FUNDING ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY AT A GLANCE

Yes, libraries still have to figure out a way to incorporate the new technologies into the budget. Although the costs are not exorbitant, a newly incorporated accessible workstation and Web site will still take money and staff time.

Fortunately, funding sources are available that can help the library reach its goals.

Before applying for any of the available grants, however, libraries should answer these questions:

• What types of technologies does the library wish to purchase?

• What are the disability demographics for the library's service area?

• What are the needs? What is the library doing right and what needs to be corrected?

• To whom does the library expect to increase service?

• What is the general patron support level? Do citizens support the library's efforts to increase access? Would they be willing to write letters of support to attach to grant applications?

• What is the support level among people with disabilities? Will patrons state that they want and will use the new services? Will consumer groups help the library market services?

Having the answers to these questions is a good start in completing a grant application that will be successful. However, remember that sometimes more than one application is needed to be granted an award.

Remember, too, that many grants are subject to the governmental budgeting process and availability may change in each fiscal period.

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), National Leadership grants for libraries

IMLS National Leadership grants are given in the amounts of $15,000 to $500,000 for a grant period of up to two years (or three years with strong justification). It requires the library to input one-third of the total program budget.

www.inls.gov/library/library/lib_nlgl.asp

The grant programs help libraries bring people the information they want and can use. Successful proposals will have national impact and provide models that can be widely adapted and replicated by others. Projects will provide creative solutions on issues of national importance.

For instance, developing a digitization project that allows visually impaired users access to rare manuscripts is a project that could be funded by the INLS.

Consult the IMLS Web site for details on submitting an application.

Library Service and Technology Act (LSTA) grants

The Institute of Museum and Library Services division also administers LSTA grants. Although criteria for successful awarding of the grants vary from state to state, the grants are to be used for "information access through technology."

Funds can be used to cover telecommunications costs, salaries, equipment, and software. Consult your state library for further information on applying for a LSTA Grant.

www.cosla.org

Consult the COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) Web site for information that will give links to all state agencies related to LSTA funding.

Basic Library Service grants

The Basic Library Service grant is a small grant given to libraries needing funds to ensure a minimum level of service to all patrons. These grants can be used to cover costs of equipment, supplies, database fees, and personnel.

Contact your state agency for further information on applying for one of these grants.

Local community organizations

Local civic groups, such as the Kiwanis, Lions Clubs, J-Cees, and Scout troops, are always looking for community organizations that they can help, and the library can be one they choose. The library is always centrally located and should be open to all. If library accessibility is a problem, these groups may be approached with a request for help. In small communities, they may only be able to raise enough money for part of a solution, but the library should welcome any assistance of this kind.

Further help in locating funding sources

Abledata

www.abledata.com/ text2funding.htm

Abledata's database includes fact sheets that address particular types of equipment, as well as a fact sheet on Funding Assistive Technology, which was developed with the input of assistive technology users.

Assistive Technology Funding Resources

www.tumbleforms.com/ bergeron.funandin.html

The Web site has links to about 275 entries that discuss funding sources.

Digital Divide Network

www.aoltimewarner foundation.org/expand/ digital_network.html

The AOL Foundation; Albert List Foundation; Annie E. Cassey Foundation; AT&T; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Ford Foundation; Intel Corp.; W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Lucent Technologies, Inc.; the Markie Foundation; and Streamingmedia.com have formed the Partners in the Digital Divide Network. It is a forum plan to cultivate innovative programs across the country that are on the cutting-edge of efforts to bridge the digital divide. This forum hopes to serve "as a catalyst for developing new strate-

gies, while making current initiatives more productive."

Disability Funding News

This publication provides readers with traditional and unique funding sources for issues relating to a wide range of disability issues. It also alerts readers to legislative initiatives relating to people with disabilities.

www.cdpublications.com

United Cerebral Palsy Association

A site search using the words "funding for assistive technology" will produce a list of possible funding organizations.

www.ucpa.org

Washington State University

Washington State University posts a Web page entitled Funding Links. The page includes links to bulletin boards, tip sheets, and funding resources relating to assistive technologies.

www.educ.wsu.edu/
assistive_technologies/
funding_links.html

Local Benevolent Endowment Funds

Check out local benevolent endowment funds, too. Often money is designated for organizations, such as libraries, which have projects that increase the quality of life for citizens with disabilities.