

Graduate and Dissertation Funding Workshop Handout

Research Opportunities Office, Bureau of Educational Research

Bureau of Educational Research Funding Opportunities

A listing of different funding databases and websites which students can use to find out more information about funding opportunities.

<http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/ber/webpages/FundingResources.html>

Funding Databases

Bureau of Educational Research Dissertation Funding Database. Over 125 common dissertation grant opportunities can be found in education, social sciences, sciences, and humanities. Users can search by keyword, award type, funder type (federal, state, foundation, on-campus, etc.), and eligibility criteria (underrepresented group, women only, U.S. citizenship required).

http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/ber/funding/funding_search.asp

IRIS (Illinois Researcher Information Service) Database. Over 8,000 active federal and private funding opportunities in the sciences, social sciences, art, and humanities. Users can search IRIS by agency, deadline date, keyword, and other criteria. Most IRIS records contain live links to sponsor Web sites, electronic forms, or electronic research administration (eRA) portals, so getting started on a proposal can be only a mouse-click away. IRIS is available free of charge to the [University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](http://www.library.uiuc.edu/iris/) community. <http://www.library.uiuc.edu/iris/>

Watch for changes to IRIS over the 2007-2008 academic year

FundSource Database. FundSource is a tool designed to help behavioral and social scientists find research funding. It has been designed to be *specific* to behavioral and social science research, *freely available* with no subscription costs, and *responsive* to your needs and feedback. The FundSource database includes short descriptions; contact information; and web links to programs in federal agencies, foundations, and international organizations that fund behavioral and social science research. It has been created with support from the National Science Foundation and the American Psychological Association. <http://www.decadeofbehavior.org/fundsource/>

Graduate College Fellowship Opportunities. All forms of graduate funding including general fellowships, dissertation grants, and travel funding. <https://www.grad.uiuc.edu/Fellowship/index.cfm>

Student Gateway to the US Government. Comprehensive portal of government funding that is geared toward students. <http://www.students.gov/STUGOVWebApp/index.jsp>,
<http://www.students.gov/STUGOVWebApp/Public?topicID=7&operation=topic>

U.S. Department of Education. Good source of information for grant competition and Educational Technology initiatives throughout the country. <http://www.ed.gov/>

DISSERTATION FUNDING PROCESS

1. Professional Profile:

- **Planning.** Consider your goals and interests and develop a plan to sustain them. Integrate funding plans with plans for meeting your degree requirements. Make both short-term (one year) and long-term (five year) plans for yourself.
- **CV.** Develop your curriculum vitae NOW. It is the primary record of your accomplishments. Funding applications may require either a full or abbreviated version. Make a habit of keeping your vita current—you will save time and stress later, and remember to use vita-writing guides.
- **Core Curriculum.** List all applicable coursework.
- **Abstract.** Two versions (1-page & 1-paragraph statements)
- **Building Your Networks** (in addition to academic, include professional & community organization affiliations)
 - **Equip your Recommenders.** Supply a draft of your written statement, and of program guidelines, to faculty who will write recommendations. Their letters will be most effective if they know your plans and interests.
 - **Allow for Response Time.** Give your recommenders ample time to respond to your request, ideally six weeks. Then, follow up with them to meet the funders' submission deadlines.

2. Be Strategic & Put it on Your Calendar:

- **Planning.** What part of the year (i.e., fall, spring) are applications due?
- **Funder's Decision Timelines.** When could you expect a decision on your application? When would funding begin? Does this fit with your personal timeline?
- **Time for Proposal Development.** Last minute productions are often rough at the edges and are less likely to get funded. Polish is important.
- **Time for Writing Process.** Start writing a project description and personal statement early – allow plenty of time for trusted readers to respond.

3. Resources:

- **Research Funding for YOUR Needs.** Look for funding for the near future—pre-dissertation funding, dissertation fellowships and post-doc opportunities. (Also notice funding programs that could support your work as a faculty member.)
- **Databases.** Become familiar with different databases, identify your favorites and develop a habit of checking them regularly.
- **Networking and e-Communication.** Use professional networks and subscribe to electronic funding announcement services. Contact funding agencies for Alert set-up (when applicable).
- **Bureau Resources.** Visit the Bureau website for tools and information
<http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/ber/webpages/FundingResources.html>

4. Researching the Unexpected:

- **Fit.** Which programs match your interests? Can you learn more about the funders' philosophy and priorities?
- **Evaluation.** Can your advisor or trusted other person provide background or share experiences about this funder?
- **Writing Guides.** Does the funder offer a proposal writing guide? If so, take it to heart!
- **Recent Awards.** Does the funder post information about recent award winners? Does your project fall into a similar domain as those funded projects?

- **ID Reviewers.** Who reviews the applications? Make sure you are writing for them.

5. Three Rules of Submission: Proofread, Proofread, Proofread

- **READ the Program Announcement.** Carefully read the funding competition announcement, requirements and instructions. Most of your questions can be answered through careful reading and paying attention to the details.
- **Proposals Take Time.** Writing the grant proposal can be as much work as writing the first three chapters of your dissertation (rationale, literature review, methods section) though the style is somewhat different. Give yourself plenty of time.
- **Polish The Package.** Don't rush through final editing and assembly of your application. Most competitions are highly competitive – do not offer an easy reason for your application to be rejected.
- **Learning Experiences.** Writing for an external audience can help define and sharpen both your theoretical ideas and your practical plans, which makes the entire process useful whether or not you are funded. Learn from all your experiences!

6. Submitting Your Proposals

Proposal submission varies by funder. The primary issue is whether you are able to submit your own application OR whether the proposal MUST be submitted by the University. The process is different depending on whether it is an individual or institutional submission. However, the requirements are often still similar

Individual

- **Human Subjects Compliance.** Check whether the funder requires you to complete IRB (human subjects) approval before submitting the proposal. If not, the funder may require your IRB approval certificate before disbursing award funds. See Anne Robertson, COE 38B, 333-3023, for advice about the IRB application.

Institutional

- **Human Subjects Compliance.** Check whether the funder requires you to complete IRB (human subjects) approval before submitting the proposal. If not, the funder may require your IRB approval certificate before disbursing award funds. See Anne Robertson, COE 38B, 333-3023, for advice about the IRB application.
- **College Planning.** Many funders require that your proposal be submitted by the University. You will need to work with College of Education and UIUC Campus administrative offices—*which means allowing extra time*. It is especially important to receive help with your budget and budget notes. Contact the Bureau for advice about where to start.
- **Proposal Sign-off.** For proposals submitted by the University, a Transmittal Form is used to collect approval signatures (from your advisor, your department head, the Bureau and the Business Office) *before* University review and submission. This form is prepared by the College Business Office. Allow up to two weeks for collecting all necessary signatures, since faculty and staff may not be available at the last minute.
- **Campus Review.** The last step in submitting an application through the University, which is reviewed by the UIUC Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Administration (OSPRA) You will need to plan for their *review of the entire proposal at least five business days before it is due.*

- **Review Modifications.** OSPRA may need you to resolve some small issue with your application, so be prepared for some last minute changes. If there is a small issue - Don't Panic! The people at OSPRA work with applications everyday and will get your application out in time.

7. After You Submit:

- **Notification times vary.** It could take three to six months to hear back from the funder and up to nine to receive the financial award.
- **Award Notifications.** The award notification (or decline) may arrive to any number of places, depending on the funding agency and submission process. It may come back to you, your faculty advisor, the College or a budget officer at OSPRA.
- **Funders' Post-award Meetings.** Check the application materials to see whether the funder will require you to attend a post-award meeting once you are funded.