

The Phone Call is Part of the Research

Always call for more information, unless otherwise specified.

You may get tips, advice, and direction beyond what is on the Web. You may glean unofficial interests and priorities from these conversations. Even if you don't you are establishing a relationship.

First, carefully read all pertinent funder information, program information, RFP, guidelines, and forms. You may find answers to some of the following questions.

What should you ask a program officer?

Private Foundation

- (Briefly describe organization and project.)
- Is my organization eligible?
- Does the project fall within your priorities?
- Will any special criteria be used?
- Does the program provide continuation funding in future years?
- What is the anticipated application/award ratio?
- What sort of evaluation process would you like to see?
- What are the most common mistakes made?
- What would you like to see addressed that other applicants overlook?
- Would you review a pre-proposal or concept paper? Would you review a draft proposal?
- Can you provide or refer us to a previously funded proposal? Is there a former grantee that you think would be willing to talk with me?
- How will the proposals be reviewed?
- How much technical expertise will the reviewers have?
- Can you provide a copy of the review form?
- Do you conduct site visits?

Government

The best time to call is before the RFP is released.

Look on program announcement for most local contact given. For Formula grants, call the Fed. Agency and get the local contact.

Try to set up a personal meeting.

In addition to above instructions, questions for Foundation officers include:

- When will program be announced in Federal Register?
- Where/in what form will application materials be available?
- Are there other programs that have been funded in my state that I should get in touch with?
- Will there be workshops? If so, where and when?
- How much money is allocated to this program?
- Do you expect the average award size to differ from last year?
- How much money will be available for new awards?
- Are there related or similar programs that I should look into?