Build the Perfect
Grant Website

OpenWater

Every grant program needs a website. Should it be a stand-alone website, such as **www.grantprogram.com**? Or should the grant website be part of a larger, existing website (likely the funder's website, such as **www.corporate.com/corporate-philanthrophy/grant-program**)?

One solution is to have both.

While the answer depends on your particular grant program, our experience serving grantmakers suggests there is tremendous value in having both.

The reasons are practical and purposeful.

Benefits of a Stand Alone Grant Website
(e.g., www.grantprogram.com)

It is beneficial to augment your funder's web pages with a standalone site. Here are just some reasons why:

Primary Platform. Building a stand-alone website allows for easy marketing communication and access. It can redirect to the funder's website or function independently. For example, the funder's website might be static program promotion while the standalone website charts current grantee work.

Search Relevance. Grant programs benefit from the search relevance strength of a primary site. A stand-alone website provides this focused attention.

Special Projects or Promotion. A standalone website is the perfect location to showcase grantee results, promote the grant program, and solicit public participation, such as voting.

What a Grant Website Should Include

All grant websites should include the following strategic components.

BONUS TIP: Be sure to build your website using a responsive design template that looks good on any device.

1. Name of the Grant + Award Amount

The basics first -- what is the grant called, and how much money is awarded?

Applicants will want this information, and so will search engines.

TIP: Be sure to include the grant name and monetary value in the copy, not just in a fancy graphic. That way it is useful to humans as well as being machine readable. Consider adding th grant name and award amount in the website page title.

Example: jetBlue for Good

jetBlue Airline's **"jetBlue for Good"** states their mission up front:

"JetBlue's mission is to inspire humanity — both in the air and on the ground."

Focus areas (Youth & Education, Community, Environment, and Giving) run along the top navigation. The grant awards average $25,000 and are disclosed further into the website, in the jetBlue Foundation section.
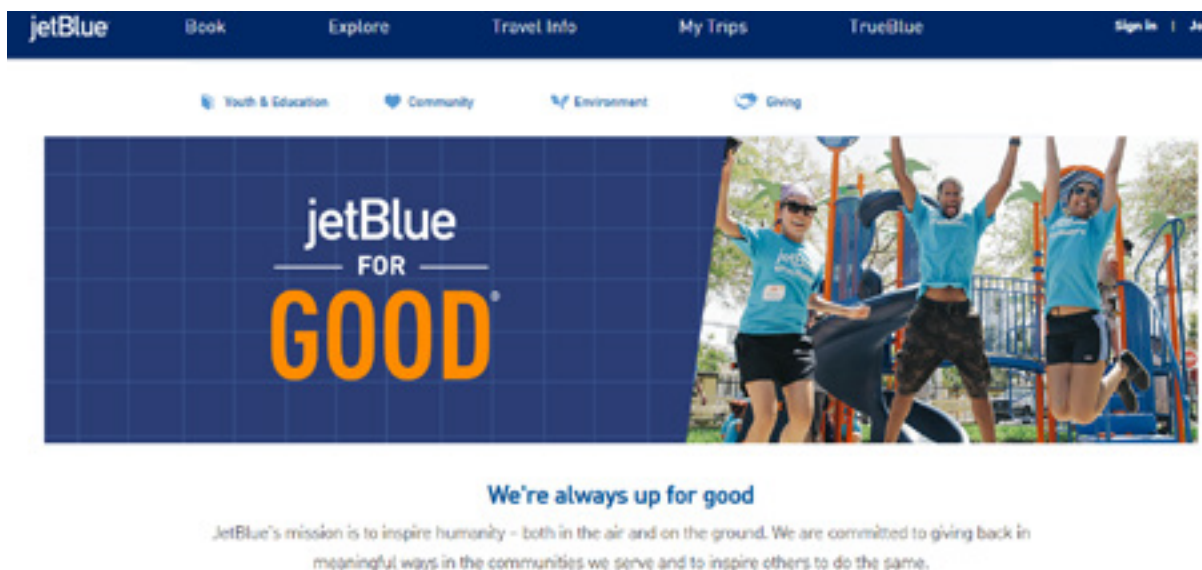
2. Origin of the Grant

Why does this grant exist? Who benefits from it? Who created it, and why?

TIP: Storytelling! Many grants have rich stories behind them. Does your grant commemorate a person? Place? Ambition or ideal? By explaining the story behind the grant you attract the best suited applicants.

Example: SSRC's Social Media and Democracy Research Grants

The **Social Science Research Council** provides grant funding for projects that examine the impact of social media and related digital technologies on democracy and elections. The story of the grant, and its funders, is told in the Request for Proposals document found on the grant application portal.

3. Grant Eligibility and Deadlines

List grant eligibility requirements clearly. Include deadlines and submission materials. Bullet points are effective so applicants can self-select. Example:

Applicants must be:
- *Resident of the United States or U.S. territories, age 18 or older*
- *Must submit 1 piece of audio, video, or new media work*

Important dates:
- *Application Deadline: December 31st, 2020*
- *Grantee Announcement: February 1st, 2021*

Detailed applications should provide an overview of the process and materials to gather. Provide an overview before an applicant starts a lengthy submission process. For example:

The Spell Foundation grant narrows applicants over a course of three evaluation rounds. Applicants prepare materials listed below. Successful applicants are invited to advance to the next round. To begin, gather the materials listed below labeled "First Round Evaluation".

TIP: Make it easy for applicants to apply directly from the website. Use application and review software that automatically saves work and encourages applicants to return.

Example: Community Grants from Home Depot

Home Depot's foundation website does a good job of explaining grant eligibility. It is very clear about who is eligible (501c organizations in good standing with the IRS) and how the grant is administered ($5,000, paid in Home Depot gift cards). Both quickly inform prospective grant applicants.

4. Applicant Questions

Anticipate common questions and direct applicants to answers.

Common questions include:

- Is this grant renewable, or one-time?
- Can I apply for funding more than once?
- What are the expected deliverables?

  TIP: Address common questions in a searchable FAQ, and post a public Grant Service Agreement, if applicable.

Example: Walmart Grants

As you can imagine, the largest retailer on the globe is flooded with grant requests. One strategy **Walmart Foundation** uses to reduce requests is found in the preview copy. This screenshot shows several of their grant programs. You'll notice that the preview copy immediately addresses who is eligible to apply for different grants and in what amount. This anticipates and addresses frequently asked questions.

5. Grant Program Partners

Who underwrites the grant? This is great opportunity to link to the funder's website, (e.g. **www.corporate.com/corporate-philanthrophy/grant-program**).

A stand-alone grant website also facilitates outbound links to relevant partner websites. This is helpful for co-promotion possibilities.

TIP: If you have numerous sponsors, create a separate page to showcase all of them.

Example: Taco Bell Charitable Partnerships

Taco Bell Foundation supports four nonprofit partners to distribute grant funding. These partners are **Boys & Girls Clubs of America**, **City Year**, **Junior Achievement**, and **MoneyThink**. The Taco Bell website links to all of them on their grants page. By showing partnerships Taco Bell drives awareness to the organizations distributing Taco Bell's funds.

6. Application Call-to-Action

Have a clear call-to-action to start the grant application process. Make an obvious button and/or text link. Example:

Start Your Application >>>

TIP: Provide a way for people to easily share your grant with others, through email, text, or social media.

Example: Impact 100 Philadelphia

Impact 100 is a national women's group with local chapters. Each member contributes $1,000 or more to the group as seed money for grants. Then, the chapter votes on projects to fund. The Philadelphia chapter of Impact 100 does an excellent job bringing visibility to the grant application process. The "Apply" button is located in the top navigation in bright orange.

7. Information About Your Organization and Mission

Include a brief overview of your organization, mission, and goals.

Example: Albertsons Companies Foundation

Here's the copy that explains the **Albertsons Foundation** mission:

Our Foundation funds organizations that strengthen the neighborhoods we serve.
On a regional basis, we fund organizations that impact the lives of our employees and customers. To learn more about what we fund in your area, choose your neighborhood.

Advanced Grant Website Essentials

Year Two and Beyond

Your grants website will grow over time. This is desirable because it will raise your visibility and reputation. Add these items to your website once you select your first round of grantees.

1. Testimonials (Meet the Grantees)

Profile grant recipients, and, where appropriate, showcase their work. Ask grantees for testimonials to add to your website.

> **TIP:** *Testimonials can come in many formats. Choose a medium that reflects your scholarship. For example, art grantees may agree to display grant-funded work on your website.*

2. Grant Impact

Show how the grant has made a difference. If the grant funds a specific project or region, show the results.

> **TIP:** *Visual representation of impact or reach can be especially compelling.*

3. Grantee Project Database

List grantee projects in a searchable database. (Get permission to do so as a condition of the grant application.)

> **TIP:** *Keep past recipients engaged. Previous recipients can promote the grant and/or act as future reviewers.*

4. Expanded FAQs

Expand the questions and answers section of your grant website based on feedback from grant applicants and grantees.

> **TIP:** *Sometimes you don't need more information, you just need better visibility of resources. Be sure your help section is easy to find and search.*

About OpenWater

OpenWater Grants is a grant management software platform that expedites the entire grantmaking process for applicants, reviewers, funders, grantees, and other stakeholders.
(Yes, our platform makes it easy to create a website for your grant program, too.)
To learn more, visit our **free resource library** and request a demo.

OpenWater

Grant Management Software

Whether you're starting a grant program from the ground up or growing an established program, OpenWater helps you:

Attract Applicants

Direct applicants to a website that retains your primary site's branding and is easy to use.

Streamline the Process

Keep everyone engaged and on task through multiple rounds of review.

Build Relationships

Make it easier for all parties to communicate before, during, and after the review process.

Track and Report Results

Simplify reporting throughout the process, and after grants are awarded.

Learn more about us at these links:

OpenWater Blog   **Customer Reviews**   **LinkedIn**   **Twitter**

Capterra
★★★★★