

# DIALOGUE

*A Periodic Newsletter for Development Officers*

-- Bill Somerville, Editor --

---

*Dialogue* is published to help improve relations between funders and development officers. *Dialogue* was started at the request of a development officer. The questions in this issue were sent in by readers of *Dialogue*.

---

**Q: If today's grant is tomorrow's overhead, why do foundations keep pushing new programs? What about the "tried and true" program?**

**A:** It might be good if we dropped the term "tried and true" because it implies that if we remain static that's OK. In today's world static won't do. Show how your work is dynamic and how you are striving to have innovations that improve what you do.

**Q: Do you know why some large private foundations give nationally and internationally but not locally?**

**A:** This would be unusual. Some private foundations give in a restricted local area that might exclude you. These foundations have particular funding interests which if you fit, you might want to call to their attention.

**Q: If we as Development people want to increase our foundation funding, "chasing the money" is a relatively common game. How do we get funded without compromising our values?**

**A:** We have got to leave the "beggar – bestower" mentality. The Editor believes development people should stop asking for money and start inviting funders to invest in good ideas. The system of sending proposals asking for money where both parties are unknown to each other is flawed. A basis premise of funding is trust; the primary job of funders is to find people you can trust. Create relationships with funders.

**Q: Who gives technical assistance grants? Do you think they are a good idea?**

**A:** Technical assistance, management assistance, organizational effectiveness – your choice. The Packard Foundation has a full time senior program officer who focuses on organizational effectiveness. Community foundations often give grants in these categories. The irony is most people don't seek such funding. (The person at Packard is Barbara Kibbe 650-948-7658.)

**Q: What are new ways of bringing in money?**

**A:** There are seven sources of funds: government (federal, state, county, city), United Way, foundations, corporations, fee for service, special projects (special event, business such as a thrift store), individuals. A recent innovation is when you buy on the Internet the retailers give 2% to 10% of the price to a charity you designate. ([www.shop2give.com](http://www.shop2give.com))

**Q: How does one capture seed money?**

**A:** When you need seed money this is start up funding but you need to make clear what you have done previously to indicate you can do what you are proposing. Otherwise you are asking people to have blind faith in you and usually this doesn't work.

**Q: Say a non profit meets all the guidelines for criteria needed for a grant along with 50 other non profits – what is the determining factor in who that fortunate non profit will be?**

**A:** There isn't one factor but some deciding factors are: trust, prior knowledge of the applicant, achievements by the applicant, ability to survive downturns and bounce back, innovative thinking, willingness to venture and try new approaches, integrity.

**Q: Is any consideration being given by corporate and family foundations to include or add religious based non profits to their eligible applicant group?**

**A:** An interesting development at the Marin Community Foundation might have implications for other foundations. Rev. Linda Compton is the staff officer for the Religion, Ethics, and Conscience program. This is the first of 400+ community foundations to include religion. Note how the program area was expanded to reach persons of faith and persons of conscience. Religious groups approaching foundations might want to follow suit. (Contact Rev. Compton at [www.marincf.org](http://www.marincf.org)).

Past copies of *Dialogue*, Number 1 (February 1996) to 16 are available as a unit for \$5 to cover the cost of copying and mailing. For a complete set send \$5 to:

**Philanthropic Ventures Foundation  
1212 Preservation Park Way  
Oakland CA 94612-1201**

## **Strategic Alliances**

National Study to Examine the Effectiveness of Nonprofit Strategic Alliances.

Chapin Hall Center for Children and Strategic Solutions ask for your help in identifying social service or cultural organizations that have joined forces to decrease administrative expenses, increase management quality, or better position themselves in the face of increased competition. Please contact us if you know of nonprofits currently or previously in alliances that involve the sharing or merging of staff, facilities, equipment, or other administrative functions or the launching of a joint program that none of the partner organizations have the capacity to maintain on their own.

Amelia Kohm

[kohm-amelia@chmail.spc.uchicago.edu](mailto:kohm-amelia@chmail.spc.uchicago.edu)

## **Best Practices by Development Officers**

After a number of years in development, I believe that I have discovered a practical and creative way to involve Board members in fund raising. Realizing that everyone-who is not a fundraiser- hates fund raising, my development committee chair and I decided that Board members are really Ambassadors for our organization. They are responsible for “talking good” about the organization, and in doing so, they raise public awareness and increase contributions. So we created the Ambassador Campaign. The Campaign consists of training, personal donor visits, events, and request letters. If a Board member isn’t comfortable asking for money, s/he should always feel comfortable introducing people to the organization, bringing them on site for tours, talking “good” about us whenever possible. This is our first year, final results are pending, but we expect a very successful year!

Darla Atwood, Director of Development  
Edgewood Children’s Center, San Francisco  
(415) 682-3115

## **Out of the Ordinary Funding**

The Jacksonville Community Foundation has established the Philanthropic Initiative Fund to teach giving to youngsters. The initiative provides both a classroom in philanthropy and a hands-on experience in grantmaking. Youth identify community issues, determine the changes they wish to make as grantmakers, design and implement a grantmaking program, and monitor their grants. Eighteen students take part.

(904) 356-4483

**Dialogue**

Philanthropic Ventures Foundation  
1212 Preservation Park Way  
Oakland CA 94612

Non Profit Organization  
U S Postage PAID  
Oakland CA Permit 962



If you would like to get Dialogue by e-mail, please send us your e-mail address. Otherwise, we'll send it via regular mail.

Our E-mail address is [pvf@lmi.net](mailto:pvf@lmi.net)



**Comments on Dialogue**

“In the past six months we have implemented many of your ideas such as mini grants, empowerment, etc.”  
Foundation Executive  
Clarks Summit PA

“As always, I found the quick question and answer format accessible and thought provoking.”  
Patrick de Freitas  
Laird Norton Endowment Foundation



**Fax your questions or comments for Dialogue to: (510) 6456-1892**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---