SeaPerch Sustainability Guide

In today's world of shrinking budgets and diminished funding, we are often asked, "Where can I find the funding to start or continue a SeaPerch program?" In response to this question, we have developed this guide to provide some ideas for finding or raising funding on your own. All of the information contained here can be found on our website under Resources/Sustainability Guide.

Grants

- SeaPerch.org has a web page devoted to any grants we are made aware of that may be of interest to our SeaPerch users. *This is only a resource and is not intended as a commitment to, partnership with, or endorsement of these organizations.* Here is the link: http://www.seaperch.org/grant_scholarship_opportunities

- There are many other STEM/educational grants that we may not be aware of, so we recommend conducting an Internet search to see what might be currently available. Simply searching "STEM grants," "STEM funding," or "STEM Education" along with the name of your state will give you plenty of information for a start. A site that routinely popped up in our research is http://stemgrants.com/ . Among other things, the site provides:

    - a free STEM Funding Guide
    - information about STEM grants, scholarships, fellowships, and competitions
    - tips for writing grant proposals
    - a comprehensive guide to STEM funding opportunities

- During your research, look for like-minded funders who care deeply about your mission. You will most likely need to establish a *group* of funders to sustain your SeaPerch program since no one source will be able to provide complete support.
    - When you find a good match, visit the funder's website and carefully study their application guidelines. Most grant makers ask for some basic information, such as:

- Name and address of the program
- Type of program (4H, afterschool, Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, etc.)
- Details of any events planned in connection with your program
- Program start and end dates
- Number of leaders involved
- Number of students involved
- Executive Summary of Program - a brief description of your program and implementation plan, including goals and objectives
- Detailed Plan - specific details and a timeline showing how you will implement the program and what topics you will teach. Describe any activities you will use that will help teach the concepts.
- Program Evaluation – Describe any evaluation tools you will be utilizing to measure the impact your program has on the participants.

Having this information researched and ready ahead of time will speed the process along. Additionally, **it is very important to be mindful of any submission deadlines and to follow the funder's specific instructions *to the letter* to increase your chances of an award!**

Sponsorships

- Research any companies in your area doing STEM-related work such as defense contractors, engineering firms, technology/ computer businesses, or marine technology organizations. Ask if they would be willing to sponsor SeaPerch kits for your classroom. For just under $2,000 a company could sponsor ten kits and one tool kit, enough to accommodate 30-40 eager students.
- Contact civic and social organizations in your town such as the American Legion, Knights of Columbus, Lions Clubs of America, Rotary International, VFW, and Kiwanis International who may have funds available.
- Ask your Parent Teacher Organization for funding.
- Reach out to local chapters of professional STEM-related organizations such as American Society of Naval Engineers, Society of Women Engineers, Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, Freshwater Biological Association, Society of Hispanic Professional

Engineers, National Society of Black Engineers, Marine Technology Association, or Women in Defense, just to name a few.

Fundraising

Getting students and parents involved helps them take ownership in the project and have some "skin in the game." Folks tend to donate when they see that the kids are motivated and committed to the cause. Here are some ideas:

- Bake sales
- Lemonade stands
- Garage sales
- Sell candy, candles, wrapping paper, flowers, Tupperware, entertainment coupon books
- Raffles (50/50, theme baskets)
- Host a spaghetti dinner or pancake breakfast
- Car washes
- Silent auctions
- Charity yard work (rake leaves, shovel snow, mow grass)
- Bag groceries for tips at the local supermarket
- Walk-a-thons, skate-a-thons

Other Helpful Websites:

- http://www.stemconnector.org/
- http://www.grantwrangler.com/STEMresources.html
- http://www.k12grants4teachers.com/
- http://www.stemedcoalition.org/
- http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/home.html
- http://grantspace.org/
- http://www.classwish.org/
- https://www.grantstation.com/

Supporting Materials

To help you approach potential funders, we have prepared a presentation that you can use to help explain your mission as well as SeaPerch's.
http://www.seaperch.org/teacher_tools

We also have a letter template that you can customize with your letterhead and program information to present to interested funders.
http://www.seaperch.org/teacher_tools

A LabTV webisode about SeaPerch is available here:
http://www.ndep.us/Sea-Perch This is a short video that shows students building a SeaPerch.