



## Quick Guide: Funding for K-12 Service-Learning Programs

*Source: RMC Research Corporation, Denver, CO, July 2004*

*For additional resources on these and other service-learning topics visit the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse Website at [www.servicelearning.org](http://www.servicelearning.org)*

---

Service-learning programs can be funded in several basic ways. Ideally, funds are a line item in the school or district budget, reflecting the fact that service-learning is a part of the mainstream educational delivery system. Many districts choose to fund service-learning as a strategy to accomplish curricular goals, so no additional sources of funding are needed.

If you do not have access to internal funding or if you need additional funds to support start-up or special activities, funds can be generated as part of the following programs. More information on these is provided below in the Resources sections.

- The Corporation for National and Community Service Learn and Serve America program grants (available on an annual basis, typically through State Learn and Serve programs);
- Use of service-learning as a strategy to meet the goals of Title I or other Title programs (e.g., Safe and Drug Free Schools (Title IV); Innovative Programs (Title V); and Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native Education (Title VII)) under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (often referred to as Special Education); these must be accessed either through state or local offices and each has very specific program requirements;
- Solicited or unsolicited grants or donations from public or private foundations;
- Grants or donations available from individuals, school districts, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other sources; and/or
- Local fundraising by parents, teachers, students, and/or community members.

Each of these sources has particular application requirements so you will need to research them using the resources provided below. Typically, you will need to provide information as to how service-learning will accomplish program goals, your specific proposed activities, costs, goals or performance objectives, and how you will document outcomes.

Deciding on the specific fundraising strategy to use depends on how much funding you are looking for and the size/scale of your service-learning program. If you are fundraising for a

large school-based service-learning initiative you may want to seek federal or foundation funding. For a single class service-learning project, you may want to look for local donations or fundraising activities. For sustainability, finding a stable funding source such as a district line item or long term grant is preferable.

The following resources may be helpful to those designing a funding strategy for service-learning programs.

## **Web Resources**

### **The Chronicle of Philanthropy**

<http://philanthropy.com/>

Provides information about grant writing and fundraising. Contains a searchable database of corporate and foundation grants.

### **The Foundation Center**

<http://fdncenter.org>

Lists funding opportunities and provides information about the grant application process. Contains the *Philanthropy News Digest*, a foundation directory, and online grant writing and fundraising tutorials.

### **The Grantmaker Forum on National and Community Service**

<http://www.gfcns.org>

Provides resources for grant writers and links to publications of service-learning and civic engagement research.

### **Learn and Serve America**

<http://www.learnandserve.org>

Contains applications for Learn and Serve and other grants. Also see: <http://www.nationalservice.org/egrants/index.html>, the Corporation for National and Community Service's online grant application and management system.

### **National Service-Learning Clearinghouse**

<http://www.servicelearning.org>

Contains a searchable database of awards, fellowships, scholarships, funding resources, grants, and funders called Funding Sources  
<http://www.servicelearning.org/article/archive/42/>

### **National Service-Learning Partnership**

[http://www.service-learningpartnership.org/youth\\_innovation/resources.cfm](http://www.service-learningpartnership.org/youth_innovation/resources.cfm)

Contains sample funding applications and press releases, and provides timelines for fundraising and grant writing.

**The U.S. Department of Education Forecast of Funding**

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html>

Lists all programs and competitions under which the Department of Education has invited or expects to invite applications for new awards for 2004.

**UCLA Higher Education Service-Learning Clearinghouse**

<http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/slc/train1.html>

Describes the fundraising process and lists sources for service-learning funding.

**Related NSLC Resources:**

Raising Funds for Service-Learning in Higher Education (NSLC Fact Sheet)

<http://www.servicelearning.org/article/archive/95/>

Sustainability in K-12 Schools: Selected Resources (NSLC Bibliography)

<http://www.servicelearning.org/article/archive/297/>

**Print Resources**

Billig, Shelley H. "Funding Your Service-Learning Program." In *Building Support for Service-Learning*, edited by Shelley H. Billig, 105-124. Denver: RMC Research Corporation, 1998.

Brewer, Ernest W. *Finding Funding: Grantwriting From Start to Finish, Including Project Management and Internet Use*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2001.

Burke, Mary Ann. *Simplified Grantwriting*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2002.

*Grants for K-12 Schools*, edited by Mollie Mudd. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers, 2001.

Ruskin, Karen B., and Charles M. Achilles. *Grantwriting, Fundraising, and Partnerships: Strategies That Work*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 1995.