

TIPS for Your Community

TIPS is an effective server training program to prevent alcohol-related problems in both commercial and consumer settings. Having trained and certified almost two million people, TIPS is used by thousands of establishments, organizations and individuals to prevent drunk driving, underage drinking, intoxication, and other alcohol-related incidents.

Society in general seems to be shifting its approach of problem solving to encourage people to work together, and TIPS trainers are no different. Both TIPS trainers and communities are realizing the value of TIPS training and recognize the variety of programs offered as a tool to reach a wide range of people. In addition to working with the liquor licensees through the *On Premise* program, many jurisdictions are using a combination of the TIPS programs to address alcohol misuse within their communities.

These communities have identified the need to include different groups in their efforts and are realizing that coalition (or community) building is an effective strategy. Working together, they are able to address the problems associated with alcohol misuse in their communities from several angles, increasing the success of their efforts.

Building Bridges in your Community

Although TIPS was originally developed as a server training program for bartenders and servers, it has since grown to meet the diverse needs of our trainers and the communities in which they live. As the program has expanded, our trainers and the people they train have also diversified. TIPS is presently used by a wide variety of people representing many industries and facets of society.

When trying to resolve the problems associated with alcohol misuse, TIPS is an effective tool in reducing drunk driving, underage drinking and intoxication. However, just as important to a problem solving coalition, are the opportunities for communication presented by the interactive nature of the program. TIPS training enables you to bring together people who may not have the opportunity to work together otherwise. It also allows people who may not see eye-to-eye on an issue to get together in an informal and impartial setting.

Getting Involved In Your Community

Undoubtedly, your organization has many opportunities to get involved with your community to resolve the problems of alcohol misuse. Depending on how involved you want to be, you can either spear-head the efforts or, if you are currently a TIPS trainer, can join in an on-going effort.

Organizing and running a coalition can be a time consuming job, especially if you are seeking funding, but it can also be rewarding. By overseeing the effort, you will have more control and be able to steer it the way you want. If you are heading up your efforts, you will want to review “Building a Community Coalition with TIPS” to get an idea of how to go about incorporating TIPS into your plans. Specific information, including cost and logistics on the program, can be found in the “TIPS Trainer Marketing Kit”, which you will also want to go over.

As a TIPS trainer, you will have much to offer groups addressing these problems. They will benefit from your knowledge and experience, especially if you already have working relationships with the people they are trying to reach. Your knowledge of the TIPS program, how it works, and how the different versions can be used to address different constituencies will also be helpful to an organization that doesn't completely understand the training.

Building a Community Coalition with TIPS

Building a coalition, or simply gathering a group of people together to address a particular issue, can be a rewarding experience. It can be frustrating at times, especially if you are applying for a grant to fund your training. Whether you are new to the TIPS program and are looking to incorporate the training into your project or you are familiar with the program already, you should be able to utilize the steps outlined below to help you incorporate TIPS into your project.

The example illustrated throughout this section is used for demonstration purposes only. Your action plan and the people that you involve is going to be dependent on your particular organization's goal. Specific, detailed information on TIPS can be found in the "TIPS Trainer Marketing Kit" and funding and budgetary issues are discussed in more detail further in this guidebook.

Gather Supporting Data

Whether you are in the beginning or middle stage of developing your plan, supplying evidence of the problem(s) in your community can be critical to winning or receiving a continuation of a grant as well as strengthening your position in your community. Items such as newspaper articles, letters from members of the community affected by the problem, photographs of the problem and similar "soft" data can be included in a proposal to support your need for funding and can be just as important as "hard" data of statistics and graphs. In addition, these items can really make a proposal stand out, which the reviewers will remember.

Identify Your Goal(s)

Identifying your overall goal is the first step to developing your action plan and it will drive your entire plan, time line, budget, and partners. Identifying your ultimate goal and developing a well thought out plan will help you reach your goal, stay organized and on schedule. You may elect to define the goal yourself or you may enlist the help of your partners.

After you have identified your goal (s), you will have to determine potential partners to help you, how many people you will train, who will train those people, which programs they will be trained in and a training schedule for them. Determining these factors will help you set your time line and budget. Each of these steps is discussed further in this section and the partners you select will help determine many of these issues.

For the sake of the guidebook, we will assume that you are going to predetermine that your goal is to reduce underage drinking in your community. You have concluded in order to reduce underage drinking, you need to address the university students and the bars surrounding the

campus in your community. Now that you've determined that, who is going to help you get there.

Approach Potential Partners

Deciding your goals will help define whom your potential partners will be. You will want to have partners who can help you achieve your goals and they should be able to help you reach the people that you want to train. Partners can also help you secure additional funding for your training.

A variety of partners may be necessary to represent the different populations you are targeting. Let's take our previous example. Although both of these groups need to be addressed to reach the goal, they are going to have to be approached completely differently with different people helping and you should think of this as two separate projects under one umbrella. Let's deal with who is going to help you reach the university students first.

To begin, let's look at your organization's board and executive board. Is there anyone with a connection to the college? This could be a direct connection, such as someone that is also on the board of the college, or a professor or an alumna of the college. If that is the case, approach them for help and advice on how receptive they feel the college would be to working with you. Aside from the insider knowledge they have about the campus environment, they may be willing to introduce you to the faculty or departments who could help you.

Don't overlook the value of someone who may have an indirect connection to the college such as someone whose child, spouse, niece or nephew attends or works at the university. They may be willing to introduce you to those "insiders" who can help you make an inroad into the college or can give you advice on how to approach the university.

Now, let's assume through networking you were able to get the support of the Student Life Office and they have agreed to help you reach the students. The only thing that has been agreed upon is they will help you; specific issues such as how the training will be funded and exactly how your project will work has not been determined at this time.

At this point, you have the support of the university to reach the students. Now that you have successfully initiated reaching the students you will need to figure out how to reach the taverns and restaurants surrounding the campus. You could individually go to each tavern and restaurant and enlist support but that's probably not the most efficient use of your time.

The easiest way to reach the establishments is to have the support of an organization that has influence and a larger reach than you do. A local tavern or restaurant association or an alcohol distributor would be a good place to start.

Let's go through the same process that you did with reaching the students. Is there anyone on your board who is involved in the hospitality industry? Perhaps one of your board members owns a restaurant, is connected to the local tavern association or beer distributor and can

introduce you to them. The best case scenario is that someone in your organization will be able to help you network directly with the tavern or restaurant association or beer distributor.

What happens if no one at your organization has ties to the hospitality industry and you haven't been able to find someone to help you forge those relationships? The only answer is that you will have to develop the relationship yourself. It is certainly a tougher, more time consuming road, but it can be done!

Call your local beer distributor and tell them that you are trying to work with the licensees to train them in the responsible sale of alcohol and explain that you would like their help to accomplish that. Many distributors are already working in the community to promote the responsible use of their products and would be thrilled at your invitation. After you have spoken with the distributor, go through the same process with the local tavern association. For the sake of this example, we will assume both the distributor and association have agreed to help.

Not everyone is going to agree with you or be so eager to "jump on the bandwagon" for your cause. You should expect to get some resistance and questioning. The more organized you are, the more convincing you will be to those organizations. Although you haven't addressed the logistics of the training, you should be knowledgeable of the costs associated with training and how you plan on funding the training.

By this point, you have made contacts either directly or indirectly with the people who are going to help you reach your intended audience. In the above scenario, your goal is to reduce underage drinking through working with the students and the bars. You have enlisted and received the college's help to reach the students, and the distributor and the tavern and restaurant association's help to reach the licensees.

Now is the time to build your momentum! Get these people involved, keep them up-to-date and hold monthly meetings to introduce everyone to each other. These people are now a part of your task force and they are going to be an invaluable resource when it comes to deciding whom you want to train, which version of the TIPS program to train them in, and where to conduct your classes.

Identify Programs to be Trained

Once all partners have signed onto your project, your next step will be to solidify which TIPS program or programs you are going to use to reach your participants. As you are aware of by now, there are eight versions of the TIPS program which are geared toward helping people handle particular situations in very different markets. Your partners will be able to help you decide which program is the most appropriate to train for their people.

By targeting different groups with the appropriate program, you will maximize your efforts and effectiveness to reach your goal. Before you can do this, you will want to review each of the programs in the TIPS Trainer Marketing Kit" to get a clear understanding of what each program is all about.

Let's continue with the example from the previous section. You have already identified that your goal is to reduce underage drinking and have determined that in order to do that you need to reach the students and the restaurants and taverns surrounding the campus. You have sought out and received support from university to work with the students and you have gained support from the local tavern/restaurant association and the distributor to reach licensees.

In this example, you are trying to work with the students to reduce underage drinking so the University program would be the most appropriate and effective program for the students. The bars and restaurants surrounding the campus should be trained in the On premise program, which will give them the skills necessary to intervene in situations that may arise while serving their customers.

The main thing to keep in mind is that you can target your TIPS training to your audience with the program that will benefit them the most. With the variety of programs offered, you will be able to develop a well rounded plan that can address both the commercial establishments to give them the skills necessary to serve alcohol responsibly and the consumers so they are consuming alcohol responsibly in a social setting. Trainers certified in the two-day On Premise train-the-trainer workshop are authorized to train all eight programs. Participants of the one-day University train-the-trainer workshop are only certified to train that program.

Identify Your Participants

Deciding who you want to train, both as trainers and participants, is critical to determining your budget, especially if you are applying for funding. In this section, we will discuss the process for identifying your participants. Once you have applied for a grant and been awarded the funding, your budget is usually set and cannot add in costs for additional participants or trainers. You will need to identify your participants first, as that will help determine how many trainers you will need.

At this stage of the game, you should have an idea of how you are going to fund your training, as your partners may now want to address it. If you are applying for a grant, the amount available and what is considered "allowable costs" will be addressed in the grant guidelines. If your grant is not going to cover all the costs of your training, you will need to determine where the additional money will come from. Your partners may be able to help you if that is the case.

Just as with determining which program to train the students and licensees in, your partners will be able to help determine the participants you will train. They will be knowledgeable about their area and will have a good idea about the participation that you can anticipate from their organization or people. Let's go through the process of identifying potential participants to train from our above examples.

At this point you have the support of the university through the Student Life Office but you haven't identified specifically which students will be trained. Will you target the whole campus or specific groups of students? Do you have the support of the correct office to reach the students or will you have to approach another office for help? Will the training be mandatory or voluntary and through what mechanism will the training take place?

Note: as you can see, at this point things could get quite confusing if you let it. There are many different directions that your project could go and the route you take is going to depend on many factors. Some of these factors include how much money you can put toward this portion of your project, the manpower it is going to take to oversee this project, how well equipped you are to handle it and the amount of support you have from your partners. The most important thing to remember is to keep your goals in perspective and to keep things organized.

Back to the example. Through a lot of discussion, you and your partners have decided to target your training to the residence hall students on a voluntary basis through the residence hall staff, who may or may not become your trainers. Your trainers are still to be determined. The Residence Life staff has said there are 1,500 students and 800 of those students live on campus in five dorms. You will offer the training to those residents and will open the training to any student who wants to participate.

However, you figure that not all of the students in the dorms will participate and some students outside the dorms will. Through this analysis as well as analysis of your budget, you and your partners have determined that you can get five hundred students to participate and you can fund them to go through the training as well.

Now you will need to focus on getting the bars surrounding the university trained in the On Premise program. Through research, you and your partners have determined that you need to target the establishments within a five-mile radius around campus. Your partners were able to identify five sit-down restaurants and three taverns with approximately 100 employees in the area and you have determined that you can fund the training of these servers as well.

Both the association and the distributor have been informally talking to the establishments about your efforts and have gotten a positive response from them in their willingness to participate. Because of this feedback, you, the association and local distributor feel you can get full participation of the establishments and their employees.

Lets's recap the participants you are going to train. These are 1,500 students total at the school, 800 live in the dorms and you are going to offer the University program training on a volunteer basis to those students as well as to the commuters through the residence hall staff.

You expect 500 students will participate and have budgeted for that many participants. The restaurant/tavern association and distributor are going to help you target the eight establishments surrounding the campus and you have budgeted to train 100 of the establishment employees in the On Premise program.

Now that you have identified the participants that you want to train, you need to identify the trainers who will train them. Once again, your partners will be key to identifying the trainers.

Identify Your Trainers

Just as important as choosing your participants and the appropriate program to train them in is choosing the right trainer. You will want to choose a person who understands both the people

that you are targeting as well as the issues they face and who is, most importantly, credible to them.

As you already know, there are eight versions of the TIPS program that can be trained throughout the community. Each of these programs is geared toward reaching a different audience and would be best trained by someone who understands that audience. When choosing your trainers, you will want to utilize the expertise of your partners because they will have a good understanding of the audience and may be willing to become trainers themselves or may have suggestions on who to approach about becoming trainers.

In the above scenario, the university students would better receive your message if someone their age conducts their training rather than an administrator that they perceive as “stodgy” or “out of touch”. The Student Life office has suggested utilizing Residence Assistants to reach the students and through some networking, has gotten them to participate as trainers.

Your job of finding trainers for the licensees is much easier because the distributor and the association have both said that they have a great relationship with the licensees and would like to be able to work with them on a more personal level through training the program.

The bottom line is to choose trainers who will be most effective in reaching your targeted audience. You want to make sure that those people won't be turned off to the training before it starts simply because they can't, or don't want to, relate to their trainer. The last thing you want to do is alienate the people you are trying to reach by choosing a trainer that they can not relate to.

Identify How Many Trainers You Need

Another very important issue is how many trainers you are going to need in order to conduct your participant sessions. The Workshop Coordinators or the Customer Service department can work with you to determine how many people are appropriate for your organization to have certified as trainers. The following factors may influence how many trainers you will need.

- *the number of participants you plan on training;
- *how much time you have to conduct your training;
- *how many versions of the program you are going to train;
- *how much money you have allotted for trainers;
- *if you are going to conduct training after your grant runs out; and
- *how much participation you can expect (class size can range from five to thirty participants)

In our example, you have budgeted for 500 students and plan on offering the training when the school year starts. You have determined that you need your own trainers and have gotten the Residence Assistants to agree to be trainers. Taking the above factors into consideration, you have determined you need five trainers to train the students.

For the licensees in the above example, you have determined that you want to train 100 of the restaurant and tavern employees in the establishments surrounding the campus. The distributor

and the tavern/restaurant association have offered to become trainers and you have decided that one person from each association will become trainers and offer the classes right before school starts back.

This figure is purely hypothetical. In a real live situation, there are many variables that come into play and the Workshop Coordinator or Customer Service department can help you determine how many trainers you will need.

Get Your Trainers Certified

Now that you have identified your trainers, whom they are going to train and the program you will train them in, you can begin concentrating on getting your trainers certified. Several factors, such as participant and trainer's schedules, holidays, and busy seasons come into play when deciding your training schedule. You and your partners should work together in determining the best time to have your people certified as trainers.

You will want to register your trainers to attend a train-the-trainer workshop, which is scheduled by Health Communications, Inc. At 1-800-438-8477. If you have approximately ten people that you wish to certify as trainers you can host a "closed workshop" in which only your people attend. The other option is to have your people attend an "open workshop" that has previously been set up by TIPS in which a variety of people participate. Workshops are scheduled approximately three months in advance of the workshop date so take that into consideration when deciding when to have your trainer's certified.

Let's continue with our above example and schedule your trainers to attend a workshop. With the university, you have decided that you are going to have five people certified as trainers in the one-day University train-the-trainer program and will conduct the training at the beginning of the school year when the students return to classes.

Because you have only five participants, your trainers will need to attend an already scheduled workshop. You should contact TIPS to find out when the next available workshop is in your area. If there isn't one, we may be able to work with you to schedule one. If available, you should schedule your people to attend a workshop towards the end of the summer so that the information is fresh. The other option is to work with a neighboring college who may be willing to send some of their people to become trainers, which would allow you to hold a closed workshop.

The two people that you have selected from the association and distributor will want to get trained in the two-day On Premise program. The same steps apply to getting them trained as your University trainers. You should contact TIPS to find out where the workshop in your area is going to be and schedule them to attend it. You have decided that you want to train the establishments prior to school beginning so you should try and attend a workshop in early to mid-summer.

Set your Participant Classes

Certified TIPS trainers schedule their own participant sessions. TIPS does not regulate when or how much trainers charge to conduct their sessions. This allows you the flexibility to set the training schedule for your participants at their earliest convenience. When scheduling your server sessions, you should take into consideration when is the best time for your target audience to attend your sessions to maximize attendance.

You will want to set up your classes far enough in advance so that you are not scrambling at the last minute to get a convenient location. Look at this as an opportunity to bring in a new partner by seeking a location such as the police or fire department, a community center, a room in the local beer distributorship or other business, city hall or community center. Your partners may also be able to help you secure a location. You should offer recognition to the establishment hosting the session in any information you send.

Be sure to order your training materials at least two weeks in advance to ensure they arrive on time and are the correct materials. Once you get the materials please make sure that your training materials match the participant materials, especially if you are training more than one program.

In the above example, you have already determined that you would like to offer voluntary training to the students who live on campus as well as to commuter students when school starts through the Resident Assistants. Figuring that students would be more likely to attend something if they didn't have to leave their dorm, the college has authorized the dorms to host sessions one night a week for the first four weeks of school in their lobbies/TV rooms.

In order to conduct the training within the first month of school, your five trainers would each have to host a session a week with 25 participants in each session. They also decided to host their sessions on four different nights of the week to give people more variety. At the end of the four weeks, your trainers will hopefully have trained all of the 500 students targeted. The college informed you that the rooms must reserve at least one month in advance so you verified with your trainers the dates prior to reserving the rooms. The also said use of the TV/VCR is included in the reservation.

Now that student classes are scheduled, you must focus on setting up the participant classes for your establishments. The distributor has offered to host the classes as well as train the participants as their establishment. You had previously agreed to train the establishments before school started and decide to hold four classes at various time to maximize participation. One establishment has asked you to train their employees at their place. You agree after verifying they have the capabilities of hosting a class.

The association and distributor partners have agreed to coordinate the workshop sign-ups through contact with the establishment owners. Don't forget that you can use your sessions to gain attention to your project! Take the opportunity to invite other businesses in the community to participate by donating lunch or items to be raffled off. You can also invite people such as the mayor or chief of police to welcome your participants. The more people know about your training, the better! Of course, the media should be notified, which is addressed later.

Solidify Your Budget

Determining your budget is one of the most crucial components of this process, especially if you are applying for funding. If you are applying for a grant, please read the grant guidelines carefully so that you understand what is “allowable” and “non-allowable” cost. If something is not allowable, or if you have to match certain percentage of the awarded funding, you will need to decide where you will obtain the additional funding. Your partners can be helpful by matching your funding, connecting you to additional sources or may be able to apply for a separate grant to cover additional costs.

If your funding won't cover all of the costs associated with your project you will need funding from an additional source. These issues should be worked out in advance of setting your training schedule, so that your project remains on schedule. Details on receiving grant funding are contained later in this document.

PR – the Ultimate Weapon

Nobody can bring more attention to your cause like the media! Invite them to participate in your community meetings and training sessions. (The role-playing section especially makes for great footage.) The media is looking for any item that will attract their reader's attention and getting a variety of people involved with your project will help generate interest. Inviting the mayor or other city official to welcome your participants at your training session will undoubtedly bring some attention.

Drum up interest in your session by advertising it in advance. A great way to build interest is to give away door prizes to attendees. This is a great opportunity for you to use your networking contacts to get items donated. Many local businesses will be happy to donate items (breakfast, lunch, dinner, t-shirts, bags, movie passes, hotel stays, etc.) in exchange for recognition.

Funding Issues

Before you approach potential partners and prior to finalizing your plans or grant proposal, review all the costs associated with TIPS training. These costs include the participant materials for the people you plan on training and the trainers who will train them. Training supplies (paper, markers, etc.) and any costs for the location you will use should also be factored in.

If you are applying for funding, be sure that you fully understand what costs are allowable or not allowable through grant guidelines. Once you have been awarded funding, you usually can not change your cost allotment and won't be able to train more trainers or participants than you originally allotted for in your budget.

In this section, you will find information to solidify the process of budgeting for TIPS training. It is meant to supplement the process of incorporating the training into your community, which you learned about in the previous section. You will also find potential sources of funding in this section.

Identify Participant Costs

Identifying your participants prior to submitting a budget, regardless of where your funding is coming from, is crucial. It will help you to allocate money in your budget to cover the cost of participant materials. By identifying your goal, you will narrow down your targeted audience. Servers must re-certify every three years to keep their active status, which you may want to address in your long-term goals.

In the example from the previous section the goal was to reduce underage drinking through work with the university students and the restaurant and tavern employees. By identifying their target audience (the students and employees) they were able to focus on how many participants they thought they could get to participate.

Accountants and treasurers don't like surprises and you will save yourself a lot of headaches by addressing this issue prior to submitting your final budget analysis. Again, this is especially true if you are applying for a grant. Identifying your participants will help you determine how many trainers you will need to train them.

Identify Training Costs

You have two options to getting your participants trained through certified TIPS trainers. You can either have someone from your organization become certified to conduct the training or you can contract with an independent trainer in your local area to train your participants. The option that you choose will depend on your organization, the goals that you have set and what type of control you want to have over your classes.

TIPS does not regulate when, where or how much a trainer charges to conduct training. Logistical information is left up to the trainer's discretion and if you are using an independent trainer you will have to work these details out with them. This option may not be cost effective for an organization that has multi-tier goals. However, it might be a great choice for an organization that has one goal with a small number of people to train.

In our previous example, the coalition decided that because of the amount of people that they had to train and the amount of time they had to train them, they wanted to have seven people certified as trainers - five from the university and two to train the establishment employees.

To recap, you will need to identify your participants and the amount of time you have to conduct your training prior to deciding how many trainers you will need. There is a re-certification process that the trainers must go through annually and you may want to decide if your long-term goals include covering that cost as well.

Identify Any Additional Costs

Once you have identified what costs are allowed in your grant or what you are willing to fund, you may have to figure out where you will receive addition funding, as well as who will be

responsible for obtaining it. These costs can be direct costs such as fees for participants or trainers or indirect costs such as advertising, room rental fees, equipment rental (for the TV/VCR), door prizes, etc.

This is where you should use your contacts! They should be able to help you obtain these items from a different businesses and organizations around town. Businesses can take a write-off for donations made to non-profits and would probably be happy to help you regardless. You may offer them recognition in your promotional materials as well as at the training.

Look to approach organizations that sell the items you need. For example, if you need a TV/VCR, approach the local TV rental or repair shop about donating one to use during the class. If your class is going to be held during mealtime, get a local restaurant to donate food or offer discounts to participants on their meals during the class.

In the previous section, the coalition's partners did a great job getting items donated. They helped get others in the community involved by getting them to donate items to be raffled which helped generate interest from the students. The university helped obtain use of a room and equipment needed for the student sessions and the distributor offered to host an on premise classes at their establishment.

Non-Profit vs. For-Profit

Not-for-Profit, or organizations with tax-exempt status, generally are eligible to apply for most funding. The list includes universities, public safety and substance abuse organizations, community service organizations and police, fire and other emergency service organizations, among others.

For-Profit organizations are usually not eligible to apply for or receive funding. Instead of applying for funding, many for-profit organizations partner with non-profit organizations. If you are for-profit, contact various non-profit organizations in your community to see if they are interested in working with you.

In our example, the coalition was eligible to apply for funding. They partnered with non-profit organizations, the university and association, and for profit organizations, the distributor, to conduct training. As a result, both groups were able to participate in the training.

All potential funding sources specify who is and is not eligible to apply for funding under a particular source prior to filling out the application.

Help Finding Funding

Finding funding may seem like an impossible task but it doesn't have to be. Please review the following section titled "Potential Funding Sources" for suggestions on where to start. You should contact your local government representatives to see if they could help or if they are willing to write a letter of recommendation for your grant proposal. They have definite interest in reducing drunk driving, underage drinking and alcohol misuse in their community and would

probably be happy to help you.

If you are looking for federal funding, contact your state senator(s) or representative. If you are looking for help with state funding. Contact your statehouse representative or governor. Be sure that you have a clear idea of your proposed project plan before you contact them so they know the best way to help you.

Funding Categories

If you are looking for funding, you will want to apply for the type of funding that you have the best chance of receiving as well as administering. Below we have listed the most common types of funding that are available and have described each type to help you identify which is most appropriate for you to seek.

Federal Funding is administered through an agency of the federal government. The process of finding , applying for, receiving and administering this type of funds can be quite lengthy and cumbersome and often has a short notice of availability. This type of funding is usually awarded in a competitive process, through a Request for Proposal (RFP). Recipients of federal funds have specific rules they must abide by when accepting and will fall under all rules and regulations that apply to the federal government.

State Funding is available through your state agencies. Many times the state will receive money and the guidelines for dispensing the money from a federal agency, which they will then administer through their agency. Often the governor will allocate the money to the agency direct. States usually award funding in a competitive process as well, through an RFP, statewide or to specific locales. Occasionally an agency will designate individual communities or organizations to receive funds without making them go through a competitive process.

Finding, applying for, receiving and administering a state grant can be cumbersome and usually has a short notice of availability. Recipients of state funds have specific rules they must abide by when accepting funding and will fall under all rules and regulations that apply to the state government.

Foundation Funding is a great way to get started with funding if you are new to the grants process. Although most have predetermined criteria that recipients must meet, foundations are not as strict in their guidelines for applying for or administering funds as government agencies and they usually give more notice of availability of funds and deadlines. Foundations vary in size and can offer grants nationally, in a particular state or even an individual locale. Foundations can offer awards based on a competitive process through an RFP annually or can accept proposals at any time.

There is no one set way for a foundation to operate so you will have to check with the foundation regarding procedures for applying for money through them. Most communities have a community foundation that receives money from businesses and individuals in the community. They then direct that money to local organizations to make improvements in the community.

Corporate and Private Funding are excellent sources for funding opportunities as many corporations give money to entities in areas that they conduct business. They may also be willing to partner with you to provide non-monetary items such as supply lunch or a location for a class. Private funding is one of the largest and fastest growing types of funding and usually will not have as many strings attached to it as the above options. The best way to obtain this type of funding is through the contacts that you have made by networking!