

Session: Inside Scoop from Pensacola
Sunday, October 23, 2016
3:30pm – 5:30pm

Presenters: Belle Bear, Marny Needle, Holly Jurnovoy, and Cyndi Warren

Scribe: Brigitte Brooks, Pensacola Bay Area

Questions and Answers

All answers were given by the Pensacola Bay Area panelists.

Q. Does every grant applicant receive a site visit? Merle Johnson, (Garden State) New Jersey

A. Yes, all grant applicants receive a site visit.

Q. How many applications do you get each year? Wendy Hoffman, Sonoma, California

A. We typically receive 80-100 applications per year.

Q. Do you have an LOI process? Mary Jane Robertson, (Garden State) New Jersey

A. Nonprofits must submit their LOIs by April 30th. There is specific criteria the applicants must meet including being in good standing with the IRS, be registered with the state of Florida, and be a 501C3.

Q. Do you give non-winning grant applicants any feedback? Beverley McClure, San Antonio

A. No, we do not. This isn't done because we don't want the nonprofits to think that making the recommended changes will result in their winning a grant in the subsequent year as the competition is different and the ladies comprising the committee making the decision will be different. There is a FAQ provided to nonprofits to incorporate the most common questions we hear from them. This is a general way to address questions about the grant process.

Q. How many board members do you have?

A. 21

Q. How is absentee voting handled? Cathy-Renee Vinnicombe, Garden State (New Jersey)

A. Information is mailed to all members ahead of time; grant summaries are also available online, together with an absentee ballot. Absentee ballots may be emailed, faxed or given to a board member.

Q. How do you handle multi-year grants? Nancy Clark, East Bay (Oakland, CA)

A. Grants are awarded for a 2 year period. Liaisons are assigned to each grant recipient to help keep them meet this deadline for completion.

Q. How many members do you sponsor annually? Teresa Bolton, Northwest Florida (Fort Walton Beach, Florida)

A. About 15 annually. They pay \$500 and we sponsor the other \$500. Sponsorships are for one time only.

Q. Do you solicit the member sponsorships?

A. No, people know we do this and some will donate the money for a member sponsorship.

Q. How do you determine the number of members you will sponsor?

A. Based on the amount of funds available, the board makes a list of those who might benefit from a scholarship, and then a joint decision is made by the board as to which ladies to sponsor.

Q. How do you determine if the nonprofit is qualified? Patricia Wynne, Metropolitan Denver Colorado

A. There is a LOI process to determine their eligibility to apply for a grant. Requirements include the organization being a tax exempt public charity, registered with the Florida Division of Corporations, and in the case of our chapter they must be based in and operate in the 2 county area in which our chapter focuses.

Q. How is sustainability of the nonprofit project funded determined?

A. This is a question on the grant application and the site visit team poses this question too on their site visit.

Q. How do you work with organizations to strengthen them? Jane Coyle, Indian River County (Vero Beach, Florida)

A. Our members individually get involved and help in the community, not board members, but general IMPACT members. Many of these members get involved as a result of the site visit.

Q. What is the term of membership and the membership season? Emily Eichenhorn, Metropolitan Detroit, Michigan

A. Members must join by March 1 in order to be considered a member and participate that calendar year. Recruitment never really ends. Ladies are invited to rejoin at the Annual Meeting and membership socials begin shortly after in early November. IMPACT board members keep the mind set of recruiting all the time.

Q. What is the population of the 2 county area your IMPACT serves? How do you fund overhead? Wendy Hoffman, Sonoma, California

A. 400,000 people live in the 2 county area we serve. To cover overhead, we have ladies who sometimes donate above the \$1,000 as well as donations of services and discounts from local businesses. For some events, we get members to donate the food, which they love.

Q. How many friends of IMPACT do you have?

A. About 50.

Q. What are your overhead expenses?

A. \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year

Q. What types of grants applications are submitted? Linda Knoll, Indian River County (Vero Beach, Florida)

A. This varies but the most successful involve tangible items, such as vehicles. A few have been marketing campaigns.

Q. What is the age demographic of your organization? Susan Page, Northwest Florida (Fort Walton Beach, Florida)

A. Women ages 35 and older is the largest group. We are trying to get an audience of younger ladies by letting them know that we have sponsorships available. At the other end of the spectrum, we also have a membership social at the nursing home.

Q. How do you balance the social events and the nonprofit events? Michelle Coleman, Weschester, New York

A. Women love the membership events. There is a social time of about an hour and a brief presentation by a nonprofit who has won a grant in the past that is 10 – 15 minutes at most of these events. Many women attend more than one event, or even all of them. A nonprofit social was added this year to advise ladies what to expect as an IMPACT member and through an icebreaker allow them to meet 10 other new members. However, we are clear that the organization is not a social club.

Q. Have you considered a multi-year membership?

A. Some women do pay their annual membership several years in advance.

Q. What is the structure of your focus area committee? Deidre Spiropoulos, Jersey Coast (New Jersey)

A. There is a chair and co-chair, who are board members. The grant applications are available online. Members who have completed a COI form prior to the start of the committee meetings and are found to have no conflicts are given online access to all the grant applications in their FAC. An online evaluation form is provided for them to reference as they read the grants. The opportunity to conduct a site visit is given to each grant applicant. One committee member volunteers to act as site visit leader for each grant applicant and other ladies volunteer to attend the various site visits. A site visit evaluation form is provided to each committee member. Site visit leaders schedule their visits between the nonprofit and other volunteers and come back and present the results of the site visit at a committee meeting. The Chair and Co-Chair schedule the site visit presentations over the weeks the committee meets. To keep the meetings on track, the Chair/Co-Chair time presentations and keep the process moving along. Ladies receive ballots to vote Yes, No, Maybe on each nonprofit presented that week. This is on its own merit and not relative to the others presented.

Q. Where can committee members and nonprofits get more information? Diana Milock, Traverse City, Michigan

A. There is a great deal of information on our website under the “Members” and “Nonprofits” tabs. We also offer a grants new committee member training and a grants workshop for our nonprofits.

Q. What challenges did you have in going from 500 to 1000 members? Allison Bacon, Chicago, Illinois

A. Knowing when to open up the number of finalists especially going from 10 to 15. We met with a statistician at UWF to discuss the best model for this. We stayed with the Arts and Culture and Environment, Recreation, and Preservation categories as they might not have had winners from these categories if not. Finalist presentations at the Annual Meeting were reduced to 5 minutes from 7 minutes. When it was 500 members, there were 2 finalists per committee. At 1,000 members, the decision was made to make it 3 finalists per focus area committee.

Q. How do you get on TV?

A. We beg, we call, use members with connections in the industry to do this. We intentionally do not compete with the nonprofits we serve. When we can we promote the work of the nonprofits. It's about their story.