Grantwriting That Gets Results

Janet Cotraccia, Program Officer
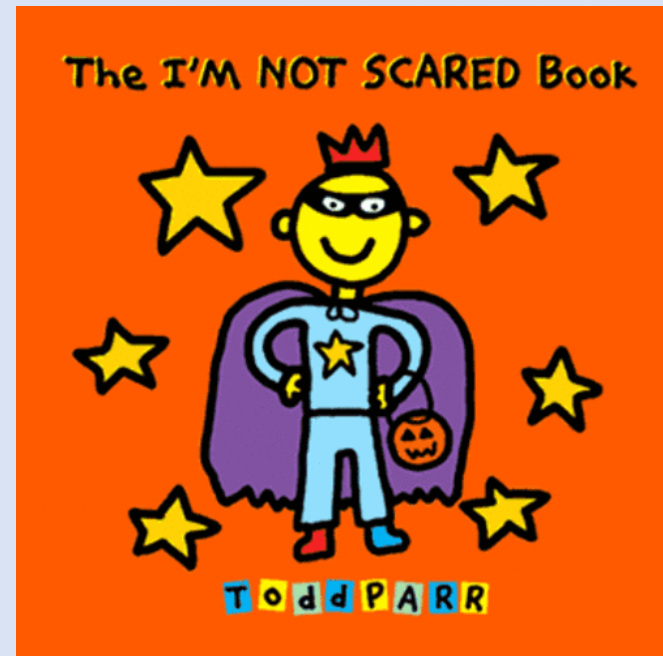
Community Foundation of Tompkins County

Annual YSS Spring Conference

Friday, April 28, 2017

Grant writing

Scary or not?

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Community Foundation of Tompkins County

Giving is Growing!

- U.S. Foundations
  - 86,192 - # of U.S. Foundations
  - $715 Billion in Assets
  - $52 Billion distributed

- Private Giving
  - $373 Billion in 2015 (up 4% from 2014)

Source: Foundation Center and Giving USA

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Is a foundation grant right for you?

- It requires:
  - Research
  - A well thought out application
  - Attention to deadlines
  - One or more reports
  - Ability to track grant funds accurately
  - Preparation to gather data and/or write up stories
  - Letters of support from key stakeholders
  - Proofreading from an objective reader (a visiting uncle?)
  - Appropriate recognition and attribution
  - Organizational support

Don't miss an opportunity!

- Some activities are best served by another fundraising method.

- If the goal is fun and attendance for a one time event, a crowdsourcing platform may be preferable.

- Investment by community members brings ownership by the community.

- Crowdsourcing also brings:
  - Awareness
  - Anticipation and Excitement
  - Commitment
  - Word of mouth sharing
  - Participation
  - Indication of community support

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Funding Sources

- Individuals
- Community Groups
- Private Foundations
- Community Foundations
- Corporations
- Small Businesses
- Government (Federal, State, and local)
- Other Nonprofit Organizations

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Funder Research

- Check out the website
- Read the guidelines
- Note the deadlines
- Call the Program Officer
- Ask about the process
- What will this funder need from you?

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Preparing to write the Grant Proposal

- Read the guidelines (again)
- Note the deadlines (again)
- Read the application (helpful even if you decide not to apply)
- Don't "pretzel"
- You're establishing a relationship
- Follow the directions (applications reflect best practices and internal protocols)
- Does your project fit your mission?
- Do you have organizational support?
- Do you have the capacity to carry out the requirements of the grant?
- Do you have necessary data?

Let's Write a Grant Proposal!

- Follow the directions!

- Be clear about the need

- Include data and stories (head and heart)

- Letters of Support
  - Not just professionals, patrons too!
  - Be careful of canned letters
  - They should show some knowledge of the program
  - Letters from teens, tweens, parents

- Target Audience

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Equal   Equitable

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Output vs Outcome

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- Outputs answer, "how many?":
  - the number of people who attended
  - The number of people served compared to the past
  - The number of books checked out

- Outcomes answer, "what do those who participated now know, think or care about":
  - Ask yourself what knowledge, skills, and abilities should someone in your program be able to demonstrate upon completion.
  - How will participants demonstrate such capacities?

More than how many worms the bird feeds its young (outputs),

but how well the fledgling flies (outcomes).

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Let's Write a Grant Proposal!

- How will you evaluate the program?

- How will you know you're successful?

- Be concise, but thorough

- Collaboration
  - Builds Expertise
  - Broadens access
  - Information sharing
  - Inspires innovative ideas
  - Demonstrates value
  - Is it just talking to someone or is it scheduled planning that coordinates and aligns mutually reinforcing activities?

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Let's Write a Grant Proposal!

- Is new really better? Make your case.

- If tried and true, establish a proven history.

- Clear and reasonable budget (a budget is a plan, after all)

- Have someone proofread it!

- Submit proposal (confirm submission)

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Pitfalls

- We're the best, it's all about us!
- We deserve it
- We might, we hope to…
- It was successful because of the smiles on their faces
- Bad *Speling, Grammer*
- Too much rhetoric
- Too many acronyms
- Emotional pleading
- Incomplete budget with no narrative (numbers don't add up)
- Verbose
- Disorganized, confusing

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Proposal Declined

- Don't be discouraged

- It's not personal

- Lots of factors

- 2nd or 3rd times a charm?

- Proposal that needs improvements or limited funding? (request/grant ratio)

- Better time to apply?

- Try, try again

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Grant Awarded

- Assess and adjust along the way
- Keep Program Officer informed of major changes
- Request repurposing of funds if needed
- Track grant funds accurately
- Maintain relationships with collaborators
- Gather data (pre/post surveys)
- Take pictures (and get appropriate releases)
- Invite funder to events/activities

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CAUGHT READING
BANNED BOOKS
947291045710589

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE SENDAK

DAN THE SNAKE MAN

Feel
The Experience !

Reports!

- Know your audience

- Submit report by the due date

- Give yourself time to complete it thoroughly

- Be honest

- How did you meet the need that was defined in the application?

- Share what you learned about what worked and what didn't work (funders are learning too!)

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Reports

- Share examples of any media coverage with appropriate grant attribution

- Provide clear and accurate accounting of how funds were used

- Include pictures (eyes and teeth)

- Include both data and stories (head and heart)

Report Pitfall
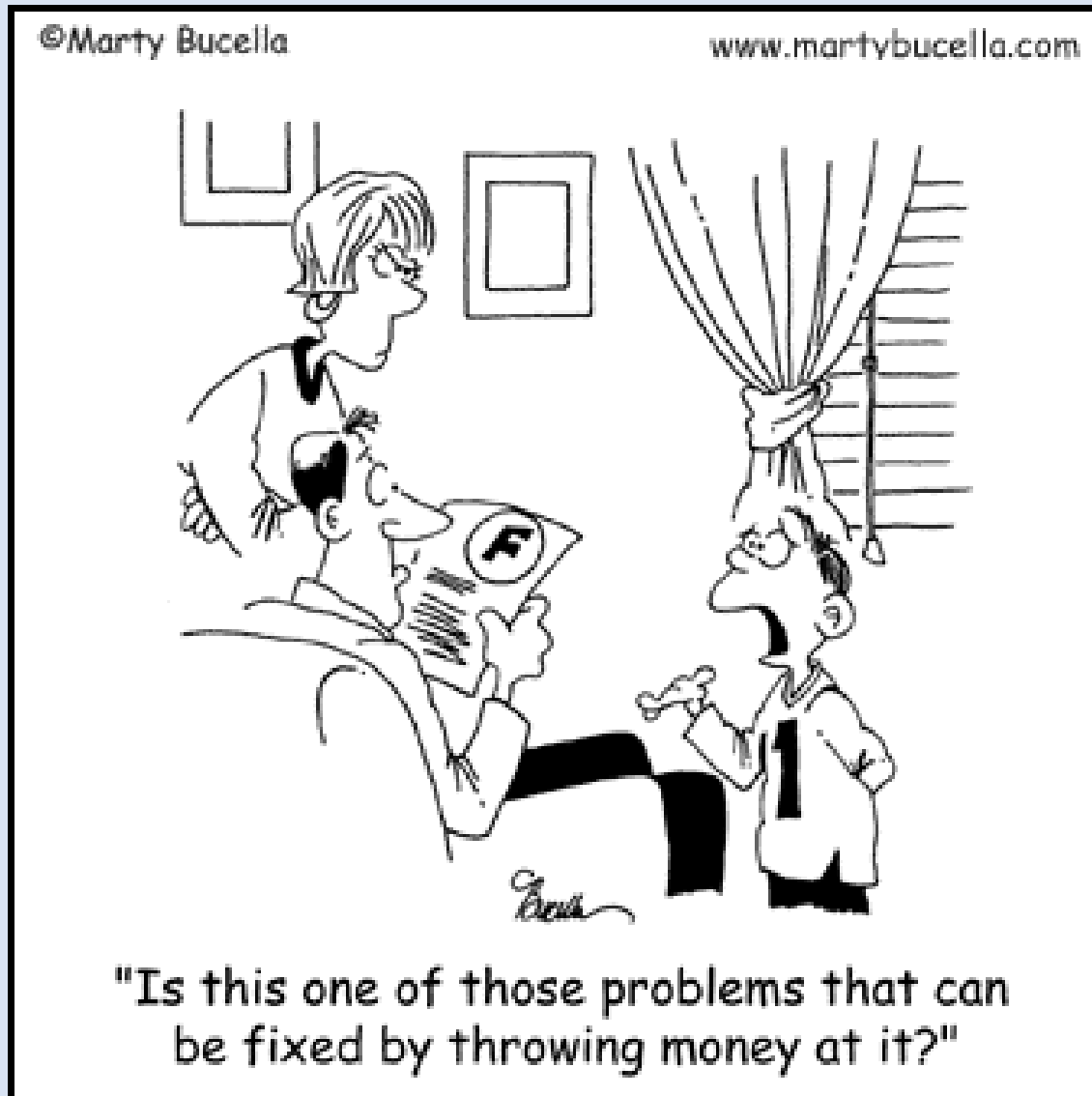
Grantmaking Resources

- ALA Big Book of Library Grant Money

- The Foundation Center

- The Council on Foundations

- The Ford Foundation - Grantcraft: guides, videos, and case studies

- The Grantsmanship Center

- Grantmaking for Effective Organizations (GEO)

- Guidestar

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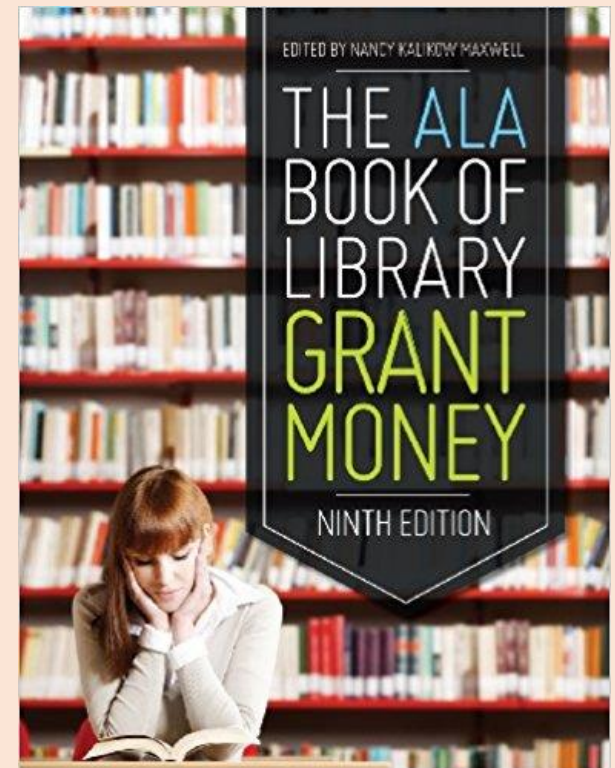
Takeaways

- Funder relationships are important, they take time
- Follow the directions
- Know your audience
- Align with your mission
- Internal communication
- Use your resources
- External communication
- Be responsible
- Know your organizational culture
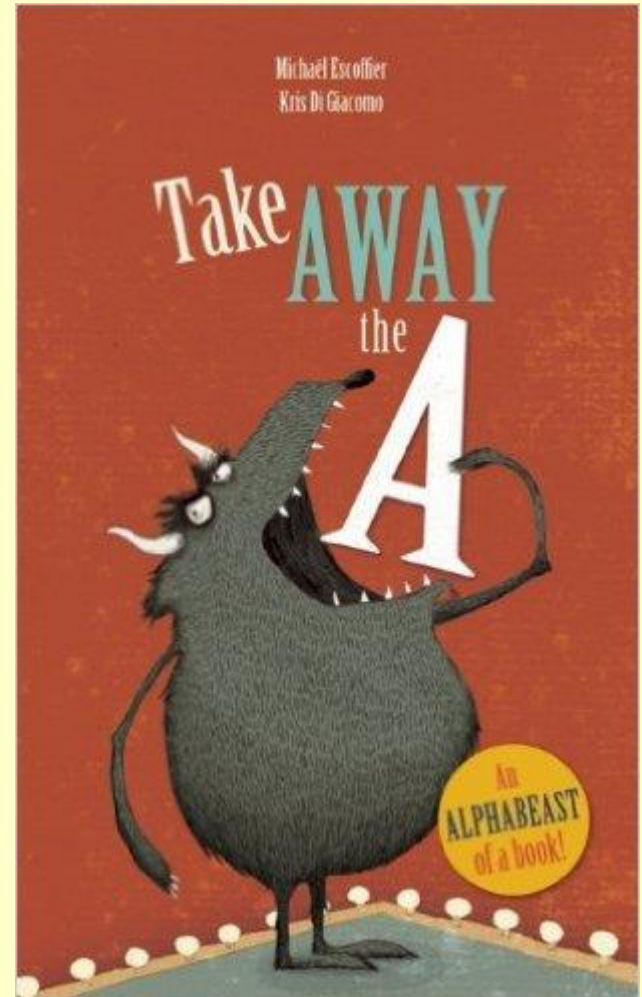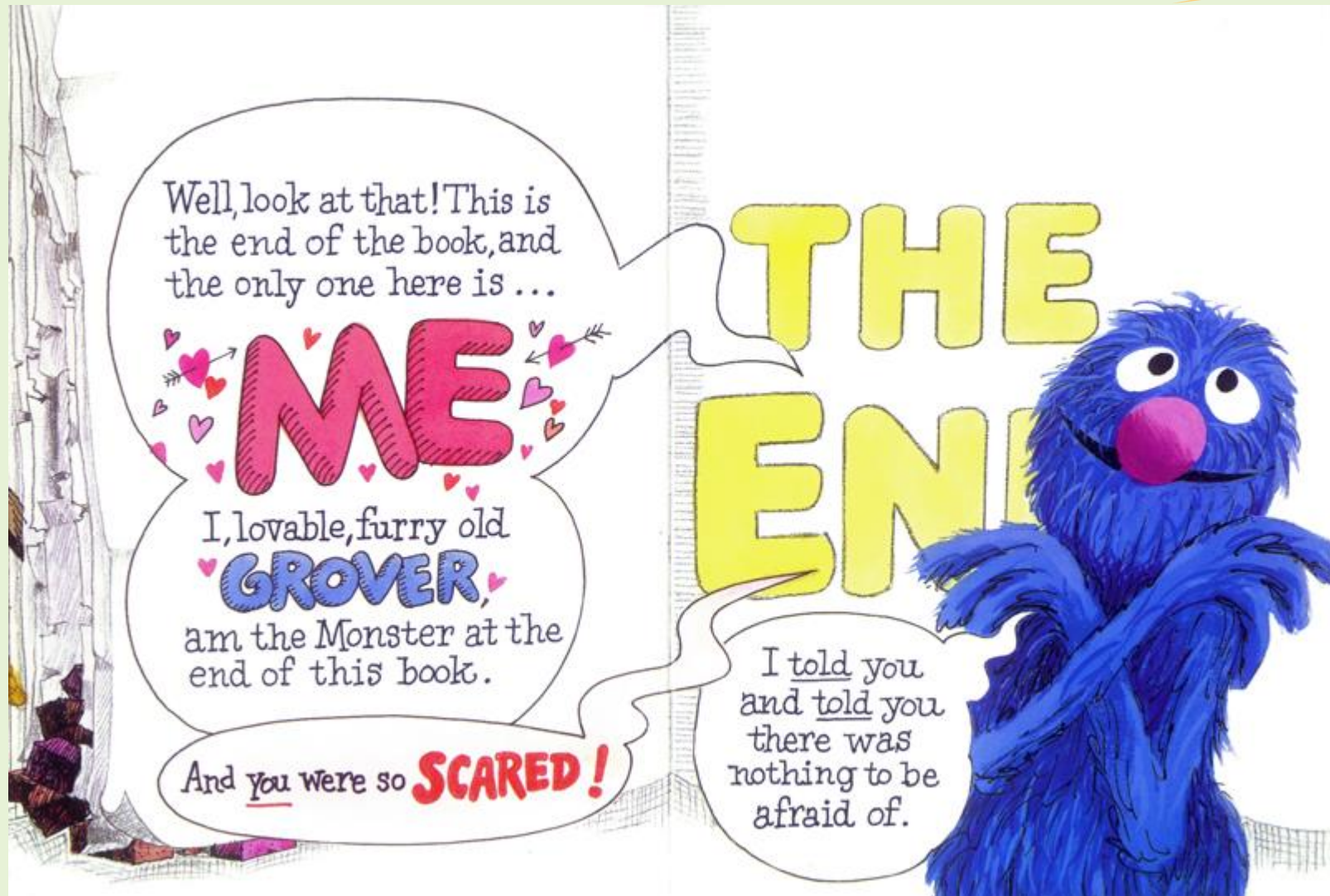
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