

Developing a Strategic Plan to Achieve Your Research Goals

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Director
Research Development



The University of Vermont

Research Development

New unit – established Jan 2020

Provide “pre-pre-award” support to faculty

- Communicate Funding Opportunities
- Manage Limited Competition Process
- Research Proposal Development & Project Management
- Grant Writing Resources, Tools, Workshops

Team

Jeralyn Haraldsen, PhD - Director

Grant Proposal Developers:

Gagan Bajaj, PhD

Ingrid Barcelo, PhD

Heidi Malaby, PhD

Grant Resources Specialist:

Hilda Alajajian, MLS

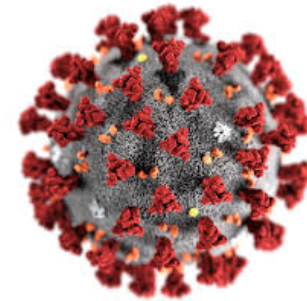


Research Proposal Development

- **Grant proposal review and grantsmanship critique**
 - Annotated feedback and suggestions
 - Review for responsiveness to RFA, and/or reviewer critiques
- **Grant proposal writing assistance and editing**
 - Substantive editing of draft text
 - Editing to improve clarity and flow, formatting and presentation
 - Assist with drafting non-technical proposal components
- **Project Management for proposal preparation**

New Faculty Life can be Overwhelming

- Move to a new campus, new city
- Setting up your office, laboratory, studio space
- Getting to know new colleagues – remotely?!
- Teaching – remotely? In-person? Hybrid?



Prioritize creating a strategic plan for your research, scholarship, or creative activity. It will ultimately **help to decrease the overwhelm** and help you use your time more efficiently.

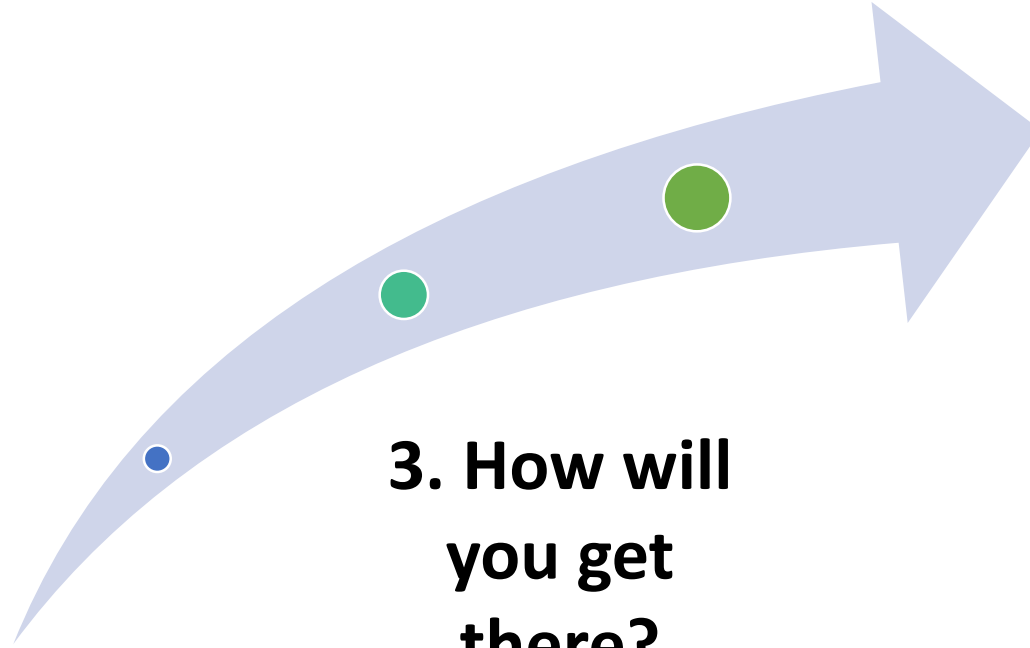
What is Strategic Planning?

**2. Where are
you now?
Current State**

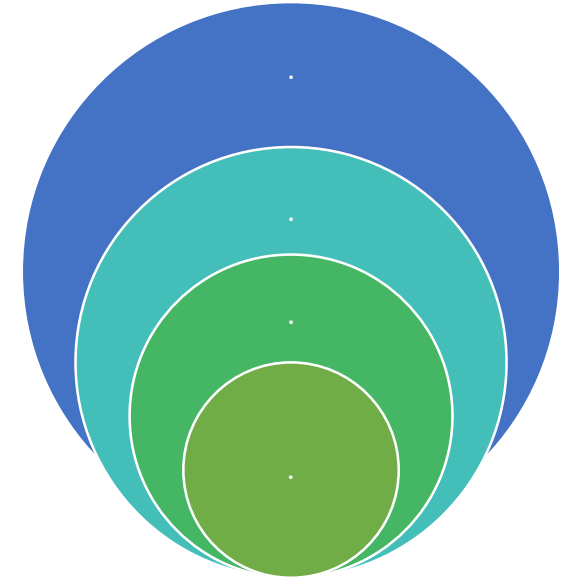


**Strategic
Assessment**

**3. How will
you get
there?**



**1. Where do
you want to
be in 5 years?
Future State**



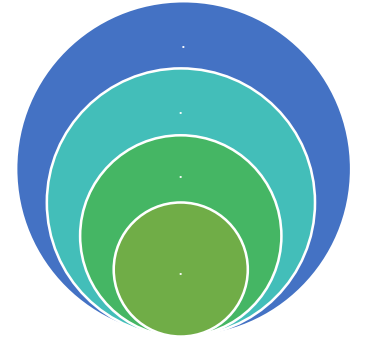
Why Strategic Planning?

- Takes you outside of the day-to-day activities and forces you to reflect on the “big picture”
- Gives you clarity about what you want to achieve and creates a plan of actions, initiatives
- Helps to align your resources and time to the activities with the most beneficial impact



Scaffold of a Strategic Plan

- Define your long-term research/scholarly vision
- Self-evaluation
 - Strengths and weaknesses (SWOT)
 - Current progress toward goal
- Understand expectations / metrics by which your success will be measured
- Define short-, mid- and long-term objectives to achieve vision
- Implementation
- Regular review, revision, realignment

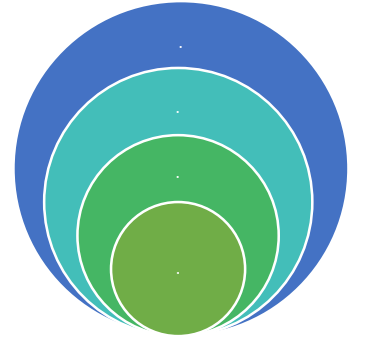


1. Where do you want to be in 5 years?
Future State

Defining Your Research/Scholarly Vision

Define long-term research/scholarly vision

- What do you want to accomplish in the next 5 - 10 years (or more)?
- What is your mission or purpose?
- What difference or impact do you want to make?
- What critical issue(s) do you want to respond to?
- What capacity / expertise do you have?
- What should your priorities be? Where should you allocate time and resources?
- Where are the best opportunities for funding?



What Does “Success” Look Like for YOU?

- Publications, book chapters
- Performances, juried exhibitions
- Field work
- Invited talks
- **Extramural Funding**
- Professional, institutional awards
- Advising / mentoring track record
- Grants or Fellowships awarded
- Other indicators of excellence in teaching or research

Understand the expectations / metrics :

- Promotion and tenure guidelines
- Norms within your research / academic / industry community

2. Where are you now? Current State

Self-Assessment

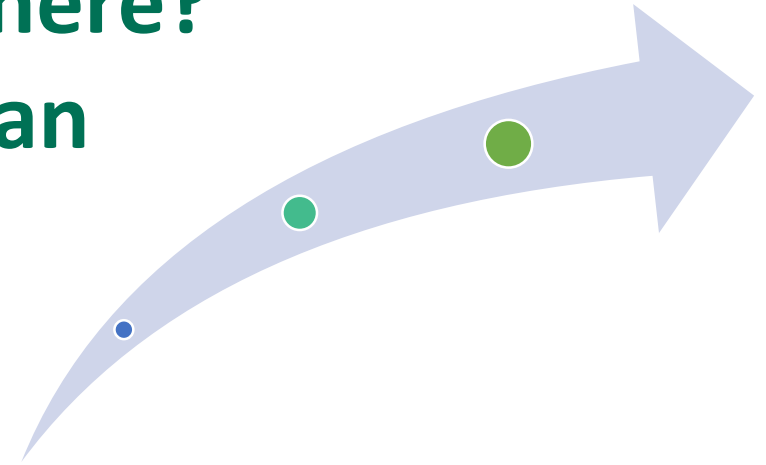


Self Evaluation – Where Are You Now?

- Is your research sufficiently separated from that of your graduate/postdoc mentor for you to establish independence?
- Is it an area you are passionate and enthusiastic about?
- Do you have a strong publication record or scholarly output that will support your chosen research area?
- Is your research/scholarship in an exciting, vigorous, high-impact area?
- Is it in an area that is likely to be funded by federal agencies or foundations?

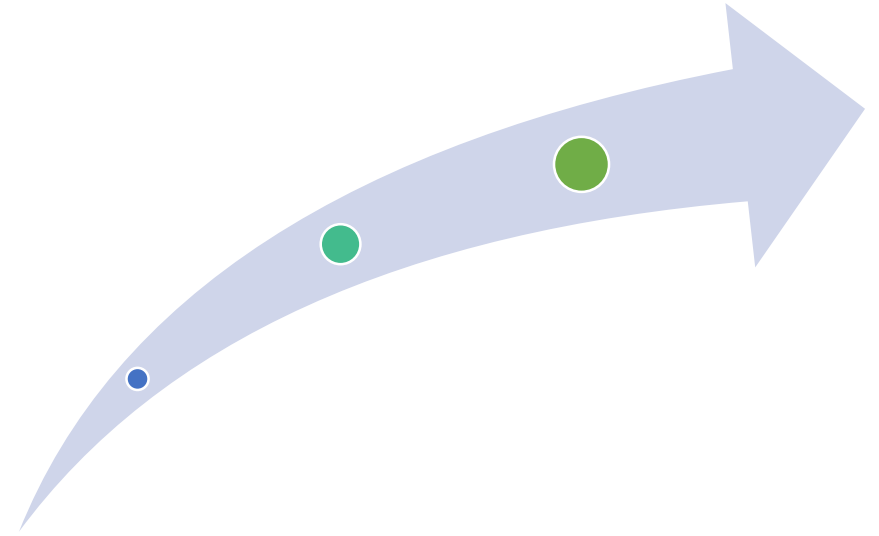


3. How Do You Get There? Developing the Plan



Create the Plan to Bridge the Gap between Your Current and Future States

- **Work backwards** from your Vision/Future State
- Develop a plan with **annual objectives** in those “success” activities
- For each annual objective, create more detailed “**milestones**”



Objectives should be “SMART”



Specific	Measurable	Attainable	Relevant	Time-Bound
Make sure your goals are focused and identify a tangible outcome. Without the specifics, your goal runs the risk of being too vague to achieve. Being more specific helps you identify what you want to achieve. You should also identify what resources you are going to leverage to achieve success.	You should have some clear definition of success. This will help you to evaluate achievement and also progress. This component often answers how much or how many and highlights how you'll know you achieved your goal.	Your goal should be challenging, but still reasonable to achieve. Reflecting on this component can reveal any potential barriers that you may need to overcome to realize success. Outline the steps you're planning to take to achieve your goal.	This is about getting real with yourself and ensuring what you're trying to achieve is worthwhile to you. Determining if this is aligned to your values and if it is a priority focus for you. This helps you answer the why.	Every goal needs a target date, something that motivates you to really apply the focus and discipline necessary to achieve it. This answers when. It's important to set a realistic time frame to achieve your goal to ensure you don't get discouraged.

Example Milestones

Publications:

- Draft of chapters 1-2 done by <date>
- Solicit feedback from 2 colleagues by <date>
- Experiments a, b, c done by <date>
- Archival work completed by <date>
- 20 interviews completed by <date>

Grant – Deadline X

- Discuss idea with program manager by <date>
- Outline by <date>
- Administrative items done by <date>
- Draft one by <date>, draft two <date>
- Send to colleagues for feedback by <date>

What Does a Strategic Plan Look Like?

- Don't overcomplicate things – use whatever format works well for you

Example 1

<div>.....</div> <div>Aimee R. Dietz, M.S., CCC-SLP</div> <div>Doctoral Candidate</div> <div>University of Nebraska-Lincoln</div> <div>Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders</div> <div>.....</div>	
<div>Five-Year Plan</div> <div>Outline</div>	
<div>→</div>	<div>Research</div> <div>1. Establish a research laboratory to study acquired neurogenic communication disorders, specifically:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the impact of visual scene displays (VSDs) on the language comprehension and production of people with chronic aphasia. (Years 1-2)</div> <div>2. Collect pilot data on the relation between visual scene displays and sentence-level reading comprehension by people with moderate, chronic aphasia. (Year 1)</div> <div>3. Apply for NIH-NIDCD funding using dissertation and pilot data (Year 2):<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write an R03 proposal for a study investigating the impact of VSDs on the reading comprehension by people with chronic aphasia.</div> <div>4. Revise grant if funding not approved (Years 2-3)</div> <div>5. Continue to collect and analyze data, regardless of grant status (Years 3-4)</div> <div>6. Finalize tenure file (Year 5)</div>
<div>→</div>	<div>Publishing</div> <div>1. Publish dissertation findings—minimum of 2 (Years 1-2)</div> <div>2. Publish completed projects and projects in progress:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. A paper on the relation between motor and cognitive contributions to speech rate changes following traumatic brain injury. (Year 1)b. A paper on the changes in social roles in people with severe, chronic aphasia. (Year 1)c. A paper on the relationship VSDs and auditory comprehension by people with chronic aphasia (Year 2)</div> <div>3. Publish manuscripts from data collected in second and third years (Years 4-5)</div>
<div>→</div>	<div>Teaching:</div> <div>1. Meet students (Year 1)</div> <div>2. Develop curricula for courses (Years 1 & 2)</div> <div>3. Offer students research experiences (Years 1-5)</div> <div>4. Mentor students on research projects (Years 1-5)</div> <div>5. Begin to recruit doctoral students at national conferences (Year 2)</div>
<div>→</div>	<div>Professional Service & Development:</div> <div>1. Become familiar with other faculty members' research programs (Year 1)</div> <div>2. Establish and develop inter- and intra-departmental and community collaborations (Years 1-5)</div> <div>3. Continue to be involved with professional associations (ASHA)</div> <div>4. Present regularly at scientific meetings</div> <div>5. Review manuscripts for scientific journals</div>

Example 2

[illegible]

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Computational Biology Institute

Dr. Keith Crandall, Director



Innovation Mall | 45083 University Drive | Suite 305
Ashburn, Virginia 20147
Phone: 571-553-0146
E-Mail: cbi@gwu.edu Web: www.cbi.gwu.edu

CBI Strategic Funding Plan

1

Background

The Computational Biology Institute (CBI) at the George Washington University (GW) is an interdisciplinary effort building on GW's strengths in life sciences and computational science, in addition to the wealth of research centers in the Washington, DC-area. By bringing together GW experts and scholars from partner institutions, CBI will provide cutting edge research, enable broad educational activities in computational biology and provide computational biology services to university researchers and public and private partners. Critical to the ability of CBI to develop and sustain cutting edge and seminal research discovery is a robust and diverse funding portfolio to support the faculty and their research, inspiring boundryless innovation to attract the best talent and contribute to our Nation's call for advancement in science & technology.

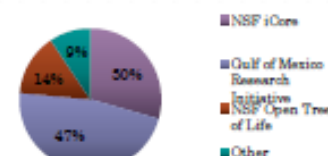


Purpose

The purpose of this medium range strategic plan is to identify funding opportunities spanning foundation, federal and industry funding for the new CBI, building around the research and leadership of CBI Director, Dr. Keith Crandall.

Our objective is to increase funding for the Director and his key faculty, support research and learning opportunities for postdoctoral fellows, doctoral candidates, and K-12 STEM students, and data core facilities.

Wesley E. Campbell, M.D.
Director, Research Recruitment



CBI Baseline Funding, 2013

Example Strategic Plan with Integrated “Funding Roadmap” (Early Faculty example)

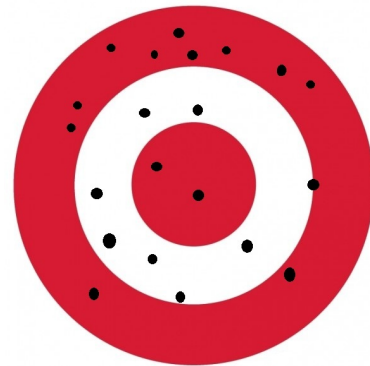
	Teaching	Research	Funding
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop outline for fall 2021 graduate course <by date> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up laboratory <by date> Collect preliminary data for Project 1 <by date> Identify mentor <by date> Identify collaborator for Project 2 <by date> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine program “home” for my research at NSF by Jan. Develop relationship with NSF Program Officer – set up meetings by Feb Determine grant submission logistics at UVM by Dec
Year 2			Apply for NSF CAREER award – July 2022
Year 3			
Year 4			
Year 5			

Implementation & Review/Revise/Realign

- Keep it in front of you
- Monitor progress – how often?
- Review and revise periodically



How Does Extramural Funding Integrate into Your Strategic Plan?



vs.



There are Two “Flavors” of Federal Funding Opps: (Or, Do I Even Need an RFA?)

Unsolicited (investigator-initiated) Opportunities:

- Recurring opportunities with relatively predictable submission deadlines
- Broad areas of interest
 - Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs)
 - “Core” programs
 - “Parent” Announcements



Solicited Opportunities:

- RFAs or RFPs requesting projects in response to a **specific** topic of interest
- May have only **one** deadline (or a few)
- Can have short “drop” between announcement and submission deadline

Foundation Different “Flavors”

Unsolicited Opportunities (most common and most challenging):

- Typically only fund pre-identified entities
- Will not accept proposals unless invited

Solicited Opportunities:

- RFAs or RFPs requesting proposals for research or projects
- Often require a Letter of Intent first
- Deadlines may be annual, rolling or anything in between
- May or may not be recurring





Why do We Care About Solicited vs. Unsolicited Proposals?

- “Investigator-initiated” proposals are EASY TO PLAN FOR and map into your strategic plan
 - NSF CAREER deadlines: **JULY each year**
 - NSF Core Programs: **varies**, but many directorates moving to “rolling” deadlines
 - NIH R01 deadlines are: **Feb. 5, June 5, Oct. 5 each year**
- “One off” proposals are trickier to plan for – require a strategy for monitoring funding opportunity announcements



Mapping Funding Opportunities into Your Plan is About Timing:

- What are you competitive for now?
 - many **Early Career award** mechanisms have time constraints or submission limits
- If you aren't competitive now, what activities do you need to focus on to become competitive and how would you fund those?
 - (more preliminary data, publishing, develop collaboration, serve as a reviewer to gain insight)
- Work backwards from your goal timeframe
- Allow time for resubmission



Wrap-up Discussion

- Your strategic plan should be **dynamic** – plan with flexibility
- Revisit and revise periodically (Annually? Quarterly?)
- Regularly obtain feedback on your strategic plan
- Modify and add funding opportunities that will help you to achieve your goals

How to Request Research Development Support

- Initiate contact early – **6-12 weeks in advance** of your deadline
- Email **request** with info about **funding opportunity** and **deadline**
- Set up a phone call or coffee meeting to:
 - Communicate overview of project
 - Early consult to answer questions or if unfamiliar funding agency
 - Discuss any concerns

Research.Development@uvm.edu

resdev@uvm.edu

For Additional Questions:

Jeralyn Haraldsen, *Director*

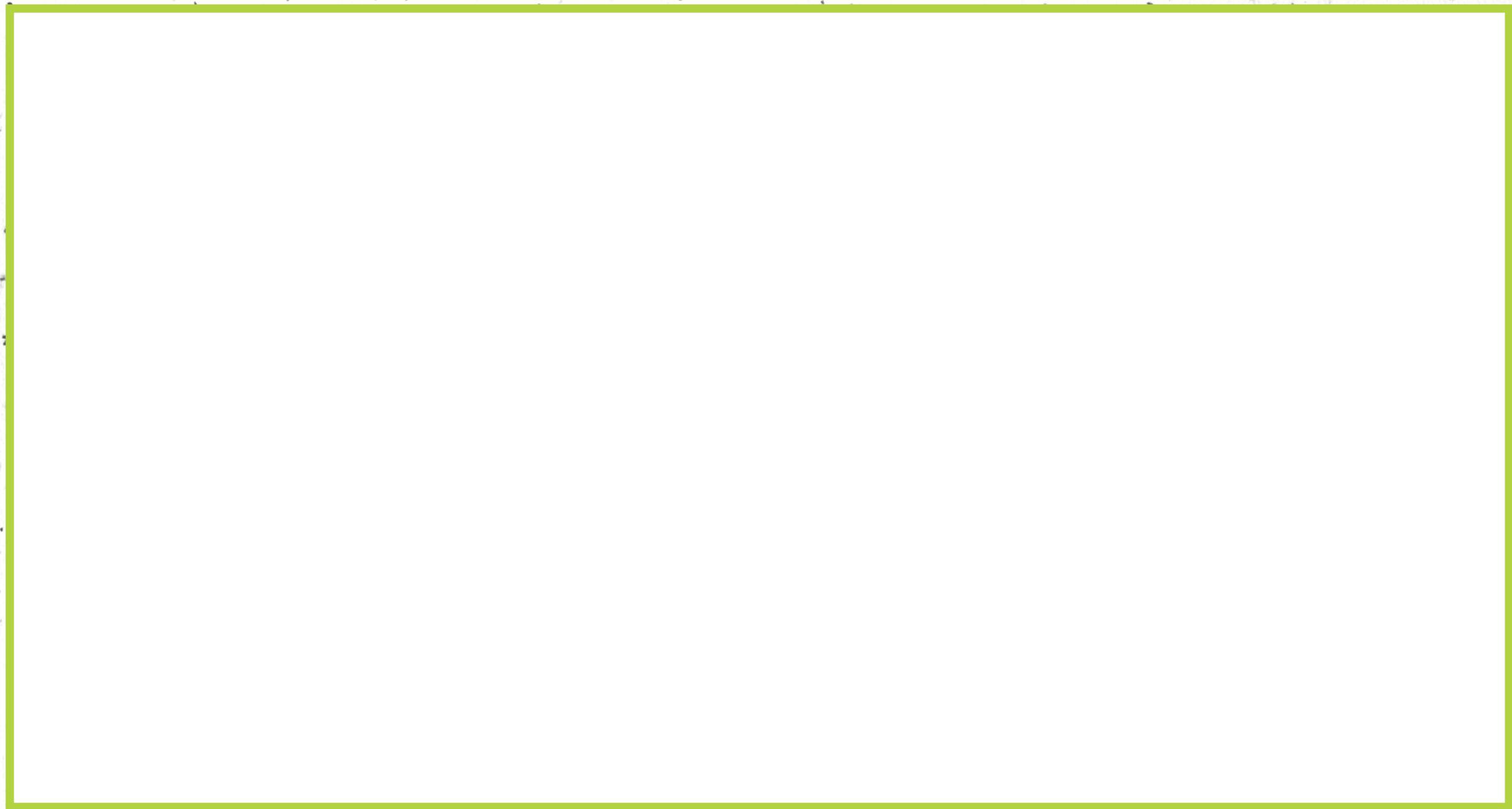
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<https://www.uvm.edu/ovpr/research-development>

Email: Research.Development@uvm.edu





Develop a Process for Identifying Funding Opps

Process should:

- Provide early/timely notification
- Cover your target funding agencies
- Cover a range of other potential funders
- Meet your needs (i.e., doesn't overwhelm)



Tools for Identifying Funding Opps

- Funding Databases
 - PIVOT (UVM subscription – SPA website)
 - SPIN
- UVM internal funding opportunities (OVPR, SPA, College websites)
- Funding agency announcements, e-alerts, RSS feeds, social media
 - Grants.gov – funding opps for 26 federal agencies
 - Individual federal agencies (e.g., NSF Update, NIH Guide for Grants & Contracts)
 - Foundation Center Resources (free access to Foundation Directory online at State Library; free RFP alerts, search assistance from Lisa Townson)
 - Vermont Directory of Foundations Online



- Great place to start if you're new to the process of identifying potential sponsors
- Great place to look for new sources of support
- Pivot and SPIN allow you to browse multiple sponsor types at once and select search criteria related to your funding needs
- Provides nice organizational space and automated alerts for updates

Pivot Tool Overview

Includes Two Interactive Databases

- Funding Database with 21,000+ records representing over \$ 55 Billion
- Scholar Profile Database with 3.3 + million profiles harvested from university websites

Funding Searches may be saved and turned on as automated alerts for updates.

Pivot Funding Search Demo

- Login at: <https://pivot.cos.com/>