
Other People's Money

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ABSTRACT Drawing on their experiences (one as a library director, the other as a grant administrator), the authors offer insights on the value of grant writing to fund special projects or activities that would be otherwise beyond a library's institutional budget.

Have you ever wanted to do a project or wondered how you could pay for some sort of continuing education? Does your library budget never seem to stretch as far as you need it to? Over the past decade, the authors have both collaborated as well as worked individually to tackle the issue of finding or funding specific projects related to Atla libraries. Mainly, Kris Veldheer's role has been as a department head and library director looking to fund specific projects like archives digitization, rare book evaluations and continuing education for library staff. In her role with Atla, Gillian Harrison Cain administers grants for Atla libraries interested in doing special projects and programs. Together, these individuals offered both sides of the issue of using other people's money.

The first thing to think through is, what do you want to do but don't have the money or resources for it? Think broadly here, because this could be anything from taking a class to improve your management skills, to tackling your first digitization project, to a collaborative effort to write an open educational resource with a faculty member. Some people keep a running list of these unfunded projects, while others choose to look for grants or funding opportunities only when they need someone else to pay for something. To give you some examples to start your thinking, Kris has received an IMLS grant (Institute of Museum and Library Services) to digitize a local history collection from the archives of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. The grant included two years of completely funded training and education plus additional funds to buy digitization equipment. More than just this single project, the IMLS grant paved the way for future digitization projects as well as

provided equipment such as a voice recorder to capture oral histories and a flatbed scanner to digitize personal papers and other artifacts. But this is just about archives or special collections. There are many other ways to get things done around your library using money from someone else.

One aspect of the work of Member Programs that Gillian oversees at Atla is to administer grants for Atla institutions, groups, and individuals. Some of these grants include consultation grants, library impact grants, regional grants, and a digitization grant program. There are also diversity scholarships, global librarians' grants, registration grants as well as travel grants for attending Atla Annual. It is well worth the time to explore the member benefits section of the Atla website to see if one of the existing grants or scholarships might fit what you are trying to do. Similarly, if there is something you are interested in doing and don't see a scholarship or grant listed to cover it, Member Programs is open to being contacted to see if they can help you accomplish your goals. Gillian and Kris have worked together through consultation grants to help Kris rewrite a collection development policy, evaluate an archive, and analyze a rare book collection. Also, some of the grants can be applied to more than one Atla institution if there are two libraries who have similar needs. For example, on two occasions, Kris has teamed up with other local Atla libraries to share the costs of bringing in experts partially funded through Atla consultation grants. All these grants and scholarships come down to the earlier suggestion to think about what you or your library wants to do but doesn't have the money to make it happen.

Another way to think about using other people's money is to take advantage of training and educational opportunities. On the Atla website, there are several professional development resources including continuing education programs and an archive of educational and informational webinars presented by Atla staff and members. These can be another way to get free or low-cost training that is targeted to a specific issue you need to know more about. Along similar lines, do you or your library belong to a state or regional group that offers continuing education? The Bechtold Library at Catholic Theological Union (where Kris is the library director) is a member of the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI). CARLI offers both self-paced learning, online classes, in-person workshops, and larger programs such as OER and data management training. Kris has been part of CARLI Counts, a curriculum developed

by CARLI to teach librarians how to collect and use data to tell the library's story. First, in developing and doing a project of her own, Kris worked on data collection for electronic resources which were then turned into graphics for faculty meetings to explain database usage. Now she is still a part of CARLI Counts through mentoring other librarians in developing their own data projects. Kris is also taking a basic cataloging class taught through another local Illinois based library system to brush up on her cataloging skills.

Looking for and using other people's money leads to many interesting opportunities. Some people with more experience getting grants or even writing grant applications can mentor others with less experience. If you are comfortable using your school's development office, there might be other opportunities to work with them on grant writing or exploring donor opportunities. Not all development officers are library-oriented, so depending on what you are trying to achieve, sometimes the better choice is trying for a grant or scholarship on your own. There are also grant writing workshops available to help sharpen your skills and equip you with possible language to help you write a better application. In the end, the most important resource you will have for getting other people's money is your list of ideas and projects for your library that are beyond your budget. There is money out there to support your ideas, but you may need to think creatively to find it.