

And you know it's always good to talk. Try to talk to a foundation and catch them when you're not on the line for asking for funding, and it's a more relaxed atmosphere. So let's get started with grant proposals, which I know everybody wants to

hear about. And keep in mind these getting started points are before you even start writing a grant.

I can't emphasize enough the importance of prepping before writing and before submitting an application. So we're going to identify the problem and the opportunity.

What that means is you have identified already the programs, the projects that need some funding, because it's always better to try to match your program to a funding source.

You never want to tailor a program to a funding source. So if it's a call for child care, you don't want to create something that is a child care program just to get some funding from a funder. You want to make sure you do your research on the funder. You want to find as much information

as you can online. You want to read their 990s, which may be tax returns.

But more than anything, these days you want to know what the public perception is of a funder, just to make sure that your organization is aligned with that group, and it's not a controversial political group that some of your trustees or others may have difficulty

with. You want to understand the work that's required it's just as much time to apply for a $5,000, grant as it is for a $25,000 grant. So you want to make sure that you understand the grant requirements,

the sections. what's required. Another good tip is to keep an internal data sheet

when you're applying for a grant and what's the outcome.

You may also want to keep a list of prospects. But that way you can track your work over time, And if you can get a hold of sample proposals from a particular funder, that's always great as well. You want to make sure that you read the application and the requirements as best you can.

Again, this is all before you start writing the grant. Funders are usually pretty specific on what they're looking for. And you want to make sure, if you are not the only writer, you want to make sure who's going to write what sections.

And also you want to try to figure out if, you know, what the project that you're applying for is something that the funder will really fund.

At this point, you also want to write a summary statement as well of your project. You know,

and again, what's the project here you're looking for?

What you're looking for to fund? You know,

who are you? What's going on? What's the best information to use in an abstract?

Excuse me. And remember, your project is important. It's a gap in knowledge and resources, and an opportunity to be filled. And, you know, keep in mind again that this is before you write.

You can always tweak something later. But this is really the story.

Oops. Okay. So you're going to develop a budget.

This is a preliminary budget. Again, it's the preliminary budget that's used to help you write the proposal.

How do you know how many staffing you need unless you've looked at and planned out in the budget?

How much you need to accomplish? Again, it goes back to your budget.

If you're serving meals, how many meals are you serving?

How many people are you serving? That's all part of preparing the budget.

You want to also create the outline. You want to describe the plan.

You want to tie it back to the RFP.

You want to figure out who's writing the sections?

What terminology are they using? What is the funder requiring

as far as terminology and sections? You're still again not writing the grant.

You want to most importantly get your PR house in order. You want to look at your social media.

You want to make sure your webinar looks good. You want to make sure that there's nothing controversial on your Facebook posts, on your Instagram posts, because these days funders do look at all that stuff as well. So once you get all this prep work, now you're finally ready

to get started and to write.

Okay, so let's set the stage.

So when you're starting to write, you really want to be simple, direct, and concise, and you want to know that this is about the project.

Don't spend a lot of time when you're writing about the goals of your organization,

the mission of your organization. Those are things that we can … funders can find out about.

You really want to devote, especially if you have a limited amount of space, is to really talk about that project.

You don't want to have blanket statements about anything without backing it up.

You want to define your technical terms. And most importantly, the reader of the proposal shouldn't have a hard time understanding what you're talking about. If I read through a proposal, and I don't understand what's going on,

then that's not a very good sign of having a good chance of being funded for your project.

And again, it's really important to be conscise. You want to draft, write, and rewrite.

You want to start a first draft from start to finish, including those sections that other people may write, because you want to go back and make it sound like it has one voice.

Other people may have a different style, they may use a different grammar tense.

You want to go back and really make sure that it all looks the same.

You want to make sure those sections are in the right places as far as the requirements for the particular funder.

And again, you know, if if you're resubmitting a request, don't use the same request. We do …

You know, everything now is on the computer. I can easily compare what you sent us before to what it is now, and even if the same request, some sections, I understand, are going to be the same.

But try to shake it up a little bit. And you want to make sure to use keywords and phrasing.

So if a funder says "what is the value of this project," you want to say "the value of this project is," so as a reader the reader doesn't have to hunt around to really get all the information that they're looking for. Clearly state the goals

and how the fund is going to be used. You really … funding will be used …

You really want to make sure they're SMART goals.

The acronym is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely.

So, if for example, you're serving meals to children, you want us …. instead of saying we will be serving lunch everyday to a group of children,

you want to say 10 children will receive lunches 3 days a week. And even better is, you could add in parens "at $10 a lunch."

And that kind of goes back to the development of a budget and justification.

So this is the point where you're really fine tuning your budget. You're using the real numbers.

You're not making them up. You may need a finance person or somebody else to help you go through.

Please add your numbers. We find a lot of arithmetic mistakes in budgets, which we do add the numbers again. And if you change the grant at any point in time during a rewrite, so you start off with 10 children for lunches, you move to 15 children for lunches, or other

numbers change, please make sure you go to your budget, and you change that.

We find lots of text does not match a budget. And a justification is oftentimes asked, or as optional, you know, provided if you want to provide a justification. My suggestion is always provide a justification. It helps to know how those numbers were derived, typically it's a very simple formula, so if 10

lunches are provided, the justification may say 10 lunches at, you know, $15 a lunch, whatever it may be.

If you don't provide a justification, still save all those documents of the computations, because if you get a call later on of how you got those numbers and you don't have any idea that's also not a good sign.

Okay. So finally, you've kind of reached the point where you may go down the black hole of waiting to see what happens to your grants,

right? But before you do that you want to make sure you finalized and reviewed your draft.

You've proofed it. And you've proofed it again, which means you read all the requirements, you rechecked everything.

You have a clean hard copy on the side, so you can cut and paste into an application.

You may have even had one or two readers to make sure everything that you're writing makes sense, especially if they don't know the project that closely.

It always helps to have another eye for that.

So now you have your clean version. You can upload it into an application.

Make sure you leave at least three or four hours before an application is due online.

Even better the day before, because if you run into those tech issues, the bigger the foundation, you may be absolutely cut off. The smaller foundations may give you a little bit leeway

if you have some tech issues. But you know, when you're getting – and some foundations do get hundreds of applications –

any little excuse to cut somebody off may be used. Proof it one more time before you submit

it. Sometimes the tool or the software application you're using to submit will let you print it. If you do, you can print it from offline.

Otherwise, you have your clean copy of what the cut and paste was.

These days a cover letter isn't necessary, but you may have to, and maybe you're still not submitting online.

And one other point before we talk about follow-up.

So sometimes you're asked for letters of support with an application, which means you're getting outside people to say, yes, they support this project.

And typically an outside person like me, if you're asking for my help, will say, please send me a template.

Send me what you want. Send me a sample of a document.

Do not send everybody the same template. You don't want to see the file …

I don't not want to read three letters that are all the same with three different people on them.

So please try to shake them up a little bit. They can all say about the same thing, but make it look like their original letters.

We all, you know, everybody on the foundation side knows the game.

I've been on the ask side. I've been on the money giving side, you know.

I know how the game is played. And yes, you can follow up, lastly,

with a foundation. I think if, you know, they say applications are due by March 1st,

you haven't heard by April 1st, it's perfectly okay to try to email or phone the funder and say, look, you know, your deadline was April 1st, when can we expect a decision?

Don't ask them if you got funded, but just ask them generally, you know,

when are you sending them out? Because, like everybody else, they get behind.

It may be they have a backlog. Somebody could have been out sick, or they're just not

processing things. You need a lot of patience, and sometimes it's a long review process. But not hearing anything does not necessarily mean you're rejected.

So please do follow up, so you get some information. Okay.

So let's see what makes a proposal stand out from others.

Proposals are most successful, I think, when they're all internally consistent, where the objectives and goals of the proposal match the budget, match the activities, and match the context or contact setting of the proposal. Generally a proposal stands out from the rest if it's well

written and concise, and if it provides us with the level of detail that we need around the organization's program structure, financials, outcomes.

For me a proposal that stands out is one that is concise,

and that answers the questions that are on the website, which demonstrates that the person who is submitting the proposal has gone to our website, which I think is critical.

Okay, so just in summary, what makes a proposal stand out well written, we've talked about that, being concise, not going on and on and on, and repeating yourself in a whole bunch of different ways, a lot of words.

And the goals, you know the goals match the the questions that are asked.

You're asking the questions. You're not leaving out anything that was in the requirements, because it does make it more difficult to assess if you're … if there's information that's omitted, and we'll talk about that a little bit later on.

I would say most often that I talk about is as a reader I have to be inspired and excited.

Okay? I want to see that enthusiasm, that urgency, that passion that comes to the grant application. I mean sometimes I'll read something and say, "Wow!

This is such a cool project." You know, if I'm reading it, it goes oh, so what?

And we'll talk about the "so what" factor later on. You know, that's really doesn't mean anything.

So, you know, again be clear, concise, and really talk about how the proposal will be carried out.

Okay, my favorite part. This is called the "Don'ts or the Magical Thinking of Grant Applicants, or the Naivete of a Grant Applicant,

if you want to think of it that way. So a lot of times I get calls from people inquiring about grants.

This is usually before they've applied. And we're chatting and they'll say, "You know what? We're a perfect fit for you."

It's like, we're a great organization. We're a perfect fit.

And I'm thinking, how do you know that you're perfect with our organization?

Isn't that a little bit presumptuous of you?

Which it really is. You know, and then there's always the rejecting the good advice, or I would also say the defensiveness.

So let's say you contact me. And you say, here's my, you know,

can you give me some help with … so I know what to apply and kind of the area of employment?

And I say, well, you know, I really can't tell you what we would approve, but I can tell if you're in the ballpark of something we would read. And you go through your whole project, and then I think, you know, what I really don't think that this is something that we're

interested in funding. And you push back, and you … you … I think we're perfect. What are you talking about?

And I'll say, basically, you know, if you want to apply, you're still able.

But really, you're rejecting good advice. I'm trying to save you

time and energy of not to apply, because we don't think it's something

that's going to move forward. And the other thing is you wouldn't believe all the phone calls I get with people who know nothing about our foundation.

They haven't read our website. And really, that's not a good sign either.

So you don't want to just apply to make your numbers.

I know some people may have to apply to X number of grants, but really the idea is one

application is one application. You want to send in quality applications, and you want to do a lot of them. You know, if you send in 10 applications, you're more likely to get funded than if you just try one funder.

And again, you know, the best way to get to know funders is when you're not looking for the grant and trying to

networking or connecting them with some way. So let's move to the grant funding decision process.

Your grant has been submitted, and I would say most of the time

this is kind of the ideal situation of what funders are looking for.

You know, your grant application is confidential. They're really not going to talk about it with anybody outside the organization

too much. And I say too much because sometimes funders do share information, and we'll talk about that a little bit later.

They're trying to be fair. They're looking for really excellence to move their own agenda and strategy forward.

They want to be efficient in they're grant decision-making process.

And they also want to try to be transparent.

So the grant has been submitted. Let's talk again

a little bit of what happens. So typically in the grant review process, there's going to be some staff that's going to look at what comes in.

They're going to download it from the Internet. They're going to check to make sure that it's complete,

whatever documents that particular foundation has required is all submitted.

And then it's going to be turned over for the staff that does the internal review. That could be the program officer.

It could be other people depending on the size of the foundation. I would say there's more fingers in the pot at a very large foundation. Smaller foundation

there's probably limited staff. And that person is going to … the program

officer is going to look at that and see how it fits in with the work and

the strategy of the foundation. They may use a rubric which is kind of like a graph on different categories, and score it to see if it's, you know,

well written, or it, you know, has the goals, and the goals
or what works meshes with what the foundation is trying to achieve.

You know, what's the budget? All those kinds of good things, and then, once it's been, you know, reviewed tentatively, it may go into one of three piles. At leastt hat's the way I work.

This is terrific. I need more information. This is probably something we might want to fund. And then something that goes into

I need information. This is okay. But I need more clarification.

And then it may get tossed aside if there's no way we're going to fund this.

And then those first two categories, it goes to a Q and A

for clarification. And I would say even the larger foundations reach out to get clarification on grant-making.

We've done some joint grant-making with Microsoft in Washington … the Microsoft. And in fact they have a very similar process that we do. They do reach out for information.

They do use kind of a rubric and a template, as they assess their grantees, at least the group that we worked with, and there's more than one grant making group at Microsoft. And then it's going to an internal review team. It is going into … it may go to

the Internal review team may include the CEO. It may go to others, but there's a list that's going to be formed as potential grantees. And by the way, your full proposal is most of the time not used.

It's usually condensed to a two-page summary, because if you're looking at a lot, those other reviewers feel they can trust to staff and don't want to review a whole proposal.
Then it may go, in our organization goes to a grants committee that kind of

looks at the funding list. They discuss it. They yea or nay it.

And then it may go to a full board of directors for approval.

So it really depends on the organization, on their internal review process.

But you know, there's more than just the words on the paper.

Why should a foundation fund you? Are you moving our work. You know,

are you moving our work forward? And again, it's more of an art than a science.

You know, we have an internal strategic plan. It's sometimes shared, sometimes not shared.

We know what we'd like to fund. We know if it's innovative, not innovative. But more importantly I call it the "So what" factor.

And that's where how you write your grant comes in.

If I'm reading a proposal, and it's like, Oh, so what?

Who cares? You really need to get beyond that. For example, if you're writing about, say an art project, we want funds to fund an after school art project.

Okay, so what? Who cares? You know? There's lots of art projects.

There's lots of great organizations that run our projects. But why is yours really different?

Are you doing site visits? Are you bringing in experts?

Are you doing some other type of component in this project that really makes it stand out, that engages the funder?

And then the question is can the applicant really do the work?

We've funded projects from a very large university.

It's done terrible projects. And we've funded very small … taken a risk on small nonprofits that've

done great projects. So you know, you dig a little deeper.

Can the funder really do the work? And that's where, you know, I may call another funder, ABC group.

And I know ABC funded this particular nonprofit

that I'm looking at. What was the experience? Do you know the personnel?

Do you know the staff? also, I know a lot of people in the field.

I may call other consultants. So there is that digging deeper that happens.

That's kind of an informal network that really does behind the scene.

Sometimes I'll pass off some things I didn't fund to other funders to say take a look at this.

And recently something was funded in New Orleans from a group in California. So there is that informal network that, you know, just like you're nonprofits and the work you do have your networks, foundations have their networks as well. Okay, let's move on and see what are the most common

mistakes you may see in a proposal. [Video plays]

Generally, the most common mistake we see from applicants in a proposal is not providing the level of detail that we've requested when asking them to submit the proposal.

So we provide a checklist when we ask organizations to submit.

And we really do need to see all of the pieces of information that we ask for.

So generally, we're not getting the level of detail around the financials or the outcomes, for example, that we would need to see.

I think the most common mistake is folks have not really done their homework and have not provided me with the information that we request on our website. And

so it's critical that they go to the website first, because we are very specific in the information that we ask for.

For the Ford Foundation our first contact with a grantee is usually through a letter of inquiry, and I think there are three common mistakes

that at least I saw as a program officer. The first is that the grantee really hasn't taken the time to read our website or understand the work of the foundation, understand the kinds of things that we're funding.

The second thing is, and this is very common, is that we'll get a request to replace some funding that's been cut either from government or from another funder, and that's just a very unappealing place to start from in a conversation. And then the third is that there's really a lack

of distinctiveness in the letter of inquiry, a distinctiveness that speaks to why the organization's approach or the organization itself is different from other kinds of grant seekers.

So there you go. Some of the things that we just talked about.

Do your homework, read the website, and make yourself distinctive.

Okay. So you've been turned down for the grant. It's really an opportunity for discussion,

right? It's to continue to build those relationships with the funder.

You can call or email with specific questions. You know, was there any part of the guidelines we missed?

What's suggestions do you have for the future? Can I reapply? You know, and the other thing you can ask for is, do you know any other funders in the space? We get asked that all the time.

But a lot of times, it was just a business decision. You know,

funders get way more applications than they're able to fund.

And, you know, you really do have to make choices as a funder.

What's the impact? How closely does it tie your strategic plan?

Maybe it's you funded a similar project last year.

And you want to play the odds as the grantee.

Again, you need to apply to lots and lots of places in order to have success and to get more experience with grant writing.

Okay. So now you got the grant. Oh, my God! Your stress comes out.
You're having a panic attack.

You know, it's a great feeling of accomplishment, but at the same time it's very, very scary, because now you have to deliver on what you talked about and what you promised, right?

So you may get a notification about that you got the grant by an email, by a letter.

More importantly, however you get that notification, please send a thank you.

That's always nice. If you do want to have a public recognition event, ask the funder. You know, for us,

we don't want to really be presented with a big check or something like that

for you to spend your money. We're giving you, you know, a grant because we know you're an organization that needs funds, and you don't need to spend unnecessary funds on that.

More importantly, though, be sure to notify the funder about any immediate changes you have, whether it's, you know, staff left in between the time you applied, or there's a budget change, or you need to do some sort of modification.

And also let them know about the good stuff. So, for example, if you got in the newspaper about your agency or this program in between the time you apply, it's always good to share those things as well. So let's quickly go through some grant evaluation, and it's really the process that

determines the impact, the effectiveness, and efficiency of what you're doing. What works, what doesn't work.

And the primary purpose isn't really to satisfy the funder, but it's really to help an organization assess the effectiveness of its work.

If you want to think about is continuous quality of improvement, and how to plan for future success.

So evaluation, think of it this way, is really your friend.

It could be informal. It could be formal.

But the productivity looks at the inputs and outputs of your project. What's happening.

What's not happening. Effectiveness is, you know, what's the relationship between the goals and the outcomes?

What's really happening. Quality is the quality of the work.

You know, the quality of the staff. The quality of your collaboration.

How good are the materials you've created? How good is the white paper or

manual you created? And the timeliness is whether the project really finished on time.

If you're, you know, here's some things that you can think about as you are going through the grant process to evaluate it internally.

You know, what has happened? Why is it happen? Especially if there's an issue.

Is it going to continue? What are we going to do about it?

Sometimes, you know, lots of times, actually, funders will help you with these kinds of troubleshooting, and from a funder's perspective,

when we're done with a project, you know, was the grantee able to implement the project?

What was the project? What was made? What progress was made, what worked, what didn't work, what were some of the challenges and what are the implications for future grants?

Now, that's really something you may not be thinking about.

But you know, when I have a project that's completed, I'll look at it and say, well, if this grantee applies again would I fund it? From this perspective of not necessarily what they're asking for,

but how well the organization did as they work through the grant, because they could have had a terrible project that didn't work out.

It was beyond their circumstances, but if they kept us well informed, we had a good relationship, you know,

I probably would fund them again. Okay, we're almost done, and then we'll have some time for questions.

So I I know Rebecca is going to send you a PDF

of the slides, so you don't have to worry about writing these down.

But there are ways of finding out grant opportunities. You can look at some of the list serves that are out there.

There's Candid at the Foundation Center. And a few of these are subscriptions.

There's Grant Launch, Grant Station, Newmobility.com. If you go online and search grant opportunities, you'll probably find some. Candid or the Foundation Center has a publication called PND

Grants, which I also get. And it lists …

it comes every week, and it lists grant opportunities out there nationally. Some disability specific foundations:

You have the Craig Neilson Foundation in California. They have open RFP specifically on SCI or related disabilities.

Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation in New Jersey has really opened it more to mobility as well as spinal cord injury.

You have the With Foundation in California. They do a lot of health and disability, Ruderman Family Foundation,

Mitsubishi Electric are both foundations that are private foundations but do focus on disability. And the Essel Foundation/Zero Project

I wanted to mention. They're based in Vienna.

They don't give out grants, but they give awards for programs that you currently have.

So if you run a program, they have a call for nominations

usually in the spring or summer, and they give out small stipends to not only come to Vienna but small stipends for the project that you've had. For those in disability research,

there's Department of Defense grants, National Institutes of Health,

NIDILRR grants, and for New Jersey specific grants,

besides the New Jersey Commission on Brain Injury Research, the New Jersey Commission on Spinal Cord Injury Research, and the New Jersey Department of Labor.

I would say there's many other grants in New Jersey that are available.

You just need to go on the state website and find out.

So that brings us almost to the end. There's two books that I've used.

One of them is Winning Grants Step By Step: The Complete Workbook. That's a really good book.

It's in more than one public …
more than one version

now. I think there's a recent version out. It has some worksheets in it. And The Foundation: A Great American Secret is more

of a textbooky kind of book about philanthropy if you're interested in that. I'm going to put up my contact information for a minute and then return it back to Rebecca and open it up for questions.

Rebecca Martin: Thank you so much, Elaine. I feel like you packed in so much good information in that 40 minutes.

So thank you. We already have some questions that are starting to show up in the chat, so if you don't mind, I'll read you the first one.

In addition to the required documents, such as 990 and audit, how much does it help …

oh, it shifted … How much does it help to attach upload supplemental additional documents, such as an annual report, photos, program, brochures, etc.

Elaine Katz: I think it depends what the funder is asking for.

You know, if you think about they're going to get a lot of applications.

So typically our national – and we're small – so typically our national applications have 75 applications.

I'm not going to go through all those materials. I think if you're … if they ask you for supplemental materials, or it's really a key material, I think that's when you can ask them for more information.

But it's on a case by case basis, I guess.

Rebecca Martin: Great. Thank you. We also have. Do you prefer to fund new programs where you are

The major or sole funder, or do you prefer existing programs?

Elaine Katz: For Kessler Foundation, we'll do both. I think otherwise

it really depends on the foundation. Most foundations prefer not to fund new programs.

We are ones that take a risk. We're actually known for our innovation.

So we do fund specifically new programs that haven't been tried.

Rebecca Martin: Thank you. Interpreter Alison, I have a question from Octavio. He would like to ask directly through you.

Would you be able to unmute and interpret for him, please?

ASL Interpreter: Yes, indeed. Okay, one moment. I'm going to attempt to pin him.

Okay. Go ahead. Hello, there! My name is Octavio.

I am deaf, and I was trying to figure out how to write a grant.

But you know, basically, I sent a grant to an organization … I would like to send a grant to an organization that is familiar with hearing impaired people or deaf people.

You know, some sort of organization that is familiar with the term deaf.

So, you know, there are some people who really don't understand deaf culture.

They don't actually understand that hearing impaired is a pejorative word.

So, you know, we're really trying to figure out, you know, different organizations that we can write grants to that kind of have a deaf awareness.

Elaine Katz: Well, my suggestion may be to try to contact Gallaudet University and see if they have

in their library, have a reference to get a list of foundations that may be favorable for serving the deaf community.

So the group of disability funders is really really small, and I think most organizations serve deaf populations.

Just contact regular funders. But part of that goal may be to you know, work with a funder to understand the needs of the community.

Ford Foundation does have some disability funding that goes specifically for advocacy in the deaf community.

If that's what you're interested in.

Rebecca Martin: Thank you. Our next question is when it fits. Oh, sorry Octavio, are you still …

ALS Interpreter: No, all good. He was just saying, that sounds good, thank you.

Rebecca Martin: Okay. Thank you. Okay. So our next question is, when it fits within the budget

is there any reason not to request the max funding from the foundation?

Elaine Katz: To play the game … everybody asks for the max funding.

I've had grants that go like pennies under. Or, I mean, I would say it's always good to end on, at least for us,

you know, we try to round up the dollar. We don't give, you know, 14 dollars and 95 cents.

for example, for a grant. I would say most people do it.

What you want to do is make sure it's a real cost for the grant, because otherwise every funders know you're playing the game, and the grantees know you're going to cut the budget slightly.

If you're asking for $50,000, the grantees know you're probably going to give less than that.

And funders know we're probably going to fund less than that.

So you really want to be realistic if you can. Everybody pads their budgets.

That's just kind of the thing.

Rebecca Martin: Thank you. The next question says, what are your views on applying for general operating support versus a specific program?

Elaine Katz: I would say some … The convention now in the grant philanthropy world is that more funders should be supporting operating grants,

indirect costs, those types of things. However, the realistic picture is that most funders do not fund that, but they may have some indirect costs that are covered in their grants.

So I, again, you know, it's what the grant … the funder says in the grant request.

If they're going to fund operating or they're going to fund programming.

But you should always include some indirect costs in your grant.

Rebecca Martin: Okay. And the, there's a follow up question to that,

which is, how do you think one can work capital improvements into a proposal?

Elaine Katz: I think capital improvements are a specific type of grant, and a lot of funders will not …

we will not fund capital improvements. So you really need to seek out those grant makers that do.

Like, I know Hyde and Watson in New Jersey typically does fund capital.

So there are funders who are known for funding capital, and that's where you may want to use a public funder.

You know, there are public funders depending on what you're building, you know, city funds, community development funds.

Those are really a whole different area. Capital, I think, is a whole different ball game.

Rebecca Martin: Thank you. We have another question. How common is it to fund the same organization more than just one grant cycle?

Is it best to apply continuation of the work from the first cycle?

Elaine Katz: I think that's an interesting question and it's really peculiar to each funder.

So we specifically state on our website for local grant making, we will fund up to three years approving each year in a project. We have funded organizations on a year or two of the same projects.

So, but you still had to apply. So it really depends. The bigger … the bigger the grants, the bigger the funders.

Typically they're funding two- or three-year grants. Our large signature

grants which are up to half a million dollars are typically funded two years at a time.

So it really, it really depends on what's in the grant requirements. And usually funders will state that on their website.

Rebecca Martin: Okay. And I have another question. If you've been denied once, do you think it's worth reapplying? Or do granters tend to recognize the name and move on to the next?

Elaine Katz: I think that's where you need to network. So you need to find out why,

you know, you were rejected. Was it because you didn't fit completely?

You know, I mean I've had, for example, in the early years, we had calls from [unclear] who would get housing grants.

So, of course, that's going to be rejected.

But if nobody calls me to find out why, we just don't typically send to everybody who

gets rejected a reason. In this case, sometimes we do. We say, you know, it didn't meet the grant requirements, or something like that. But if you don't really know what the grant requirements are and don't dig

deeper, you wouldn't know. We have funded people …

actually, we have in our history, we funded an organization applied probably five times because they couldn't …

they didn't know how to write a grant. And finally we sat down with them to help them write a grant that we knew would be funded because they had great concepts, but they just needed help

grant writing. So you know, the smaller the foundation sometimes will give you assistance too. So it could be anything.

But I would say you need to find out why that grant was not funded before you apply again for the same thing.

Rebecca Martin: Thank you. So we do not have any more questions in the chat.

Does anybody want to unmute and ask anything, or place any in the chat?

I have one I can ask in the interim while you're thinking.

I was wondering, the gentleman from Ford had noted that he didn't enjoy talking about grant proposals where you were starting from the deficit of having lost grant funding from somewhere else.

So if someone has a project that they're passionate about, and for whatever reason they've been unable to get funding from another source, and they're trying to get funding from you to continue that work with you, how would you want them to approach that to market themselves well?

Elaine Katz: Well, I think you don't want to say, you know, you want to continue this project because you lost funding.

I think you want to say, you know, we want to move forward with this project.

We think we can expand and contract it. In order to do that, we need additional funding.

You know, there's ways of … I mean, you know,

think of a grant application, it's really marketing and communications.

I mean, you're marketing your organization through your words to somebody else, and you don't want to say well, I'm only applying to you because I lost my money.

That's basically what he's saying. You know, you want to apply …

And we've had organizations say, you know, we want to continue a program.

We don't know where we're going to get future funding. You know,

that's more attractive than saying well, basically,
he's saying, you know, if somebody tells you they're only applying to you because they lost their money, and they think you're a source.

That's, you know, it's like, so what? Everybody loses funding. Why should we fund you?

Rebecca Martin: Thank you. I see that Arlene has raised her hand. Arlene feel free to unmute and ask.

Arlene: Thank you very much. I'm Arlene Romoff.

I'm deaf, and I have cochlear implants that I use to hear.

I've been advocating since the ADA was signed on many different issues.

One issue that we're facing right now and it's been on the platform for 30 years

is assistive listening systems for people with hearing loss, which is part of the ADA but generally ignored. The technology of choice, induction loops, sometimes called hearing loops, prevalent in Europe but relatively new here.

And we're getting money from the Department of Human Services that were given to 13 counties to install loops.

But obviously this is just to start. And so I'm looking at how to assist counties,

municipalities that, for example, need to install induction

loops in their libraries, in their council chambers

so people with hearing loss can walk in and participate. I'm not going to be writing them, but I really wanted to know what this grant process was about.

So in advocating for this, what could I advise these municipalities how to get their money in a way that I have no experience with that,

but perhaps you do?

Elaine Katz: Well, that's more of a public funding issue, which I'm not that familiar with the public sector, but you know there is money available for communities.

Sometimes there's community development funding. There's also private not-for-profits that are funding inclusion for underserved populations and communities.

I mean, that's where I would focus looking in. I mean, because there may also, besides the deaf community, there may be those with visual impairments who need access to documents in braille as well. So it may be looking at a broader ask than just the deaf community, but it …

Arlene: Well, it's not, it's not deaf. It's especially what's really coming up now.

The aging population with a lot of attention on that, because with that, you have a lot of people that are losing their hearing.

Elaine Katz: Right. So there's accessibility money. I mean that then the key is focused on accessibility for all within your community.

And looking for dollars from, I would say, you know, public sources.

There are some foundations that do that, but really accessibility. There's a lot of attention to that right now.

Arlene: Okay, I appreciate your answer. Thanks very much.

Elaine Katz: I'm not sure … I'm not familiar with municipalities again, where they get their funding.

Arlene: Right. It's really … this is the topic of the moment, because a lot of attention is being spent on aging issues.

And this… and with people being able to remain active in the community.

This is the way to do it, and discretely, so many, many facets of this.

But I hope you'll be hearing more about this, because it really it's time has come.

Rebecca Martin: Thank you very much. We have time, probably, for one more question.

I see that Carrie has her hand raised, and so I'll turn it over to her.

Carrie: Hi Elaine, thank you for your training today. I'm happy to be here.

I was wondering if an agency has been awarded a grant in the past and the project was not particularly successful, whether because of the program or the staff at the time, how would you recommend an agency approach a funder and convey that this new project would be successful either with the staff in place or because of

the project itself.

Elaine Katz: You know, that brings up a really interesting point which I forgot to mention.

So if you've applied to a foundation. and you've completed

that project. And now you're in the second year, and you want to play again.

Mention the project you had before. Some people never, ever mention it, which is like, if I gave you funding before, why wouldn't you mention that you're like looking for round 2?

So I would mention it in the grant application that, you know, you had gotten dollars for this, and since then your organization has improved in these ways,

kind of a thing. Or if it's a totally different project, then it's really irrelevant, really.

But I would mention that you know your past grantee, and you appreciated the funds,

and you're looking to do XYZ. But you mentioned, I mean, I did have a grant up application where year 2 they never even mentioned the year before we gave the money, and it was for the same project.

They didn't even talk about how it turned out. So that's a bit disappointing.

Carrie: Thank you.

Rebecca Martin: Thank you so much. So thank you everyone for attending today.

Thank you, Elaine. This was so informative and useful, and
I really appreciate you coming and supporting us in this way.

I'd like to thank our interpreter, Alison, for being here today as well, and as always

I would like to thank the New Jersey Division of Disability Services for funding these trainings as well as the grants program. And so, thank you all,

and we hope to see you again soon. Take care.