

MASTERCLASS

Finding and Applying for Grants

What experiences do you have in searching for grants, and what challenges did you face?



What is a grant?

A grant is funding given for an agreed purpose, with rules for spending, delivery and reporting. It is usually not a loan and does not mean giving up ownership, but award conditions matter.

Applicant type	What to check
NGO or community group	Legal status, geography, mission and delivery capacity
Student or individual	Individual eligibility, or a required university / host
Business or entrepreneur	For-profit eligibility, business stage and sector

First step: decide who would legally apply. Funding and donor introductions are never guaranteed.

How to start checking for grants the right way

1. Define your project: who it helps, the problem, activity, result and likely cost.
2. Identify who would legally apply.
3. Search with a repeatable formula (next slide).
4. Use discovery sites to find leads.
5. Open the original funder page and read the current call.
6. Screen the lead against the published rules: apply, clarify or skip.
7. Track every lead: funder, link, amount, deadline, decision, next action, date checked.

A repeatable grant search

Issue + location + applicant type + funding term

- "digital skills" "South Sudan" "small grants"
- "youth employment" Africa "community grants"
- Try related words: digital inclusion, livelihoods.
- A search result is only a lead: check the year, geography, route and deadline.
- Save the official link, deadline, amount and applicant rules.

Websites for funding research

Website	Use it for	Access or status
fundsforNGOs	NGO grant listings (information service)	Free resources and paid services
Candid	Nonprofit funder research	Paid tools, some free access
Opportunity Desk	Youth and student opportunities	Grants and scholarships listed
The Pollination Project	Grassroots charitable projects (funder)	Rolling applications, year-end closure
Tony Elumelu Foundation	African business founders	2026 call closed on 1 March
UN Partner Portal	NGO and CSO partnerships	Check each call and country

The first three help you discover opportunities. Always verify on the original provider's site. Status checked 24 October 2026.

Key things to note when checking grants

Eligibility

Legal status, location, mission and your capacity to deliver.

Deadlines and status

Check the year, open or closed, and the deadline timezone.

Amount and rules

Confirm the current maximum and read excluded activities and costs.

Payment and legitimacy

Confirm the funder can pay you.
Verify donors on their official site.

Evidence

Show the need, outputs and outcomes, and how you will measure them.

Budget and duties

Match costs to activities. Know your spending and reporting duties.

Screen a lead: eligibility check

Published rule or check	Juba Digital Skills (example)
Charitable, volunteer-led work	Community group with two volunteers
Project budget below USD 10,000	USD 600 project
Request up to USD 500 on the eligibility page	USD 500 request
Other rules, exclusions, receipt of funds	Read all rules. Confirm a workable payment route.

Decision: possible fit. Funder pages differ on the maximum request (USD 500 vs 1,000), so confirm the current limit and clarify before applying.

Write it clearly, budget it honestly

A clear project summary covers:

- Need and evidence
 - People and place
 - Activities and delivery team
 - Expected change and measurement
 - Funding request
- Outputs = what you deliver.
Outcomes = what improves. Report honestly; a skills course cannot promise employment.

Cost item	Total	Grant
Computer lab hire	200	100
Internet data	80	80
Participant transport	240	240
Reusable learning aids	80	80
TOTAL	600	500

USD 600 = USD 100 confirmed cash + USD 500 requested.
Illustrative prices: get local quotes, check eligible costs, show in-kind support separately.

Submit, follow up, and plan your first application

Before submitting

- Confirm eligibility and deadline timezone.
- Set up portal access early.
- Attach exactly what the call requests.
- Check the budget matches the proposal.
- Submit and save the confirmation.

After, and your plan

- If awarded: follow the agreement, keep spending records, report results.
- If not: review any feedback available.
- Today: choose one opportunity and record your decision.
- Next: finish summary, budget and missing documents.
- Find a review partner.

Grant scams: protect yourself

Red flags

- A fee is demanded to receive or "release" a grant
- Guaranteed approval, or a win you never applied for
- Pressure to reply fast or keep it secret
- Bank PINs, passwords or ID copies requested early
- Free email address, no official website, no checkable contact
- A name that copies a well-known funder

What to do

- Find the funder's website yourself, not through a message link
- Compare contact details with the official site
- Share no bank or ID details until the funder and award are verified
- Ask a colleague or partner organisation
- Stop, and report suspicious messages

Why applications get rejected

Common reason	How to avoid it
Not eligible (location, applicant type, size)	Screen against the published rules before writing
Guidelines not followed	Use the funder's questions, word limits and attachments exactly
Weak evidence of need	Show who needs it, how many, and how you know
Budget does not match the activities	Trace every cost to an activity; use local quotes
Unrealistic or unmeasurable results	Set targets you can measure and deliver
Late or incomplete submission	Check the deadline timezone; submit early and save the confirmation

If unsuccessful, ask for feedback where available, then improve and reapply.

Sources and further reading

- Knowledge Centre / Community Tool Box: ctb.ku.edu/en/applying-for-grants
- Candid: candid.org/candid-search/find-nonprofit-funding
- The Pollination Project: thepollinationproject.org/funding-eligibility and [/apply](http://thepollinationproject.org/apply)
- NCVO: ncvo.org.uk, writing your application and preparing your budget
- UN Partner Portal: unpartnerportal.org
- Tony Elumelu Foundation: tonyelumelufoundation.org
- Albuquerque Neighborhood Toolbox: cabq.gov, grant application processes
- Well Doncaster: well-doncaster.uk/finding-funding

Checked 24 October 2026. Always confirm details on the funder's own site.

THANK YOU

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