

# Becoming Grant-Ready



Presented by Cheryl Smith

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Making a Difference in the Community



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## About Your Presenter: Cheryl Smith

1. **Current:** CEO, Dewlyn Nonprofit Services.
2. **Reach:** Training, start-up, and strategic alignment for thousands of nonprofits each year. U.S. Small Business Week Presenter for SBA/SCORE and Maui, HI. Training for faith-based, universities, banks, community-based organizations and SCORE chapters across the U.S.
3. **Experience:** 25+ years in Nonprofit Sector, including C-Level and Board Positions.
4. **Education:** BA, Michigan State (MI); MPA, Kennesaw State (GA).
5. **Past Contribution:** Secured millions in grants for small nonprofits.
6. **Author:** 21 Ways to Fund a Nonprofit.
7. **My Favs:** Morning runs, books on the quantum field, metaphysics and consciousness, and making soap!
8. **Other Wins:** Mother to 3 amazing people & Nanna to 1 brilliant future leader.



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## Workshop Logistics

**Run-Time: 60**  
minutes

**Q & A: 20**  
minutes

**Presentation:**  
Available thru  
SCORE

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## Thought for the Day: Trust the Process.

"In the quiet embrace of the earth, even the smallest acorn holds the promise of a mighty oak.  
Trust the process of becoming."



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## Today's Discussion

### Understanding the levels of nonprofit grant-readiness.

- Level 1: On Par
- Level 2: Above Par
- Level 3: Proactive
- Level 4: Productive



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# 4 Levels ~ 12 Steps to Becoming Grant-Ready

## Level 1

### On Par

1. 501(c)(3)
2. Clear Mission
3. Professional Image
4. Board & Volunteers

## Level 2

### Above Par

5. Compliant
6. Budget
7. Financials

## Level 3

### Proactive

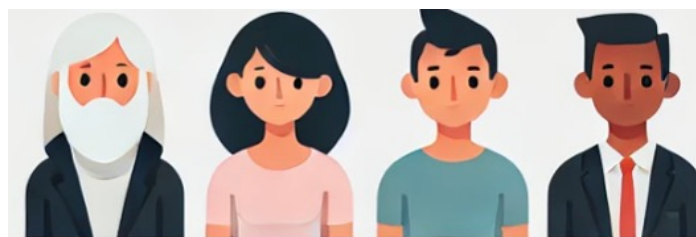
8. Community Engagement
9. Income Generation

## Level 4

### Productive

10. Key Registrations
11. Program Started
12. Track Results

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Level 1: Par

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**Level 1: Par**

The noun par has meant “that which is equal” since the mid-1600’s.

Present day...

Things you have put in place:

- Public Charity Status
- Board and Volunteers
- Mission Statement
- Professional Image



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# Mission Statements

The best nonprofit mission statements are 20 words or less.

1. Why your nonprofit exists
2. Whom it serves
3. How it serves them

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# Mission Statement Template

Our mission is to (why you exist) by (what you do) and (who you do this for) to (why it matters).

## Example

Our mission is to alleviate homelessness by providing shelter and resources that will help unemployed and underemployed individuals regain self-sufficiency. (20)

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## Professional Image

Does your public image represent the organization in the BEST POSSIBLE LIGHT?

- **Website**
- Business Phone
- Business Location



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## Professional Image

Does your public image represent the organization in the BEST POSSIBLE LIGHT?

- Website
- **Business Phone**
- Business Location



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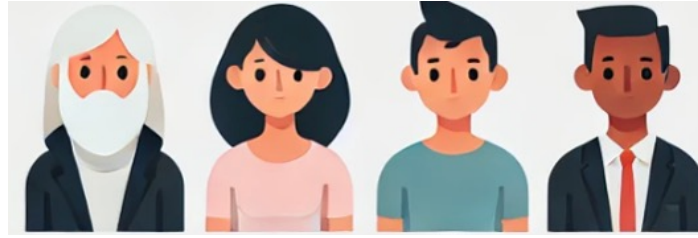
## Professional Image

Does your public image represent the organization in the BEST POSSIBLE LIGHT?

- Website
- Business Phone
- Business Location**



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## Level 2: Above Par

Better than normal or expected. Very good.

Things you have put in place:

- ✓ Regular Volunteers
- ✓ Regular Board Meetings
- ✓ A Budget

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## Be sure that you have also put these things in place...

1. Separate bank account for your nonprofit.
2. Mission-aligned Business Income.
3. A diverse and engaged board.
4. Financial Statements
5. Federal Compliance
6. State Compliance
7. Otherwise, something will seem noticeable off.



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### Level 3 : Proactive

Acting in anticipation of future problems, changes, or needs.

Things you have put in place:

- ✓ Community Activities
- ✓ Partnerships
- ✓ Seeking Grants

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**Be sure that you have also put these things in place...**

1. A process for being productive (not just busy).
2. Formal partnerships by MOU
3. A funding strategy (success activities)



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# Level 3

**Success Activities:**

- Planning Sessions
- Inviting Staff to Board Meetings
- Developing an Annual Fundraising Plan
- Donor Centric
- Community Events
- Applying for Grants



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# Applying for Grants

## Full Proposal

A 10-50-page document

1. Organizational Background
2. Statement of Need
3. Program Description
4. Target Population
5. Goals and Objectives
6. Measurement and Evaluation
7. Sustainability Plan
8. Budget

## Letter of Inquiry (LOI)

A 2-to-4-page document

1. Introduces you and your organization to a potential funder.
2. Shares program details.
3. Why the program is needed.
4. Program goals.
5. Request Details.

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# Grants are awarded to solve a problem.

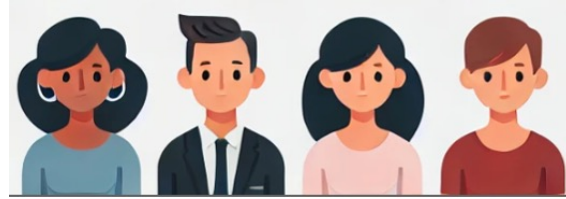
**Program:** Food Pantry

**Problem:** Food Insecurity

**Program:** Youth Mentoring

**Problem:** At-risk youth multiple reasons (Prevent H.S. Drop out; Juvenile Delinquency; Teen Pregnancy, Not enough minorities in STEM careers; lack of exposure to arts and culture.

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## Level 4 : Productive

1. Having the quality or power of producing, especially in abundance.
2. Effective in bringing about.
3. Yielding results, benefits, or profits.

Things you have put in place:

- ✓ Key Registrations
- ✓ Programs have started
- ✓ Tracking Success

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# About Level 4: Being Productive

## Key Registrations

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## About Level 4: Being Productive

### Key Registrations

[Guidestar.org](http://Guidestar.org)  
[Poweredbypercent.com](http://Poweredbypercent.com)  
[Google.com/nonprofits](http://Google.com/nonprofits)  
[211.Org](http://211.Org)  
[Findhelp.org](http://Findhelp.org)  
[48in48.org](http://48in48.org)  
[SAM.gov](http://SAM.gov)

### Start Your Program

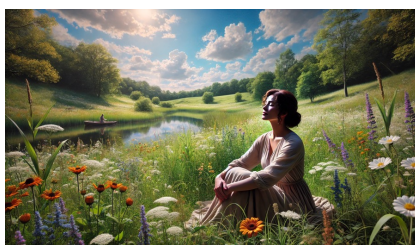


### Track Success



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## Productive = Make Things Happen



Bring in positive energy



Research funders  
and  
contact them if needed.



Apply

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# Master these 12 Steps and Become Grant-Ready!

## Level 1

### On Par

1. 501(c)(3)
2. Clear Mission
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## Level 4

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# Becoming Grant-Ready Checklist

## On Par

Things you have put in place:

- Public Charity Status
- Board and Volunteers
- Mission Statement
- Professional Image

## Above Par

Things you have put in place:

- Regular Volunteers
- Regular Board Meetings
- A Budget

## Proactive

Things you have put in place:

- Community Activities
- Partnerships
- Seeking Grants

## Productive

Things you have put in place:

- Key Registrations
- Programs have started
- Tracking Success

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## Why Proposals Are Declined

### Guidelines not followed

- Was not mission aligned
- Deadline not met
- Didn't answer the questions asked.

### Poorly written

- Poor statement of need
- Didn't describe the program
- Unrealistic budget

### Other

- Cost greater than benefit
- Highly competitive
- Funder depleted funds

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## Grant Win Rates

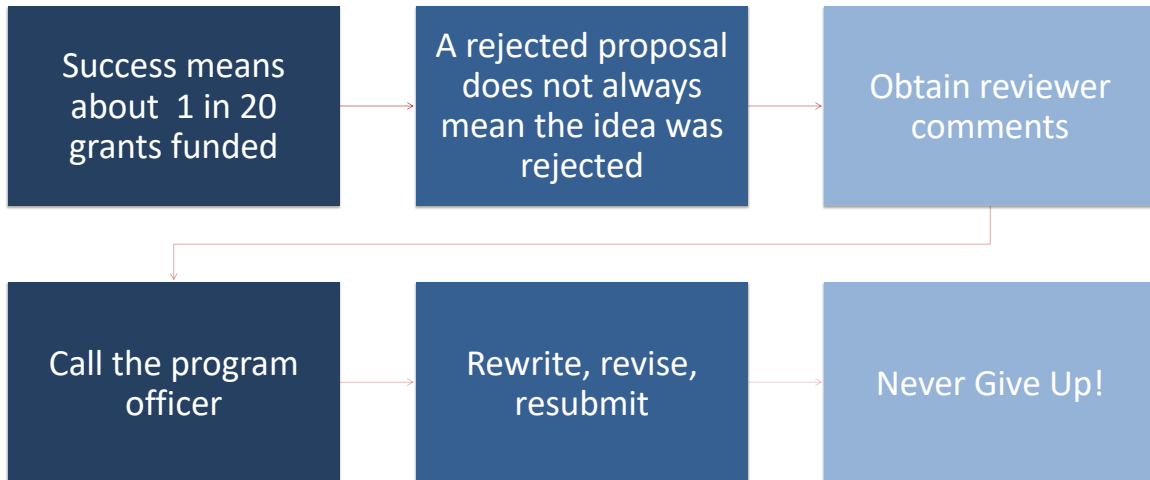
Of the 2700 grant applications submitted each day, only about 7% (200) are funded.

Source: <https://www.snpo.org/funding/grants.php>



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## Recycle your Proposal



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## Awesome Grant Databases

### Grantmakers.io

- Free access to thousands of grant-making funders. Visit: <https://www.grantmakers.io>

### Foundationcenter.org

- Free access to Foundation Center database and resources at a location near you at no cost. Visit: <http://https://fconline.foundationcenter.org>

### GrantGopher.com

- Free Search Available: Yes. Visit: <https://grantgopher.com>

### Instrumentl

- Free Search Available: Yes. Limited search at: <https://www.instrumentl.com/browse-grants>

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## Awesome Resources for grant-writing

### **ChatGPT.com**

- Inspiration, content creation, editing.

### **Perplexity.ai**

- Valid research for your statement of need.

### **Grammarly.com**

- Writing, editing, plagiarism check.

### **Guidestar.org**

- Researching funders.

### **FiscalSponsorshipdirectory.org**

- Locate a fiscal sponsor

**Caution!** Working with ai requires your input and validation, as the ai may produce inaccurate content.

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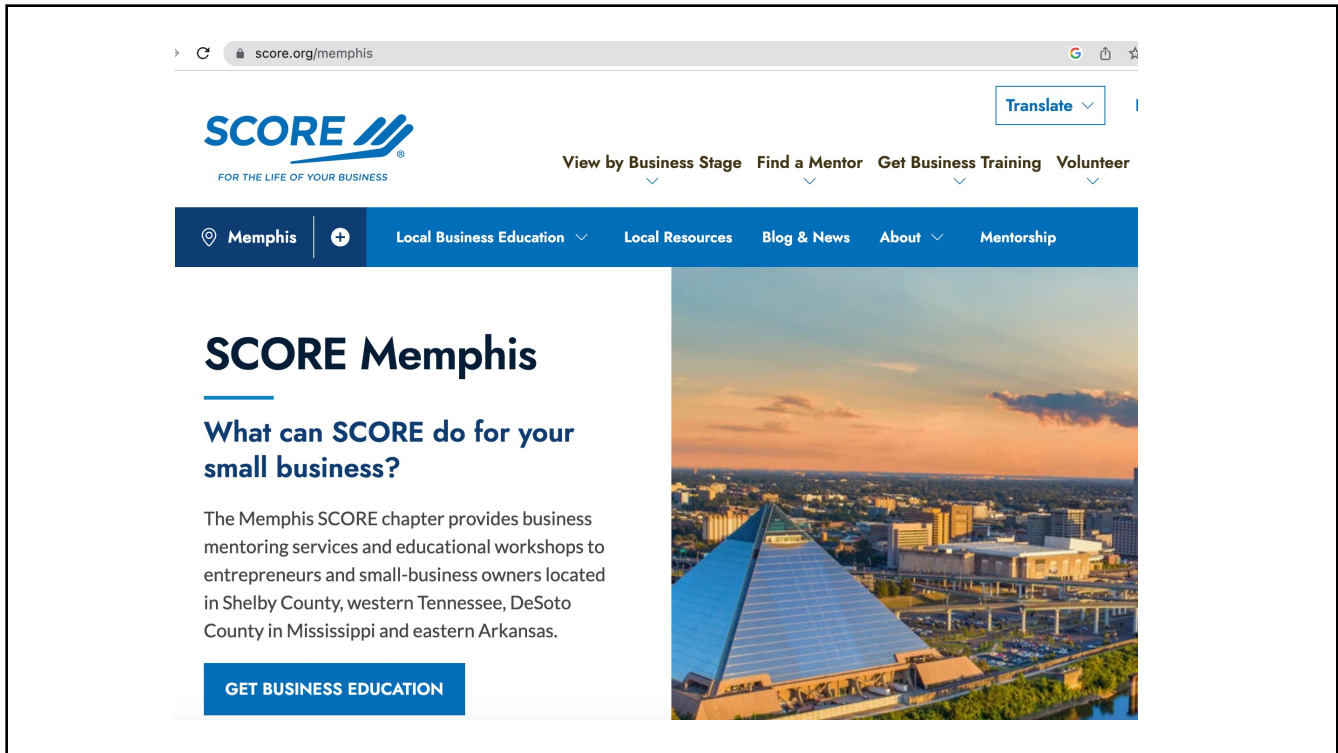
And so, the acorn  
becomes a mighty tree.

**From small beginnings grow  
mighty possibilities.**

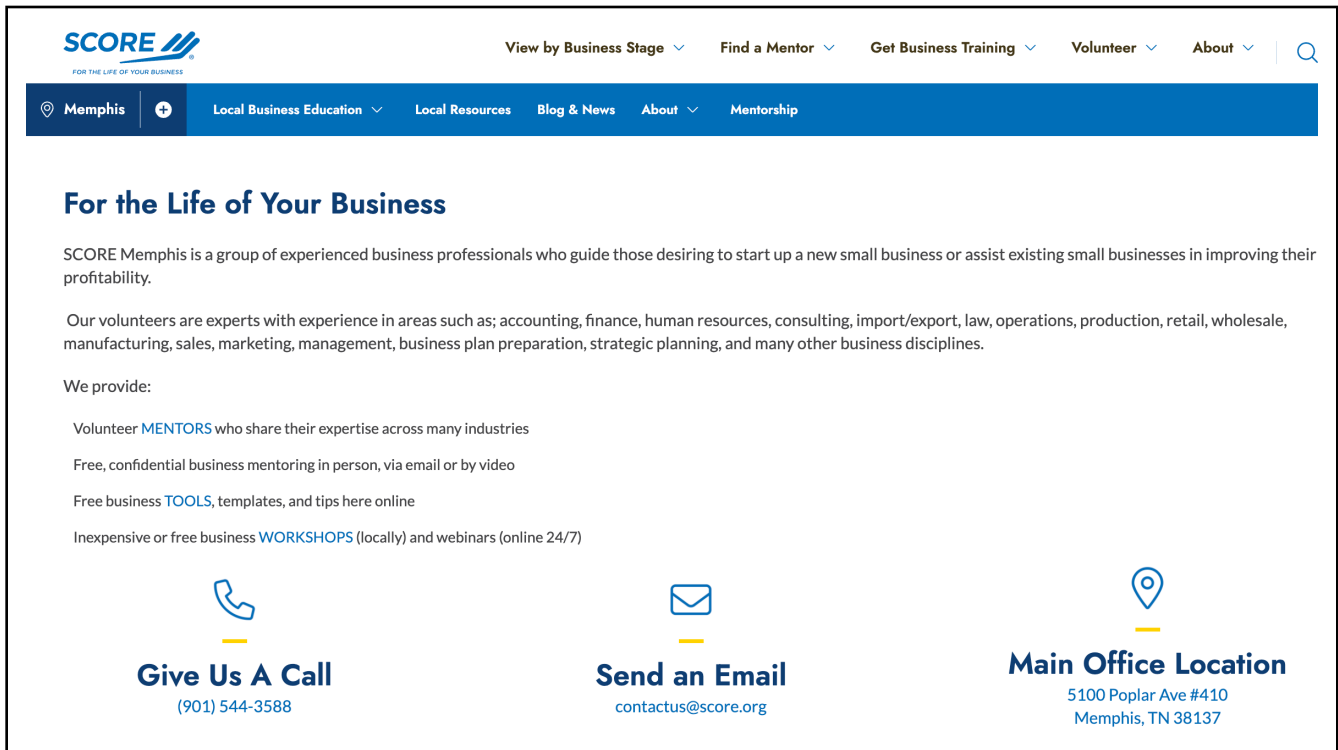
*I honor where I start, knowing each step  
forward brings me closer to the strength  
and greatness within me.*



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Cheryl Smith, CEO  
Dewlyn Nonprofit Services  
National Nonprofit Trainer & Coach

## What I do each day...

1. Establish nonprofit organizations
2. Grant proposal-writing
3. Strategic Planning
4. Group coaching and training



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*Thank You!*

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