

Grant-seeking through COVID-19
Prepared 15th April 2020

Business Case for continuity of grant-seeking, project planning and strong submission and copywriting, to help get your organisation through Covid-19.

The Facts

- a. While many fundraising channels (events, door knocks, community fundraising, face to face etc.) have been put on hold, very few funders have postponed / cancelled their funding rounds, at present.
- b. Many funders are reviewing upcoming guidelines etc. to make funding more flexible.
- c. Most funders are allowing changes to use of funds already held, with a move to “untie” grants made or soon to be made. (See exemplar from [Perpetual Trustees](#) who is leading the sector).
- d. Our Research Team is currently working close to 80 hours per week! There are more grant round changes and announcements being made than ever before. A very small sample can be found [here](#).
- e. The message from [Philanthropy Australia](#) (and [Philanthropy New Zealand](#)) to their members and the philanthropic community is to “keep on giving.” There is [growing collaboration for continuity of support to the Charitable Sector](#).
- f. The funders that are currently affected most are: some gambling related entities; corporate foundations and Councils.
- g. There have been very few changes to open government grant and tender rounds, apart from NHMRC. They are still granting funds but have redirected some rounds to COVID-19 specific response.
- h. Funders are reporting higher than average grant applications and higher than usual ineligible applications! Remember to retain best-practice and only apply if you meet the guidelines and present a robust case.
- i. Don't stop grant-seeking! Even just one-two months of inactivity will see a hole develop in your funding pipeline!
- j. You must review your project pipeline NOW. Your list of funding needs is undoubtedly different now to what it was six months ago.
- k. Update your key messages. What is your plan to get through COVID-19? Be clear on changes to your short-term strategies.

Your GEM Portal subscription helps in time of limited budget, and to navigate the ever-changing funding landscape. Benefits include:

- a. **A huge saving in research costs.** Our experienced research team identifies new funding opportunities every day. And currently, a lot of these new opportunities are specific to helping those affected by COVID-19. It is far more cost-effective spending up to \$4400 per year rather than paying wages to keep your grants data current.
- b. **See highly customised grant opportunities that fit your current strategic focus** via your GEM Portal's Grants Calendar. If you were to use other research sources, it will consume hours of time sifting through the thousands of grants to find just those that are relevant to your organisation. Refresh your Grants Calendar fortnightly!
- c. **Priority access to information on new grants gives you optimal time to prepare strong applications.** Strategic Grants is a Philanthropy Australia member and has direct relationships with most of the bigger trusts and foundations and many smaller ones. We receive direct updates from funders before they are publicised. And we know where to look for the grants' updates. This is a resource that can't be replicated easily and without significant cost.
- d. **Sector leading training and thought leadership content to build your expertise.** Strategic Grants is recognised as a leader in the grant-seeking space in Australia. We work closely with the Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit studies at QUT, and are asked to present nationally and internationally. We are currently contributing to a number of sector-wide training initiatives and research efforts. We are scheduled to present a pre-conference masterclass at the 2021 Philanthropy Australia conference (rescheduled from 2020).
- e. **GEMS provides an organisational overview of your grants activities, allowing continuous monitoring and improvement to your grant seeking strategy.** If you have applications in progress, pending and successful, you must keep track of their progress and when reports are due. GEM Portal helps you to ensure continuity of relationship management and communications with your funders.

New initiatives to support you through COVID-19

- a. We are doing everything we can to support our GEMS Subscribers and the sector at large, through this period.
 - New weekly Grants Chats, every Thursday at 1pm AEST. Sit in on the latest news, and then fire away any and all questions for us to answer. Many of your fellow GEM Subscribers will also be online.

- We have started a COVID-19 Funder News page on our website for the sector at large. This contains high level updates for those smaller organisations who are unable to access GEM Portal and other support.
- We are participating in a body of research to collect NFP data on the impact of COVID-19 across various fundraising methods, including grants. (Rather than a lot of the anecdotal and opinion that is being bandied about). Led by More Strategic and in collaboration with Donor Republic, IVE, Stellar Partnerships and Xponential. You will receive that survey soon if you haven't already.
- In addition to our own in-house training program, we are delivering a lot of webinars for the sector via our partnerships with Pro Bono, Connecting Up, Fundraising Institute New Zealand etc.

The benefits of retaining other Strategic Grants support services

- a. Advisory Services to help your organisation:
 - Re-prioritise your project pipeline. This is a critical step! You need a current list of priority projects to be ready to respond to current and new grant rounds. This will look very different to what it did a few months ago.
 - Have you spoken to all your current funders? Mentoring in conversations to have and assistance with short proposals detailing how you plan to divert funds held.
 - Don't let panic take over best-practice. Ensure you are only applying when your project CLEARLY meets the funding objectives and the guidelines!
- b. Grant and tender writing and reviewing: Continue to put your best applications forward! Ensure proof checking and adhere to all the grant-writing must do's. There will be more applications going in, so competition will be higher. Ensure best-practice prevails!
- c. Monthly Management: if your organisation has had to reduce human resource, we can help keep the tendering and granting process moving. Monthly Management: provides 10-hours of Advisory, Writing and/or critiquing support per month: based on what support is needed that particular month. Whether it be identifying prospect funders, managing the grants calendar updating process or preparing a high-quality grant application – our highly experienced team will optimise your grants program.
- d. Data analysis and reporting: If you need support with other areas of data analysis and reporting, there are members of our team who can assist. Just let us know.

Special COVID-19 Support for our NFP Partners

All GEM Renewals made between April 17th and 31st September 2020, will be 15 months rather than 12, until further notice. So, your annual subscription fee will run for 15 months from the date it is due. This offer applies to annual payments, paid in full, up front.

We are also offering access to one of our webinars from our online training library. Talk to your Client Manager for details on access.

We look forward to continuing to support your organisation and are pleased to answer any questions that your organisation's leadership may have.