Get Funded
Grants Writer Trade Secrets (Tips and Tricks)

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Introduction
Martha Weise, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations
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1994
Began career in grants-writing in Washington, D.C.

1994 – 1995
Trained on the job and with the Grantsmanship Center

1996
Promoted to director of grants funding

1999 – 2016
Built Consulting Practice
Seminar Purpose

- Provide a brief overview of the grants writing process
- Clarify some grant writing terms and acronyms
- Make distinctions between writing for federal, corporate and foundation sources
- Provide tips and tricks on getting funded
Getting Funded isn’t Magic, but there ARE some Tricks…

...that fall under the categories of:

- Teamwork
- Research
- Determination
- Hard Work
- Strategy
Why Teamwork?

A proposal is a combination of:

- A critical, academic essay
- A targeted sales pitch
- A varying amount of bureaucratic regulation and teamwork
Teamwork
Ideally, who is on a proposal team?

The least stressful, most effective proposal processes are carried out by a team, composed of:

- Content Expert / Project Director / Principal Investigator (PI)
- Grants Writer / Fund Raiser
- Institutional Expert / Finance – at Purdue, this is Sponsored Program Services Pre-Award
The role of team manager best falls to the grants writer / fund raiser.

Team members should provide input according to their strengths and their input should be received as expert counsel.
Teamwork Tips and Tricks
Organization and Time Management

Develop a timeline for all team members, working backward from the proposal due date with internal deadlines.

Include padding (two or three days) in the timeline deadlines so that the process moves forward smoothly even if you or someone else miss the deadline.

"I love deadlines. I love the whooshing noise they make as they go by."
— Douglas Adams
Research

When is Research Done in the Grants Writing Process?

At the beginning, through:

- Prospective funder research
- In-depth research of resulting prospects
- Program research to make the case for funding
Research

Why so much effort on finding a match?

To save time and effort:

Proposals are time-consuming and everyone has competing priorities for their time.

Proposal competition is fierce and submitting a proposal where there is a weak match is likely to result in being denied funding.

Prioritizing is best policy in fund raising, because time spent on a proposal likely to be denied would be better spent on developing a stronger proposal that has a greater chance of being funded.
Research Tips and Tricks
Choose the Funder Type that is the Best Match

• Individual Donors
  1. Scholarships and Endowments
  2. Bricks and Mortar

• Federal Agencies
  1. Reflect Policy Trends
  2. Release Targeted Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

• Foundations
  1. Research Projects and Programs
  2. Approach Differs for Each Foundation, According to Foundation Type and Preference

• Corporations
  1. Sponsorships
  2. Often Have Marketing Goals Embedded in Giving
Research Tips and Tricks: In Summary

Find your match

Know both what your prospective funder does and how they do it

Know their process for both application and review

Make your case

“All I’m armed with is research.”
Mike Wallace
Strategy
When is it used in the grants writing process?

At the beginning of the process, when:
- Approaching prospective funders
- Designing the match
Strategy Tips and Tricks
Approaching Funders

Reach out individually whenever possible, although sometimes funders require blind responses to RFP’s or LOI’s (Letters of Inquiry)

Reach out through Purdue contacts
Strategy Tips and Tricks
Finding the Match

Be flexible:

- Funding can be found for part of the project or the entire project
- Multiple funders can fund one project from multiple types of sources
Hard Work Tips and Tricks

Coordination

The up front planning is the most important

Every step, especially the budget, attachments and approvals, take more time than you think they will.

Funder deadlines are often fixed to the moment and sometimes the system glitches, especially when everyone is trying to submit at the same time. *Submit early – plan for two to three days before deadline.*
Hard Work Tips and Tricks
Writing the Proposal

• Typical Proposal Format is a Modified Essay
  1. Need
  2. Measurable Goals and Objectives (SMART) or Hypothesis
  3. Program Description, including Significance and Evaluation
  4. Dissemination
  5. Sustainability
  6. Capacity, including Key Staff

• Symmetry and Backwards Engineer
• Academic Standards are modified
• Apply the Grandmother and Strengths / Weaknesses Tests
• Do not be attached to the writing.
Hard Work Tips and Tricks
Care and Feeding of Program Officers

In development, referred to as “stewardship”

Build the relationship

Submit deliverables and reports on time

Follow their guidelines for spending the money

Do what you promised to do, unless you obtain prior approval from them.
In Conclusion: Determination

Fundraising for your project is a long-term goal.

Expect to be denied. You may only need one big grant, but it may take applying for five before one is funded. Seek to lower your odds of being funded through research, strategy, and the work of putting the proposal together.

Patience and determination pay off.

Funding entities exist to give away money, never be hesitant to ask.
Questions