Gift vs Grant

Gift

A gift is a voluntary transfer of something valuable (e.g., money, equipment) from the donor to the institution without the expectation of any significant reciprocal benefit or return. The contribution may be unrestricted, meaning the institution has broad discretion of how to use it; however, some gifts may be restricted. There is typically no application or minimal reporting processes required when receiving or managing the gift. Further, typically no administrative overhead is charged for managing the funds.

Grant

A grant is a formal and legal transfer of funds or resources for a specific purpose. Grants are typically associated with application and reporting processes and there are strict guidelines laid out in a contract or similar agreement as to how the grant must be used. Grants generally have significant oversight and compliance requirements and are often associated with a specified timeframe in which the grant must be utilized.

	Gift	**Grant**
Description	Voluntary donor contribution of money or property without the expectation of receiving anything in return	Award of money or resources provided from an external funding agency to be committed to a specific purpose.
Competitive	Typically, no	Typically, yes
Restrictions	Often unrestricted but may have some restricted purpose	Often has restrictions on how funds are to be used
Reporting	Minimal	Significant
Deliverables	None	May require deliverables based on terms of grant contract

Source: Table modified from USC Department of Contracts and Grants