A large, dimly lit library with tall bookshelves and a large open book in the foreground. The bookshelves are filled with books and have green vines growing on them. The floor is dark and reflective, showing the open book. The background is a bright green gradient.

# Alternative Funding for Libraries and Information Centres: Developing a Fundable Research Grant Proposal

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# Agenda / Roadmap

## Overview of the Session



### Importance of Alternative Funding

Discover why seeking new funding opportunities is crucial for library sustainability in the face of shrinking traditional resources and rising service demands.

### Key Topics Covered

- Funding source types,
- Steps for developing successful proposals,
- Essential proposal components,
- Budgeting and sustainability approaches,
- Possible funders, and
- Actionable writing tips.

### Actionable Outcomes

- Be equipped to identify suitable funders,
- Craft compelling proposals, and
- Leverage tools and to secure funding.



# Context & Rationale

- ❖ Impact of reductions in government and institutional funding;
- ❖ Facing higher expectations for digital resources, innovative services, and modern infrastructure.

To survive and thrive amid these pressures:

- ❖ Libraries must innovate, expand service offerings, and secure alternative sources of funding.



# Landscape of Alternative Funding Sources

## Types and Examples

1

### **Government Grants and Foundations**

Tap into support from national research agencies - NSF, and major foundations such as the Carnegie Corporation Elsevier Foundation, which prioritize information access and community impact.

2

### **Corporate Sponsorships & Crowdfunding**

Engage tech companies supporting literacy or ICT initiatives and harness community backing via online crowdfunding platforms like GoFundMe, enabling collective investment.

3

### **Consortia Funding**

Form partnerships with other institutions to pool resources and jointly submit for larger-scale grants, enhancing both proposal strength and shared benefit.



# Identifying & Researching Funders

## Successful Funder Outreach



### Understanding Funder Priorities

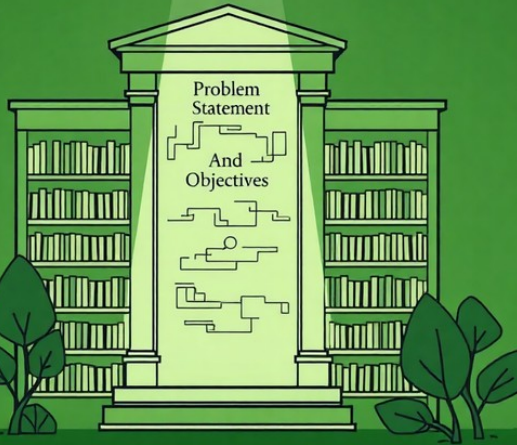
Study each funder's mission, focus areas, and eligibility requirements to ensure alignment with your library's project goals, maximizing relevance and proposal competitiveness.

### Research Tools and Tracking

Utilize grant databases such as Grants.gov, Pivot-RP (ProQuest) UNESCO, INASP, and the Foundation Center to find opportunities, and build a prospect sheet to track deadlines, contacts, and project themes.

# Defining Your Funding Project

## Laying the Foundation



### **Problem Statement**

Clearly identify the need or gap your project addresses, ensuring it is specific and supported by evidence, which will anchor your grant proposal.

### **Objectives and Relevance**

Establish SMART objectives—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound—and demonstrate how your project aligns with the library's strategic plan and the broader community needs.



# Building Partnerships & Collaborations

## Leveraging Networks

### Internal and External Collaboration

Collaborate with IT, faculty, national/local government, or other libraries to enhance project scope, expertise, and impact.

### Formalizing Partnerships

Secure letters of support or memoranda of understanding to formalize relationships, signaling funder confidence and demonstrating diverse resource leveraging.



# Proposal Structure & Key Components

## Blueprint for Success

### Essential Elements

Include a clear title page, succinct executive summary, context-rich background, explicit problem statement, specific objectives, robust methodology, detailed timeline, and defined expected outcomes.

### Narrative Flow

Ensure your proposal follows a logical progression: context and rationale establish the need; objectives guide methodology; outcomes define success; and the timeline presents feasibility.





# Budgeting & Financial Justification

## Making a Convincing Case



### Comprehensive Budgeting

- Break down costs into categories such as personnel, equipment, travel, and supplies.
- Justify each component, ensuring each aligns with project goals.

### Narrative and Institutional Support

- Include indirect costs and show institutional contributions.
- Utilize standardized templates and conform to funder formatting requirements for clarity and compliance.

# Sustainability & Evaluation

## Planning for the Future

### Ensuring Long-term Impact

Show how your project will continue to deliver benefits after the grant ends by integrating activities into institutional structures and plans.

### Monitoring Success

Develop an evaluation plan with tools, indicators, and schedules for reporting outcomes, and establish mechanisms for sharing results with stakeholders.





# Writing & Submission Tips

## Maximizing Success

### Clarity and Compliance

- Avoid jargon; use clear, concise language reflecting the funder's preferred terminology.
- Carefully follow all guidelines for structure and formatting.

### Peer Review and Timeliness

Solicit feedback from colleagues, proofread thoroughly, and submit proposals before the deadline to avoid last-minute complications.



# Exemplars: Grant Sites and Funders for Libraries in Developing Countries

1

## EIFL

**Website:** <https://www.eifl.net>

**Focus:** Supports libraries in developing and transition economy countries through innovation and access to knowledge.

**Grants Offered:**

- Public library innovation grants.
- Capacity-building and ICT development support.
- Open access and open science initiatives.

2

## IFLA

**Website:** <https://www.ifla.org>

**Focus:** Global library development, advocacy, and professional support.

**Grants Offered:**

- Participation grants for conferences.
- Small grants for advocacy and community engagement projects.

3

## Elsevier Foundation

**Website:**

<https://www.elsevierfoundation.org>

**Focus:** Capacity building for libraries, training, and technology upgrades.

**Grants Offered:**

- Supports training programs, digital literacy, and access initiatives.



# Next Steps

## Moving Forward

### Action Plan

- Explore library funding opportunities;
- Create a funding opportunities calendar;
- Establish collaborations and networks;
- Work closely with your university's research office to align efforts.



Q&A / Discussion