



# Advances

**The Source for Current Housing Trends**

## Foundations and Corporate Giving

Philanthropy and community giving have been a part of American culture for well over 200 years. Ben Franklin, for example, is noted for his pioneering work in creating and funding community groups to assist those in need. During the last two hundred years, philanthropy has developed into a sophisticated business of organizations with specific political and social agendas. Many of these philanthropic organizations are identified as "Foundations". Currently, over 40,000 grant making foundations and direct corporate giving programs operate throughout the United States.

Foundations and corporations provide funding for hundreds of different types of projects and programs across the country from spinal cord injuries to affordable housing. While there are significant resources available for use in the affordable housing industry, the competition for these funds is also significant competition for the funding. The Colorado Division of Housing (CDOH) recommends that your search for foundations begin locally (state level) and then proceed to national foundations that have narrow interests that are a close fit to your program or project.

Each foundation and corporate giver has specific goals and objectives that are linked to the funding that they provide. Some have specific applications, submittal deadlines, and processes for obtaining funding. Others offer year-round funding cycles that are accessed through writing a letter of interest. The Colorado Division of Housing encourages you to contact each funder directly to obtain specific information about what types of programs/projects they will fund and how to apply to funding.

Effective grant and proposal writing and application skills are very useful in obtaining funding from foundations. Listed below are characteristics of a good proposal:

- absolute adherence to the foundations application guidelines
- use plain language and define any specialized terminology that cannot be avoided
- include all documents requested with your proposal
- make sure that the budget makes sense and is well explained
- include a response to every application question

Information on the names of foundations and corporate givers, contact information, and information about each organizations application process can be located through the following sources:

### Foundation Funder Guide

The Colorado Department of Human Services Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs produces the *Foundation Funder Guide*. This guide is updated annually and provides detailed information about local and national organizations that provide funding for affordable housing and other supportive housing and homeless programs.

### **The Foundation Center**

The Foundation Center is an independent national service organization established in 1956 by foundations to be an authoritative source of information on foundation and corporate giving. The Foundation Center operates an extensive Internet web site at [www.fdncenter.org/](http://www.fdncenter.org/) that provides information on funding sources and workshops on proposal writing and grant research. In addition, The Foundation Center's Cooperating Collections offer a core collection of publications and searchable, electronic resources on local and national foundations. In Colorado, Cooperating Collections can be found at the main Denver Public Library (303) 640-6200 and the El Pomar Nonprofit Research Center in Colorado Springs (800) 554-7711.

### **Council of Foundations and the Internet Nonprofit Center**

These additional Internet web sites also provide information on foundations, corporate givers and grant writing advice. The Council of Federations web site can be found at <http://www.cof.org/> and the Internet Nonprofit Center web site can be found at <http://www.nonprofits.org/>.

### **Colorado Division of Housing**

The staff of the Colorado Division of Housing can provide information concerning foundations and corporate givers that have been active in affordable housing projects. Please contact the Colorado Division of Housing at (303) 866-2033 for assistance.

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[ [State Home](#) | [DOH Home](#) | [DOLA Home](#) ]

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*last modified 06-16-02*

Contact: [Department of Local Affairs](#)