

Spokane Homeless Coalition

(Join us the 1st Thursday of every month
at the [Gathering House 733 W. Garland Ave.](#) for our monthly meeting 9:00-10:30 am)

November 2, 2017 Meeting

Topic: Grant Funding

Panel: [Dr. Robert Zinke](#), Professor of Public Administration, [EWU College of Business and Public Administration](#); [Molly Anselmo Sanchez](#), Director of Grants and Community Engagement, [Inland Northwest Community Foundation](#); [Brian Myers](#), Vice President of Rural Health and Capacity Building, [Empire Health Foundation](#)

MCs: [Ryan Oelrich](#), Executive Director at [Priority Spokane & Spokane Homeless Coalition](#) Chair; [Angela Slabaugh](#), Vice-Chair of [Spokane Homeless Coalition](#) and Executive Director of [Hearth Homes](#)

[Ryan Oelrich](#), [Priority Spokane](#)

Q: What does a successful grant look like?

[Molly Anselmo Sanchez](#), [Inland Northwest Community Foundation](#)

A: There's an evidence based need for the success of the program. Why is it being proposed? What is the evidence-based need? More closely: is there a demand for this? There may be a need, but no demand. A clear plan, with conversations that have already happened and steps already in place for the execution of that plan.

[Brian Myers](#), [Empire Health Foundation](#)

A: Not much more to add besides emphasizing how this will make a difference in our region. Advice: find a professional grant writer because there's a lot of grantsmanship that goes into it. If you must go it alone, find someone to read it and make sure it works.

[Dr. Robert Zinke](#), [EWU College of Business and Public Administration](#)

A: 2 components: 1) You actually have a good project that is worth selling. I've seen examples that students put together a haphazard project with the effort of acquiring money when they're not ready to execute a plan.

2) It's a process of persuasion. You have to convince the organization that you have the capacity you say you do to execute the grant.

You're trying to tell the funder that you know the community and can do what you say you're going to do.

[Brian Myers](#), [Empire Health Foundation](#)

A: We try not to focus on spelling mistakes, but they do come into account.

Don't just check a box saying "we collaborate" if it's not what's going to happen. With national grants, sometimes people reviewing will Google Spokane and say, well, it's not too big and are they really going to collaborate.

[Molly Anselmo Sanchez, Inland Northwest Community Foundation](#)

A: Make sure that the numbers match, and your overall budget should equate the number being requested.

Mission creed: is something we look at pretty closely. What's an organization's mission. Does the grant fit? We want to award dollars in a way that makes sense.

Make sure that the collaboration is in place: do you know where you will get your volunteers from which will be part of that work (adequate preparation).

[Brian Myers, Empire Health Foundation](#)

A: You don't go for grant money for daily operation costs. You go for it in a way that will advance the motivations and innovative projects of the organization.

You can't go for a grant to pay for something that you're already doing. If you pursue this, it's a red flag because your organization is on the cusp of collapse and you need a bail out. You don't want to "just maintain your operation".

[Molly Anselmo Sanchez, Inland Northwest Community Foundation](#)

A: One of the criterion for grant approval is: are we excited about this project?

We'll do operating funds, expansion funds, and are "all over the board" in a good way.

[Brian Myers, Empire Health Foundation](#)

A: Every organization is perfectly designed to get the results it's getting.

Innovation is great but let's not recreate the wheel.

100 communities have done something and it's worked.

Operation costs, you have to ask for what you need; if you need toilet paper, list it.

DATA

[Ryan Oelrich, Priority Spokane](#)

Q: How do you organize and track data, and how do you best show those results?

[Dr. Robert Zinke, EWU College of Business and Public Administration](#)

A: The most significant change over the last 2 decades is including an evaluation plan in the grant proposal.

Evaluation has now become a central feature of grant applications. You have to provide evidence that you've achieved the goals and objects you set out to reach.

The better you can track what you've done, the better you will do. Ask yourself, how can I see the results I've set out to achieve and how can we track how we've done it.

[Brian Myers, Empire Health Foundation](#)

A: The importance of data vary. What is interesting to you might align with the vision and mission of the organization you are seeking funds from. If you are looking for a 10 year change,

you can look for a proxy and find short-term results that will move you in that direction. One mistake you see is not working with the funders as partners. We work closely with our partners, and what happens 3 months from now might create a need to shift the path or focus, and having data allows for a mindful shift.

[Molly Anselmo Sanchez, Inland Northwest Community Foundation](#)

A: Are the dollars moving the needle for a certain issue, and is the work allowing the telling of stories with that data. You don't have to commission your own research and create your own numbers, you can seek out a community indicator site, or use census data. It's important to put the numbers in context. Connect your numbers to the broader need. You in your practice have a much better understanding of why those numbers are important to your organization and why those numbers should matter for us.

[Ryan Oelrich, Priority Spokane:](#)

Comment: One stop shopping for data for grants and funding requests: [Spokane Community Indicators](#), overseen by EWU's Dr. Patrick Jones

[Molly Anselmo Sanchez, Inland Northwest Community Foundation](#)

A: If there is one takeaway: we are very accessible at the community foundation. Look at the guidelines on our website, then call us and ask: does this make sense, is it a good fit? Tweak a little bit, etc. Don't waste time writing for something that isn't a good fit. Help on the front end, and on the back end as well: we decline really good proposals all the time, because there are limited funds to do everything we want to do. We want to have that conversation afterward to say it was a good proposal, or it wasn't a good fit.

[Brian Myers, Empire Health Foundation](#)

A: Ditto. It used to be mandatory. We like coffee. We denied Catholic Charities the first 5 years, now they're building buildings together and doing great things.

[Dr. Robert Zinke, EWU College of Business and Public Administration](#)

A: It's an occupational hazard to think at the 30k foot level rather than the 5k foot level. There's an old saying: when you are up to your neck in alligators, you forget that your main purpose was to drain the swamp. We are in a money driven society and we always compete for dollars. What we forget is that there are certain values that drive what we are doing. In writing grants, looking at the data, RFPs, you can quickly forget that there is a larger community value. We need to constantly remind ourselves as we go through the process. We are in a time of restructuring. We are going to see more and more people hurting, as a result of the shrinking money. Traditionally, some of the poorest sectors in the economy provided the largest percentage of charitable giving. Because of economic reasons, that source is beginning to dry up. Because the economy is going into fewer hands, there is a structured shift in what we do in communities. There will come a time when there is a widespread reevaluation as to the place of grants in our society.

Audience member

Q: Is there anything you wish were happening in Spokane, but isn't?

[Brian Myers, Empire Health Foundation](#)

A: More money. More compassionate giving. Housing.

[Molly Anselmo Sanchez, Inland Northwest Community Foundation](#)

A: There are so many good things that are happening. Something that comes up a lot with our grants committee and reading a lot of applications. The piece about networking, trying to figure out what our role in our organization is to make those conversations happen. To see more networking in the community with other issues and problems- there are some higher level solutions to roll out into a broader community impact. There's so much.

[Dr. Robert Zinke, EWU College of Business and Public Administration](#)

A: I'd like to see a shift from reliance on experts to community based research and the people who are effected take responsibility to generating some of their own data and research. In that process, taking responsibility for their own lived experience in the community. Too often we look for outside expertise to tell us where the data is in what we're doing. Research is always biased. Too often the data collected by experts reflects the perspective of the experts. If that data is used for grant writing, that's fine, but there has to come a time when community-based research is the springboard for change. You will have a better place to understand the role of the community. Community engagement and research is a step forward.

Audience member

Q: Recommendations on resources to access better grant writing?

[Molly Anselmo Sanchez, Inland Northwest Community Foundation](#)

A: WA nonprofits (conference every year in Eastern Washington), they have a variety of resources.

501 Commons is Seattle-based, provides a lot of resources for nonprofits. They have consultants that you can enter into a contractual relationship. Both of these are resources we lean on heavily.

[Brian Myers, Empire Health Foundation](#)

A: We try to find places to put volunteers, free labor.

[Dr. Robert Zinke, EWU College of Business and Public Administration](#)

A: Our students have requisites to serve the community. Call me or our Director, Neil Lee regarding connecting with students.

[Angela Slabaugh](#), Vice-Chair of [Spokane Homeless Coalition](#) and Executive Director of [Hearth Homes](#)

Comment: Thanks and (invites speakers to make announcements).