



Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations

How Can the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations Help You?

The Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations (CFR) pursues major **charitable** grants to support institutional priorities and initiatives. Working hand-in-hand with CU Boulder's colleges and schools, we represent the University to corporate and foundation constituents, build mutually beneficial relationships, and promote CU Boulder's funding priorities to our external partners.

If you are looking for external charitable funding opportunities, this website is a great place to start.

CFR staff can:

- discuss and develop project concepts
- help you identify funding sources
- connect you to funding databases ([link to finding funders page](#))
- help interpret application guidelines
- advise on proposal and budget development
- review and edit proposal drafts

The proposal toolkit will provide resources and guidance as you are seeking funding for your important work. Those seeking support from public sources, including federal opportunities, should contact the [Office of Contracts and Grants](#). Check out the [Sources of Funding document](#) to determine with whom you should work with on campus.

Can't find what you need? [Contact us](#). We're here to help.



Get Started

As a large research university, CU Boulder can be a complex place to navigate. The Office of Corporate Relations and Foundation Relations is here to help. The Proposal Toolkit provides you—CU Boulder faculty, program directors, researchers, and fundraising staff—with the tools to pursue and manage charitable grants from corporations and foundations.

The CFR staff works closely with faculty, senior administrators, and gift officers in the colleges, schools, and units to help raise funds for high-priority projects. We assist in navigating administrative processes and procedures throughout the lifecycle of private funding opportunity, from concept to close out. If you are a faculty member or a program director who would like to work with CFR, please [contact us](#) as well as the gift officer in your department or unit, so that we can all be aware of your funding needs.

The Proposal Toolkit is a resource to help you get started. Please contact us with questions or suggestions.

Proposal Toolkit Contents

[Find Funders](#)

Identify funders who may have an interest in your project by using free search tools, or request help from CFR and the Research and Innovation Office (RIO).

[Contact Funders](#)

Review guidelines for contacting potential funders and a list of foundations that have requested coordination by CFR.

[How to Prepare a Successful Proposal](#)

Find information and resources on grantwriting and budget preparation.

[Suggested Timeline for Submitting Grant Proposals](#)

Ensure you have enough time to develop and submit your proposal.

[CU Boulder Fact Sheet](#)



Find Funders

Corporate Relations and Foundation Relations (CFR) staff can help identify non-governmental funders that may take an interest in your project. We conduct this “prospect research” for projects that have been identified as high priority by the president, provost, deans, or unit directors. To request corporate or foundation prospect research, please [contact us](#).

CFR staff uses several tools to find potential funders. Some of these are paid subscription services, but others are free and publicly available. The tools listed below are free and open to everyone at the university.

Limited Submissions at CU Boulder

Limited submission programs are those for which funding agencies restrict the number of nominations or proposals a university may submit for consideration for an award. For these opportunities, CU Boulder must internally screen all eligible and interested nominees to determine which will represent the university in the regional, national, or international competitions. The Research and Innovations Office (RIO) coordinates different types of limited submission [programs](#).

Private foundations may also limit the number of proposals they will accept from one institution. In such cases, CFR may solicit pre-proposals from colleges, schools, and units to be considered for submission. When applicable, CFR will convene an impartial, internal panel to select the pre-proposal with the best chance of receiving funding.

[Foundation Directory](#)

The Foundation Directory provides CU Boulder faculty, staff, and students with access to essential information about nearly 90,000 foundations and 250,000 Form 990s (the IRS form filed annually by tax-exempt organizations that indicate assets and expenditures, including a list of grant recipients and dollar amounts).

[GuideStar](#)

GuideStar disseminates information about IRS-registered nonprofit organizations. You can set up a free account and find basic information on grantmaking organizations, such as contact information and Form 990s.

[Council on Foundations](#)

The Council on Foundations comprises approximately 1,600 independent, operating, community, public, and company-sponsored foundations, and corporate giving programs in the United States and abroad. The council does not make grants collectively; however, a list of its grantmaking members is available with links to their websites.



Contact Funders

Many corporations and foundations are particular about how they wish to interact with the university. Corporations may have existing relationships with several colleges on campus and with specific faculty members. Foundations may only issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs), which are public announcements inviting proposals for a specific grant program. Other funders may restrict submissions to one proposal per year from each college or school, or the entire university.

Before contacting any corporation or foundation directly, please talk with your department's gift officer or [contact us](#) for more information.

Coordinated Submissions

The following foundations have high-level relationships with CU Boulder or specific requirements for engaging with the university. Please consult CFR before contacting them.

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Ford Foundation
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Lilly Endowment
W. K. Kellogg Foundation
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Bloomberg Philanthropies
David and Lucile Packard Foundation
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
MacArthur Foundation
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Rockefeller Foundation
Walton Family Foundation/ZOMA
JPB Foundation
Kresge Foundation
Carnegie Corporation of New York
Simons Foundation
John Templeton Foundation
Knight Foundation
Laura and John Arnold Foundation
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
Daniels Fund
Pew Charitable Trust
Chan Zuckerberg Foundation
Keck Foundation
Surdna Foundation
Bush Foundation

Rockefeller Brothers Fund
Henry Luce Foundation
Paul G. Allen Foundation/Vulcan Philanthropies
William Randolph Hearst Foundation
Robertson Foundation / Julian Robertson
CIFF - Children's Investment Fund
Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation
Spencer Foundation
Grantham Foundation/ Jeremy Grantham
Schmidt Family Foundation, 11th Hour Project
Heising-Simons Foundation
Nathan Cummings Foundation
Freeman Foundation
SeaChange Foundation
Gill Foundation
Marcus Foundation
TomKat Foundation/Next Gen/Tom Steyer
Blackstone Charitable Foundation
Rodenberry Foundation
V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation Inc.
Ray C Anderson Foundation
Hersh Foundation
Argosy Foundation/Abele family
Turner Foundation
Oak Foundation
Dutch Postcode Lottery
TAE Foundation/ La Vaca Independiente /ASC

To find open calls for proposals in your discipline, go to [Search Grant Opportunities](#).



How to Develop a Successful Proposal

Where do I start?

Start with an idea for a project. If it involves partners in other departments or organizations, begin talking with them early. Contact the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations (CFR) for help finding foundations with priorities that match your project.

-OR--

Start with a Request for Proposals (RFP) from a foundation. If the RFP is related to your area of interest, CFR will help you develop a description of your current research that matches the requirements of the RFP. As many foundations only allow one application per institution, CFR can also guide your submission to the Research and Innovation Office's (RIO) internal limited submission [competition](#), should this opportunity be available to researchers across the Boulder campus.

How do I know if the funder is a good match?

Go to the funder's website and read their goals and grantmaking philosophy. Review their list of recently funded proposals; this list is usually the best indication of whether or not the funder would find your project appealing. Unless the funder has supported projects of similar size and scope to your own, they may not be a good fit. (This is true even if your work directly relates to the funder's mission—for example, in international development or social psychology.) If the foundation is one with which the University has a [relationship](#), please contact the [CFR office](#) to coordinate.

If you are encouraged by what you see on the "past grantees" list, then download or request the funder's proposal guidelines. Carefully note the deadlines.

Read and reread the guidelines, highlighting key words and phrases. Determine whether initial submissions should come in the form of a letter of intent (LOI), preproposal, application, or full proposal. Also, some funders require that grantees match the requested award with other funding sources. Typically this is 1:1, meaning a \$100,000 grant requires a match of \$100,000 (usually from institutional funds) to support a total project of \$200,000. In these cases, it's good to speak with your department chair and dean to see if such funds are available.

I've located the foundation that is a good match for my project. Now what?

Contact your [CFR office](#) for support.

Create a checklist of everything the funder requires you to submit with your proposal.

Before you jump into writing the proposal, consider writing a 1-2 page concept paper to sharpen your thinking. A concept paper gives you the freedom to ponder the basic questions that will be fleshed out in your formal proposal, including:

- What is the idea or problem you want to tackle?
- Why is it important? To whom it is important?



- What related work has already been done by others?
- What gap does your project fill?
- What does your project aim to do? What are the outcomes?
- How will you achieve your goals?
- Why are you the ideal person to address this topic or to lead this project?
- Why is now the right time for your project?
- How long will it take?
- What will your research/project contribute? What will be known or understood when it is complete?
- What resources (time, money, access, collaborators, travel, materials, equipment, space) do you need to complete this project?
- Why will your project succeed?
- What will success look like and how will it be measured?
- How will you share the results?
- Can this project/research be easily replicated or carried forward?
- Will the project/research continue once grant funding ends? If so, how might it be funded?
- Besides writing and revising, what else should I be doing?

Develop a realistic timeline, working backward from the deadline for proposal submission.

Schedule time to work on your grant budget. The foundation may have an official budget form. Use our Grant Budget Worksheet for your draft [budget](#), because it will automatically calculate fringe benefits, cost of living increases for multiple-year grants, and indirect costs.

Request letters of support or letters of commitment. Make sure your recommenders are aware of all deadlines. Some competitions allow reviewers to submit letters after the deadlines; most do not. Share your concept paper with your letter-writers, so they can write more persuasively on your behalf.

If there are no submission guidelines, what format should I use?

Most proposals include the following:

- an executive summary
- background information about your institution and project
- a discussion of why the project is important
- a description of your project methodology
- a description of what will be done and who will do it
- the expected results and how they will be evaluated
- a plan for sharing the results
- a case for the sustainability of the project after grant funds are expended
- the project timeline and budget

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What should I do once I complete a draft of my proposal?

Ask a colleague or two to read your proposal. It's wise to get feedback from someone outside your discipline. With advance notice, a CFR staff member can serve as an educated general reader and provide feedback.

Make sure that the budget reflects everything described in the proposal narrative, and the proposal narrative discusses everything listed in the budget.

Make revisions and finalize the proposal.



Suggested Timeline for Submitting Charitable (501C3) Grant Proposals

Plan your timeline by working backwards from the submission due date. For example, if your grant proposal is due September 15, plan to get started by no later than June. Remember that the first step in grantseeking is not to sit down and write, but simply to read carefully through the grant guidelines. Below are a series of small steps that can help you more easily fit grantseeking into your busy schedule.

Three - Six months before deadline

- Read guidelines; contact the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations for help.
- If proposal involves cost-sharing, contact your department chair and the Dean of the Faculty.*
- If your project will involve human subjects, or vertebrate animals, get in touch with the relevant compliance contacts on campus.

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Two months before deadline

- Draft concept paper and develop timeline for your grant-funded project.
- Begin preparing your budget.
- Contact organizations or colleagues for letters of support.

One month before

- Draft proposal and share it with colleagues for feedback.

Two weeks before

- Incorporate draft and budget feedback.

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Campus Visits and Events

The Offices of Corporate Relations and Foundation Relations frequently hosts corporate partners, and occasionally foundation representatives, on campus. These events enable the university community to recognize and thank our partners for their support, and to cultivate future philanthropy and involvement. To ensure that an event is successful for all participants, CR/FR works hand-in-hand with the corporation or foundation and with those colleges or units that have a significant role in the relationship. A multi-unit visit may include meetings with student organizations, tours of facilities or research units, or convenings of chief administrators and faculty, depending on the interests of the corporation or foundation.

Corporations and foundations that are interested in visiting the campus, or colleges and units that would like to host a campus event, can contact [Campus CFR](#).

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For Corporations and Foundations

The Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations works with corporations and foundations to build productive partnerships across the campus through an array of services. We can help:

- Identify philanthropic opportunities at CU Boulder.
- Connect our external partners to university offices that facilitate collaborative research, intellectual property development, technology transfer, recruiting, continuing education, and more.
- Introduce and engage university leadership.
- Plan and host visits to campus.
- Assist with reporting on gifts and grants.
- Assist with recognition through media and special events.

If you are looking for ways to engage with the university or need assistance finding the right office or individual on campus to help you, [contact us](#).