

Staffing Grants Management
DEFINING THE STANDARDS FOR PHILANTHROPY

THIS BOOKLET WAS CREATED as a guide to inform the philanthropic community about the diverse tasks assigned to—and staffing needs necessary for—the grants management function. It defines the numerous roles of grants management and its importance as the department in a foundation in which program, finance, communications, application, approval and administrative functions overlap.


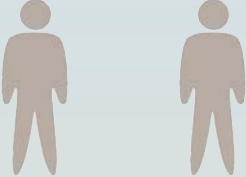





The grants management role should be recognized as a core function of a foundation's work. The information in this booklet will help three primary audiences realize the potential of grants management for their organization:

- CEOs and senior foundation executives will find it useful as they build a first class management team, or reposition staff to improve their organization's effectiveness, by strategically employing grants management as a central resource for their foundations
- Human resource professionals and grants managers can use the templates here to develop position descriptions and workflows appropriate to their foundation's unique structure
- Grants management professionals will now be able to articulate the standards for their positions, better consider career paths and identify the skills and competencies they need for advancement

The structures and recommendations in this booklet reflect the actual staffing patterns of grants management at foundations across the country. To create this template, 75 position descriptions were compiled from independent, family, community and corporate foundations. A survey of the results was sent to the 500 Grants Managers Network members nationwide and the project was discussed in regional meetings. The pages that follow can therefore reliably be used to identify duties and roles of grants management staff in a foundation. (It is important to note, as illustrated in the diagram on the facing page, that the specific responsibilities, as well as the number of individuals who serve in these roles, may vary significantly from foundation to foundation.)

As philanthropy has grown in the United States and elsewhere, grants management has evolved from a collection of needed but ill-defined duties to one of strategic responsibilities that impact all facets of a foundation's work. Today, professional foundations recognize that grants management forms a critical component of their organization's structure. The following pages will help provide clarity on how to best structure this vital function.

Positions, Competencies, Duties

DIRECTOR OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT	GRANTS MANAGER	GRANTS MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATE	GRANTS MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT
<p>Senior Management Level Works at the highest staff levels and with trustees. Enhances foundation's long-range planning, strategy implementation and communications efforts with knowledge of grantees, foundation history and pertinent regulations. Ensures quality and timeliness of all aspects of grants processing and management.</p>	<p>Department Management Level Oversees grants management staff. Directs all components of grants processing, including structure of grants, regulatory compliance, and sharing of grants information with program, finance, communications and technology staff. Trains foundation staff in compliance, internal processes and technology for efficient use of foundation resources.</p>	<p>Analyst Level Works externally with applicants and grantees and internally with program, finance and legal staff to structure and complete processing of grantmaking requirements. Attentive grant administration enhances foundation effectiveness and reputation.</p>	<p>Entry Level Provides data entry and general office and administrative support for grants processing. Accurate work allows all foundation staff to utilize grants records as an information resource.</p>
Foundation Staff Size			
<p>LARGER ORGANIZATIONS may require multiple persons in each position</p>			
<p>MEDIUM SIZED ORGANIZATIONS may combine positions, with staff members responsible for diverse functions</p>			
<p>SMALL ORGANIZATIONS One person may fill all four functions</p>			

The detailed position descriptions on the following pages are tools to help develop grants management positions appropriate to a foundation's size and strategic goals. The range of responsibilities of a particular position will vary based on a foundation's history and structure.

Required Competencies and Skills

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

- Ability to monitor and apply governmental regulations related to foundations
- Knowledge of and experience in philanthropy and the nonprofit sector
- Broad familiarity with foundation's history, structure and operations
- Understanding of foundation's program areas and mission

LEADERSHIP AND PROBLEM-SOLVING CAPACITY

- Demonstrated experience in formulating and implementing policies and procedures
- Ability to think and act decisively about program and operational issues
- Capacity to group abstract ideas and form coherent picture
- Ability to objectively analyze a situation and evaluate pros and cons of any course of action

All skills and competencies listed under "Grants Manager"

Responsibilities

- Participates in strategic planning as a member of the senior management team
 - Forecasts and tracks foundation payout to meet legal requirements and program goals
 - Ensures legal compliance across the foundation's functions
 - Prepares and presents Board materials, responds to Trustee inquiries
 - Fosters the use of innovative program strategies, such as Program Related Investments (PRIs), endowment grants, challenge grants and awards to individuals, as appropriate
 - Helps structure external communications on foundation's mission, goals and programs
 - Provides clear and concise grants administration policies and procedures for grantees and staff
 - Contributes to and coordinates foundation publications, including the annual report and Web site
 - Helps identify grantees with capabilities for additional or new projects
 - Communicates foundation policies to staff, grantees and applicants
 - Develops funding applications, brochures and departmental Web sites
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The Director is responsible for overseeing grants management and integrating its work with the other departments of a foundation. This person monitors the grants management operations to ensure overall high quality of grants administration across programs. Directors are able to use their resulting cross-program knowledge to support efficient operations that further the goals of the foundation and its staff. The executive functions of this position are seen in the variety of titles used by persons with these responsibilities, including Vice President of the Office of Grants Administration, Director of Grants and Programs, Director of Grants Administration, Chief Operating Officer and sometimes Operations Manager (in small foundations). This position typically reports to the CEO or President.

Required Competencies and Skills

GRANTS AND PROPOSAL ADMINISTRATION

- Knowledge and application of best practices in grant making
- Analytical capabilities with accounting procedures and processes for structuring projects
- Understanding of current IRS regulations related to foundations
- Knowledge of grants management software and information technology skills

MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Ability to communicate technical, budgetary and program details to staff, grantees and applicants
- Demonstrated leadership skills and ability to manage and motivate a team
- Ability to design and implement effective workflow processes and procedures
- Capability to foster an atmosphere which recognizes and respects cultural and individual differences

All skills and competencies listed under “Grants Management Associate”

Responsibilities

- Ensures compliance with IRS regulations and foundation requirements for all grants and programs
- Negotiates and facilitates sensitive issues in the grant-making process
- Prepares docket materials for Board and committee meetings
- Creates program and management budgets and periodic financial reports and IRS schedules
- Develops and oversees standard terms and conditions for grant award letters, agreements and contracts
- Oversees grants to individuals, PRIs and other specialized awards instruments
- Provides links between program, finance, information technology and other administrative staff so that all foundation activities are smoothly implemented
- Trains staff on both grants procedures and grants management software
- Drafts and updates grants management manual
- Conducts ongoing grants administration, program and foundation management research, including analyses of grant reports and program trends
- Implements and maintains grants management software that follows foundation’s work processes while balancing the needs of program and accounting staff and regulatory compliance; assures integrity of data
- Identifies professional development and training opportunities for staff and self
- Undertakes special projects as assigned or initiated

As department leader, the Grants Manager brings to the position extensive experience with the grant-making cycle and the ability to design, implement and monitor workflow processes and procedures. Either previous work experience or a master’s degree is preferred by most foundations when hiring for this position. Persons with these responsibilities have titles such as Grants Administrator, Program Administrator and Foundation Administrator. At foundations with small staffs, a program officer or executive director may have these responsibilities. The Grants Manager typically reports to the Executive Director, CFO or Director of Grants Management.

Required Competencies and Skills

- Proven abilities in analytical, database and reporting skills
- Advanced computer and office skills
- Basic understanding of IRS and foundation-specific regulations
- Strong communicator with program and finance staff, grantees and applicants
- Sound judgment with regards to budget and program issues
- Strong organizational skills and ability to multi-task

All skills and competencies listed under “Grants Management Assistant”

Responsibilities

- Assures compliance with IRS and foundation-specific regulations for assigned grants
 - Creates grant files that meet legal, auditing and foundation requirements
 - Schedules reporting requirements and payments for new grants
 - Analyzes budget and expenditure reports, monitors PRIs
 - Maintains multi-year payment schedules and monitors grant balances
 - Provides reports, responses to inquiries and grants histories as requested
 - Communicates externally with grantees and applicants
 - Communicates internally with program and finance staff
 - Participates in training and professional development
 - Tracks and processes vendor contracts
 - Understands foundation structure and history
 - Undertakes special projects as assigned
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The Grants Management Associate serves as the foundation’s liaison between grantees and program and finance staff. This person creates and monitors reporting schedules, deadlines and requirements to ensure consistent grant processing. Recent college graduates or individuals with several years of office or bookkeeping experience are often sought when recruiting for this position. Depending on the organization, these responsibilities are part of a job variously referred to as Grants Associate, Assistant Grants Manager, Program Associate, or Proposal Management Associate. This position reports to the Grants Manager/Department Manager.

Grants Management Assistant (Entry Level)

Required Competencies and Skills

- Basic computer and office skills
- Attention to details and deadlines
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Ability to work with supervision
- Strong team player skills in a multicultural environment

Responsibilities

- Maintains records and files
- Answers telephones and refers inquiries
- Opens and sorts mail
- Tracks incoming inquiries and proposals
- Drafts routine correspondence
- Maintains calendar and contacts
- Handles travel arrangements and maintains expense reports
- Assists with special meetings or event planning
- Assists with preparation of Board materials
- Orders and tracks office supplies
- Undertakes special projects as assigned

In fulfilling these responsibilities, the Grants Management Assistant provides administrative support for grants management. Information for payment processing, requirement tracking and contacts is centrally available to all foundation staff as a result of this work. The position is variously referred to as Office Assistant, Grants Assistant, Administrative Assistant, or Program Assistant and reports to the Grants Manager/Department Manager.

Staffing Grants Management: Defining the Standards for Philanthropy is a project of the Grants Managers Network (GMN). GMN improves grantmaking by advancing the knowledge, skills and abilities of grants management professionals and leading grantmakers to adopt and incorporate effective practices that benefit the philanthropic community. As the nation's only nonprofit membership organization devoted to grantmaking operations, GMN connects its more than 1,400 members to best practices and the collective knowledge of the field, innovative learning experiences, and peer-to-peer collaborations. For more information about GMN, visit www.gmnetwork.org.

Staffing Grants Management was conceived by a group of grants managers from the GMN-New York Region, with input from GMN members nationally. Jim O'Sullivan (John A. Hartford Foundation) and Mary A. Lampson (Ford Foundation), led the project with the help of A. Heather Masters (Rockefeller Brothers Fund), Suzanne Neuman (Henry Luce Foundation), Maryan Newbury (Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors), Kyle Reis (Ford Foundation) and John Seidl (Heron Foundation). Financial support was provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.