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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National POLST Paradigm embodies and promotes the essential elements of a POLST Program and, among other activities, assists states in developing POLST Programs. This document is intended to serve as a resource for all POLST Programs interested in evaluating their program structure and leadership.

Each state POLST Program has developed independently and, as a result, there is great variation and experience to examine; this Program Development Guide scratches the surface in cataloging some state experiences.

Due to variation with funding, staffing, and laws that each state must abide by; there is no single optimal plan to develop a POLST Program. Drawing upon the experience of selected states that are currently endorsed or mature, a team of graduate students from the Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) Master of Science in Healthcare Management capstone program, along with guidance from Amy Vandenbroucke, Executive Director, National POLST Paradigm and an Associate Director for the OHSU Center of Ethics gathered data to help create this program development guide. It is important to note that not every state participating in the POLST paradigm was contacted, but those who expressed interest and filled out the initial survey were followed up with. Research methods included surveys; follow up phone calls, and investigating best practice methods coalitions similar to POLST.

The guide is organized around issues and common themes that have been most recurrent across the states implementing POLST Programs. The sections suggest a preferred outcome for sustainable business practices. The Guide provides a brief overview and analysis of each issue, as well as methods to achieve a preferred outcome.

The guide is comprehensive, but is not a perfect model for any one state. Each state can choose information that will be helpful given their specific issues. The goal of this document is to provide states with options for structuring their POLST Program that will help with long term financial, coalition sustainability, and quality improvement.
Purpose of a Coalition

In starting a POLST Program, building a coalition of key stakeholders is vital to its success. A strong coalition is important because it will have the resources and ability to implement a POLST Program. If the climate is not ripe for doing so, it will help prevent opposition from implementing legislation or policy that hinders the future ability for a POLST Program to develop. Further, it increases the flexibility of a POLST Program to proactively approach and manage known opponents and reactively manage setbacks or previously unknown opposition.

Some other key purposes of creating a coalition include:

- Allows for an organized and formal approach to implementing a POLST Program
- Helps ensure key stakeholders are participating in the POLST Program development
- Creates visible accountability and responsible parties for key POLST Program implementation
- Easier ways to find funding
- Manages legislative process (if any)
- Coordinates and manages media
- Coordinates with other POLST Programs
- Coordinates with National POLST Paradigm
- Represents POLST Program during Nation POLST events
- Develops educational materials
- Creates and conducts quality assessment activities
- Oversees POLST Form (developing initial and revisions, possibly dissemination)
- Networks with and garners support from other organizations and like-minded professionals

Building the Coalition

Building strategic partnerships is a key function of all effective advocacy organizations. A coalition’s capacity is inherent in the collective capacity of its members. This capacity includes leadership to articulate and assemble others to work around a common vision. It is vital that the coalition understands the National POLST Paradigm, the organization’s strategic niche, as well as has good interpersonal skills to network with one another. Some examples of people you may include in your coalition are below.

**Stakeholders:** These are the people who have a stake in the success of the coalition’s efforts. They may include:

- The most affected by POLST in healthcare
- Formal and informal helpers: those charged with carrying out community functions related to POLST
Community leaders: It is extremely important to invite those who can influence large numbers of people to support the program. Such people as:

- Hospice and Palliative care leaders
- Emergency Medical System personnel
- Ethic Consultants
- Clergy

Policy makers: The participation of local political leaders, state representatives, and others in policy making positions will both add credibility to the POLST coalition and increase the chances that you can actually influence policy in your area of interest.

Further, a strong coalition creates an effective POLST Program, but it requires thought and diligence. Do not just create your coalition from individuals who are interested in building POLST; it is important that you consider the elements below.

What number of members would be most effective for your coalition? States have found that having everyone who is interested in POLST easily results in having 150-200 names. It takes a lot of effort to effectively use all those individuals. Considering an appropriate structure to best harness this interest is necessary. For example, will you have a core group of individuals working on POLST frequently, what is a manageable number for doing the work and setting up meetings? Is their appropriate support in place to manage the communication needed to communicate to (and hear from!) all 200 people and to set up meetings?

Key organizations: POLST is too complex and systemic to have only one organization implement a successful POLST Program. Your coalition should consider what organizations would want to have a voice in developing and implementing a POLST Program. The National POLST Paradigm Task Force (NPPTF) has provided the seven core elements list to consider when doing this. The NPPTF is comprised of one representative chosen by each state that has an endorsed program and includes legal and emergency medical service consultants. Committees are chaired by members of the NPPTF and comprised of representatives from endorsed and developing programs. By including key organizations you create an environment that allows for easier: institutional buy-in; when organizations have a voice they are more engaged and likely to support, rather than resist, a POLST initiative. You also can better coordinate and effectively use member expertise and resources to influence complex issues.
Some examples of key organizations for your coalition could include:

- Academic Medical Center(s)
- Key healthcare systems
- Academy of Family Physician group for your state
- Association of Hospital and Health Systems
- State department of Human Services
- State Hospice Association
- State Medical Association
- State Osteopathic Association
- State Nurses Association
- Veterans Administration
- Society of Physician Assistants
- POLST Registry Organization (if applicable and separate from your POLST Program)
- Office of Long Term Care Ombudsman
- Local AARP

**Key individuals:** After you’ve identified what organizations to include, make sure your coalition has the right individuals from those organizations. By identifying individuals who are in a position of influence or authority within the key organizations, you increase the likelihood they can promote POLST, disseminate education and roll out activities, as well as address any issues or problems that arise. They are also the individuals who can update their organizational leaders as the POLST Program evolves.

*Note:* You may want to consider how to remain “neutral” in your coalition composition— for example, to avoid conflict among academic medical centers, you may limit each center to only having one individual from each identified organization participating in your coalition.

**Member qualifications:** Members should be employed by a “Key Organization” (see above) and in a position to: (a) promote the appropriate use of POLST within their organization and associated organizations; (b) help respond to issues, develop quality assurance measures, and implement changes regarding POLST arising in their organization; (c) educate about POLST within their organization; and (d) identify and work with key stakeholders within their organization.

Beyond the strategic considerations of having coalition members collaborate, network, and partner, they need to be able to dedicate time and resources to the less obvious. For example, each POLST coalition member will need to understand how a single issue fits into a broader network of issues. The member must be able to wage and weigh the value of coalition membership.

While building the coalition, members must be able to articulate the value they bring regarding POLST, as well as what will make them important. Second coalition members must be able to express what they want or need from the POLST coalition. See Table 1.
Table 1: Capacities of Effective POLST Coalition Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacities of Effective POLST Coalition Members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills and knowledge to work collaboratively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to share resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to openly identify conflicts between the individual organization and coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to share power and credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to speak as a unified one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to spend time on projects and see them through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to commit to the action as well as the name of the POLST coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication to coalition - consistent ability to attend and meaningfully participate in coalition and its activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership and Structure of the Coalition

The leadership and structure of your coalition will depend on the current political, economic and social realities, as well as existing efforts and groups that are already working on POLST. The coalition leadership will identify how the coalition can effectively function as a team.

Leaders and leadership structure: Building a POLST Program takes a lot of time and effort so the structure of a coalition should consider what structure will be most effective. For example, if a leader is identified who has institutional support and dedicated time towards building a POLST Program; they may not need as much support from coalition members. If there is no such leader and everyone is participating outside of the work activities more support from the coalition may be necessary. In this latter structure, establishing subcommittees and widely disseminating work may be more effective. Whatever structure works best, however, it is important to consider how your coalition will be developing new leaders. Identifying and mentoring future leaders is vital to the long-term success of your POLST coalition and Program.

Leadership capacity: Leadership capacity refers to the ability of the POLST coalition to create and sustain the vision, make decisions, as well as provide direction and innovate. Some leadership capacities that need to be implemented when establish your coalitions are listed in Table 2.
### Table 2: Leadership Capacities for POLST Coalitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Capacities for POLST Coalitions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared mission, vision, and purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified common goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalized set of rules or bylaws to govern coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified core leadership team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency in decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed and engaged membership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Choosing the right coalition leader:** Energetic, strong, and influential leaders result in successful coalitions. When recruiting a leader be sure to consider the following:

- Must be respected by others and generate confidence and knowledge of POLST
- Able to inspire others and motivate them to take action
- Knowledge about leading groups
- Have the ability to see diversity in all forms and the skills needed for conflict resolution and consensus building
- Able to build ownership and commitment of others
- Able to take initiative and demonstrate drive
- Ability to mentor
- Ability to fulfill term limit

Beyond just having the leadership characteristics mentioned above, it may be important that the coalition leader be from the right organization. The organization with which the coalition leader is affiliated may create perceived or actual conflict among coalition members or it may limit or hinder political activities (for example, a leader from an academic medical institution or a state entity may be unable to speak for or against POLST legislation- your coalition needs to consider if this may matter).

**Leadership responsibilities:** In order to maintain a healthy coalition, a leader or program manager could be appointed to complete essential tasks. Some coalitions have structured boards that appoint someone to do this task, while others are less rigid.
The leader should be able to perform the following duties as well as delegate others to assist:

**Tasks:**

- Keep members and organizations engaged; review/renew member status
- Keep membership growing and informed; replenish or expand if needed
- Address organizational needs within coalition and revise structures/procedures as needed
- Rotate and develop leadership through mentoring
- Form groups and assist in grant funding
- Create a positive public relation campaign
- Work closely with national executive director of POLST and NPPTF (e.g. attend conferences and participate in regional committees and communication committee)
- Continue to revise/implement action plans and keep projects moving ahead
- Assess changes and accomplishments at a state and national level
- Build on past successes to move to new goals and strategies
- Maintain and update website (if applicable)
- Coordinate conference calls and webinars for committee meetings

**Products or Outcomes:** It may be advantageous to develop, maintain and retain the following documents or processes.

- Minutes and attendance records for coalition meetings (See Appendix A)
- Rosters and mailing lists (email and snail mail)
- By-laws or operating procedures
- Structure or organizational chart
- Regular communication channels (newsletters, action alerts, print/electronic media items) – for example, disseminating the national POLST eNewsletter to all coalition members
- Strategic plan
- Clear mission and value statement(s) for procedures
- Structure or organizational chart
- Regular communication channels (newsletters, action alerts, print/electronic media items) – for example, disseminating the national POLST eNewsletter to all coalition members
- Strategic plan
- Clear mission and value statement(s) for you POLST Program
- Monitoring news regarding POLST
- Retaining products from projects (e.g. reports, service directories, educational materials, campaigns, trainings)
- Ensuring projects and quality assurance activities have been achieved in reasonable time and fashion
- Accurate financial records
- Accurate historical and archival information
Suggested Coalition Member Roles and Responsibilities

Once a great leader is in place, he or she can assist in forming work teams and delegating tasks. All members can play an active role in the success of the coalition. Activities for coalition members include, but aren’t limited to:

- Participating in determining the direction of the coalition
- Serving as the liaison to the member organizations. Organizations represented should be using or open to using POLST
- Ensuring coalition supports and promotes the National POLST Paradigm guidelines and initiatives
- Participating in the needs assessment of a POLST Program for your city or state
- Assisting in drafting a strategic plan with goals and objectives
- Assisting in the implementation of activities directly related to POLST, including participating on coalition subcommittees
- Serving as a resource for development of program activities
- Helping to represent the coalition at key meetings and events
- Serving as an ambassador of the work of the coalition and promote the POLST mission when possible – not just within their organization
- Gathering and relaying appropriate information to the coalition
- Consistently attending and participating in coalition meetings
- Helping to develop and implement a sustainable plan for the coalition and POLST Program
- Encouraging and recruiting new coalition members
- Mentoring those who may become leaders

Maintaining the Coalition

In order to be sustainable, the coalition will need to be maintained. At this stage in coalition development, your coalition is most likely implementing activities and projects. Members of the POLST coalition are learning to deal with power distribution and allocation of resources. The group can take on more challenges as relationships and trust builds. The POLST coalition may be more visible in the community. The goals and strategies used are refined. As some goals are realized, some members may choose not to commit anymore. Early leaders might drop out and the coalition will need to address new leadership development and succession.

Creating structure within your coalition is key to holding onto to your existing members. Structure will increase engagement from the membership and lessen the burden on the leader. Manage resources effectively to avoid having the leader do all the work. The best way to overcome this obstacle is to involve members of the coalition in the organization’s projects and activities. Each member should be assigned to a task group or work team. Allow coalition members to report on their work at the meetings. The project leader could type out a job description and discuss it with the members of the coalition to make sure everyone is clear on their roles and expectations.
Creating a clear organizational structure: To be an effective coalition and keep membership involved, most coalitions require clear structure. Here are a few ideas on what a coalition can do to outline their organizational structure.

- Create a strong and stable organization structure that clarifies roles and what is expected of members
- Create a formalized set of structures and practices, such as written roles and bylaws
- Have management strategies such as effective communication, conflict resolution plans and set decision making guidelines
- Organization effectiveness is related to positive work environment, higher satisfaction from members and strong linkage with the community
- Create ground rules on how the coalition will function
- Create ground rules for meeting etiquette
- Develop communication tools and feedback mechanisms for members of the coalition
- Reach a consensus on the mission and vision of the coalition. Examples of states with established organizational structure and bylaws are:

  California: [http://coalitionccc.org/](http://coalitionccc.org/)

  Oregon: [http://www.or.polst.org/](http://www.or.polst.org/)

Additional ideas to help maintain/sustain your coalition include:

- To ensure momentum, establish committees such as; education, research, quality, legislative, bylaws and POLST form committee. Your group will now what committees are needed
- Designate a historian who keeps record of attendance and meeting minutes
- Keep an updated roster and mailing list of all participating members
- Communicate regularly via email, newsletters or webinars
- Identify and discuss new issues, tasks and objectives
- Develop and follow a process for leader succession and recruitment of new members
- Increase enthusiasm by providing recognition and renewal to members
- Address organization needs and revise structure/procedures as needed
- Rotate and develop leadership
- Set a term limit
- Continuously update and integrate coalition goals and strategies
- Develop funding streams
- Manage meetings effectively. Make sure meetings start and end on time, send out an agenda in advance for member review
- Make it personal – demonstrate what POLST can do and what’s in it for them
- Find out what can be improved by creating a member feedback from
- Create a revised action plan for POLST Coalition annually or as needed
- Celebrate victories
Designing a Maintenance Plan

In general the leaders can spearhead and take responsibility for the initiation of the maintenance plan, but this does not mean they have to work on it themselves. Leaders can delegate experienced members who are interested in maintenance and sustainability of the coalition. The plan can be presented to leadership, then to the larger membership for review, and then edited as needed.

The plan should be formal and written in a professional manner with full maintenance and assessment procedures. The plan should be easily accessible for work team leaders and able to update as needed.

The coalition members carrying out the plan may be the same work team or group leaders writing the plan. The members who will implement the plan should have a strong voice or some say in the matter.

An annual review of the maintenance plan is advised. Some coalitions may break their plan down into smaller sections and review special need areas more frequently, such as budget, conference planning, and etc.

Most POLST coalitions can conduct an informal review of their plan, but some could benefit from an external review from a professional consultant group. The external group review can be expensive, but may help in solving some internal issues.

Formal reviews are formal in that they have their own policies and procedures; they take place on a regular basis, and they are an accepted part of the coalition. Often times the formal review will result in a written report.

Formal reviews can evolve in various ways:

- Can be an annual program review with predetermined methods. An executive committee or group can be assigned to this task
- A subcommittee review or designated group may be in charge of conducting the review and reporting out
- Some coalitions may choose to rotate a series of smaller reviews on a staggered schedule

Informal reviews can be less structured and can be looked at as a way to see how things are going. Informal reviews can include:

- A group retreat, usually away from the place of business, to stimulate ideas and a fresh perspective
- Feedback by survey monkey, email or written questionnaire can allow for suggestions and improvement
What are the Challenges of Building a Coalition?

There are often barriers or challenges to starting a coalition, and it’s important to be aware of and anticipate them, because they may dictate the process the coalition will have to follow in order to begin successfully. Most often, challenges involve the presence or absence of key organizations or members or conflict among them. See Table 3 below.

Table 3: Benefits and Challenges of Coalitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing</td>
<td>Loss of autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to resources</td>
<td>Compromise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared mission</td>
<td>Expending scare resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to attain desired outcomes</td>
<td>Lack of direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to build skills</td>
<td>Negative exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of coalition work</td>
<td>Middle ground tendency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organization conflict: Conflict can arise from many places, including not having an organization at the table (particularly one that feels they should have representation) or having an organization unwilling to share information with the coalition.

Organizations are often very sensitive about sharing their work, their target populations, and especially their funding. Part of the work of starting a coalition may be to convince a number of organizations that working together will in fact both benefit all of them and better address their common issues.

Strategies to avoid conflict include:

- Research the issue
- Establish points to discuss in advance, consider the best way to reach out to the right leaders to present your case
- Consider the right coalition member to help with resolution
- Consider how current coalition members may be able to manage or avoid potential conflict
- Consider using any personal connections that you, or coalition members, may be aware of to get information who work at an organization
**Membership conflict:** Choosing coalition members is an exercise in limiting conflict and opposition to the extent possible. In addition to working to make sure you have the right people at the table you also want to make sure you don’t have the wrong people- these are people that create conflict, are unsupportive, or actively hindering your efforts. It may also just be someone who, although from a key organization, does not have the ability to talk to their leaders, fix issues, educate or do what needs to be done to implement or promote POLST within his/her organization (essentially it means the org is not represented).

Although you may have the right individuals at the table, the conflict may arise when a single person dominates the coalition’s activities. If unmanaged, this can create an atmosphere of resentment, having participants feel that they are not able to contribute and, eventually, lack of coalition member attendance or participation. A successful leader should be one that creates a participatory atmosphere and focuses on getting all coalition members to participate.

**Helpful Resources for Coalitions**

*For more resources on how to conduct and effective meeting please see APPENDIX A.*

**Books:**

*Ignite!: Getting Your Community Coalition Fired Up for Change:* By Frances Dunn Butterfoss, Ph. D, discusses how to build a strong coalition

**Websites:**

[http://coalitionswork.com](http://coalitionswork.com): Offers great templates on leadership, coalition building, maintenance, and strategic planning

*Community Toolbox:* Offers definitions on what a coalition is and how to create a strategic plan

[http://ctb.ku.edu/en](http://ctb.ku.edu/en)

*National POLST Website:* A great resource for coalition work teams and leaders.


**For professionals:**

- Locating programs
- Download education materials
- Updated Resource Library

**For program leaders:**

- Program Requirements
- Developing a POLST Form
- Implementation Steps and Materials
- Electronic Registry Development
POLST PROGRAM HOME

Every POLST Program needs a home, whether it is formal and permanent or informal and transitory (working towards permanence). A permanent home for your POLST Program is one of the most important pieces for achieving sustainability – but this is not an easy task.

Ideally, your entire coalition will be engaged with this project (even if there is a small core group doing the diligence and reporting back) some questions to consider in starting this process include:

1. Does the potential organization align with the mission of the National POLST Paradigm?
   - Having a home that doesn’t support our mission is potentially an insurmountable challenge.

2. Is the potential organization willing to be collaborative?
   - The goal is statewide use of POLST, which necessitates working well with all key stakeholders. Consider how collaborative this structure or environment will be; in some states, the key to a successful home was locating an entity that healthcare systems considered “neutral” (meaning that no one healthcare system appeared to “own” POLST).

3. Does the potential organization support coalition building?
   - Having a coalition is another important part of developing your POLST Program. You want to make sure your home allows you to collaborate and build a coalition with other members of the healthcare community.

4. How is the potential organization going to support your POLST Program?
   - Besides a place to set up your organization, does your potential home provide you with any other benefits such as; phone services, IT support, staff, etc.

5. Once two or three possibilities are identified, complete at least an informal SWOT analysis (Appendix C) of the potential home/structure. Consider all strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats before moving forward with the necessary due diligence. What liabilities may exist in aligning POLST with a certain entity? What benefits?

Many possibilities exist. Current structures/homes for POLST Programs include: Non-profit entities, academic health centers, insurance companies, physician practice and state agencies.

501(C)3

What is a 501(c)3? Section 501(c)(3) is a portion of the US Internal Revenue Code that allows for federal tax exemption of nonprofit organizations, specifically those that are considered public charities, private foundations or private operating foundations. It is regulated and administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury through the Internal Revenue Service.

Entities such as corporations, trusts, community chests, limited liability companies (LLCs) and incorporated associations can seek 503(c)(3) determination from the IRS.
A corporation is a legal entity separate from individuals who manage it or organize it. It is this separate legal existence that affords the protection from liability, but it also means that the organization becomes immortal in a way. The nonprofit corporation continues to exist beyond the lifetime or involvement of the people who began it or who have managed it. The fact that the organization continues in this way is attractive to donors who want to fund a cause over the long term.

One of the most distinct provisions unique to these organizations as compared with other tax exempt entities is the tax deductibility of donations. Deductions are provided for federal income tax purposes for some donors who make charitable contributions.

Other unique provisions tend to vary by state. Like federal law, most states allow for deductibility for state income tax purposes. Also, many states allow 501(c)(3) organizations to be exempt from sales tax on purchases, as well as exemption from property taxes. Special nonprofit, bulk rate postage discounts are available from the Post Office to qualifying organizations.

There are three types of 501(c)(3) organizations:

- **Public Charity** – Public charities receive a substantial portion of their revenue from the general public or from government. In order to remain a public charity (and not a private foundation), a 501(c)(3) must obtain at least 1/3 of its donated revenue from a fairly broad base of public support. Public support can be from individuals, companies and/or other public charities. Donations to public charities can be tax deductible to the individual donor up to 50% of the donor’s income. Corporate limits are generally 10%.
  - Examples include churches, benevolence organizations, educational organizations, etc.

- **Private Foundation** – A private foundation is often referred to as a non-operating foundation, as in it typically does not have active programs. Revenue may come from a relatively small number of donors, even single donors. Private foundations are usually thought of as nonprofits which support the work of public charities through grants, though that is not always the case. Donations to private foundations can be tax deductible to the individual donor up to 30% of the donor’s income. Governance of a private foundation can be much more closely held than in a public charity.
  - Examples include a family foundation.

- **Private Operating Foundation** – The third category and least common is a combination of a public charity and private foundation. These organizations often maintain active programs similar to public charities, but may have attributes (such as close governance) similar to a foundation. As such, private operating foundations are often considered hybrids. Most of the earnings must go to the conduct of programs. Donation deductibility is similar to a public charity.
Why to choose a 501(c)3: Being, or being affiliated with, a 501(c)(3) organization can provide certain benefits such as:

1. Exemption from federal income tax – Federal corporate tax rates can be very high while state corporate taxes can be as well. If you expect to earn substantial amounts of money from your mission related services, exhibits, product sales, or performances, you'll likely want to seek an organization with exemption for your program.
2. Eligible for government and foundation grants – As a 501(c)3 you will be able to receive grants and donations for your program. Foundations are required to give funds only to 501(c)(3) organizations.
3. Credibility – Forming a nonprofit corporation is not simple, but the documents required force coalition members to be clear about their mission, think through operating rules, and develop procedures for decision-making. This is especially important for a nonprofit whose board members may come with diverse interests and viewpoints. Clear-cut delegation of authority and specific operating rules embodied in the articles of incorporation and the bylaws may make running the organization easier and less divisive.
4. Tax deductibility for donors – Individual donors to your program can claim personal federal income tax deductions for their donations, and bequests will be exempt from federal estate taxes.

Things to consider: Disadvantages can include:

- Paperwork – As an exempt corporation, a nonprofit must keep detailed records and submit annual filings to the state and IRS by stated deadlines in order to keep its active and exempt status.
- Costs – A 501(c)3 may require a significant amount of legal guidance, hiring a lawyer to prepare your papers may be necessary.
- Time and energy – To comply with regulatory demands and to grow your organization can be a lengthy, complex process.
- Restrictions – Such as, no pay for your directors, no political campaigning, restrictions on lobbying, and when your organization closes, its assets must be given to another nonprofit.
- Highly Regulated – Strict rules apply to both the activities and the governance of these organizations. No part of the activities or the net earnings can unfairly benefit any director, officer, or any private individual, and no officer or private individual can share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets in the event the organization shuts down.

If the benefits of becoming a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation make sense and outweigh the disadvantages, you may be ready to move ahead. Although 501(c)3 may be the most common type of nonprofit affiliation, there are several other options that could potentially be a good fit for your POLST Program.
States that use a 501(c)3 structure:

- Hawaii – http://www.kokuamau.org/professionals/polst
- California – http://coalitionccc.org/
- Tennessee – http://endolifecaretn.org/
- Virginia – http://virginiapost.org/
- Missouri
- Nevada – http://www.nevadapolst.org/

Non-Profit Organization

What is a Non-Profit Organization? Non-profit organizations use their profits to develop their programs; these organizations generally fall into one of the following categories:

- Charitable organizations – a group designed to benefit society or a specific group of people. It may be educational, religious or humanitarian. i.e. Doctors Without Borders, March of Dimes
- Political groups – a group of people who share similar political aims and opinions. i.e. Coalition to Transform Advance Care (C-TAC)

Why choose a Non-Profit Organization? There are many benefits to being affiliated with or becoming a non-profit including:

- Tax exemption/deduction opportunities
- Eligibility for public and private grants – Nonprofit organizations are generally allowed to solicit charitable donations from the public. Many foundations and government agencies limit their grants to public charities. For more information on public and private grants please see the Funding section of this document.
- Formal Structure – A nonprofit organization exists as a legal entity in its own right and separately from its founder(s). Incorporation generally puts the nonprofit's mission and structure above the personal interests of individuals associated with it.
- Limited Liability – Under the law, creditors and courts are usually limited to the assets of the nonprofit organization and the founders, directors, members, and employees are generally not personally liable for the nonprofit’s debts. There are exceptions: for example, a person cannot use the corporation to shield illegal or irresponsible acts on his/her part. Also, directors have a fiduciary responsibility; if they do not perform their jobs in the nonprofit's best interests, and the nonprofit is harmed, they can be held liable.
**Things to consider:** In addition to the potential liability concerns mentioned above, there are potential disadvantages of a non-profit affiliation, including:

- **Cost** – Creating a nonprofit organization takes time, effort, and money. Because a nonprofit organization is a legal entity under federal, state, and local laws, the use of an attorney, accountant, or other professional are likely necessary to structure it properly and file all necessary paperwork. Aside from legal or other consultant fees, applying for a Federal tax exemption can cost $200-$850 or more, in addition to state fees for incorporation.

- **Paperwork** – As an exempt corporation, a nonprofit must keep detailed records and submit annual filings to the state and IRS by stated deadlines in order to keep its active and exempt status. This may be more paperwork than would be required under other structures.

- **Shared control** – Although the people who create nonprofits like to shape and control their creations, personal control is limited. A nonprofit organization is subject to laws and regulations, including its own articles of incorporation and bylaws. In some states, a nonprofit is required to have several directors, who in turn are the only people allowed to elect or appoint the officers who determine policy.

- **Scrutiny of the public** – A nonprofit is dedicated to the public interest; therefore, its finances are open to public inspection. The public may obtain copies of a nonprofit organization’s state and Federal filings to learn about salaries and other expenditures.

**States with Non-Profit affiliation:**

- Georgia

**State Agency**

**What is a state agency?** A state agency, also called a government agency is a permanent or semi-permanent organization that is responsible for oversight of specific functions. State agencies that are related to end of life, palliative care or healthcare would be the most appropriate agencies to partner with. For a list of state agencies in the country please visit: [http://www.usa.gov/directory/federal/](http://www.usa.gov/directory/federal/)

**Why to choose a state agency:** Many POLST programs struggle with expanding the initiative to the entire state; a benefit to being a part of a state agency is that it may grant you statewide structure that can help with implementation and potentially provide ongoing funding for your POLST Program.

**Things to consider:** One of the struggles with being affiliated with a state agency is funding. State Agencies are funded through legislation that is tied to specific services. The state budget through the legislative process allocates funding to each agency so they can provide specific services. The POLST coalition may be constantly fighting to stay in the budget of whatever department they are part of. Also most state entities must comply with state public record or freedom of information act laws. POLST Programs just need to exercise caution in creating documents and ensure compliance with those laws.
Another challenge may be the legislative or regulatory process. In order to be affiliated with a state agency, your POLST Program will need to be part of statute or regulation. There are many challenges associated with legislation, including not having so much of your program or form specifically described or defined that the POLST Program or form cannot be easily adaptable to change or updated. Further, since the POLST Program will likely be included with an existing department (as opposed to being its own), another challenge may be changing department leaders- not all leaders may be supportive or helpful for your POLST Program.

States with affiliation:

- Iowa: https://www.idph.state.ia.us/IPOST/
- Louisiana - http://www.lhcfq.org/lapost

**Academic Medical Center**

**What is an Academic Health Center?** An Academic Medical Center is defined as an accredited, degree granting institution of higher education that consists of:

- A medical school
- One or more other health professions school or programs. i.e. Dentistry, Nursing, Public Health, Pharmacy
- An owned or affiliated relationship with teaching hospital, health system or other organized health care providers

**Why choose an Academic Medical Center:** Academic Medical Centers (AMCs) generally have a positive reputation and branding within the state or region (even nationally) and have potential to be a great home for your POLST Program. This has many benefits such as:

- Philanthropic donations may be easier to obtain
- May have access to a foundation that can assist with obtaining donations, handling necessary paperwork and donor management activities
- Key stakeholders work at the hospital
- Established media department to assist with education/promotion of your POLST Program
- Established government relation/legislative department to assist with any legislative issues/concerns relative to your POLST Program— they likely have connections that can be useful to support or oppose legislation related to POLST
- Usually good benefits for staff (insurance, etc)
- Grant management support – staff that will manage the submission of grants, track budgeting and managing financial reporting to grantors
- HR support – it may be easier to hire qualified individuals being located at an AMC
Things to consider:

- Competition – If your state has more than one AMC there could be some competition and you may not get full support of your POLST program from the supporters of the other institution.
- Department – It is important to consider the department within an AMC in which you are going to be housed: programs have been housed in centers for ethics but another possibility is within the emergency department or internal medicine. Department support and budgeting can make a big difference in the success and support given to your program.
- POLST Programs generally are not revenue generating and could be cut if the AMC is looking to tighten up their budget – this is another reason to be careful about the department in which your program is located. You’ll want to make sure it has financial support to protect the POLST Program.
- Legislative interests – POLST Programs may not be a top priority or area of focus during a legislative session.
- Bureaucracy – depending on the AMC there may be bureaucratic hurdles that would not be found in another type of entity (e.g., policy compliance, contracting requirements, grant submission processes, HR processes)
- Philanthropic limitations – an AMC may have restrictions on certain types of donors or prohibitions in reaching out to specific donors
- Increased costs – overhead for space, staff, IT support, HR support may be a higher cost than with other entities
- Public record laws – many AMCs are public institutions that must comply with state public record or freedom of information act laws. POLST Programs just need to exercise caution in creating documents and ensure compliance with institutional policy/law.

States with affiliation:

- Oregon - http://www.or.polst.org/
- West Virginia - http://www.wvendoflife.org/
- Florida - http://med.fsu.edu/?page=innovativeCollaboration.home
- Oklahoma - http://www.okpolst.com/

Insurance Company

Why choose an insurance company: An insurance company may have some of the qualities that your POLST Program is looking for in a home including:

- Financial support – insurance companies generally have a sustainable budget and can provide financial support for your POLST Program. They can provide your program with financial sustainability and resources that can help your program develop state wide.
- Branding – insurance companies invest into marketing their companies giving your program an affiliation with known branding and potentially a good reputation.
- Other resources – insurance companies may also provide your program with a physical office and other resources such as phone support, marketing, and IT.
• Common focus – many insurance companies are focusing on palliative care and currently have an interest in supporting such programs; some companies are supportive of innovations and policies that support improving the provision of end of life care to patients.

• Foundation – insurance companies generally have foundations (usually separate legal entities such as 501(c)(3)s or other nonprofit organizations) associated with them that may provide additional support opportunities.

**Things to consider:** Keep in mind that there may be an actual or perceived conflict of interest – While no studies on POLST and cost effectiveness have been undertaken, people may perceive there financial motivation in having an insurance company pay to house and support a POLST Program. This potential perception is something to consider if your POLST Program is planning to do research relative to POLST.

**States housed in insurance companies or with an insurance company affiliation:**

- Pennsylvania
- Washington

**Physician Practice**

**Why choose a physician practice:** Physician leadership and buy in is pertinent for a successful program. Being housed within a physician practice may give you leverage on getting an invested leader for your program. A physician practice may also provide you program with financial sustainability, a physical office and other resources such as phone support, marketing, and IT.

**Things to consider:** Being housed within a physician practice may propose some issues. Expanding the program statewide is a very important part of sustainability of a POLST program. There are two main challenges:

1. Competing practices – if your program is housed within a physician practice, it may be a challenge getting competing physician practices to adopt the program.
2. Accessibility – generally physician practices are located in one geographical area. Expanding beyond that in some of the larger state could be challenging.

**States with a physician practice affiliation:**

  - Moving to partner with a state medical association
Benefits and Challenges of Affiliation/Entity - Table 4

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Approaching Possible Organizations or Deciding on a Structure

Once you’ve narrowed possible organizations to approach or decided on a structure, the coalition must plan the next steps. If you decided to become a stand-alone 501(c)(3) or other non-profit entity, you should consult with professionals (attorney, tax expert) to ensure you complete the process appropriately.

Once you have decided on a few organizations please refer to the Organizational Home document for guidance on how to frame your request.
FUNDING

Funding is a fundamental concern for every state looking to start, further develop or sustain their POLST Program.

This section provides information on:

1. Creating a business plan for your program
2. Identifying potential sources of funding
3. Suggestions on organizational alignment for funding

Creating a Financial Plan
Establishing a solid financial structure for your POLST program may be the first step to ensure developing a strategy for sustainable funding. Many funders will want to see that the program they are supporting has a long-term plan for sustainability. In addition, creating a formal business plan will help build a culture of a sustainable, mission driven programming rather than serial grant seeking. For more information on creating a business plan please refer to the Business Plan Basics section of this document.

Financial Advisory Committee
Creating a work team such as a finance advisory committee (FAC) (ideally lead by someone with a background in finance) or coalition leader with financial expertise can help with POLST Program financial oversight and implementation of control systems for money flowing through the program. Other FAC or coalition leader with financial expertise responsibilities may include making financial recommendations, budget analysis and determination of fund allocation. Below are examples of FAC tasks.

FAC primary tasks:

- Identify financial leadership within the committee
- Work with coalition leader and work team to create an annual budget
- Decide where funds raised will reside
- Set up process for acquisition of funds from sources
- Set up process for funds to be dispersed
- Provide reporting data on how funds have been used
- Project funding requirements
- Make recommendations for cost cutting and/or investing
Resource Development Team

Another committee can be created to work specifically on resource development. This can be the POLST Program Resource Development Team (RDT). The RDT can be a separate entity than the FAC. As your coalition works to create or strengthen your program’s financial plans, it may be beneficial to list out specific steps to resource development. Below are some example steps your program can take for resource planning.

For an example donor letter that can be used to reach out to potential funders, see Appendix G.

Resource development plan:
1. Set up a RDT of leaders, staff, and coalition partners with fundraising experience and contacts
2. Prepare necessary general support or project proposals
3. Identify possible funding sources from coalition members’ contacts and experience with fundraising
4. Decide what kind of funding you do, or do not, want to accept or seek (e.g., some coalitions prohibit or limit funding from sources such as health care entities)
5. Decide on the number and type of fundraising events you will have, plan and hold
6. Decide on the structure of your annual campaign, then plan and implement it
7. Use foundation directories and guides to identify possible foundation/corporate funders
8. Obtain information about potential funders from directories, Internet, annual guidelines and reports, and from those who know them; prepare summary forms for each potential funder
9. Prepare support materials that need to accompany proposals, such as introductory letters;
10. Update the mailing list of current and potential individual donors – consider investing in a donor management system (e.g., giftworks, etc.)
11. Make a master list of funders to be approached, including the funding type and amount that will be requested (general support or for a particular project)
12. Decide which coalition members will make solicitation visits to potential funders, train them, send initial letters or proposals, and arrange for visits
13. Arrange support calls from coalition members who have contacts with potential funders
14. Have team prepare site reports on donor visits for files and follow-up
15. Review progress after first visits, provide more training, and revise materials if needed
16. Provide follow-up to visits; assess progress; and revise fundraising approaches

Creating a budget

There is no one budget that will work for every POLST Program. Budgets vary based on the following factors: home affiliation, number of coalition members, physical location, size of state, the overall strategic direction of the program, educational activities, quality assurance activities, etc. However, there are some key elements to consider when you are creating your budget including:

- Program Administration – Most POLST programs will have a champion who drives the development of the program. As you are writing your budget, it is important to think about the costs of supporting this person and the tasks they will be completing. Administrative costs may include; salaries, benefits, support personnel and equipment
• Rent/Lease – having a dedicated space for your POLST program is very important. Consider the cost of rent, utilities and maintenance for your office. If you are considering a virtual approach it is important to have a space allocated for in-person meetings.

• Information Technology (IT) – Leveraging technology can significantly reduce operational costs. Programs should use email and online conference calls as methods of communication. Having a website is also a great method of educating people on your program, if you plan on having a website it is important to consider the costs to create and maintain it. Computers, printers and internet connectivity are technology requirements for program operations. Also consider IT administration and technical support, even if it is on an as needed basis.

• Educational Materials – Pamphlets, flyers, brochures and videos are all common ways to deliver information. Some of them have minimal cost, but none of them are free and it is important to decide which method is best for your program and add it to the budget. Your program must decide whether it wants to charge for these materials; the benefit for doing so is offsetting costs or even making a profit but you are requiring entities to pay for these materials which may incentivize them, to save money, to develop materials on their own- these materials may not be consistent with the POLST Program. However, if you do not charge for the materials, then you maintain control over the education and messaging but must find a way to pay for the materials.

• Travel – Many programs shared that travel was a big part of their budget, for meetings and conferences and for education. Food, lodging and transportation are costly and should be included in the budget.

For an example of specific budget items, please see Appendix F.

**Funding Sources**

Almost every POLST program struggles with funding. There are many methods of funding that your program can explore. One approach is to start identifying potential funding in your local or regional area. Local funders want to make a difference in their community, create partnerships and grantees to be successful. When reaching out to local funders, make sure you do your homework.

Consider these few questions about the potential funder:

1. How do they operate? (Annual, Multi-year grants?)
2. What do they fund? (Operations, Education, Research, Policy)
3. What don’t they fund? (Operation, Education, Research, Policy)
4. Have they every funded a program or project like this?

Answering these questions can make a stronger case for your POLST Program to receive funding. When making your case be sure to gather local data, prepare local stories and calculate local impact. Most importantly, be honest and realistic.
Also remember: Local and Regional Funders...

- Are a part of your community
- Care about lasting change
- Balance risk and reward
- Have opinions
- Are accountable to their bosses, boards and community

Potential funding sources include:

**Organizational partnerships**

Organizational partnerships are defined as cooperative, collaborative relationships that exist between two or more independent nonprofits to increase administrative efficiency and/or programmatic impact through shared, transferred or combined services, resources or programs. The varying types of partnerships are described as follows:

- **Cooperation** - Mutually beneficial administrative and program relationships that may include sharing information, clients, space and other resources. Also includes relationships in which organizations agree to work on projects together.

- **Coordination** - Deeper relationships built upon compatible missions, joint planning, division of roles and resources and consistent communication channels in which accomplishments are mutually acknowledged. Partners recognize the value in the relationship and begin to develop a supportive partnership infrastructure.

- **Collaboration** - The deepest of organizational relationships, where documented expectations and a structure to achieve goals beyond those any individual partner could achieve are in place. Organizations have established long term, ongoing operation of coordinated or cooperative activities and have demonstrated continuity and long-standing trusting relationships. Successful organizational partnerships include, but are not limited to, the following characteristics:
  - Organization has established working partnerships with other organizations in the community that have been in place for more than one year.
  - Organizational partnerships involve significant activities, which may include working to establish common goals, pooling resources, joint planning, implementing and evaluating services, and evaluating services and procedures
  - Organizational partnerships are guided and executed by an up-to-date Memorandum of Agreements or similar documents

**States that have used organizational partnerships as a funding source:** Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Ohio, Oregon and Pennsylvania.
In-kind donations

In-kind gifts are contributions of goods or services, other than cash grants. Corporations are a common source of in-kind gifts, which are offered along with, or in lieu of, cash grants. Examples of in-kind gifts include:

- Goods – computers, software, furniture and office equipment
- Services – meeting space, copy machines, phone support, mail service and administrative/financial support
- Expertise – legal, tax or business advice; marketing and website development; strategic planning

Corporations increasingly prefer to provide in-kind support. Thus, if your funding request has options for in-kind support, this may help to start a relationship with a corporate funder.

States that have used in-kind donations as a funding source: Delaware, Florida, Montana and Nevada.

Foundations

As government funding diminishes private foundations and corporations can help with your program efforts. Foundations can be of great resources to help with POLST program funding. Having good working knowledge of how foundations are set up to provide funding can help you in your efforts. Foundations, corporations and government have fundamentally different approaches to funding decisions. Not understanding the difference can lead to frustration.

Foundation and Corporate Process: Stewardship

- Stewards of donor’s intentions and interests
- Often favors known successful program
- Makes use of information not in the grant proposal
- May not have a written proposal process or staff access at all
- Final decision makers may not be the experts

There are many different types of foundations. Generally, foundations fall into one of two primary categories – public and private.

- Private - come from an individual, a family, a corporation, or some combination of related parties. Examples include, independent, operating, corporate, corporate operating
- Public - a public charity that has grant making as a primary purpose. Examples include, community, public charities

Tips for writing a successful foundation/corporate proposal:

- Write a good grant (useful and appropriate language)
- Every foundation and corporation is unique: follow their process
- Never “repurpose” a government grant proposal for a foundation or corporation
Writing the proposal comes at the end of the process. Many of the steps will take time. Respect each foundation or corporation’s process and procedures. Make use of all the resources you have, including connection to the foundation or corporation.

**States that have used foundations as a funding source:** California, Oregon and Pennsylvania

**Grants**
Grants are available to most programs if you qualify to apply for them. Be sure to look locally and apply early for best results. Be open and honest with your needs and make sure to do your background assessment and relay your needs in a compelling way. Different than foundation and corporate donation using the stewardship method, government grants are awarded on a “fairness” basis. This means that:

- All applicants should have an equal opportunity
- Detailed written criteria
- Review panel of outside experts
- Staff members are assigned to answer questions

A variety of programs seek grants for funding. The application process can very long and competitive. A systematic strategy can help grant seekers increase their chances of being awarded grants.

**A systematic approach to writing successful proposal to grant funders:**

1. Nurture relationships
   a. It essential to know the foundation or corporation
   b. Provide a regular stream of information to the potential funder
   c. Invite staff to events
   d. Don’t let the proposal be your only communication

2. Advertise your success
   a. Smaller grantors especially want to ensure that they are giving to good programs
   b. Make sure your efforts are seen and appreciated in the community
   c. Here’s a little secret: foundation and corporate giving people talk to each other

3. Do your homework
   a. Find out what are the funds and at what level
   b. “Over the transom” proposals are never successful — and no multiple copies
   c. Tailor the proposal carefully to match the language (buzz words) of the funder

4. Look locally
   a. Most foundation and corporate money is local, but most people look nationally
   b. Have local influential people on advisory boards
   c. Receiving support locally will help you compete for national grants

5. Understand the funder’s needs
   a. What are the requirements in the application process
   b. Check the history of programs that have received grant funding
6. Simplify and clarify
   a. Failing to simplify is often a downfall for nonprofits
   b. Have a verbal pitch that is at maximum 2-3
   c. Write it down and memorize it
   d. Answer the obvious questions (cost, length, why you)

7. Talk before writing
   a. Always try to talk to a program officer before submitting a grant application if possible
   b. Ask for advice – they often can and will give it
   c. Hearing that they would never fund you is not an insult, it is a favor
   d. Listen more than you talk

8. Create the proposal
   a. Here is where you actually write the proposal
   b. Do What? (Clear statement of the project/program objectives)
   c. So What? (What difference will it make?
   d. Then What (How will the effort continue once funding ends?)

9. Remember your goals
   a. Don’t respond to every grant; you won’t be successful and will soon give up
   b. Be politely persistent
   c. Don’t let the pursuit of funding warp your strategic goals – know what you do well and stick to it.

The best indicator of future performance is past performance. Your ability to go back for an additional grant will be based on your relationship and performance as a grantee.

Note: If you are housed at an academic medical center you may be affiliated with a foundation that has staff that can assist you with applying for foundation grants or assist with relationship development. You may also find that there are restrictions or processes in place limiting your ability to apply to certain foundations. For example, there may be certain foundations that require approval by leadership before submitting an application since a relationship may exist that needs to be protected or foundations may only accept a limited number of proposals from an organization and you need to apply to be one of the departments/programs that can submit.

Be patient and try again if you do not succeed the first time. Here is a list of a few grant-writing resources:
The Foundation Center  www.fdncenter.org
The Grantsmanship Center  www.tgci.com
The Council on Foundations  www.cof.org
Foundations Online  www.foundations.org
Charity Channel  http://charitychannel.com
Grants.gov  www.grants.gov
Philanthropy News Network  http://pnnonline.org
Grant management: Once funding has been secured for your project or your POLST Program, it is important to have a plan on how to manage the funds, the contacts within the funding agency you are working with and any other communication that may take place. Another term for this is grant management (for more vocabulary related to grants see the grants glossary in Appendix H).

Grant management is the process of reporting your program and financial performance to your grant makers. Every funder has different requirements, but most private and corporate grant makers want to see your progress towards meeting the objectives you stipulated in your proposal as well as how you allocated the grant award to your program costs. In reality, grants management is a challenge for many small and medium-sized nonprofits. How many of us have attempted to track grant-reporting requirements in Excel? It is not the most productive use of our time, especially when we have to juggle multiple grants simultaneously.

Add a government grant into the mix, and it gets even more complicated. It is always a challenge to track the programmatic components of our grants (the outputs and outcomes we realize through nonprofit programs) as well as the financial elements of grant allocations. But not having the right tools makes a challenging task even harder. You may already be using cloud-based applications such as GoogleDocs, storing your images in Flickr, and filing your information in Evernote. Cloud-based services become more functional by the day, and most are multi-taskers. Now there are also cloud-based grants management systems and options that are integrated within broader fundraising software solutions.

Keep in mind:

1. Grant makers want a sound return on their social investment
2. Donors expect results
3. Your POLST Program may need a broad, integrated information technology system

So how do you get there? Here are some tools that can assist your POLST Program in managing grants. This is the step that can bring the financial plan of your POLST Program full circle.

http://www.bromelkamp.com/
http://philantech.com/products/philantrack_for_grantseekers/features/
http://www.ecivis.com/take-a-tour.html
In the event your POLST Program has limited or no funds, there are other steps that can be taken to manage the financial accounting of your program. Small business software can be very inexpensive or sometimes free. Some of the most common small business software for accounting are Quickbooks, Quickbooks Pro and Quicken. Below is a list of others:

**Small Business/Accounting Software (free)**
- Freshbooks
- Wave Accounting
- Intuit Billing Manager
- Zoho
- Outright

**States that have used grants as a funding source:** Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Oregon

**Individual donor stewardship**
Another funding source is from individual donors interested in donating to your POLST Program. These donations may be one-time donations, annual donations or a gift given through estate planning. Donor stewardships an investment that takes a substantial amount of time but can be helpful if your POLST Program needs quick funding for a project.

**Other fundraising**
A few established POLST Programs have found some success in being creative in how they engage in fundraising efforts. Workshops, seminars, keynote speeches and distribution of educational material are all ways funds can be raised to help make POLST program sustainable. In addition, activities like the ones mentioned above help support education about the POLST program.

## BUSINESS PLAN BASICS

**Internal Assessment**
The first step is to conduct an internal assessment, examining the current state of your POLST Program. Perhaps you are just starting out or maybe you are going through some changes. Either way, it is important to know where you are and where you want to go.

Each of the sections of this guide - **coalition**, **home** and **funding** - influence what each program looks like and impacts future decisions. After going through the guide and deciding on which home you will have, what funding you will seek and putting together a coalition, the next important step is to put it all in a business plan.
Basic Overview of a Business Plan

A basic business plan includes an executive summary, a programmatic overview, the business environment, the POLST program description, the strategy, a financial assessment and strategy and the action plan that can be objectively evaluated. There are many different versions of business plans because every business is different and has different strengths and focuses. The business plan that works best for you will vary based on your structure, for-profit or not-for-profit. The POLST Program home section of this guide will help direct where you want to house the program, which will dictate the type of business plan you put together. The POLST Program model leans more towards the not-for-profit business plan as making a profit is not the main focus.

The list below is meant to be a guide; some of the sections can be broken into two sections or combined with others depending on your business.

- **Coversheet** - Essential information. Be sure to include the current date as a business plan should be reviewed and updated every few years.
- **Executive Summary** (Ideally one page, two pages max) - Write this part last. This section summarizes key points in your business plan. Explain the fundamentals of the POLST Program: What is the POLST paradigm, who is your audience, who are the stakeholders, and what do you think the future holds for your POLST Program? Keep it clear, captivating and brief.
- **POLST Program Overview** - This section describes the nature of your POLST Program. It may include your mission and vision statements as well as descriptions of your values, your service, ways you are unique and what opportunities you are planning to seize.
  - **Mission and Vision statement** - The mission and vision statements define the POLST Program’s entire reason for being and the guiding principles. You may use the same one from the National POLST office: “The National POLST Paradigm is an approach to end-of-life planning based on conversations between patients, loved ones, and health care professionals designed to ensure that seriously ill or frail patients can choose the treatments they want or do not want and that their wishes are documented and honored.” Look at other state’s websites to see what their mission and vision statements are for some guidance.
  - **Goals and Objectives** - Goals are directly related to your mission statement and fulfill its purpose. They are broad and conceptual. Objectives are specific steps that you will complete to reach your goals. They are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.
  - **Values Statement** – This is a set of beliefs or principles that exist behind the scenes to guide the way your POLST Program operates.
  - **POLST Program Structure** - Use the Home section for more information on this.
- **Organizational Environment** - This section is an analysis of everything that affects your POLST Program that is beyond your control. Take a look at everyone who has a stake in end-of-life care, the landscape your POLST Program will exist in and the forces at work between the two. For POLST, the beneficiaries of the program are well defined and there is not competition, but there may be proponents or naysayers of the program who should be included in the
analysis. It is important to look for any strengths and challenges that may exist outside of your program.

- **POLST Program Description** - In this section, include information about your leadership team, your organizational structure, your POLST form and services (e.g. educational materials, training opportunities, etc.), and the daily operations. The Coalition section will help in figuring out the structure of the management team and organization structure. For operations, we want to document the process of putting the form together, how you distribute POLST to health care professionals and facilities, how you inform patients and the public about POLST, training programs for physicians and other medical professionals, and how you track what you distribute and any other operational processes that you have in place.

- **POLST Program Strategy** - Here is where you detail your roadmap to the future. This section brings together the information about your organizational environment and your POLST Program’s resources and then lays out a strategy for going forward. The strategic plan usually has a timeframe of one, three or five years and after the stated number of years, it is reviewed and refined to continue with the development of the POLST Program.
  
  o Value Proposition canvas – There is more detail in the Tools You Can Use section
  
  o Lean Stack canvas - There is more detail in the Tools You Can Use Section
  
  o Exit strategy - The leadership will change and it is important to have a successor in place. See the Coalition section for more information.

- **Financial Assessment and Strategy** - This section includes a review of the current state of finances and a forecast of the future. A POLST Program should have a budget. Please see the Funding section and Appendix F for more information on a budget. Typically other items such as an income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow statement are included here. The Helpful Websites listed below have guidance around putting together those forms.

- **Appendices** - Include details and studies used in putting together your business plan; for example:
  
  o An example POLST form
  
  o Brochures and educational materials
  
  o Relevant articles
  
  o Copies of leases and contracts
  
  o Letters of support
  
  o Any other materials needed to support the assumptions in the plan

One final note is to send all your important documents to the national office and they will be your historians. They are a great resource to ensure these important documents do not get lost during transitions.

**Websites:**

There are example business plans and important information that will help guide you in putting together a business plan in the websites below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Business Administration (SBA)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.sba.gov">www.sba.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealist resource page for non-profits</td>
<td><a href="https://www.nonprofits.org">www.nonprofits.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.score.org">www.score.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nolo, law for all</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nolo.com">http://www.nolo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bplans, your small business planning resource</td>
<td><a href="https://www.bplans.com">www.bplans.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GLOSSARY

**Affiliation**: Refers to where your POLST program is housed, for example: Academic Medical Center, State Department, Non-profit entity

**Challenge**: A circumstance or obstacle that may keep people or entities apart or that may prevent communication or progress

**Coalition**: A group of individuals and/or organizations with a common interest who agree to work together to implement a POLST Program.

**Core Elements of Education**: [http://www.polst.org/develop-a-program/implementation-steps-and-materials/](http://www.polst.org/develop-a-program/implementation-steps-and-materials/)

**Financial Advisory Committee (FAC)**: A committee that provides expertise and advice to the main governing body of an organization. The advisory committee does not decide the matter, but represents a broader spectrum of interests than the governing body itself.


**National POLST Paradigm**: Refers to the National POLST organization

**NPPTF**: National POLST Paradigm Task Force

**POLST**: Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment

**Resource Development Team (RDT)**: Committee focused on identifying and securing funding sources

**Resource Library**: Refers back to the website: [http://www.polst.org/educational-resources/resource-library/](http://www.polst.org/educational-resources/resource-library/)

**SWOT Analysis**: Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat. A SWOT analysis guides you to identify the positives and negatives inside your organization (S-W) and outside of it, in the external environment (O-T).

**Task Force**: Refers back to the NPPTF unless the state has created their own task force. The NPPTF includes one representative chosen by each endorsed state.
RESOURCES

http://nonprofit.about.com/od/foundationfundinggrants/a/Sample-Of-Corporate-Letter-Request-For-Gift-In-Kind.htm
http://data.foundationcenter.org/#/fc1000/subject:health/all/total/list/2012
http://www.cof.org/content/foundation-basics
http://www.elcbrevard.org/p/97/committees


Zionts, Nancy D. CEO, Jewish Healthcare Foundation: Pittsburgh, PA PowerPoint Presentation


Feather, John. Successful Corporate and Foundation Fundraising for Nonprofits: PowerPoint Presentation
APPENDIX A

ANATOMY OF A GREAT MEETING

BEFORE

Determine structure and purpose

1. Who needs to attend?
2. What is the objective?
3. How much time is needed?
4. What preparation will help?
5. What is your role?

Communicate in advance

1. Develop a written agenda; assign owners to each item
2. Send agenda and supporting materials in advance
3. Set expectations for in-person or video attendance
4. Set context/framing for meeting (Why are we here?)

DURING

1. Start/Finish on time
2. Assign a note-taker and a time-keeper
3. Provide context/framing at the outset (Why are we here?)

Manage the discussion

1. Making an ask?
   - “To reach our objective, we need a piece of critical input from you.”
2. Off-topic ideas coming up?
   - Put them in a parking lot.
   - “Great point. Can we come back to it?”
3. Discussion wandering?
   - Bring it back to topic.
   - “Great discussion, but can we stay focused on [new topic]?”
4. People talking too long?
   - Set time limits.
   - “We have 5 minutes to present their case.”

After

1. Follow the agenda
   - Set goals and objectives
   - Establish owners for agenda items
   - Review next steps and establish accountability
2. End early
   - When possible

FOLLOW-UP

1. Send brief notes to meeting attendees and people who were absent, focusing on:
   - Decisions made
   - Action items and owners

REVIEW

1. Review what worked and didn’t:
   - and note that for next time

Before you hit “send” on your Outlook meeting organizer:

CONSIDER:

1. Is it a meeting the best forum for what is needed?
2. Do you have the answer you need?
3. Are there difficult or sensitive issues?
4. Is it a recurring meeting with no news or updates?

*Instructions about running an effective meeting. See the HR Invoicetn Starter kit for processes and insights at www.adobe.com/hric.*

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APPENDIX B

The Value Proposition Canvas makes explicit how you are creating value for patients, families, and healthcare facilities when using POLST. It helps you to design products and services your patients and families want. The canvas will help you show the “fit” between the customer (your audience) and the actual product. In this case it is the POLST. Your team will begin to learn more about the “pains” and “gains,” your customer (audience) will incur.

The Value Proposition Canvas is related to the Lean Stack Canvas in Appendix D. It takes a more in depth look at two of the sections, Value Proposition and Customer Segment. In the POLST Program, we do not have customers in the traditional sense, but we have an audience or stakeholders. Keep that in mind as you are filling out the Canvas.

You can download this template at Strategyzer.

An overview of the Value Proposition canvas can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aN36EcTE54Q
A SWOT analysis (alternatively SWOT matrix) is a structured planning method used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in a project or in a business venture.

Strengths (internal, positive factors)
Strengths describe the positive attributes, tangible and intangible, internal to your organization. They are within your control.

- What do you do well?
- What internal resources do you have? Think about the following:
  - Positive attributes of people, such as knowledge, background, education, credentials, network, reputation, or skills.
  - Tangible assets of the company, such as capital, credit, existing customers or distribution channels, patents, or technology.
- What advantages do you have over your competition?
- Do you have strong research and development capabilities? Manufacturing facilities?
• What other positive aspects, internal to your business, add value or offer you a competitive advantage?

Weaknesses *(internal, negative factors)*
Weaknesses are aspects of your business that detract from the value you offer or place you at a competitive disadvantage. **You need to enhance these areas in order to compete with your best competitor.**
- What factors that are within your control detract from your ability to obtain or maintain a competitive edge?
- What areas need improvement to accomplish your objectives or compete with your strongest competitor?
- What does your business lack (for example, expertise or access to skills or technology)?
- Does your business have limited resources?
- Is your business in a poor location?

Opportunities *(external, positive factors)*
Opportunities are external attractive factors that represent **reasons your business is likely to prosper.**
- What opportunities exist in your market or the environment that you can benefit from?
- Is the perception of your business positive?
- Has there been recent market growth or have there been other changes in the market that create an opportunity?
- Is the opportunity ongoing, or is there just a window for it? In other words, how critical is your timing?

Threats *(external, negative factors)*
Threats include external factors beyond your control that could place your strategy, or the business itself, at risk. **You have no control over these,** but you may benefit by having contingency plans to address them if they should occur.
- Who are your existing or potential competitors?
- What factors beyond your control could place your business at risk?
- Are there challenges created by an unfavorable trend or development that may lead to deteriorating revenues or profits?
- What situations might threaten your marketing efforts?
- Has there been a significant change in supplier prices or the availability of raw materials?
- What about shifts in consumer behavior, the economy, or government regulations that could reduce your sales?
- Has a new product or technology been introduced that makes your products, equipment, or services obsolete?

(Adapted from khmernext.blogspot.com)
APPENDIX D

The Lean Canvas is a one-page business model that is a faster and more effective way to communicate your business model with internal and external stakeholders. There are three parts to this canvas, but here is the first section to get your POLST team on board with this idea. You team can pick an area that needs to be worked on within your POLST program and begin to fill out the canvas. The canvas is very straightforward and helps you to identify: problems, solutions, value proposition metrics, and early adopters to a new idea. To learn more about this canvas and download the template you can visit: Lean Stack Canvas

Here is a YouTube video on how to use the canvas: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7o8uYdUaFR4

There are many other resources available on the internet about how to effectively use the Lean Canvas.
SIX STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING (adapted from Coalitionworks.org)

1. Set program goals
   - Develop objectives to reach your goals.
   - Plan the methods you will use to reach those objectives.
   - Design specific activities to carry out the methods.

2. Inventory all resources
   - Preview people and organizations in your community who might be able to help.
   - Brainstorm a specific list of individuals, civic organizations, media, and businesses.

3. Assess the options and develop a fundraising campaign - A well-structured campaign uses many fundraising techniques to move toward the ultimate goal:
   - Vision - Goals, purpose, potential prospects
   - Cultivation - Informs prospects of goals and current activities before the request is made (brochures, media, and contacts).
   - Solicitation - Actual request to potential donors and how they will be contacted.
   - Recognition - How you thank donors and inform the public when appropriate.

4. Assess your financial and personnel needs
   - Decide what you need in people, money, services or products to reach goals.

5. Implement fundraising activities
   - New programs are best funded by 1-2 large gifts from foundations or corporations.
   - Programs that do not have new components are more easily funded through various annual activities
     annual drive or conference
   - Development activities must be planned to support the programs.
   - Consider recruiting civic groups to do benefits - Not only do they raise money, but they can issues you are working to solve with their support.

6. Evaluate results
   - Assess what went well and what didn’t as each project is completed.
   - Did you reach the goals? How much money did you raise before expenses?
Contents of a Budget: Below is an example of expenses POLST Programs might consider when creating a budget.

**Potential Expenses:**
- Salaries
- Fringe Benefits
- Supplies
- Equipment
- Phone
- Utilities
- Insurance
- Rent

**Total Expenses**

**Potential Income:**
- Membership
- Grants
- Donations
- Educational Materials
- Training Sessions

**Total Income**

This example budget was adapted from: http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/finances/managing-finance/annual-budget/main
APPENDIX G

How to approach funders:

This example is provided to help you think about how to frame your request when approaching funders.

This example Letter of Inquiry seeks funding to build the capacity of a sponsoring organization so that it may serve as the POLST Organizational Home, referenced in the Seven Core Elements of Sustainability. This example should be customized to meet your specific needs. This example has not been tested with potential funders and is provided simply to help you think about how to frame your request. Foundations that have not funded POLST work in the past will likely need additional information about POLST than what is provided below.

When to use this approach: the proposed organizational home for POLST does not have the capacity to develop the statewide infrastructure to build a coalition. For example, the state medical association is willing to be the organizational sponsor for POLST activates but lacks the capacity to staff it. The requested funds would go to the state association to “ramp up” and begin to build a statewide coalition.

Summary

[Organization] is seeking a [time frame, e.g. one-year] grant for $XXXX to undertake a process that will build our capacity to serve as the organizational home for the Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) in [state]. Through the proposed activities [organization] will develop and begin to implement a detailed, realistic, actionable and phased-in plan to build a sustainable state-side POLST coalition by [year/date].

Problem Description

[Organization’s] mission is to [e.g. promote high quality, person-centered, care at the end-of-life]. Our passion for [e.g. advocating for people with serious illness] is reflected in our commitment to implementing the Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) - an approach to end-of-life planning that ensures seriously ill patients can choose the treatments they want, and that those choices will be honored by medical providers.

The population of the United States as a whole is aging as the baby boomer generation grows older. Experts project that the number of [insert relevant aging statistics for your region/state e.g. Californians over age 65 will triple by the year 2025]. As more Americans enter old age they are more likely to experience a medical emergency during which they cannot communicate their treatment wishes.

POLST is important to this population because it is the only model that can capture an individual’s preferences for medical interventions at the end-of-life and turn these wishes into physician’s orders to be followed, even in an emergency. As a result, POLST can prevent patients from receiving unwanted care, and ensure that patients’ wishes are honored.

Formed in [year], [organization] spent its first [#] years focused on securing legislative/regulatory support and recognition for POLST. Our small but committed group of [#] organizations and individuals, representing health care professionals, consumers, advocates, the legal community, and the settings where POLST is used, succeeded in spearheading the [State] adoption of POLST [in year or on date].

Now that POLST has been adopted it is important that a single, central organization oversee its implementation. As the logical “home” for POLST implementation, [organization] is now responsible for:
• Building and maintaining a sustainable statewide coalition
• Coordinating communication about POLST to a wide a diverse set of audiences
• Informing public policy and advocacy efforts

To date, [organization] has relied on volunteers, donors, and in-kind support to provide technical assistance, research, advocacy, [etc.] necessary to secure the adoption of POLST. Since being adopted, interest in and awareness of POLST has grown so sharply that our small staff is not readily able to address all the requests for assistance we have received from [fill in groups e.g. policy makers, providers, faith groups, employers, the media and the public].

Funding this proposal will allow us to engage in strategic planning and partnership development to 1) build our capacity to lead POLST implementation activities and 2) garner additional resources necessary to achieve widespread use of POLST by building a coalition to implement POLST statewide.

Prior to preparing this proposal we interviewed [external stakeholders] to identify our organizational strengths and areas of greatest effectiveness. We discovered that [organization] is widely valued as a neutral convener and honest broker working to foster collaboration among [fill in]. Interviewees also praised [organization]’s ability to stimulate leadership at state and local levels and leverage strategic relationships to advance [fill in]. The benchmark information gained from these interviews will be used as a basis for the proposed strategic planning and partnership development process.

**Goals and Activities**

The goal of this project is to strengthen [organization’s] readiness to lead the statewide implementation of POLST by making an the development of a well networked, highly capable, statewide POLST coalition. At the conclusion of this grant [organization] will have developed and begun to implement a detailed, realistic, actionable and phased-in plan to build a sustainable state-side POLST coalition by [year/date]. This grant will include the following activities:

I. Create a Central Infrastructure for the Coalition

Sample Activities

- [Organization] proposes to work with the National POLST Paradigm Task Force to create a framework for building a sustainable statewide POLST coalition in [State].

- [Organization] will define the mission, vision and goals of the coalition. Outline the support that [organization] will provide to the coalition [e.g. hold regular meetings, etc.] and identify the resources required to do so.

II. Recruit Coalition Members

Sample Activities

- [Organization] will identify and recruit organizations and individuals who represent key constituencies (e.g. physicians, hospitals, nursing homes, emergency services providers, hospice, home health) to join the coalition and/or serve other roles (e.g. board positions, committee or advisory group members, speakers, trainers, mentors, donors, etc.).

- [Organization] will foster inclusiveness in the coalition by building partnership with state medical societies, regulatory agencies (health, EMS), religious groups, right-to-life groups, disability advocacy groups, minority advocacy groups, and leaders of differing political persuasions.

III. Review Sustainability Options for the Coalition

Sample Activities
• [Organization] proposes to work with the National POLST Paradigm Task Force to understand how coalitions undertaking POLST implementation around the county are achieving sustainability.

• Based on that review, consider different fund-raising options and coalitions structures including: [fill in options you would consider].

IV. Establish an Evaluation Plan

Sample Activities
• Consult the National POLST Paradigm Task Force materials related to evaluation strategies and develop a plan based on stage of development in the state.

V. Craft a Communication Plan

Sample Activities
• Work with [communications consultant] to integrate what is already known about common misperceptions about POST among key audiences [e.g. medical directors at long-term care facilities and emergency medical services providers] into [Organization’s] communications strategy to address these issues.

• Develop media training strategies for key POLST spokespeople in the organizational home in consultation with a [communications consultant].

Work Plan and Budget

Work Plan with timeline

[Organization] is requesting $X for this [length of time] process. [Organization] plans to use the money requested in the following way:

• National POLST Paradigm Task Force at a rate of $x/hour to lead activities outlined under [fill in] in an amount not to exceed $X.
• [Communication consultant] at a rate of $x/hour to lead activities outlined under [fill in] in an amount not to exceed $X.
• Travel expenses in amount of $X.
• Indirect expenses at the rate of XX% or $X.
APPENDIX H

It may be helpful to become familiar with terms often associated with the grant seeking process

Grantseeking Basics

Glossary of Terms

Annual report: A voluntary report issued by a foundation or corporation that provides financial data and descriptions of its grantmaking activities. Annual reports vary in format from simple typewritten documents listing the year’s grants to detailed publications that provide substantial information about the grantmaker’s grantmaking programs.

Assets: The amount of capital or principal—money, stocks, bonds, real estate, or other resources—controlled by a foundation or corporate giving program. Generally, assets are invested and the resulting income is used to make grants.

Associates program: A fee-based membership program of the Foundation Center providing e-mail and toll-free telephone reference, photocopy and fax service, computer searches of Foundation Center databases, and access to a special Associates-only web site.

Community foundation: A 501(c)(3) organization that makes grants for charitable purposes in a specific community or region. The funds available to a community foundation are usually derived from many donors and held in an endowment that is independently administered; income earned by the endowment is then used to make grants. Although a community foundation may be classified by the IRS as a private foundation, most are classified as public charities and are thus eligible for maximum tax-deductible contributions from the general public. See also 501(c)(3); Public charity.

Company-sponsored foundation (also referred to as a corporate foundation): A private foundation whose assets are derived primarily from the contributions of a for-profit business. While a company-sponsored foundation may maintain close ties with its parent company, it is an independent organization with its own endowment and as such is subject to the same rules and regulations as other private foundations. See also Private foundation.

Cooperating Collection: A member of the Foundation Center’s network of libraries, community foundations, and other nonprofit agencies that provides a core collection of Center publications in addition to a variety of supplementary materials and services in areas useful to grantseekers.

Corporate giving program: A grantmaking program established and administered within a for-profit corporation. Because corporate giving programs do not have separate endowments, their annual grant totals generally are directly related to company profits. Corporate giving programs are not subject to the same reporting requirements as corporate foundations.

Family foundation: An independent private foundation whose funds are derived from members of a single family. Family members often serve as officers or board members of family foundations and have a significant role in their grantmaking decisions. See also Operating foundation; Private foundation.

501(c)(3): The section of the tax code that defines nonprofit, charitable (as broadly defined), tax-exempt organizations; 501(c)(3) organizations are further defined as public charities, private operating foundations, and private non-operating foundations. See also Operating foundation; Private foundation; Public charity.

Form 990: The annual public information return filed with the IRS by most exempt organizations with receipts of at least $25,000

Form 990-PF: The annual public information return that all private foundations are required by law to submit to the Internal Revenue Service.

Geographic Focus: Indicates any state/regional preferences of the grantmaker.

Grantmaking public charity: See Public charity.

Guidelines: Procedures set forth by a funder that grantseekers should follow when approaching a grantmaker.
Independent foundation: A grantmaking organization usually classified by the IRS as a private foundation. Independent foundations may also be known as family foundations, general-purpose foundations, special purpose foundations, or private non-operating foundations. The Foundation Center places independent foundations and company-sponsored foundations in separate categories; however, federal law normally classifies both as private, non-operating foundations subject to the same rules and requirements. See also Private foundation.

Letter of inquiry/Letter of intent: A brief letter outlining an organization’s activities and its request for funding that is sent to a prospective donor in order to determine whether it would be appropriate to submit a full grant proposal. Many grantmakers prefer to be contacted in this way before receiving a full proposal.

Operating foundation: A 501(c)(3) organization classified by the IRS as a private foundation whose primary purpose is to conduct research, social welfare, or other programs determined by its governing body or establishment charter. An operating foundation may make grants, but the sum generally is small relative to the funds used for the foundation’s own programs. See also 501(c)(3).

Payout requirement: The minimum amount that private foundations are required to expend for charitable purposes (including grants and, within certain limits, the administrative cost of making grants), in general, a private foundation must meet or exceed an annual payout requirement of five percent of the average market value of its total assets.

Private foundation: A nongovernmental, nonprofit organization with funds (usually from a single source, such as an individual, family, or corporation) and program managed by its own trustees or directors. Private foundations are established to maintain or aid social, educational, religious, or other charitable activities serving the common welfare, primarily through the making of grants. See also 501(c)(3); Public charity.

Program officer: A staff member of a foundation who reviews grant proposals and processes applications for the board of trustees. Only a small percentage of foundations have program officers.

Proposal: A written application, often accompanied by supporting documents, submitted to a foundation or corporate giving program in requesting a grant. Most foundations and corporations do not use printed application forms but instead require written proposals; others prefer preliminary letters of inquiry prior to a formal proposal. Consult published guidelines.

Public charity: A nonprofit organization that qualifies for tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Public charities are the recipients of most foundation and corporate grants. Some public charities also make grants, and their funds are derived from many donors (referred to as grantmaking public charities or public foundations). See also Community foundation; 501(c)(3); Private foundation.

Public foundation: See Public charity.

RFP: An acronym for Request for Proposal. When the government issues a new contract or grant program, it sends out RFPs to agencies that might be qualified to participate. The RFP lists project specifications and application procedures. While an increasing number of foundations use RFPs in specific fields, most still prefer to consider proposals that are initiated by applicants. For a current listing of selected RFPs, see our RFP Bulletin online at foundationcenter.org/pnd/rfp.

Types of support: Specific types of funding provided by a grantmaker.

For a more extensive glossary, see The Foundation Center’s Guide to Funding Research on the Web at foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/gfr/glossary.html.