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Grant Proposal Writing | Spring 2015

Final Reflection

Today I find myself moving out of the commercial art world and into the nonprofit sector, seeking meaningful work that allows for engagement with communities as well as greater experimentation and flexibility. I am seeking to work in Montana, connecting the contemporary arts to community cultural development in rural places. This work will require resourcefulness and strong development skills, including knowledge and abilities in grant writing. Funds are difficult to find for rural communities and especially rural community arts, so seeking small grants and donations from local organizations and foundations that are invested in these rural places will be instrumental.

The funding project that I chose is directly related to a project or program that I am beginning to develop in my home community in Montana. It is a sort of idea generating pilot-project for a larger organizational concept that I hope to develop later on. This creative place-making work would help stimulate arts and culture within these rural communities, helping to develop momentum from which other cultural projects can grow. The Central Montana Foundation is one of the few local foundations that would be willing to support such a small, localized project. The Central Montana Foundation is a community focused foundation that supports efforts to improve quality of life, including cultural projects, within the Central Montana area. As someone planning to work with small rural communities in Montana in the future, it made sense that I choose the CMF for my proposal in order to better understand the expectations of such small community foundations. It seems that the application process for these grants is not very extensive, and provides a challenge to the grant writer to succinctly present their program or project in a brief but effective way that can engage its audience with

little convincing. It was difficult to determine how best to introduce the program using just 250 words. Every word must count. Complex projects that are not fully fleshed out and that require a lot of explanation to understand will be easily spotted using this method, so it is important to be clear and concise, as well as have a solid program plan outlined in advance.

Overall, learning about the grant proposal writing process and having to complete a small grant has made me much more comfortable with the process. It has also given me much greater knowledge in the areas of development, grant writing and philanthropy. I feel much more prepared to seek out and apply for potential resources. Most importantly, the process has given me a much stronger perspective on the effective program planning that comes first.