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COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CONFERENCE  
APRIL 24 • 26, 2026



# Working with Grant Applicants 101

## Grant Making

Saturday, April 25, 10:30 am, Stevenson D





# Your Facilitators

**Kathleen Vyrauen (She/Her)**

Senior Grants Officer  
The Winnipeg Foundation



# Our Approach & Philosophy

- **Goal:** To create a fun, safe and engaging space.
- You are the expert of your community and your community foundation.
- Please share your thoughts, knowledge, and experiences so that we can all learn from each other.

**Why is this important?**

**How do you do it?**

**What is the outcome?**

**How can I apply this learning to my community foundation?**



# Warm Up Question

**What is the Difference Between a Good Grant Made by a Community Foundation and a Great One?**


# Discussion #1

**How do you Showcase Flexibility  
when Working with Grant  
Applicants?**

**What is the Impact of This?**

# Definition: Working with Grant Applicants



- The **relationship** a foundation holds with community-serving organizations
  - The **processes** and **supports** the foundation has in place to support community-serving organizations in working with the foundation
  - A granting process that is **trust-based** and centered around engagement with organizations that are eligible to apply for grants.
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# Why is Working with Grant Applicants Important?

- **Strengthens** community connections and relationships
- Creates the opportunity to provide the best **community value** with the available grant funds
  - Through transparency and information sharing by both the foundation and the community-serving organization

# How to Work with Grant Applicants

- Build relationships and communicate with grant-eligible organizations
  - Learn about the grant applicant
    - Who are they? What are their needs?
    - How will the grant support their work?
    - Why does their work matter to the community?
  - Share about the foundation
    - How much do you have to grant?
    - What is your average grant size?

***Move from the transactional to the relational***

# How to Work with Grant Applicants

- Be **flexible** and supportive throughout their journey
- Address and manage the real AND perceived “**power dynamic**” between community foundations and grant applicants.
  - Approach the work from a place of humility, compassion, and gratitude towards the community-serving organizations.
  - View the foundation's role as a partner while balancing the need to do "due diligence" on the funds disbursed.

# Outcomes of Effective Community Granting

- The establishment of a **peer-to-peer** relationship between your foundation and the service organizations in your community.
- Grants that address the **needs** of the community, as **defined** by the community.
- An **accessible** and **collaborative** granting process.



# Discussion #2

**When do you connect (talk) with the grant-seeking organizations in your community?**

**What are you connecting (talking) with them about?**



# Discussion #3

## Exploring YOUR challenges:

- What is your biggest challenge with respect to working with grant applicants?



# Shared reflections

What's one key takeaway or "AHA" that you want to remember?

What are you curious about now?

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## Individual Reflection

What tools & ideas can you take back to your community foundation board?



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