Princeton Research Forum

External and Internal Funding
Funding for research at Princeton: an overview
The Big Picture

University research is funded by a range of extramural parties:
- Federal government
- State and local government
- Foreign governments
- Corporations/Industry (domestic/foreign)
- Foundations/Nonprofit organizations (domestic/foreign)
- Individual Donors – handled by University Advancement Office

The university research enterprise is driven by both external and internal funding
The Big Picture

University research is driven by a range of agreements with extramural parties

Funded (in order of restrictiveness)
- Gifts
- Grants
- Cooperative agreements
- Contracts

Non-funded
- Provide valuable opportunities rather than funding
- Confidentiality agreements
- Data use agreements
- Material transfer agreements
Internal Funding

Available opportunities/competitions across a broad range of disciplines, encourages interdisciplinarity

Invests in key areas and activities
Innovation/Travel/Transformative technologies

Competing for internal funding in a particular area can be a good precursor for competing for external funding

May support preliminary or exploratory research and results critical to obtaining external funding

External Funding

Each sponsor has a different mission and set of priorities

Eligibility variations
Young Investigator/Multi-disciplinary/Travel/ Equipment, etc.

Federal funding driven by budget/appropriations

Non-federal funding driven by sponsor priorities/focus
External Funding Identification Tools

- Pivot
- Foundation Directory Online
- Grants.gov/FedBizOpps
- Curated Opportunities
- Limited Submission
- Leveraged Relationships
Sponsored Awards vs Gifts

- Strings attached
- Specified statement of work
- Reporting requirements
- Performance period
- Subject to University policy
- Must be submitted through ORPA

vs

- No strings attached
- No specified statement of work or deliverables
- Minimal reporting requirements
- Irrevocable
- Subject to University policy
- Managed by CEFR
Office of the Dean for Research

Funding Lifecycle

- Develop Idea
- Find Funding
- Submit Proposal
- Award Negotiation and Acceptance
- Award Management
- Dissemination and Closeout
Proposal Development Tips

- Read the solicitation carefully
  - Deadline dates
  - Cost sharing requirements
  - Restrictions (publication, non U.S. persons, IP ownership)

- Alert your departmental Grants Manager as soon as possible
  - He/she is your resource for proposal development and submission

- Reach out to ORPA/CEFR and/or the Program Officer with questions
Award Management Advice

› Read and understand the award notice from the Sponsor
› Direct questions to your ORPA administrator (GCA) and/or your departmental Grants Manager
› Be aware of the reporting requirements to ensure due dates and/or deliverable requirements are met
› Work with your departmental grants manager to programmatically and financially manage the award
› Be a good steward of the funding
Investing in Relationships

- Program Officer
- Collaborators
- Department Grant Manager

Idea → To → Action
Working with NSF: Perspective of a former Program Officer

Jack Brassil

- Understanding the grant proposal Merit Review Process
- Developing a relationship with NSF
Most new faculty ...

- Have little or no prior experience preparing a grant proposal
- Have little understanding about how proposals are reviewed
- Often don’t know any NSF Program Officers
- View NSF as something of a mysterious black box
Grant Proposal Workflow

• NSF announces funding opportunity
• Organization prepares/submits proposal
• NSF receives proposal
• Cognizant program officer receives proposal and selects peer reviewers
• Peer reviewers review proposal
• Program officer analyzes input and makes recommendation to Division Director
• Division Director review of recommendation
Merit Review Deep Dive #1

- Cognizant program officer receives proposal and selects peer reviewers
  - Binning process based on quick look at proposal
  - Selection of PO to handle your proposal
  - PO selects qualified reviewers from your research community (Panel)
Merit Review Deep Dive #2

• Peer reviewers review proposal
  • Panels comprise mix of experts and generalists
  • Each panelist submits review before panel
  • Panel convenes in person to debate funding worthiness
  • Panel writes summary of their key findings
Merit Review Deep Dive #3

- Program officer analyzes input and makes recommendation
  - PO reads proposal prior to panel
  - PO moderates panel, encouraging panel to form consensus on competitiveness of each proposal
  - After panel, attending POs make award/decline decision based on all available information, writes Review Analysis (justification)
OK. I get it.

But what I *really* want to know is how to write a winning proposal.
Two recommended actions

1. Target and email POs and agree to meet them to introduce yourself and share your research plan
   - PO now knows you and recognizes your proposal

2. Immediately offer to participate in the Merit Review process as a panelist
   - Learn how to write a competitive proposal by reading both competitive and non-competitive proposals
   - Inform your understanding of your research community’s proposal expectations
   - Visibility to your community’s best ideas, meet and work alongside leaders in your field
Good luck!

Additional discussion at