CFDR Grant Writing Workshop

July 24, 2013

Overview of Today's Workshop

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

- Tips generalizable to a number of agencies

Benefits of Grants

- Investigators (opportunities for new and cutting-edge research)
  - Research resources: data collection, software, travel, training, and computing
  - Human resources: graduate and undergraduate students, staff, consultants, and time release
- University
  - Build reputation and visibility
  - Train students
  - Indirect costs

Some Funding Sources

- FOUNDATIONS
  - William T. Grant Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson
- PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
  - ASA, PAA, NCFR
- NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
- NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE
- NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
  - NICHD, NIMH, NIA…(several institutes make grant awards)
  - NICHD is the single largest funder of behavioral and social science research on population (mainly via the PDB)
- See CFDR's page on grant opportunities

Sources for Grad Students and Postdocs

- American Sociological Association
- National Science Foundation
  - Data gathering projects for doctoral students
  - Postdocs for minorities
- National Institutes of Health (PDB)
  - F31 (Predoc) and F32 (Postdoc)
- National Institute of Justice
  - Ph.D. Graduate Research Fellowship
  - W.E.B Du Bois Fellowship (must have terminal degree in discipline)

Sources for Grad Students and Postdocs

- Spencer Foundation Dissertation Grants (education)
- AERA Dissertation Grants (education)
- Jack Kent Cooke Foundation dissertation fellowships (education)
- Hewlett Foundation Dissertation Fellowships (population issues in Africa)
- Population Reference Bureau (individuals from developing countries)
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowships (health)

Some Mechanisms for NIH Research Support

- R01 - Research Project
- R15 - Academic Research Enhancement Awards* (AREA) (See Director's Notes)
- 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

* 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 (unsolicited) projects but address mission of institute or branch (Parent Announcement)

- Active FOAs for the NIH

Example of Single Mechanism

- R01 – Research Project (the “Holy Grail”)
- R01s support investigator-initiated research projects within the mission of one of the PDB program areas or the areas of other NIH institutes and branches).
- K01 and other mechanisms viewed as stepping stones to R01(and this is often made explicit in grant)

Recent Changes to NIH Grant Applications

- See Summary of Changes
- Electronic Submission (via OSPR)
  - Reduced number of pages
  - Change in research plan
  - Only one revision permitted
- Beware of documents that refer to applications prior to 2010

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	October 25
K01	3 to 5 years	Varies	13 pages	February 12	June 12	October 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 project narrative (do this last)
- Facilities & other resources
- Biosketches (note new format) for key personnel
- Budget (CFDR and OSPR)
- Budget justification
- Introduction (resubmissions only)
- Research plan
- Human subjects (if clinical research or primary data collection tables required)
- Inclusion of women, minorities, and children
- References cited
- Multiple PI leadership plan
- Letters of support from each consultant
- If you have a subcontract with another university additional documents
- Routing form (CFDR routes it with research plan)

Steps in Writing an NIH Grant

- 1. Commit yourself
- 2. Do your homework on grant mechanism
- 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 (not everyone shares)
- 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 PDB suggests the description 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:
  - Other 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 with specific dates
- Begin developing a drafting a budget with the help of the CFDR and OSPR
- Speak with OSPR official about dates

Step 6: Write Proposal

- Follow directions
  - Different agencies have different formats
  - Creativity (with respect to format) not good
- Use space allotted (but don't put stuff about research plan in other sections)
- Tips
  - Look at evaluation criteria
  - See helpful hints from a seasoned reviewer

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