


# Funding with Grants

Better than Bake  
Sales!

Kathy Maksymec  
Edmonton Central Council  
June 21, 2024




**Before  
We Get  
Started**





**About Me**

- Kathy Maksymec
- Vincentian for 11 years
- Grants Committee for 3 years



**Our Theme – Serving in Hope**

- We meet needs
- We deliver hope
- The more we can help, the more hope we can spread



### **Serving in Hope**

- We might think our actions are small – a couple of bags of groceries, a couch.
- While we're meeting a need, we're also delivering hope.
- The more we're able to give and the more people we're able to reach, the more hope we're able to spread.
- We're going to be talking about money and ways to get more money, but what we deliver with the that money is hope.

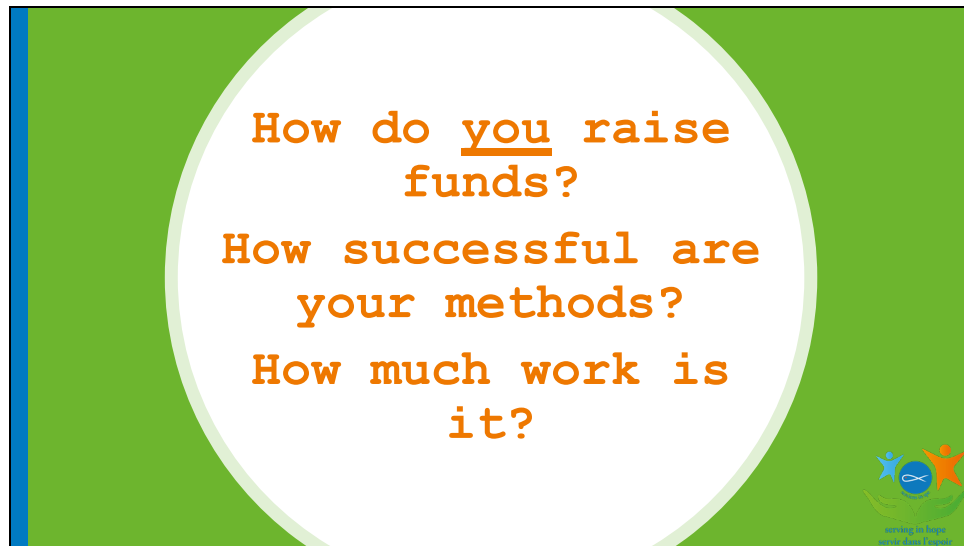


## Agenda

- Edmonton Central Council
- Our Grants Committee
- Skillsets for grant writers
- What we've learned about grants
- The grantor's perspective
- Writing winning grants
- Budgets
- Post Grant




serving in hope  
servir dans l'espoir



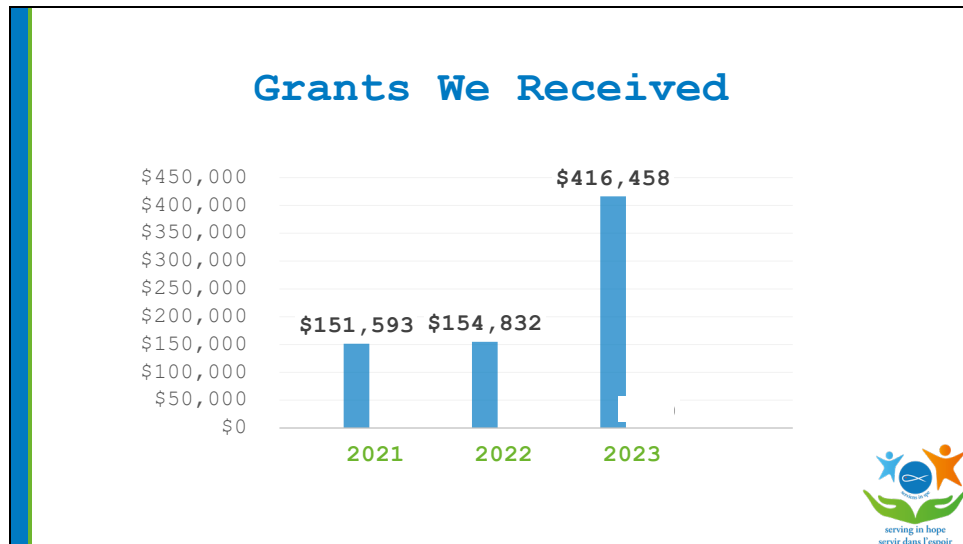
How do you raise  
funds?

How successful are  
your methods?

How much work is  
it?



Group discussion



3 year history of the grants we received

**In 2021 we raised \$151,593**

- applied for 9 grants and got all 9

**In 2022, \$154,832**

- applied for 13 grants and got 11. 7 of them were awarded in 2022 – that's where the \$154,832 comes from. The remaining 4 were awarded in 2023.

**In 2023, our best year to date, we raised \$316,458**

- We got our biggest grant ever in 2023, \$165,000.
- There was also a lot of money available for food last year. We took full advantage for that and got 3 separate food grants for \$50K each

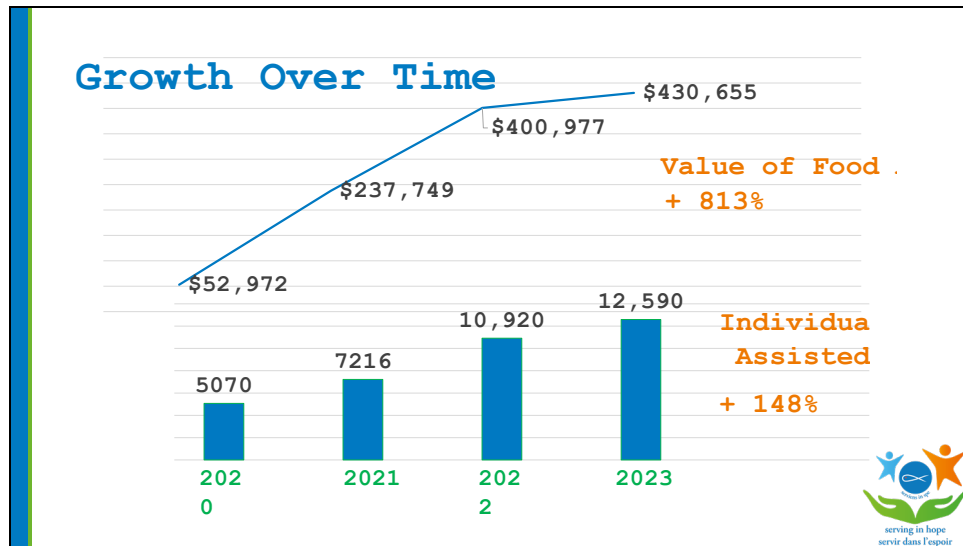


Every council has a different operating model. We're free to serve the poor in the way that works best for us given the needs we have and the ability of our volunteers and supporters to meet them.

This is how Edmonton Central Council has chosen to serve the poor.

- We collect used furniture and household goods.
- We own 6 trucks that are shared by our 19 conferences, so that we can deliver all that furniture.
- We maintain a warehouse which we call our Distribution Centre or DC
- Our DC includes space for a clothing room, a place where our friends can come and help themselves to free clothing
- We operate a shop we call Vinnie's Treasure Shoppe, where we sell things that were donated to us but that aren't appropriate for the poor – e.g. heavy furniture that doesn't fit in small apartments
- We provide food hampers and grocery gift cards.
- Some of our conferences also provide financial assistance in the form of rent or bills support.

Slide 7



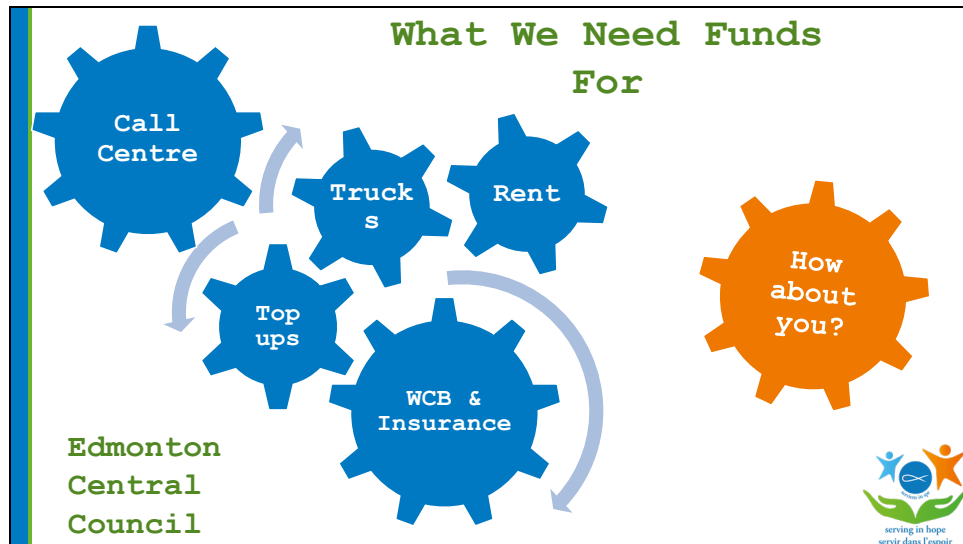
This slide shows how the demands for our assistance have grown in the last 4 years.

The bars at the bottom: how many individuals we helped in each of the 4 years between 2020 and 2023.

The graph on the top: the value of the food aid we provided in each of those 4 years.

- The increase is due in part to the exponential increase in requests post Covid, and also the increase in the cost of groceries

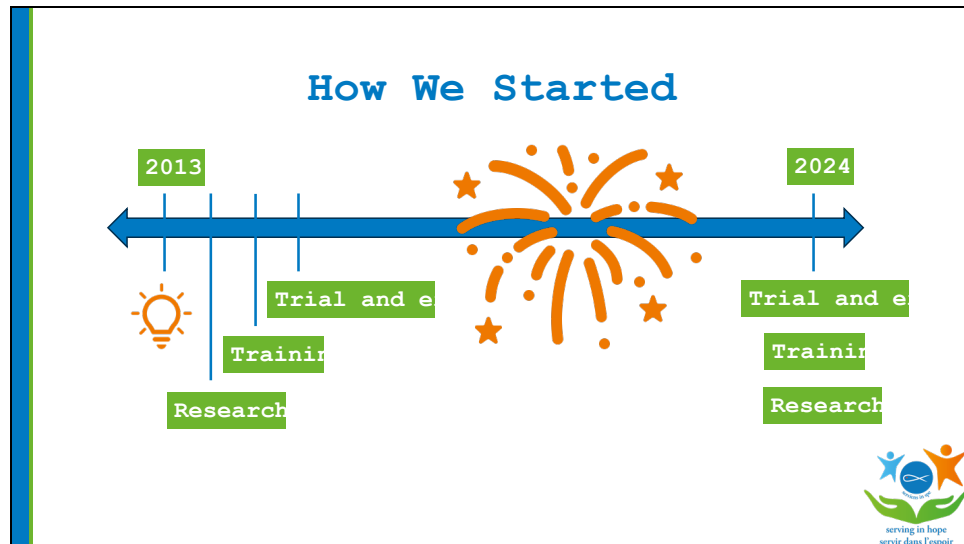
It's because of the grants we received that we were able to help as many people as we did.



At Edmonton Central Council:

- We store donated goods in our warehouse, so we have **rent and utilities** to pay at the warehouse.
- Operational costs on our **fleet of 6 trucks** – gas and insurance
- **Workers Comp** so that our volunteers are covered for medical expenses if they're injured while working for us.
- We **contract a call centre** to run a 24/7 Help Line so that those in need can phone us if they need help.
- We **top up** our warehouse stock when donations run low.



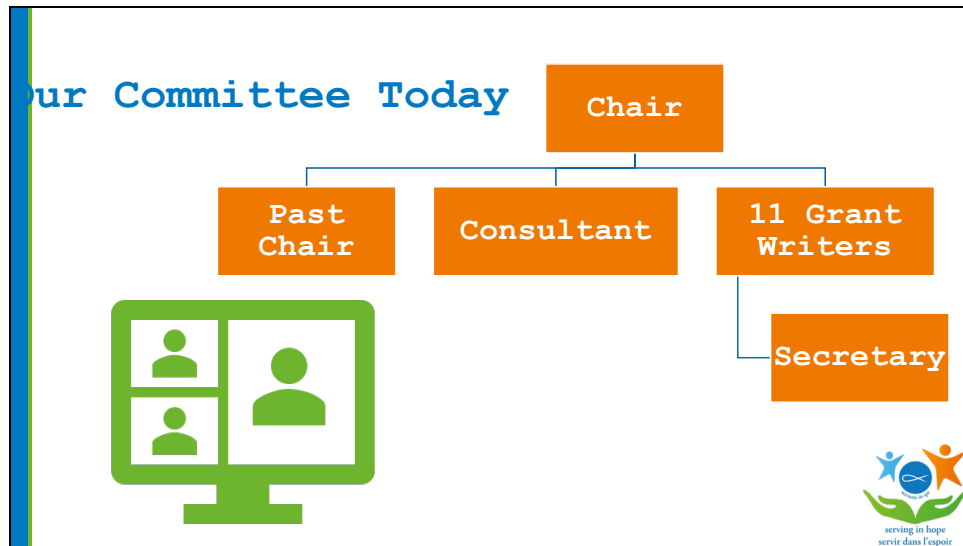


- Started in 2013
- The early committee had no experience in grant writing.
  - Used their connections to find grants.
  - Paid for training – grants writing course at the U of Alberta
  - Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations provided training and taught us more about grants
  - Fundraising databases – expensive, tried it out for 1 year
  - Took the leap of faith and submitted some applications
  - Success breeds success: you learn how to write a compelling application; how to tell your organization's story.

Grants take a lot of work but the work leads to success.

Today we're still doing the same work. We've got more successes under our belt but:

- The landscape is always changing.
- We have to keep training the new people who join our Committee.
- And we have to keep putting out applications.



- 14 people on our Grants Committee, not including our Council President and Treasurer who also sit in on our meetings
- Our **Past Chair and our Consultant** fill important roles but don't write grants.
- It's helpful to have lots of grant writers.
  - Spreads out the workload
  - Gives us a bigger collaborative pool to work with.
- One of our writers doubles as our **secretary**

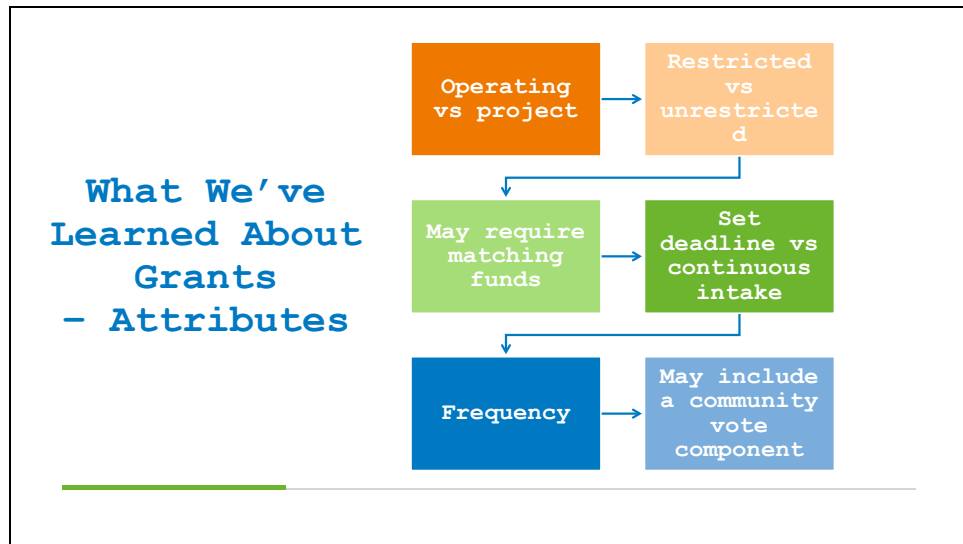


- **Review upcoming grants.** We keep a spreadsheet with all the grants we've worked on or that we've already researched and decided that we should try for.
- **Review grants we've received** since our last meeting and decide what we need to do from there.
- **Review new grant opportunities** and we debate whether or not it's something we should keep on our radar.
- **Review new funding requests.** Typically we get these from our council President; we can use our meeting time to **brainstorm** which grant source would be good for what we're being asked for.
- **Start to put the story together**
  - Collaborate – what can we emphasize in order to create a compelling story for that application



3 key skillsets:

- They must be a good writer.
  - Our committee members come from all walks of life but fundamentally we all have writing skills.
- Have to understand our organization – train them up if they're new to SSVP
- Has to be willing to do the research to make sure that the grant is going to be a fit.



Grants that cover **operating expenses** vs **project based grants**.

- **Operating grants** can be used for anything, including your ongoing operating expenses such as rent and utilities.

- **Project based grants** - money goes to a specific purpose

**Restricted vs unrestricted:** Once you get the grant money, your treasurer has to know if it's restricted for a particular use and can't be used for anything else, or if it's an operating grant that can be used for general expenses.

**Matching funds** – some grants will give you money on the condition that you are able to match whatever they give you.

- It's important to understand any requirements they have around those matching funds – e.g. must the matching funds be new money?

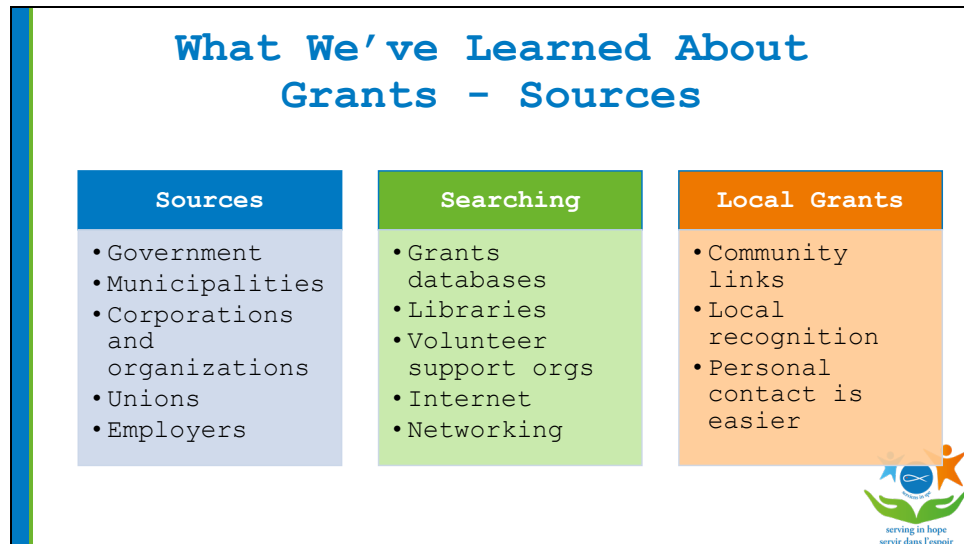
**Set deadline vs continuous intake** – refers to how often the grantor is open for applications.

- If set date, they will tell you when applications are due.
- If continuous intake, the grantor is open to applications at any time because they review and make decisions every few weeks.

**Frequency** is how often an organization can apply to the grantor.

- Some grantors are open to you applying as often as you want.
- Others will say that if they've given you money in the past 2 years, you can't apply again until that 2 years is up.

**Community vote component** – grantor may want to give the public a chance to weigh in



### Sources

- **Government** – federal, provincial, municipal
- **Corporations and organizations** of all types and sizes - many companies have budgets that they specifically earmark for charitable work.
- **Unions**
- **Employers** – May not offer grants to the general public, but may provide them to pet projects that their employees are involved in.

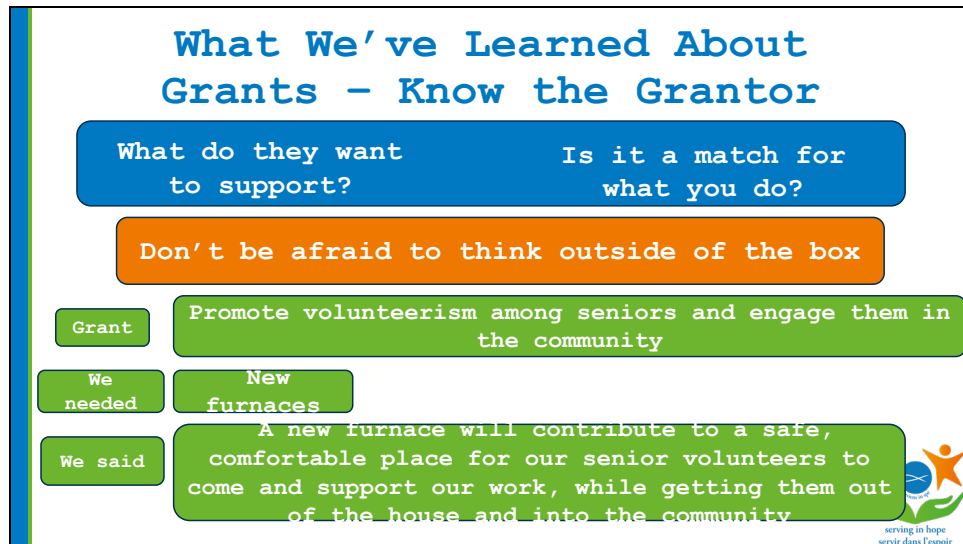
### Searching

- **Third party databases** compile lists of grantors; there's a fee for this.
- **Local library** might have a list.
- **Local organizations** that support the voluntary sector – e.g. Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
- **Internet searches**
- **Networking**
  - Ask your members if they know of any grants, or if they work (or have worked) for a company or organization that gives grants
  - Ask your family members and friends the same thing
  - Don't forget other parish groups. Your local Knights of Columbus might provide small grants. Ask them.

### Local grants

- Want to work with grassroots organizations like ours that are also planted in the community.

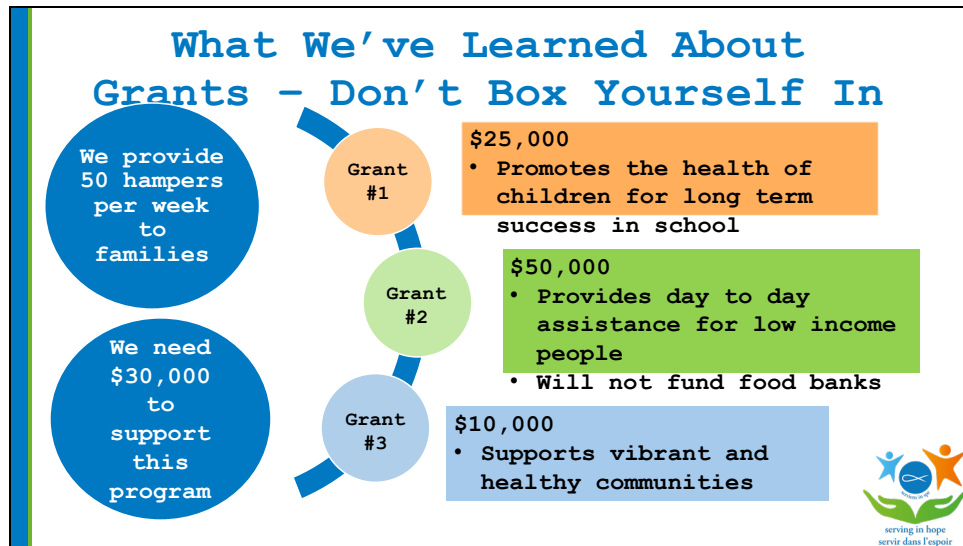
- Some of these local grants, by their mandates, will only help local organizations.
- Often they want **local recognition** – e.g. a photo op for their website
- Can be **easier to get a hold of someone** when they're local if you have a question



Learn about the grantor – check their website or call

- **What do they want to support** – i.e. their mandate
- **Is it a match for what you do?** Want alignment, not misalignment
- **Don't box yourself in:** with a little creativity you might find that the grant is more of a match than you first think.





### Group activity



**What We've Learned  
About Grants - Build  
Relationships**

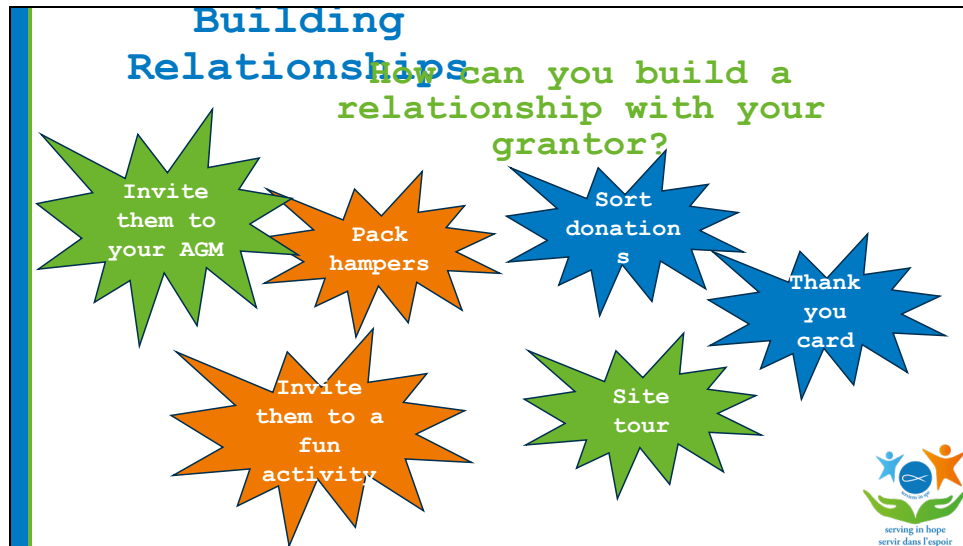
- Sometimes you get more than you asked for because they know you and what you do
- May come through quickly for you in an emergency
- Can help you work up to a higher level of funding



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Why a relationship with your grantor is good:

- **Sometimes you get more than you asked for** because they know you and what you do.
- They may come through quickly for you in an emergency.
- **Some grantors have tiers to their grants.**




## Group activity

## The Grantor's Perspective




**You're not entitled to support**

- You're one of many
- Be prepared to sell yourself
- Convince them of the good work that you do




**Meet the grantor's needs**

- Relationship
- Be a trustworthy partner
- Align to their mandate



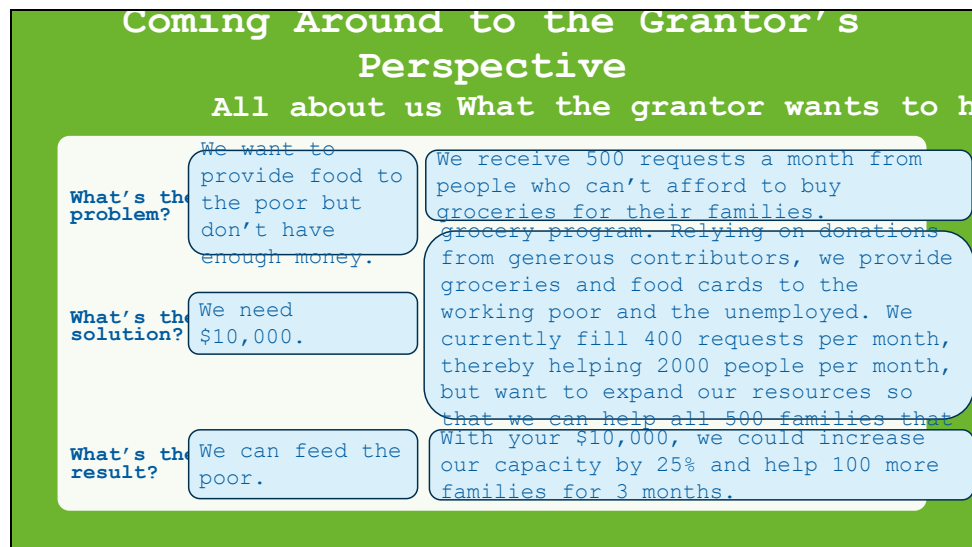
**Solve a problem**

- Focus on a need in the community



Think about what a grantor wants to hear.

- You have to earn their support.
  - You're not the only organization asking them for money
  - You have to demonstrate why **you** deserve the money more than any of the other applicants.
  - It is a competition so be prepared to "sell" yourself.
  - Make sure the grantor understands how much good you do.
- Your purpose in applying is to raise money but the grantor is looking to get something else.
  - Likely want a partnership with someone who's going to spend their money wisely, and on a project that makes them look good.
  - You have to stand out from the other organizations.
    - Hand them a project that they can be confident in, with an organization they can trust.
    - Align with their mandate
    - Make sure they understand how your project is a perfect fit for their organization.
- They want to hear less about what you need, and more about a problem you can solve
  - Focus on the needs you can meet as opposed to what you need as an organization.



3 questions on the left hand side - fundamentally this is what a grant application is going to ask you.

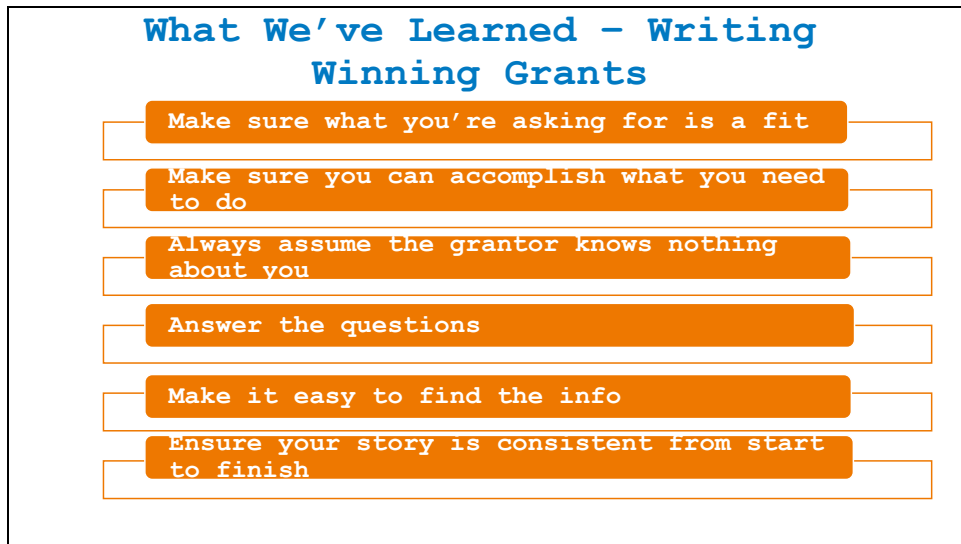
Middle column - answers that might be provided on a grant application if the application all about you.

- This would not be a compelling grant. Doesn't inspire confidence or tell the grantor how we're better than anyone else.

Right hand column - these answers keep the grantor's perspective in mind, but still sell ourselves and position us as a trustworthy partner.

- Answer to the 1<sup>st</sup> question:
  - States a specific need in the community
  - It sounds like we have a handle on the problem – that makes us trustworthy
  - We can back up our statement with data – that makes us trustworthy
- Answer to the 2<sup>nd</sup> question:
  - Sets us up as the ones who can fix the problem
  - It's less about the money and more about the people we can help
  - Supported by data
- Answer to the 3<sup>rd</sup> question:
  - It's focussed on others, not on us.
  - Provides a clear picture of how their money will be used.
  - Data driven

By turning the tables and thinking less about what we need and more about how we can solve a problem rather than about what we need makes for a more compelling story.



- Make sure what you're asking for is a fit.
  - Find out what the grantor wants to support
- Make sure you can accomplish what you need to do
  - Don't overextend yourself just to get the money – stick to what you know you can do
  - At the end of the grant, you will probably have to report on how you accomplished what you said you'd do
- Very important: Always assume that the grantor knows nothing about you and your project
  - Provide a very clear picture of who you are and what you do.
- Answer the question in the very first sentence of your answer and embellish later. Don't make the grantor read to the end to get your answer.
  - You will be scored against all the other applications.
- 5. Make it easy to find the info.
  - "See attached" is not sufficient.
  - Make it as easy as possible to find the info.
- 6. Ensure your story is consistent from start to finish.
  - Inconsistency draws away from the picture of you as a reliable and trustworthy partner that you're trying to create.

## Edmonton Central Council – Who We Are

Our mandate is to serve all those living in poverty, regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender or other societal delineation, and to promote their dignity by serving with love, respect, justice and without judgement.



ECC's mandate – we put this front and centre in all our grant applications



What We've Learned - Writing Winning Grants

3 C's: Clear, Concise, Coherent

**Clear**



- Easy to understand and read
- Use an active voice
  - Present tense,
  - Action verbs not passive verbs

**Concise**

- Direct and to the point
- Short sentences and paragraphs; lists
- Limit jargon and clichés; no redundancies

**Coherent**

- Logical order
- Sentences link together



The 3 C's of good writing:

### Clear

- Make your application easy to understand and read - an enjoyable story that people will remember.
- Active voice: present tense, action verbs rather than passive verbs

### Concise

- Get to the point right away without meandering
  - Use short sentences and paragraphs, or lists or bullets rather than full sentences and paragraphs
  - Less is better.
  - If it isn't relevant, leave it out.
- Don't use words that outsiders don't understand.
- No redundancies. If you've said it already, you don't need to say it again.
- Some applications have character limits – including spaces.


### Coherent

- Your story has to be presented in a logical order
- And it's important that your sentences link together so that you move smoothly from one thought to the next.



What We've Learned - Writing Winning Grants

## Data Is Your Friend



- Support your application with data
  - Relevant data will help make your story compelling
  - Don't include irrelevant data that doesn't support your story
- Contribute to the community


Which is better:

- We help many indigenous families.
- In 2023, we helped 1352 indigenous families.
- In 2023, we helped 1352 indigenous families, an increase of 14% over 2022.

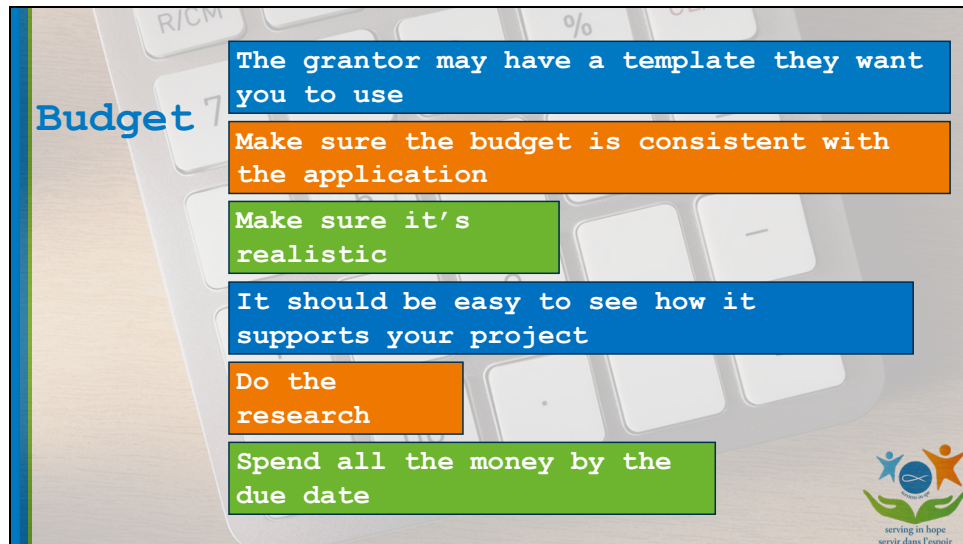
Need new furnaces

Grantor's mandate to promote volunteerism among seniors and engage them in the community

What kind of data could support this request?



- Data elevates your application to the next level.
  - It provides evidence that confirms that the problem you want to solve exists.
  - It contributes to trustworthiness.
  - A good rule of thumb is to include as many numbers as possible – as long as they support your story.
- **Blue boxes in the middle of the slide** - these statements move from less impactful to more impactful. Each subsequent statement shows that we have a handle on what we're doing. We're trustworthy.
  - Data showing a change over time (eg 3<sup>rd</sup> statement) tells its own story. Not only are we helping indigenous families, but we're helping more families than we did before, which suggests that our work is really having an impact.
- **Green boxes at the bottom** of the slide.
  - Group activity



Almost every grant application you submit will ask you to provide a budget.

- **The grantor may have a template** they want you to use. If they do, use that. If they don't then you're free to complete your own statement of expenses.

**Make sure your budget is consistent with the application.**

- If you're applying for an alarm system for your premises, don't include a line item in your budget for furniture – unless for some reason the furniture is intrinsic to the alarm system. If it is, that should be explained in the body of the application.

**Make sure it's realistic.**

- Include related expenses – e.g. installation costs.
- Don't be afraid to go big, but don't ask for more than you realistically need.

**It should be easy to see how your budget supports your project.**

- The expenses are relevant and don't introduce anything new.

**Do the research.**

- If you need to provide a written quote, get a professional one from a trusted vendor
- If you don't need a written quote, you can check out prices on-line. Just make sure that your pricing is accurate.

**Most grants come with a due date by which you have to spend all the money.**

- If you don't, you'll have to return the unspent portion, and that might work against you if you go back to the same organization for future grants.
- Or, they might decide to give you less than what you ask for next time because you've shown that you overask.



**Post Grant**  
Congratulations!

...there are strings attached



But...

- You are accountable for what you said you'd do
- There are deadlines
- If there's a problem, let your grantor know
- Track expenditures and revenue the way the grantor wants them
- Monitor your progress



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Most grants will come with strings attached.

**You are accountable**

- You've been given the money because the grantor wants to support your project, so now you have to do what you said you'd do.

**The grantor will have deadlines**

- They will probably want the money spent by a certain date
- They will probably want you to file a report to tell them how you spent the money, and how successful your project was

**If there's a problem, let your grantor know.**

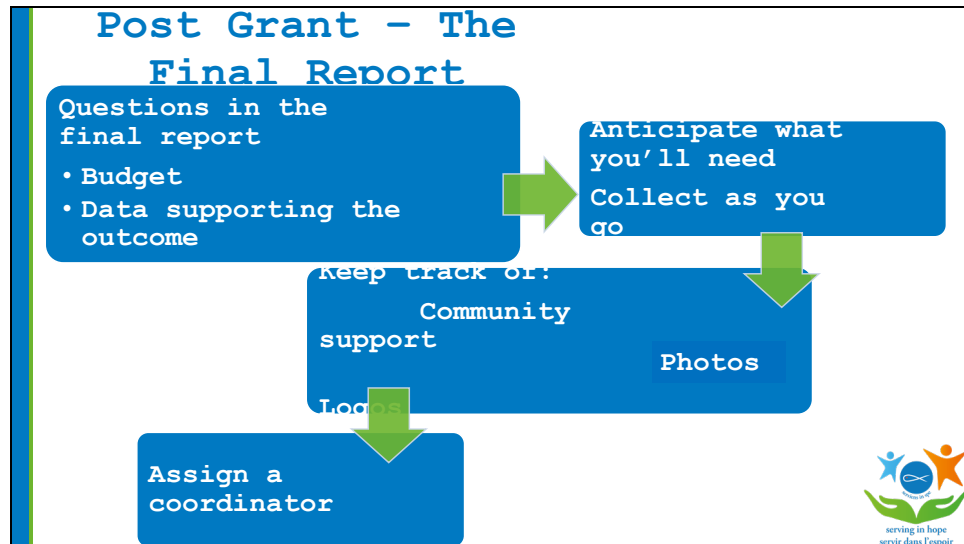
- Communicate when hiccups arise. Provide a solution.
- This will assure the grantor that you continue to be trustworthy, and that you're competent because you can work through hiccups.

**The grantor will likely want you to track expenditures and revenue in a particular format.**

- Give them what they want. Use their templates.

**Monitor your progress.**

- Make sure that you're on track to complete the project and spend the money by the due date.
- The final report is easier to write when you've collected information as you go.



At a minimum, you will probably be asked to supply a budget showing all your expenditures, and data saying what the outcome was.

- Common questions for a more involved report:
  - Explain the community impact.
  - How many volunteers were involved?
  - Tell us one story that illustrates the impact of your grant.
  - How satisfied were you with the program that supplied this grant?
  - How were we recognized for supporting your project?
- Know what you'll need and develop it as you go
  - Eg volunteer hours
- Other things to keep track of
  - **Copies of community support** – letters, social media mentions
  - Anything with the **grantor's logo** on it or that mentions the grantor
  - **Photos** that were taken while the project was being rolled out – you can use these in your final report
- If you don't submit your final report you won't be able to make another application with that grantor until you do. Or you may not be considered again.
- Helpful to set up a coordinator to work with your council treasurer

## Questions?





Thank you for your attention to this presentation, please don't forget to provide your feedback on the **rating sheet** available in the room or directly through this **QR code**.



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Thank



for your

Merci pour votre attention à cette présentation, n'oubliez pas de partager vos commentaires sur la **fiche d'évaluation** disponible dans la salle ou directement via ce **code QR**.