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Are Grants to Individuals Available?

Foundation Grants

The vast majority of foundation grants are only for 501©3 (an IRS tax designation) non-profit organizations. There are some foundations that provide scholarships or fund individual research or artists projects. Grants for personal needs, even for ones where individuals may be in dire circumstances, are extremely difficult to find, but there are a few. For example, the *Travis Roy Foundation* (travisroyfoundation.org) gives individual grants to individuals with spinal cord injuries to purchase or modify vans, wheelchairs, computers, ramps and other adaptive equipment.

To search for the few foundations that may fund individual projects, individuals may be able to access grant databases. Many are available through a subscription service, but some are accessible other ways. For instance, **the Foundation Directory Online ([fonline.foundationcenter.org](http://online.foundationcenter.org)) can be accessed at select local libraries.** Reference librarians can even assist with how to use the database to search for grants for individuals.

Federal Grants

Federal government grants go to state and local governments, universities, researchers, law enforcement, organizations, and institutions planning major projects that will benefit specific parts of the population or the community. The Federal Government does not offer grants to individuals, despite what you may see advertised (<https://www.usa.gov/grants>). Websites or other publications that claim to offer free government money are often scams and should be reported to the Federal Trade Commission. The government does offer federal benefit programs designed to help individuals and families in need become more self-sufficient or lower their expense. **Contact your local federal officials' offices, and they should be able to guide you.**

Crowdfunding

Asking many people to donate money in a specific time period is often the best way to raise money for a specific person or family in need. Most people use social media and crowdfunding sites such as *gofundme*. Many people donating small amounts adds up quickly! **Crowdfunding sites have information on how to set up a page and promote it.** It's important to note though that individuals cannot take a tax deduction for contributions to individuals or families but only to 501©3 charitable organizations. You may even want to **consider contacting local media** to see if they will cover the story- thus bringing more attention to the need of the individual or family.

Non-profit Organizations

Some non-profit organizations may be able to help an individual or family in need, especially if it is a temporary need or a crisis. If not with cash with other needed resources such as meals and clothes. For instance, *Unmet Needs* (vfw.org) helps America's military families who have financial difficulties as a result of deployment or other military-related activity or injury with aid of up to \$1,500 to assist with basic life needs. **Individuals can search the internet or call your local government for more information on how to find charitable organizations** who may be able to help.