CFDR Grant Writing Workshop

July 25, 2011

Overview of Today's Workshop

- Overview of funding agencies
- Focus on NIH funding and mechanisms
- Changes in NIH applications
- Steps to submitting a grant
- Useful links

- Tips generalizable to a number of agencies

Benefits of Grants

- Investigators
  - Summer funding and release from teaching (e.g., full year sabbatical); salary for researchers employed in public health departments or research agencies
  - Support for data collection, statistical software, consultants, research assistants, and other resources to needed to conduct research
- Indirects to university (e.g., departmental support for travel)
- Impetus for cutting-edge research

Some Funding Sources

- FOUNDATIONS
  - William T. Grant Foundation, Child Development Foundation, Templeton Foundation, National Campaign Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancies
- PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
  - ASA, PAA, NCFR
- NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
  - Faculty Research Grants
  - Dissertation Grants
- NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE
- NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
  - NICHD, NIMH, NIA…(24 of the 27 institutes make grant awards)
  - NICHD is the single largest funder of behavioral and social science research on population (mainly via the DBSB)
- CFDR Website:http://www.bgsu.edu/organizations/cfdr/page34550.html

Some Mechanisms for NIH Research Support

- R01 - Research Project
- R15 - Academic Research Enhancement Awards* (AREA)
- R21 - Exploratory/Developmental Grants
- R03 - Small Research Grants
- K01 - Research Scientist Development Award*
- Kirschstein NSRA Predoc and Postdoc Awards*
- See full list of NICHD Funding Mechanisms: Funding mechanisms used by the NICHD

* See additional eligibility requirements

NIH Funding Initiatives

- RFAs (Request for Application): funds are set aside
- PAs (Program Announcement): no funds allocated but viewed as an important area
- Most are investigator-initiated http://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/org/cpr/projects.cfm?fiscal_year=2011&nihorg=HNT2

Example of Single Mechanism

- R01 – Research Project (“the Holy Grail”)
- R01s support investigator-initiated research projects within the mission of one of the NICHD program areas (or the areas of other NIH institutes).
- K01 and other mechanisms viewed as stepping stones to R01

Recent Changes to Grant Applications

- Electronic Submission (via OSPR)
- Reduced number of pages
- Change in research plan:
- http://enhancing-peer-review.nih.gov/docs/application_changes.pdf
- Only one revision permitted

NIH Grant Application Guide
(Note that dates for resubmissions are different.)

Mechanism	Project Period	Direct costs Up to	Research Strategy And Specific Aims Page Limit	Due Date Cycle I	Due Date Cycle II	Due Date Cycle III
R03	2 yrs	$50,000/yr	7 pages	February 16	June 16	October 16
R21	2 yrs	$275,000/ full period	7 pages	February 16	June 16	October 16
R01	up to 5 yrs	Varies	13 pages	February 5	June 5	October 5
R15	up to 3 yrs	$300,000/ full period	13 pages	February 25	June 25	November 5
K01	3 to 5 years	Varies	13 pages	March 12	July 12	November 12

Components of an NIH Grant

- Checklist (OSPR)
- Cover letter (with desired study section)
- Cover page (OSPR)
- Table of contents and other details (OSPR)
- Project summary and public health relevance
- Research environment
- Biosketches (note new format) for key personnel
- Budget (CFDR and OSPR)
- Budget justification–personnel
- Research plan
- Human subjects (if clinical research or primary data collection tables required)
- References
- Letters of support from each consultant
- If you have a subcontract with another university additional documents
- Routing form (one week in advance)

Steps in Writing an NIH Grant

- 1. Commit yourself
- 2. Do your homework on NIH grants
- 3. Develop project description
- 4. Assemble research team
- 5. Begin administrative details
- 6. Write proposal
- 7. Obtain feedback
- 8. Revise and copyedit proposal
- 9. Submit and track proposal electronically
- 10. Obtain NIH feedback on proposal

Step 1: Commit Yourself

- Begin with an idea that has evolved from prior work and interests
- Choose a deadline several months in advance and stick to it
- Send letter of intent if necessary
- Register or update your information on eRA Commons; verify your new investigator status: https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/

Step 2: Do Your Homework

- Read a successful proposal
- Look at recently funded projects for different institutes: http://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm
- Identify funding institute and mechanism
- Update review of literature on topic (be sure to venture beyond your discipline)
- Identify data or subjects

Step 3: Prepare a One-Page Description of Project

- The description should include:
  - Your research topic and primary research question(s), including a short discussion of why this research question is significant
  - The theoretical perspective
  - The specific hypotheses
    - Specify the dependent and independent variables.
    - The hypotheses should be directional, not just stating that the independent and dependent variables are related.
    - Discuss the mechanisms through which the independent variables affect the dependent variables.

Step 3: Description (Cont.)

- The description should include:
  - The methodology and data collection methods (if applicable)
  - The estimated budget (direct costs)
  - A time line
  - Plan for disseminating data and research findings
- Circulate description to peers
- E-mail (don't call) a program officer

Step 4: Assemble Team ("Key Personnel")

- Size of team will vary depending on scope of grant
- Possibilities:
  - Co-PIs and Investigators
  - Social science programmer
  - Consultants
- Complementarity is critical

Step 5: Begin Administrative Details

- Create a folder on the CFDR server to share documents
- Begin your own checklist with the components of grant; organize the components of your grant
- Begin developing a drafting a budget
- Have CFDR and OSPR refine budget

Step 6: Write Proposal

- Follow directions
- Anticipate making several revisions
- Fatal flaws
  - Incremental contribution to field or failure to articulate contribution
  - Incomplete or outdated literature review
  - Mismatch between different parts of proposal
  - Feasibility

Step 7: Obtain Feedback

- Have members of the grant-writing working group provide feedback on your summary and evolving research plan
- Arrange a mock study section well in advance of the deadline (e.g., one month)
- While others are reviewing the research plan you can work on others parts of grant (e.g., human subjects)

Step 8: Revise and Copyedit

- Imagine this is your only chance to submit the grant; make sure it is the best it can be
- Identify a study section in your cover letter with rationale for choice:
- http://www.csr.nih.gov/committees/rosterindex.asp
- Send your contact person at OSPR your documents two business days in advance

Step 9: Submit and Track Proposal

- Plan to be in the office (9 to 5) on the day the grant is submitted by OSPR in case of incomplete or incorrect documents
- View all of the materials in your application "kit" before it is submitted
- Check eRA Commons regularly to ensure appropriate study section is selected

Step 10: Obtain NIH Feedback

- Arrange to speak with your program officer soon after the proposal is reviewed
- Probe your program official for details of meeting (Don’t be emotional!)
- Read written summary statement as soon as it is posted
- Share your review with colleagues
- Revise and resubmit or rethink project

Useful Links about NIH Grants

- CFDR webpage
  - http://www.bgsu.edu/organizations/cfdr/page34550.html

- Other overviews on NIH grants
  - Cornell Population Program / Services / Grant Training
  - http://www.cpp.cornell.edu/services/grant_training.cfm