

## A Foundation Prospects Chart

By Susan Whitmore, The Moran Company

### A Foundation Prospects Chart

The aim of a prospects chart is help keep you on track with the preparation, submission, and follow-up of grant requests over the course of six months or a year. If you stick to a schedule, you will not overburden your administrative office with too many proposals to submit or track at one time. A number of requests submitted over time will also hopefully insure a steady stream of funding.

Your prospect chart should include the following categories:

- Foundation name and contact information: Address, phone number, and the name of the person to call for follow-up.
- Foundation information: Areas of interest, geographic focus, and any limitations.
- Application information: What to send, guidelines or how to request them, deadlines.
- Your request: When to submit, dollar request, and what program the request is for. (Time your request in accordance with foundation board meetings if no deadline is listed; base your dollar request on the foundation's recent giving history.)
- Status: This column includes ongoing information, including when the application was sent, when follow-up phone calls or meetings took place, and the request outcome.

A typical prospects chart might look like the one listed below.

<b>Grant Options: January – June 2003</b>				
<b>Foundation</b>	<b>Foundation Info</b>	<b>Application Info</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Status</b>
	<b>Fields of interest:</b> <b>Geographic focus</b> <b>Limitations</b>	Initial approach: Letter Deadline(s): None		
<b>Andrews McMeel                      Universal                      Foundation</b> 4520 Main St. Kansas City, MO 64111  Contact: Kathleen Andrews, V.P. and Secy.	<b>Fields of interest:</b> Arts; Community development; Education; Health care; Higher education; Human services; Media/communications; Museums; Performing arts; Youth development. Geographic focus: Kansas; Missouri <b>Limitations:</b> Giving primarily in KS and MO, with emphasis on the bi-state Kansas City area.	Application form not required. Initial approach: Letter Deadline(s): None	January \$10,000 Youth Newsletter	Sent 1/1/3; meeting 1/15/3; pending

Equally important to timely proposal submission is your organization's follow-up with the foundation while the grant is under consideration. Suggestions for successful follow-up include:

- Where possible, match individual board member with requests, especially if a board member knows someone on the foundation board. The board member can make phone calls, arrange for site visits, or take a funder out to lunch. Board members can also be paired with development staff at meetings.
- Call the funder one to two weeks after submission to make sure the request has been received. Ask if you can set up: 1) a site visit, 2) a meeting at the foundation, or 3) a phone conference.
- Always follow up meetings, site visits or phone conferences with a written thank you.
- If your request is declined, call the contact to find out if they are open to discussing why it was rejected. In this conversation you can find out critical information, including how to improve your application and whether or not you can re-apply in the next funding cycle. Major funders might initially decline a request from an unfamiliar organization; however if you stay in touch and keep them apprised of how your program is going, it may be on the second or third try that funding comes through.