



## Heritage Program Funding Guide

The *Heritage Program Funding Guide* was developed by the Alliance for the Advancement of Heritage Languages as a resource for community-based heritage language programs seeking funding sources. The process is designed for those with limited experience searching for, and soliciting, grant funding. For this process, the primary tool is the Foundation Directory Online from the [Foundation Center](#). For more information, [see the FAQ](#), *Where Do Community-Based Heritage Language Programs Find Funding?*

### Foundation Directory Online

The [Foundation Directory Online](#) was developed by the Foundation Center, a national nonprofit service organization whose mission is to “strengthen the nonprofit sector by advancing knowledge about U.S. philanthropy.” The Foundation Directory Online includes information on U.S. grantmakers and their grants, drawn from sources such as IRS Form 990s, grantmaker Web sites and annual reports, and individual grantmakers.

### Accessing the Foundation Directory Online

To access the Foundation Directory Online, a minimum of the basic subscription is required. The pages linked to in this funding guide will not be available until you have subscribed and logged in. We regret any inconvenience this may cause.

## Searching the Foundation Directory Online

The following outlines the basic process for conducting a Grantmaker Search:

1. Visit the Foundation Directory Online.
2. Log in using your username and password. (Subscription required)
3. Click on Search Grantmakers.
4. Search by the following categories, and leave the other areas blank.
  - a. Fields of Interest
  - b. Types of Support
  - c. Geographic Focus
  - d. Keyword Search(See *Narrowing or Broadening your Search* below for tips to guide you in obtaining the most relevant search results.)
5. Click a Grantmaker Name to view that grantmaker's profile.
6. Review grantmaker profiles for relevance. (Refer to *Evaluating your Search Results* for guidance on how to interpret grantmaker profiles.)
7. Click a grantmaker's URL to visit that funder's Web site for further information.
8. Review a grantmaker's information on the types of work they fund and how to apply.

### **Narrowing or Broadening Your Search**

Depending on a variety of factors including the language, location, and financial needs of the program for which you seek funding, your search may result in a longer or shorter list of potential grantmakers. For example, a search for Chinese produces more results than a search for Dutch, and a search for Massachusetts produces more results than a search for Wyoming. Choose narrow or broad search options based your language, location, and financial needs. However, be prepared to narrow or broaden your search options based on the results, until you achieve the most comprehensive, yet manageable list of search results to explore further.

#### ***Narrow Search Options***

To narrow your search, Search by Types of Support, Fields of Interest, and Keyword Search. For the narrowest search, include all four categories and all possible search terms outlined below.

#### ***Broad Search Options***

To broaden your search, search by Types of Support and Keyword Search only.

## Search by

**Types of Support** – We have found that the following six search terms produce the most relevant results:

- Curriculum development
- Program development
- Scholarship funds
- Seed money
- General/operating support
- Use of facilities

Choose individual terms or all of the above, depending on your needs. We suggest entering all six terms separated by “or” to produce the greatest number of search results.

**Example:** Curriculum development or Program development or Scholarship funds or Seed money or General/operating support or Use of facilities

You may manually type in each term separated by “or,” or select each term from the index by clicking “view index” under the category Types of Support. To use the index, click a term, and “or” will automatically be entered between each term you select.

**Fields of Interest** – We have found that the following six search terms produce the most relevant results:

- Children/youth
- Cultural/ethnic awareness
- Education
- Language (foreign)
- Language/linguistics
- Minorities/immigrants, centers/services

We suggest entering all six terms separated by “or” to produce the most search results.

**Example:** Children/youth or Cultural/ethnic awareness or Education or Language (foreign) or Language/linguistics or Minorities/immigrants, centers/services

You may manually type in each term separated by “or,” or select each term from the index by clicking “view index” under the category Fields of Interest. To use the index, click a term, and “or” will automatically be entered between each term you select.

**Geographic Focus** – We have found that, while some grantmakers fund programs nationally, many focus on supporting programs in local communities for a variety of reasons. For example, some organizations fund programs to support the communities in which major facilities are located. Therefore, we advise entering the name of your specific state plus “or national.” To exclude grantmakers who focus on local communities outside your area.

**Example 1:** Alabama or national

**Example 2:** California or national

**Keyword Search** – We have found that some grantmakers have general requirements while others identify more specific interests. Entering the name of a heritage language will provide you with grantmakers whose focus is a specific language background, culture, or community. Entering the search term “language” will provide you with grantmakers who support a wider variety of language-related work. We advise entering a heritage language (or Indigenous for the category of Indigenous languages) plus “or language.”

**Example 1:** Chinese or language

**Example 2:** Indigenous or language

### **Evaluating your Search Results**

Once you have obtained a list of search results from the Foundation Directory Online, click on a Grantmaker Name to view that grantmaker’s profile. From there, check the following sections: Background, Limitations, Purpose and Activities, Program Area(s), Fields of Interest, Geographic Focus, Types of Support, Additional Location Information, and Selected Grants. Look for overall relevance and key information that would disqualify your program from funding. If the grantmaker’s funding goals appear to be an appropriate match for your funding needs, proceed to the grantmaker’s Web site via the URL link at the top of the profile. If a URL is not provided and the grantmaker’s Web site cannot be located via an online search, you must contact the grantmaker directly by telephone or mail to obtain further information.

Some grantmaker Web sites provide more complete information than others. Some allow potential grantees to apply for grants online. At a minimum, most grantmaker Web sites include a basic description of the types of programs they do and do not fund and how to inquire

or submit a proposal. Please note that some grantmakers accept proposals by invitation only. In these situations, you must first make a brief inquiry and introduce your program via telephone, email, or mail to obtain approval by the grantmaker prior to addressing proposal development and submission.

The following is a list of questions to consider when searching a grantmaker's Web site or seeking information via inquiry.

1. Are there any funding restrictions (such as type of program funded or program location)?
2. Are there any restrictions in what the funding can be used for that would make a particular grant a poor match for my program's needs?
3. Is it required that our program share some part of the costs, in addition to the grantmaker's contribution?
4. What are the proposal requirements (e.g., content, format, length)?
5. What is the proposal deadline?

The Alliance hopes this brief overview of funding, including information about funding sources for programs within our database and resources from the Foundation Center Online, will prove helpful in your funding planning and activities.