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GRANTS OFFICE

GRANTS OFFICE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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MOVING BEYOND THE "BUDGET STRESS" REQUEST

BUILDING GRANT-ELIGIBLE
PROJECTS, P1

PRISONER RE-ENTRY GRANTS

RESOURCES FOR
GRANTSEEKERS, P3

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

A LOOK AT HIGH-SPEED RAIL
AND RACE TO THE TOP
FUNDING FROM THE
RECOVERY ACT, P4

NEW WRITERS WANTED!

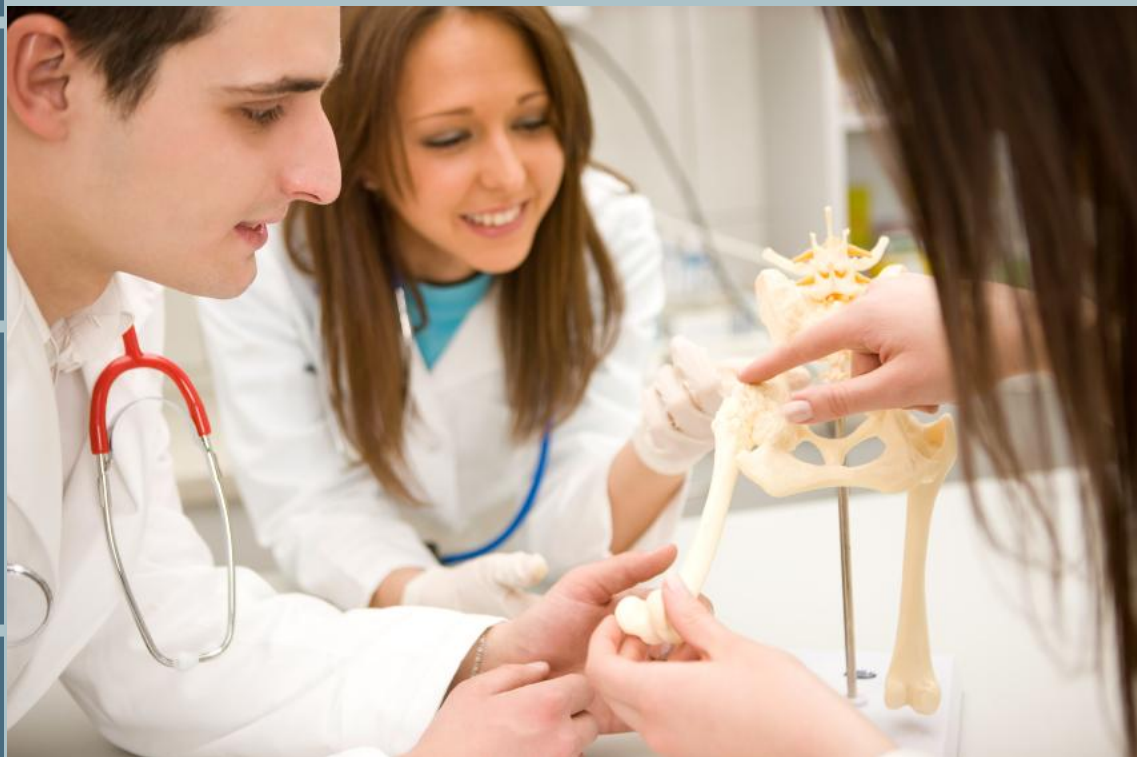
LEARN HOW TO HAVE YOUR
ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN
FUNDED! P5

2012 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

BE AN OFFICIAL SPONSOR
OF A .INFO WEBSITE &
WEBCASTS, P9

Embrace the Changes: Update on HRSA's Nursing Education Grant Programs

WHAT GRANTSEEKERS NEED TO KNOW TO SUCCEED, P7



World-class grants intelligence, at your fingertips



Moving Beyond The "Budget Stress" Request BUILDING GRANT-ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

By Christopher Haight, Grants Development Consultant

With what seems like a never-ending saga of budget cuts, organizations across the country continue to seek out alternative sources of funding such as grants from different government sources or private foundations. Many of these requests, perhaps unsurprisingly, tend to be for basic operating expenses, salaries, or equipment such as new computers or technology. Even as more organizations line up to compete for grants for basic purposes, funders are actually seeking much more comprehensive projects beyond these kinds of requests.

Most often, these funders break down along two overarching themes to their grant programs: they either seek out the most promising innovations or seek to sustain and scale-up evidence-based practices that are not yet widely adopted.

For the former group, the notion of what constitutes a promising innovation goes far beyond the mere implementation of the latest technologies such as an iPad. Rather, the innovative approach tends to push a re-imagination of what could be compared to what currently

exists. Replacing textbooks with text on an iPad is not a fundamental shift in reshaping how students are educated. The paradigm is still the same, albeit with a different tool.

Applying for these kinds of grants can bring an additional layer of challenge as it requires leadership at the creative level, as well as at the fiscal, technical, and logistical ones. Since there is no standard definition of what can be construed as "innovative," there is a greater reliance on the subjectivity of reviewers. Grantseekers should challenge basic assumptions and models when trying to think of an innovative project, especially those that may involve some considerable risk. In many ways, these types of projects are akin to an entrepreneurial endeavor - without the typical profit motive in a corporate environment.

Innovation should not be mistaken for completely untested or undeveloped, however. An innovative project is most likely to be competitive if it draws from supportive research and investigations that would lead to a reasonable hypothesis that the proposed project would yield real

(continued on page 2)

Resources for Evidence-Based Practices

- **What Works Clearing House:** <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>
- **National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practice:** <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/>
- **COPS Office Resource Information Center:** <http://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceSearch.aspx>
- **CDC Prevention Research Centers:** <http://www.cdc.gov/prc/prevention-strategies/index.htm>
- **Find Youth Info:** <http://fyi-iwgyp.airprojects.org/ProgramSearch.aspx>



(continued from page 1)

benefits. For example, existing research provides evidence that students suffer a severe drop-off in retention of skills and knowledge during the academically-inactive summer months. Based on this existing research, a school or nonprofit organization may propose any number of initiatives that keep students active during the summer in applying lessons learned from the previous school year. The innovation would be in taking the results of previous research and developing them into an actionable project.

In contrast, a grant program that seeks to support evidence-based practices may be less interested in "what's new" than in "what works." Grantseekers interested in pursuing these streams of funding should seek out initiatives and models that have already been implemented and researched. Research, in this case, refers usually to causal studies that compare control and test groups of students to analyze the actual statistical significance of the initiative. These are much more rigorous than a longitudinal study that is more likely to illustrate correlation between the initiative and student performance, instead of more reliable scientific proof.

When pursuing this kind of grant program, there are many resources that have documented evidence-based practices. Within education, the Institute of Education Sciences provides a public database on these kinds of projects related to everything from literacy instruction to character development. Other government agencies also provide additional resources, such as the Center for Disease Control (see side box on previous page for website URLs).

Innovation and evidence-based practices need not be mutually exclusive, however. Innovative programs can encompass a variety of evidence-based techniques, blending previously proven interventions into a new model or project. The most important thing to remember is that funders are not usually interested in making up for lost revenues or enabling purchases of equipment without a credible project attached.

Understanding GRANTS:

One of the most important things we emphasize to grantseekers is to approach grants with ideas for projects, not just requests for products. For many grantseekers, moving beyond this mindset can be difficult. To help get you started, here are a few key items you should consider for your organization:

Goals: What tangible end-results do you want to accomplish? You should not think of a goal as a list of items to buy. Rather, goals should be actual measurable results, such as number of patients seen, improved academic performance, etc.

Rationale: Why has your organization identified this as a priority for funding? You must be able to demonstrate a need for the grant beyond just a restricted budget. A rationale could be an indicator like increasing poverty rates.

Audience: Who are the people you are serving? Many grant programs specifically seek to help the most disadvantaged populations such as the poor, elderly, youth, individuals with disabilities, etc.

Novelty: Are you seeking funding to launch a new initiative or expand your services? General operating expenses are among the least fundable types of requests. Many funders prefer to see something new and promising for your organization or functional area.

Timeline: How and when are you planning to implement your project and track the results? Winning a grant is hardly the end of a grant cycle - funders will maintain close ties to monitor spending and survey the results.

Sustainability: How will you continue the project after funding has ceased? If you do not have a credible plan for how to sustain the services and benefits of your project (beyond seeking more grant funding), funders will be much less interested in your proposal. They want to have a lasting impact and not be a constant source of revenue.



Prisoner Reentry in the New Economy

RESOURCES FOR GRANTSEEKERS

By Vince Siragusa, Grants Development Consultant

According to a 2009 report from the Pew Center on the States, a division of The Pew Charitable Trusts, more than 7 million people are in jail or prison, or on probation or parole. With one in every 31 adults under some form of correctional control, the economic costs and burdens associated with this statistic are no doubt overwhelming. Compounding this issue is the fact that too often successful prisoner reentry—the process of leaving prison and returning to society—isn't solely correlated to a specific release date.

With current unemployment rates sitting over 9%, many people, successful with their release, find themselves unprepared to compete adequately in a stagnant economy that is already saturated with unemployed and underemployed job seekers. For this reason alone, it is not difficult to surmise why, according to the Center, nearly two-thirds of the inmates released from state and federal prison each year are rearrested within three years. Perhaps too often, recidivism results less from a propensity to commit crimes, but as a result of limited alternative options.

As stated by the Community

Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Director, Bernard K. Melekian, "Every day, ex-offenders return to communities in need of programs and resources that support the challenges associated with reentry." In response to those prisoner reentry challenges, the Council of State Governments Justice Center, a national nonprofit organization, has partnered with the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to make available the promising online Reentry Programs Database.

Searchable by state, topic area (employment, housing, mentoring, etc.), and by keyword, this free resource is available at <http://reentrypolicy.org/> and is comprised of various reentry programs and initiatives from across the country that are designed to identify adult and juvenile programs that assist in making an individual's transition from a correctional facility back into the community more successful. The database features a variety of available programs, allowing those returning home and their families to

connect with local programs designed to facilitate that reentry. Included in that database are a number of Second Chance Act programs.

With the Department of Justice tasked with administering the associated grant programs, the Second Chance Act of 2007 was in large part authorized based on its intended design—to increase public safety and to break the cycle of criminal recidivism. The \$83 million provided in the FY2011 budget supported dozens of state, local, and tribal related initiatives. Successful projects in the past have ranged from substance abuse and mental health initiatives, down to mentoring and career training. Additional information on 2011 awards is available at

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/FY2011_awards_solicitation.htm.

While successful stories built on Second Chance funding are common, the future of this funding remains in limbo. The Senate Appropriations Committee has eliminated funding for the Second Chance Act in the FY2012 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill while the House Appropriations Committee provides an amount of \$70 million. Additional information will be available pending passage of the FY2012 appropriations and by monitoring www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/funding.htm for upcoming grant opportunities.





Where Are They Now? Evaluating Results from the Recovery Act

By Christopher Haight, Grants Development Consultant

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, Recovery Act) is now over two-and-a-half years old. Within that time frame, over \$200 billion in new grants, loans, and contracts was awarded in order to spur economic growth, maintain employment, and invest in various national priorities. While the open grant opportunities have come and gone, their effects are still being felt as some of the most high profile programs continue to influence the national agenda.

High Speed Rail

Among some of the most controversial components of the Recovery Act was the inclusion of \$8 billion for the development of High-Speed Rail (HSR) in the United States. While a large sum relative to what the United States normally invests in any year for HSR, it

still was more of a (small) down payment, given that full implementation of any of the planned HSR lines would stretch easily into the tens of billions of dollars.

Since announcing the initial recipients of HSR funds from the Recovery Act, HSR has been among the most volatile. The 2010 midterm elections swept into power skeptics of HSR, such as Governors Rick Scott (Florida), Scott Walker (Wisconsin), and Josh Kasich (Ohio), who all returned the awarded stimulus funds, fearing the development of HSR would ultimately prove too costly for their states to handle. Recently, California announced its own HSR plans were already due for dramatic change, with the ultimate price tag rising from \$33 billion to \$98 billion and timeline for completion extended.

Earlier this year in February, Vice President Joe Biden proposed a six-year \$53 billion investment into a HSR network, only to have it go the path of so many other proposals in Congress - nowhere. Given the new unwillingness of states to invest, cost overruns as plans are revised, and pervasive focus

on deficits in Congress, it is unlikely this Recovery Act investment will result in the envisioned network of HSR that is much more common in Europe or Asia. Despite this diminished outlook, the investment may still help make improvements to efficiency and safety of the rail networks that do exist and provide marginal improvements to areas of the country where rail is more heavily used, such as the Northeast.

Race to the Top

As the signature effort of the Obama administration in the field of education, Race to the Top was heralded for its size (over \$4 billion allocated to this one competitive grant program) and scope (taking on everything from charter schools to teacher evaluations to achievement gaps and more). Through the Recovery Act funds, the administration awarded 11 states and the District of Columbia (D.C.) for their education reform efforts.

Now, those recipients are in the

(continued on page 5)

Recovery Act By The Numbers:

\$288 Billion - Tax Cuts

**\$224 Billion - Entitlement
Benefits**

**\$274 Billion - Grants, Loans, and
Contracts**

(continued from page 4)

process of implementing their ambitious reform agendas, some of which were set by preceding administrations of the opposite party. Unlike the controversy over high speed rail funding, newly elected Governors in Florida, Georgia, and Ohio have all retained funding despite their initial reservations during their campaigns.

That is not to say implementation has gone off entirely smoothly, however. All recipients have submitted amendments to their original approved applications, many involving delaying the proposed timeline (for a list of amendments, see

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetot>

[hetop/amendments/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetot/hetop/amendments/index.html)).

Furthermore, newly released data has called into question the ability of Race to the Top to achieve actual results in terms of academic improvement for students. Earlier this month, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) released the results of Reading and Mathematics assessments, showing recipients Hawaii and D.C. leading Race to the Top winners in improving in both areas. The remaining recipients showed little to no significant changes in academic performance, and New York even saw a decrease in its 4th grade math results.

Still, Race to the Top remains a priority at the federal level and garners

considerable interest from states. The competition expanded in 2011 to include a \$500 million competition, known as Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge, which drew 35 applicants. Race to the Top is also holding a third competition, although this time inviting only the unfunded finalists from Phase II to resubmit revised proposals.

In addition, the U.S. Senate is aiming to include formal authorization for the program in its latest draft of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). If it passes with Race to the Top included, that would likely put the grant program on more solid footing annually.

2011 INVESTING IN INNOVATION (13) FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

On November 10, 2011, the U.S. Department of Education announced 23 Finalists for the 2011 Investing in Innovation grants. These finalists must demonstrate they have secured a match requirement before they can receive funding. Development grants require a 15% match, Validation grants require a 10% match, and Scale-Up grants require a 5% match. The Department's press release can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/twenty-three-investing-innovation-applicants-named-2011-grantees-pending-private>.



SEEKING NEW WRITERS for FUNDED

Every month, Grants Office publishes *FUNDED* to keep you up to date with the latest issues, trends, and opportunities in grant funding. Now, we are inviting other writers and grants professionals to be a guest contributor to *FUNDED*. If you have an article you would like to submit for publication in *FUNDED*, please email your article, short biography, and contact information to Christopher Haight at chaight@grantsoffice.com.

Please note: Articles should be between 500 and 750 words and address a specific grant opportunity or topic related to grant funding.





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Challenge Grants for Two-Year Colleges

Authority: National Endowment For The Humanities (NEH)

Summary: The National Endowment for the Humanities invites two-year colleges to apply in a special Challenge Grant competition to strengthen their long-term humanities programs and resources. Two-year colleges are major educational assets that have too often been overlooked, even though over half of students in post-secondary education attend two-year institutions. The humanities can and should play a vital role in community colleges. The perspectives of history, philosophy, and literature can enrich the educational experience of students attending two-year colleges, deepening their understanding of questions related to differences among cultures, as manifested in diverse understandings of citizenship, politics, and ethics. NEH seeks to encourage two-year colleges to develop models of excellence that enhance the role of the humanities on their campuses. The goals of this initiative are: (1) to enable two-year colleges to strengthen programs in the humanities, especially the study of the world's many cultures and civilizations; (2) to support model humanities curricula at two-year colleges that may be replicated at other institutions; and (3) to encourage two-year colleges to broaden the base of financial support for the humanities.

Eligibility: Institutions eligible to apply in this competition are accredited U.S. two-year colleges and community colleges that predominantly award associate degrees that can be earned in two years of study. Both private, independent colleges and government-supported colleges are eligible. Community-college districts and two-year-college consortia may also apply, in collaboration with at least one two-year college. Associate-degree-granting institutions are encouraged to partner with other institutions to carry out grant-oriented activities but one two-year college must serve as the applicant of record

Awards: Successful applicants will be offered a matching grant. The requested grant amount should be appropriate to the humanities needs and the fundraising capacity of the institution. The maximum amount an applicant may request is \$500,000. Smaller grants for sharply defined purposes are encouraged.

Deadline: The deadline to submit an application is February 2, 2012.

Contact:

National Endowment for the Humanities
Office of Challenge Grants, Room 420
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506
Phone: (202) 606-8309

Email: challenge@neh.gov
http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/challenge_2yr.html



Embrace the Changes: Update on HRSA's Nursing Education Grant Programs

By Chris LaPage, Grants Development Consultant

When the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced major changes in their upcoming slate of well-known nursing education programs for Fiscal Year 2012, many people started to panic. One change in particular, inter-professional education, which is being emphasized across all of their programs, has received mixed reviews. While the academic jury is still out on the effectiveness of inter-professional education methodologies compared to traditional nursing programs, HRSA has went all-in on supporting such models. For instance, the Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention Program (NEPQR) will fund three-year demonstration projects in inter-professional education in the context of advancing the diverse priorities applicants are able to target historically under the program. In the past, HRSA funding under this program was limited to educating nursing personnel exclusively.

Inter-professional education modalities tend to be more synchronized with how health care is typically practiced, with teams of health professionals fulfilling different roles. As long as inter-professional education strategies are not less effective than traditional models, they certainly make intuitive sense. The exciting part for grantseekers is that they often times have health professional education projects that involve individuals from a variety of disciplines. These potential applicants will no longer have to upend solid project plans to carve out a nursing-exclusive piece in order to qualify for NEPQR and other HRSA programs. If you have a continuing education project aimed at increasing staff

proficiency around a particular piece of health technology, the curriculum can be delivered to audiences that include nurses, physicians, specialty techs, and other types of health professions.

In addition to NEPQR, the Advanced Nursing Education Program (ANE) will return in FY 2012 after a one-year hiatus, and will also place a priority on funding projects that incorporate inter-professional education models. ANE was formally known as the Advanced Education Nursing Program. The entire FY 2012 allotment will be dedicated to funding new applicants as all projects previously supported through the program have been completed. Another big change for ANE will be its focus on incorporating telehealth and simulation equipment into projects that move current professionals and students into advanced nursing degree programs. Considering HRSA's historical approach with funding simulation equipment through NEQPR, we would expect some restrictions on the amount of simulation equipment that can be purchased. Typically, no more than 50% of requested funds can go towards the outfitting of a skills lab. Both NEPQR and ANE should be announced in late Fall with deadlines in the first quarter of Calendar Year 2012. HRSA is expected to make somewhere between 80 and 100 new awards in FY 2012 through these programs. Individual applicants can request up to three years of funding, totaling \$750,000.

(continued on page 8)



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In other news, the Nursing Workforce Diversity Program (NWD), which focuses on moving folks from underprivileged backgrounds into the nursing profession, will not hold a new competition in FY 2012; but will instead make awards to unfunded applicants from the FY 2011 program. However, other grants through HRSA will still be available to support nurse trainee expenses, such as stipends, books and living expenses. The Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship (AENT) program will be available in FY 2012, and for the first time will no longer be formula-based. This means the program will be more widely available than it has in the past. The downside is that the program will now only be offered every other fiscal year. Individual applicants are limited to a funding ceiling of \$350,000.

While some folks may be nervous, most of the changes that were made to HRSA's nursing education grant programs should be beneficial. Almost all the changes discussed here will result in nursing education grant programs that are much more accessible and less restrictive. The focus on inter-professional education will allow for a greater cross-section of projects and reap benefits for all types of health

professionals, not just nurses. The new priorities put in place for ANE means health care organizations will have another vehicle to adopt advanced technologies (telehealth and simulation equipment) that have demonstrated improved health outcomes. While NWD will not fund new applicants in FY 2012, the additional money available through AENT and opening it up to a competitive process should be viewed as a net gain. Overall, these are changes that most grantseekers should be able to embrace.

LAST CALL FOR APPLICATIONS!

Title: Rural Health Care Services Outreach Grant Program

Funder: Health Resources & Services Administration

Deadline: November 22, 2011

Description: The Rural Health Care Services Outreach Grant Program supports collaboratives of at least 3 separately owned health care organizations in their effort to improve health service delivery in underserved rural areas. Funding can be used to support staff for personnel-based outreach initiatives as well as technology-based

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 2011 Webcasts

- **November 16, 2011:** 2012 Higher Education Funding, *Sponsored by Dell*
- **November 17, 2011:** Aiming Higher: Funding Colleges and Universities with SIP Grants, *sponsored by Cisco*
- **November 29, 2011:** Funding Fire Prevention and Safety Initiatives

December 2011 Webcasts

- **December 8, 2011:** Distance Learning & Telemedicine Webcast Series, Part 2, *sponsored by Cisco*
- **December 13, 2011:** Grantwriting Series: Grants for Research and Development
- **December 19, 2011:** DHS Program Overview: Understanding Homeland Security Funding

Register for upcoming or view previous webcasts at <http://grantsofficeevents.webex.com>



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www.CommunityDevelopmentGrants.info

Community Facilities Grant Program
Sustainable Communities Regional Grants

www.HomelandSecurityGrants.info

2012 Homeland Security Overview
Urban Areas Security Initiative

www.FireGrants.info

Assistance to Firefighters Grants
Fire Prevention and Safety Grants
Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response

www.K12Grants.info

Promise Neighborhoods Grants
21st Century Community Learning Centers
Next Generation Learning Challenges

www.TribalGrants.info

Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation

www.JusticeGrants.info

COPS Secure Our Schools Grant Program
Community Policing Development Grant Program
Community Oriented Policing Services Hiring Program

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