



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Become a Cooperating Collection of the Foundation Center

The Foundation Center is looking for host organizations that are ready to join with us to meet the information and training needs of organizations and individuals whose grantseeking needs are not currently being met.

The Foundation Center builds the fundraising capacity of nonprofits, helping them deliver vital programs and services to their communities. Our network of Cooperating Collections is key to achieving this goal—making our databases, directories, publications, and research reports available to the grantseeking public.

What is the Cooperating Collection Network?

The Foundation Center supports a network of more than 425 Cooperating Collections across the country and in several locations around the world. These funding information centers—available to grantseekers at no cost at public, academic, or special libraries, community foundations, and other nonprofit resource centers—provide access to *Foundation Directory Online*, the leading grantseeking database on the web, *Foundation Grants to Individuals Online*, and a core collection of Foundation Center directories and publications. Cooperating Collections (CCs) also provide a selection of supplementary materials and services in areas useful to grantseekers. The CCs offer educational sessions for the public, including classes on the basics of grantseeking and dialogues with local donors. And they serve as hosts for the Center's fee-based, full-day grantseeker training courses.

A key initiative of the Foundation Center is to expand the CC network to ensure that grantseekers across the nation, and selectively in other locations around the globe, have access to high-quality resources and expertise, enabling them to attract and sustain support for their organizations. An important objective for the Foundation Center is to provide help to under-resourced agencies that deliver services to underserved populations who are in need of useful information and training to build organizational capacity. One of the ways we accomplish this goal is to designate new Cooperating Collections where they can do the most good and where staff has the ability to serve nonprofit communities in need of Foundation Center resources.

Eligibility

Qualified institutions include (but are not limited to):

- ◆ Public, academic, or special libraries
- ◆ Nonprofit resource centers
- ◆ Community or other foundations
- ◆ State associations
- ◆ United Way agencies
- ◆ Non-governmental organizations in locations outside the U.S.

Host institutions must:

- ◆ Be open to the public, without restriction, at least 25 hours per week
- ◆ Be located in an area serving at least 100 nonprofit organizations

- ◆ Provide access to a computer(s) connected to the Internet for public use
- ◆ Have staff available to develop expertise in foundation funding resources and to assist the public in their use
- ◆ Be prepared to offer public training on the basics of grantseeking
- ◆ Send a representative to regional and/or national meetings of Cooperating Collection supervisors held at various locations and/or participate in virtual conferences held by the Center
- ◆ Pay an annual membership fee of \$995 (billed on a calendar year basis)

Core Collection Materials

Electronic resources:

- ◆ *Foundation Directory Online Professional*
- AND
- ◆ *Foundation Grants to Individuals Online*

Print publications:

- ◆ *After the Grant: The Nonprofit's Guide to Good Stewardship* (2010)
- ◆ *America's Nonprofit Sector, 3rd ed.* (2010)
- ◆ *Board Member's Book* (2003)
- ◆ *The Foundation Center's Guide to Proposal Writing, 5th ed.* (2007)
- ◆ *The Foundation Directory* (2010)
- ◆ *The Foundation Directory, Part 2* (2010)
- ◆ *The Foundation Directory Supplement* (2010)
- ◆ *Foundation Fundamentals* (2008)
- ◆ *Foundation Grants to Individuals* (2010)
- ◆ *Foundations and Public Policy* (2009)
- ◆ *Foundations Today Series:*
 - *Foundation Giving Trends* (2010)
 - *Foundation Growth and Giving Estimates* (2010)
 - *Foundation Yearbook* (2010)
- ◆ *The Grantseeker's Guide to Winning Proposals* (2008)
- ◆ *Guía para escribir propuestas* (2008)
- ◆ *Guide to Funding for International and Foreign Programs* (2010)
- ◆ *International Grantmaking IV* (2008)
- ◆ *National Directory of Corporate Giving* (2010)
- ◆ *Philanthropy Annual* (2010)
- ◆ *Securing Your Organization's Future* (2001)
- ◆ *Social Justice Grantmaking II* (2009)
- ◆ *The 21st Century Nonprofit: Managing in the Age of Governance* (2009)

Benefits of Hosting a Cooperating Collection

Foundation Center Cooperating Collections enjoy the following benefits:

- ◆ Access to *Foundation Directory Online Professional*, the nation's most popular grantseeking resource for nonprofits and consultants, which is updated weekly with interactive maps and charts showing a foundation's giving priorities.
- ◆ Access to our database of more than 8,000 funders, *Foundation Grants to Individuals Online*. Updated quarterly, it's an ideal resource for students, artists, and researchers.
- ◆ A core collection of Foundation Center reference materials and fundraising guides with a cumulative value of approximately \$3500.
- ◆ Exclusive access to our web site for Cooperating Collection supervisors (CCNet). CCNet contains information and materials that enhance the ability of CC supervisors and staff to assist patrons and stay informed about the latest developments at the Foundation Center. It includes training opportunities and support, promotional materials, publication order forms, calendars of upcoming events, a networking directory, an electronic message board, and more.
- ◆ Free admission for Cooperating Collection supervisors to any of the Foundation Center's full-day grantseeker training courses nationwide (space permitting), and the opportunity to co-host training courses in your facility.
- ◆ Online tutorials, scripts, and handouts to assist with your on-site, basic training for grantseekers.
- ◆ National and regional Cooperating Collection supervisor meetings, convened by Center staff; support and advice from the Center's five regional offices.
- ◆ "Ready reference" services to all Cooperating Collections via CCNet, e-mail, phone, or fax.
- ◆ Regular site visits from Center staff, during which workshops for the public and staff are presented.
- ◆ Enhanced visibility for your organization with funders and other nonprofits in your community through referrals by the Foundation Center

Preparing Your Proposal

Please include the following information in your proposal:

- ◆ **How did you first find out about the Cooperating Collection Network?**
Were you referred by an existing CC or some other individual? Did you come across it on the Center's web site? Did you receive a letter or e-mail about the initiative? If so, from whom?
- ◆ **Location:**
What is the population of your city and/or county? How many nonprofit organizations are located in your area? (Please be specific: submit estimate and source.) Would anyone who walks in the door be able to use your resources?
- ◆ **Access:**
How accessible is your location? Is access to the building interior barrier-free? Is public transportation available to your site? Is there parking available? If so, is there a fee? What type of security checks are involved? Will there be a sign-in or registration process for people who use the collection? *Please note: applicants whose institutions require appointments to use the resources will not be considered for membership.*
- ◆ **Host Institution:**
Please indicate if yours is a public, academic, or special library, a nonprofit resource center, a foundation, or other type of institution. What is your IRS exemption status? How many visitors do you now serve, and how do you anticipate that becoming a Cooperating Collection will affect this number? Who will support the cost of the yearly membership fee and future enhancements to the collection? Please submit your annual report, budget, etc.
- ◆ **Populations Served and Special Services:**
What are the demographics of the community you serve? Provide us with details on how your organization serves under-resourced populations (economically disadvantaged, specific populations, etc.). Have you conducted a needs assessment or user survey of any kind in recent years? What outreach efforts does your library engage in to reach new audiences? Do you offer services that encourage use by under-resourced groups, such as foreign language materials? Do you employ staff who speak other languages or are uniquely qualified to assist these populations? Do you have special equipment for disabled visitors?

◆ **Physical Layout of the Collection:**

The Foundation Center requires Cooperating Collections to identify themselves as easily identifiable units of their host institutions. *Please indicate your intent to post prominent signage* (provided by the Foundation Center), have all CC materials in one place, provide adequate seating, and to have shelving, computer, and photocopy equipment nearby. Please submit a floor plan indicating the proposed location of the collection.

◆ **Technology:**

Included with the core collection of Foundation Center resources are subscriptions to *Foundation Directory Online Professional* (FDO) and *Foundation Grants to Individuals Online* (GTIO). The searchable FDO database contains information on more than 98,000 U.S. grantmakers and their grants and GTIO contains unique information on more than 8,300 foundations that give grants to individuals. The Center's web site is another vital source of useful fundraising information. Appropriate technology must be in place to make the Center's database and its web site accessible to patrons. Cooperating Collections may request IP addressing for all or some of the computers in their facility, *as long as use can be limited to visitors in the building where the collection is housed*. Please indicate how many terminals will be designated to provide access to the Center's database. On the required floor plan, please indicate the proximity of these terminals to the reference staff and the rest of the CC resources. Do you have access to a computer lab and/or training facilities and equipment for Internet and computer demonstrations?

◆ **Books, Reference Works, Periodicals:**

Each Cooperating Collection will receive a complete and up-to-date core collection of Foundation Center reference-only publications. Duplicate copies of core Foundation Center print publications and copies of Center-issued publications that are not part of the core collection can be ordered at a special discount, as long as they are intended for use by visitors to the Collection or for circulation purposes. Each CC is required to subscribe to one or more fundraising or "grantsmanship" periodicals, and purchase basic reference works issued by other publishers, and monographs on foundations, nonprofit management, and fundraising that are published annually. CCs should also gather news items and annual reports for those foundations in their geographic area. Please submit a bibliography of current relevant holdings (with an indication that you do, or will, subscribe to at least one relevant periodical), as well as plans to enhance the core collection with future acquisitions.

◆ **Services:**

The Foundation Center requires that all Cooperating Collections provide reference assistance to the public, staffed at a minimum of 25 hours per week. Most CCs far exceed that minimum requirement. How many hours per week will your CC be open to the public? Will you be open during evening or weekend hours? Will you provide mail, telephone, and/or e-mail reference service? If so, will that be offered free of charge?

◆ **Public Trainings:**

The Foundation Center requires that each CC offer at least two community workshops or orientations on the funding research process each year for local nonprofit organizations. The Center provides training support (including PowerPoint presentations, scripts, and handouts) and staff members will be happy to assist you in scheduling workshops. How frequently will your CC offer orientations and workshops for grantseekers in your community? We are very interested in your partners in the community. Do you plan to collaborate with other libraries, agencies, technical assistance providers, or nonprofits?

◆ **Staff Trainings:**

The Foundation Center requires Cooperating Collections to allocate travel funds for the supervisor to attend at least one regional CC meeting or one annual Network Days every other year. New collections are required to send the supervisor to Network Days in the first year they are designated. (In 2010 Network Days will be held in New York, NY on October 8–9 and in a virtual format on June 3-4.) Please indicate your preparedness to provide funding for travel to a Network Days conference and/or to attend Virtual Network Days.

◆ **Staffing:**

At least one designated staff member, well versed in the use of core materials, is required for the Cooperating Collection. The Foundation Center prefers that a professional librarian, with an MLS degree, serve as CC supervisor. If this is not possible, the designated supervisor must be knowledgeable about nonprofits and have experience working with the public. The supervisor will be the contact person for the Foundation Center and will be responsible for informing the Center of changes related to the collection. Familiarity with Internet and database searching is helpful. The supervisor is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the CC, and for regular reports on the use of the collection. Please address the following:

- Who will oversee the collection?
- Will s/he work full-time or part-time in that position?

- What steps will be taken to ensure s/he is knowledgeable about the collection and the field of philanthropy?
 - How many staff members will work with the collection?
 - What training and support will be provided to them?
- ◆ **Outreach:**
It is critical to let the community of local nonprofits know about the new funding resources available. How will you publicize your collection? Do you have a web site? Do you have a blog? The Foundation Center requires that you indicate your affiliation with the Center and availability of the Center's databases on your web site and through prominent signage. Do you have a newsletter, mailing list, or regular contact with the media? Does your organization have a public relations officer who will help promote the collection? Are there other organizations you will partner with who will help you present orientations, workshops, and seminars? What other community involvement will there be? Please submit detailed plans.
- ◆ **Letters of Support:**
Please submit two or more letters of support from organizations in your community, including nonprofits who will use your collection and grantmakers who will support it, if applicable. Please indicate ongoing support or any special funding your collection is likely to receive.

How to Submit Your Proposal

The proposal should come from the institution that plans to house the Cooperating Collection. It should be submitted and signed by a member of that institution's administration. Proposals for CC designation are reviewed on a regular basis, with designations made each month. Host institutions are welcome to submit a proposal at any time during the year. Keep in mind that the annual membership fee of \$995 will apply, no matter when during the year you submit your proposal. Invoices are mailed out each January for that year's full membership. Please be sure your proposal includes all required information as outlined in the "Preparing Your Proposal" section. Submit your proposal, with all attachments, to:

Coordinator of Cooperating Collections
The Foundation Center
79 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10003

For more information, contact Kief Schladweiler, Coordinator of Cooperating Collections, at (212) 807-2417 or cks@foundationcenter.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!