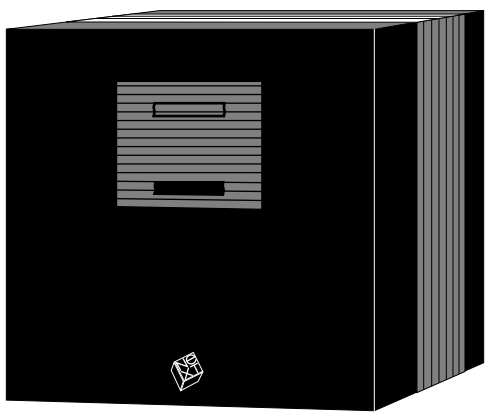
GOLDEN NUGGET AWARD

Grant Proposal



Rocky Mountain
NeXT Users Group

rmNUG

1. ***Your User Group Background.***

Name of your Group:

Rocky Mountain NeXT Users' Group (rmNUG).

What is the objective or charter of your group:

To successfully provide an environment for NeXT enthusiasts to share, learn and profit from the collective expertise of the group.

Name of your group officers/positions for group:

President:	David Hieb.
Vice President:	Brad Green.
Newsletter Editor:	Dave Bowdish.
Treasurer:	Jacob Gore.
Secretary:	Douglas Pattie.

How many people do you have on your email and postal distribution lists:

65 members total. 24 without email access and 41 with email access.

How many attend each meeting:

We average between 20 and 25 people per meeting.

Date your group was founded:

April 11, 1990.

How often does your group meet:

rmNUG meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

How often do you publish a newsletter:

The rmNUG Newsletter is published once a month.

Do you mail a meeting reminder to members:

Yes, the rmNUG Newsletter includes a complete description of the upcoming meeting, along with the time, date and place.

What is the background of your membership base (academic, developer, business, faculty, students, etc.):

rmNUG members embody an extremely broad background of interests and expertise. We feel that this is one of the major strengths of our group.

Here is a categorical breakdown of the rmNUG membership:

Business	12
Professional	28
Faculty	13
Student	7
NeXT	3
Developers	2

Have you given NeXT classes to your user group members?

Yes, rmNUG meetings have a feature presentation by one of the members or other special guests. These presentations focus on a particular hardware/software product or special project and are intended to provide the user with an overview and many times a working knowledge of the topic.

2. Group leadership

What kind of leadership structure do you have? (President, chair, editor, publicity chairman, etc.) Do you have elections? Will you have elections?

rmNUG currently has the following formal leadership structure:

President:	*David Hieb.*
Vice President:	*Brad Green.*
Newsletter Editor:	*Dave Bowdish.*
Treasurer:	*Jacob Gore.*
Secretary:	*Douglas Pattie.*

rmNUG's president was elected at the first meeting and the other officers have been temporarily appointed by the president. Formal elections will be held during the first quarter of 1991. We feel a certain amount of time is necessary for the group to stabilize and mature before we make formal commitments.

Tell us about your past group accomplishments (events, newsletter audience, speakers invited, classes and support provided).

See Creative Projects below.

3. Creative Projects

List your past creative projects and ideas that you have followed through.

rmNUG is proud to have just completed it's first six months of operation. In that time frame we have grown quite a bit and have several things to show for our efforts.

a) Six organized meetings complete with special features, discussion periods, get acquainted sessions, and overall planning on how to stay a successful user group. It was obvious from the first meeting onward that the users are very excited about the opportunity to share and learn from the group. We had our first "Users' Night" meeting in September where instead of having a feature presentation, we had 8 machines loaded with new and exciting software so that the users could sit down and spend some quality time with the new technology.

b) The rmNUG newsletter is one of our greatest accomplishments. We publish a monthly newsletter which is designed and formatted by one of our desktop publishing experts, Dave Bowdish. I would like to think that the newsletter

accurately depicts the level of enthusiasm and professionalism that our group is collectively striving towards. The newsletter does not only present information pertinent to rmNUG, but is rapidly becoming a valuable resource for NeXT enthusiasts across the nation. By encouraging our users to contribute articles and reviews, the newsletter will provide a forum for our users to share, learn and be an active part. An exciting side effect is that the rmNUG newsletter, along with other fine publications like the NeXT Users' Journal, will serve as a motivating paradigm for other newer user groups.

c) Having a heterogeneous membership base is one of the goals that rmNUG has been trying to achieve. As our categorical membership statistics indicate, approximately 20% of our current membership is from a business-only background; no formal computer education or experience. This not only provides for most interesting conversations, but helps both the technical and non-technical camps understand each others needs better. We also have a rather high percentage of people from academia that lend yet another perspective.

d) Involving Businessland at a close level is one of my personal goals that we have just lately been able to achieve. After working with the top management for the Denver area Businesslands, they have committed themselves to help serve the needs of the rmNUG members and are actively providing support in areas like: hosting our September meeting, sending employees to our meetings, and offering to demonstrate hardware and software at the meetings. This type of close involvement can only benefit all persons involved considering they sell more machines and we get more members.

e) Besides our local talent for special features, we have also been scheduling outside professionals and developers for the rmNUG meetings. Our October meeting will feature Andrew Stone of Stone Design. We are planning on having a special presentation by the Frame Corporation and have also been discussing presentations with the people from Media Logic and Lotus.

f) rmNUG's software contribution program is off to a successful start. So far we have received TextArt from Stone Design, and have commitments for the Lighthouse Design compilation disk, the Adobe type library, Displaytalk, Topdraw and others.

g) The Computer Science department at the University of Colorado has given us limited ftp access for rmNUG newsletters and related documents and projects. Although this access has served well during our beginning, this is one of the major areas that we would like to address if we receive the award.

What ideas (newsletters, classes, support, NeXT visibility would you implement given the resources?

See Grant Usage.

4 *Membership*

What plans do you have for membership growth? (How would you attract new members

and keep existing members?)

rmNUG will attract more members as it continues to become apparent that our group is a dynamic and extremely important resource to any NeXT enthusiast. Businessland's recent commitment to rmNUG will open up more new territory in the business world by that fact that Businessland will be able to promote rmNUG membership for their customers. rmNUG meetings are currently advertised in the Sunday editions of the Rocky Mountain News, one of the leading newspapers in the Denver area. We are also pursuing advertising in the University daily newspapers and the Denver Post.

rmNUG plans to host a joint meeting with the Front Range UNIX Users Group (FRUUG). FRUUG is a generic UNIX users group with approximately 350 computer professionals (some of which are already strong members of rmNUG). This will be a great opportunity to entice FRUUG members to give NeXT, and rmNUG, a try.

With some help from NeXT and Businessland, rmNUG members could man a booth at the Denver Infocom conference. That would provide a great opportunity for prospective rmNUG members to hear about our group and could also be a showcase for the real projects that rmNUG members have been developing.

rmNUG will be able to retain membership by keeping the rmNUG goal in mind:

"To successfully provide an environment for NeXT enthusiasts to share, learn and profit from the collective expertise of the group."

If we can continue to meet our goal, the users will have a natural desire to be active members of rmNUG.

5. ***Self-sufficiency financial plans.***
Do you currently have a dues plan? How much are your dues?
How will you financially sustain yourself after the grant runs out?

rmNUG has elected to not collect membership dues until the first quarter of 1991. At that time we will be assessing a $24.00/year membership fee to cover the costs of printing, photocopying, paper, toner, phone calls, mailings, bank charges, etc. During the interim we have been collecting voluntary donations in a "pass the hat" manner. Interestingly enough, this method has been working very well.

rmNUG is not planning on using the award for operating expenses, but would rather utilize any monies for very special opportunities *(see Grant Usage)*.

6. ***Grant Usage***
Please itemize the planned usage of the $5000 grant. (We would like to come back to each of the award winners four months and eight months after the grants to evaluate future user

group programs. We will look to the award winners to educate the other NeXT User Groups about their successful projects.)

rmNUG would like to utilize the award to pursue opportunities that would otherwise not be possible. By covering our operating expenses from sources like membership dues, we could use the award to implement technology that would make rmNUG a paradigm for other user groups.

Many of our members keep their NeXT's at home. As one of the major purposes of a user group is to foster communication between members and the world at large, we would like to explore networking these home machines with each other and the Internet. Some of the users already have UUCP connectivity and are experimenting with SLIP and other technologies in conjunction with their employers. We have already been discussing Internet access options with different organizations that are willing to provide these services to us as a user group.

Upon receiving this award we would be in a position to negotiate specific networking services for rmNUG members – these services being provided by a pilot program at US West, a Denver/Omaha-based telecommunications company. These services would include: login, UUCP, SLIP, Bulletin Board services, ftp archive, electronic mail, etc. We would use the money to provide US West with modems, archive disks and other hardware so that we could basically have a dedicated system for rmNUG.

Our proposed use of grant money is an ambitious goal, but we feel that information access is the most important service rmNUG can provide for its users. We have a unique opportunity with US West to provide fantastic information services for our users who would otherwise have no access to them. These information services will be a great draw to rmNUG and furthering communication will make a stronger user group. We would like to thank you for seriously considering our proposal.