

Section 15: Exploring Private Funding for Assistive Technology

Sometimes, assistive technology isn't covered by public funding because it's not seen as essential for work, medical, or education needs. In these cases, you can look for private funding from charities, foundations, or community groups.

Be clear about why you need the device and how it will help you be more independent, work, learn, or participate in daily life. Each organization has its own rules, so be flexible and persistent.

You may need to combine funds from several sources or add personal fundraising to cover the full cost.

When deciding where to apply, think about your age, disability, location, and community ties. Local groups like churches, civic clubs, and unions sometimes help, even if that's not their main focus.

Some funders use simple letters; others require full applications. Always fill out forms carefully and include everything they ask for.

If you need help, contact your regional Assistive Technology Access Site: www.atk.ku.edu

Information that could be requested that you should be ready to provide:

- Proof of income.
- Copy of photo I.D.
- Doctor's prescription and/or letter from doctor on their letterhead describing your disability and why the assistive technology (AT) is needed.
- Bid/quote from licensed contractor if home mods are being requested.
- If requesting home mods, proof of Home Owner's Insurance, signed Letter from Landlord stating they approve modifications to be done to property if it's a rental.
- Bid/Quote for Assistive Technology being requested from company, DME Provider AT can be purchased from.
- Denial letter from insurance stating why they cannot purchase requested AT.

Helpful Hints for Building Good Rapport with Funding Sources

- **Be polite.** Always be kind and respectful when talking to people.

- **Keep copies.** Write things down and save copies of all papers you send or receive.
- **Write down phone calls.** Note the date, the person's name, and what you talked about.
- **Stay in touch.** Check in often—don't wait too long between contacts.
- **Work with the same person.** It helps to talk with the same contact each time.
- **Be helpful.** Send any papers they ask for and explain how the technology will help you.
- **Share information clearly.** If they have questions, give simple, positive answers about how the technology makes life easier.
- **Say thank you.** Always thank people who help you.
- **Keep notes.** Write down everything, even phone conversations.
- **Don't give up.** If one funding source can't help, try another.