



## PRC Grant Policy



### Policy

## **THE PRC GRANT POLICY: Applying for Private/Foundation Grants**

### **Introduction**

It is the purpose of this policy to support creativity and innovation in identifying and addressing problems that cannot be resolved with existing resources, but might be suitable areas for seeking grant funds. It is important to emphasize the need for adequate planning and quality control in all activities related to the administration of grants that involve resources and personnel of Westchester County Parks Department or PRC.

Projects funded in whole or in part with grant money are not independent of PRC operations and should not be created simply in reaction to a notice of availability of funds, whatever the source. It is the practice of PRC to be proactive in its pursuit of supplemental funding sources. PRC personnel should identify problems that cannot be solved with current resources, engage in broad-based planning to address those problems, and carefully consider whether grants are an appropriate resource to pursue, given their temporary nature.

For the purpose of the policy, a grant is an award of financial assistance for which PRC, or the Westchester Parks Foundation, has made application to a public or private entity and is subject to requirements imposed by the awarding agency. These requirements include, but may not be limited to, implementing an agreed upon program, being accountable for the use of those funds awarded to the Westchester Parks Foundation or PRC to accomplish said program, and providing cash or in-kind matching funds or other contribution of PRC resources.

The existence of grant funds does not exempt PRC personnel from conducting project activities in accordance with County policies and procedures which govern fiscal processes, hiring of personnel, employee travel, etc. Regulations and reporting requirements of the funding agency are in addition to, not replacement for, County policies and procedures.

The County recognizes the additional effort that must go into grant projects at all stages of the process to ensure their proper implementation and ultimate success. This policy and the procedures that follow are intended to clarify and streamline that process where possible.

The Westchester Parks Foundation will be the fiscal agent for any foundation grants since foundations only give grants to 501(C)(3) organizations and WPF has that status. Government isn't eligible.

### **Grant Staff**

A staff person from the Conservation Division serves as the grant writer for PRC.

The Westchester Parks Foundation also has a grant writer to assist with obtaining grants. Both PRC staff and the WPF staff have extensive training in grants.

## **Application Process**

Applying for private/foundation grants involves the following:

- Identifying problem areas that might be addressed using grant funds;
- Engaging in broad-based planning that will ensure that personnel and cooperating agencies essential to implementing the program are involved at the earliest stages;
- Designing projects in such a way that activities can be institutionalized in the future should they result in successful programs, since grants are usually a source of temporary funding or for primarily starting or testing new initiatives;
- Developing partnerships that strengthen the project, but with careful awareness of possible conflict;
- Proofreading of all grants is done by the Marketing division;
- Filing applications on time and in accordance with the funding agency's instructions;
- Managing grant funds in accordance with the same policies and procedures as those required of County funds and in accordance with funding agency guidelines/requirements;
- Managing the project in accordance with regulations and deadlines of the funding agency;
- Providing copies of progress reports and evaluations to the foundation when required.

## **Researching grant opportunities**

The primary tool used for researching foundation grants is through a subscription to the Foundation Directory on-line. The Foundation Centers directory has the most extensive details on grants and funders. The Westchester County Community Foundation is also another source.

In addition, numerous other on-line resources are available such as the Chronicle of Philanthropy <https://www.philanthropy.com/> and PND News <https://philanthropynewsdigest.org/news>

## **Training and Other Opportunities**

Grant staff is encouraged to belong to professional organization about grants such as Grant Writers of the Lower Hudson, the Association of Development Officers or the Association of Professional Fundraisers.

In addition, staff is encouraged to take classes or attend workshops on various aspects of grant writing to stay current with funding trends. The Foundation Center in NYC offers classes. The State University at Purchase offers classes in conjunction with the Association of Development Officers. United Way through Pace University also offers classes.

Staff is also encouraged to attend special fund raising or not-for profit days such as Fundraising Day in NYC. It is the premier east coast conference on philanthropy bringing together the best nonprofit professionals from around the world to share their thoughts and advice. United Ways Not-For-Profit Leadership Summit also has a grant track.