

Finding Funding: Tools and Tips

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THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT



The University of Vermont

Introductions - Research Development

**Jeralyn
Haraldsen**
Director

- Manages Research Development team workflow, assignments
- Identifies unique, large-scale funding opps and oversees support
- Program development and capacity building

Cailey Biles
*Grant Resources
Coordinator*

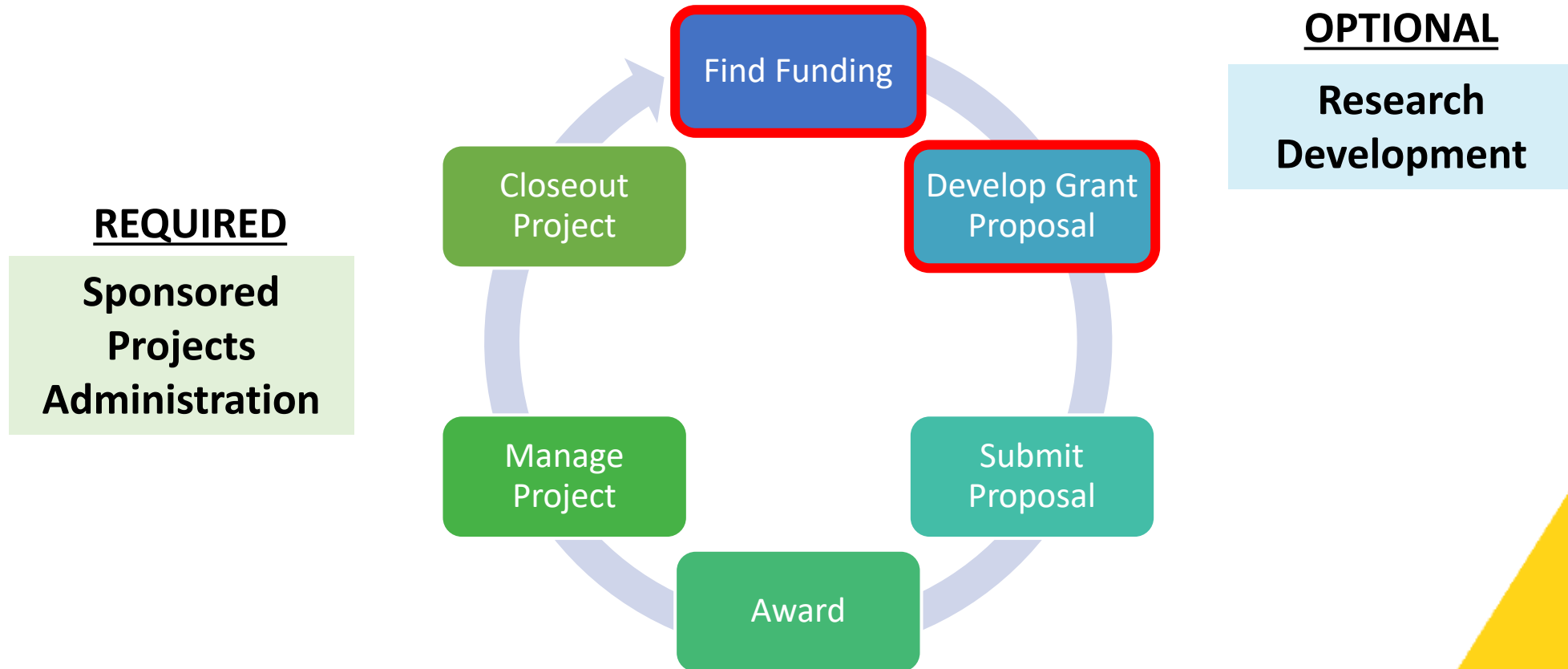
- Assistance with PIVOT-RP (funding database)
- Disseminates selected funding opportunities
- Administers limited competition process



Research Development

- **Communicate funding opportunities**
- **Manage Limited Competition process**
- **Provide Grant Proposal Development Support**
- **Develop Grant Writing Resources, Programs, Tools**

Where Does Research Development Fit In?



Discussion Topics

- Major Sponsor Types and Funding Mechanisms
- Search Tools and Alert Services for Identifying Funding Opportunities
- Demonstration of the Pivot Tool for Funding and Collaborators
- How to Determine whether or not a funding opportunity is a good fit for your research project
- (Emerging Areas of funding) * BONUS topic -- if time allows

Working with Sponsored Project Administration to submit grant proposals and applications

- Sponsored projects are externally-funded activities in which a formal written agreement, i.e., a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement, is entered into by recipient (UVM) and Sponsor (e.g., federal, state, other universities, industry). Sponsored projects usually support research, public service, or instructional efforts.
- External Sponsors grant awards to the **institution** on behalf of the individual applicant
- All proposals to external sponsors submitted by Faculty, Staff and sometimes students are required to go through SPA for review and institutional endorsement.

Landscape of Sponsor Types

Federal

- Biggest provider of science and engineering funding in Academia
- The big names: NSF, NIH, DOE, DoD, EPA, USDA

Non-Federal

- Professional societies
- State and local agencies
- Private/Public/Family Foundations
- Foreign National Governments
- Other non-profits

There are Two “Flavors” of Federal Funding Opps: (Maybe I don’t need to wait for 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

Foundations 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
 - NIH R01 deadlines: **Feb. 5, June 5, Oct. 5** each year
- “One off” proposals are trickier to plan for – require a strategy for monitoring funding opportunity announcement

Tools for Identifying Funding Opportunities

- **Internal UVM Sources for Students and Faculty** – Career Center, Community-Engaged Learning (CELO), EPSCoR, Graduate College, Gund Institute for Environment, Humanities Center, and many more!
 - See the rest of the funding resources on the SPA Homepage under the [Find Funding](#) tab
- **Funding Agency Announcements** –Individual federal agencies (NSF, NIH), [Grants.gov](#) for all 26 federal; individual non-federal agencies, and agency social media accounts
- **Funding Databases** Pivot-RP (UVM subscription)

What is Pivot-RP?



Searchable funding database

Updated daily from a wide variety of sources including Federal and regional government, foundations, professional societies, associations, and corporations

Create customized saved searches, funding alerts, and track opps

Claimed profiles allow for personalized alerts and collaborations

Search Tools – A Quick Interlude



Boolean Operators – and, or, not

“food systems” **and** “food security”
“food systems” **or** “food security”
“food systems” **not** “food security”



Phrase Searching – “food systems”

**Pivot will automatically put Boolean operators between words if there are not quotation marks*



Proximity Searching - food w/2 systems

Pivot Demo



The University of Vermont

Develop a Process for Identifying Funding Opps

Many funders have recurring opportunities with relatively predictable due dates, but others may not be as predictable

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)

Creating a “Funding Roadmap” Will Keep You on Target



Considerations When Creating Your “Funding Roadmap”

- How does grant seeking fit into your overall, career strategic plan?
 - Alignment with career stage (fellowships, travel, short-term/summer, postdoc funding opportunities)
 - early-career opportunities – limited eligibility window
 - Alignment with long-term research and teaching goals
 - Departmental and College expectations regarding external funding
- Assess your readiness/competitiveness
- Incorporate SMART goals/milestones
- Revisit and revise your “roadmap” periodically

Mapping Funding Opportunities into Your Plan is About Timing and Assessing Competitiveness

- What are you **competitive** to apply 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 activities?
 - More preliminary data, publishing, develop collaboration
 - Serve as a reviewer to gain insight
- Work backwards from your goal timeframe
- Allow time for resubmission



How Do you Assess Competitiveness?

- **Talk to people** – mentors, colleagues, program officers
- Review **examples** of successful proposals (ask mentors, colleagues, sponsor websites)
- Award databases
 - Abstracts
 - Project team
 - Awarded budget
 - Who is the assigned Program Officer?
 - What was the funding program?

Once the RFA (“solicited”) is Released

- Read references and hyperlinks to relevant reports contained within RFAs
 - They’ll help you to understand the rationale and vision for the program from the Agency’s perspective
- Talk to Program Officers / Managers
- Your grant is a part of their programmatic portfolio
- PO’s want good quality proposals that **fit** their program, so they are motivated to provide guidance
- Contact them to gain better understanding of **programmatic priorities**
- Ask how your work could **better align** with the program

BONUS material!

**How to “Expect” the Unexpected:
Tips for Identifying Emerging Areas of
Interest at Funding Agencies**



Strategies for Identifying Emerging Areas of Interest

Talk to Program Officers

Deep dive into Funding Agency websites

- Strategic plans
- Priority Areas of interest
- Reports and white papers
- Advisory Council meeting minutes
- “Cleared Concepts” – the birth of an RFA

The NIH Concepts Process

- Concepts solicited from external research community, focus groups, Institute staff
- Approved/cleared at **Advisory Council** meetings
- Cleared concepts are the precursor to RFAs
- Keeping up to date with what concepts are being discussed can give you a jumpstart



Cleared Concepts at NIH (e.g., NIAID, NCI, NICHD)

NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

Enter a keyword or phrase Search

Research | Diseases & Conditions | Grants & Contracts | Clinical Trials | News & Events | About NIAID

Grants & Contracts > Find a Funding Opportunity > NIAID Research Priorities

Find a Funding Opportunity

Opportunities & Announcements

Types of Funding Opportunities >

NIAID Research Priorities >

Concepts: Potential Opportunities >

September 2021 DAIDS Council-Approved Concepts

September 2021 DMID Council-Approved Concepts

September 2021 Trans-Divisional Council-Approved Concepts

See Funded Projects

Timelines & Due Dates >

Find a Funding Opportunity | Apply for a Grant | After Submitting an Application | Manage Your Award

Concepts—Potential Opportunities

Concepts represent early planning stages for initiatives: program announcements, requests for applications, notices of special interest, and solicitations.

Below we post the concepts Council approves a few weeks after each advisory Council meeting—go to the [Advisory Council](#) for the schedule. To get an email alert when we post new concepts, sign up at [NIAID Email Alerts Subscription Center](#) and pick “Concepts, Potential Funding Opportunities” as a topic of interest.

DAIDS	DAIT	DMID	Trans-Divisional
September 2021	September 2021	September 2021	September 2021
June 2021	June 2021	June 2021	June 2021
January 2021	January 2021	January 2021	January 2021

Another Strategy is to Examine a Federal Agency's Annual Budget Request to Congress

FY2022 example

- (Oct. 2020 - Oct. 2021) Agencies plan and submit budget requests (OMB guidance)
- (Oct. 2021 – Jan. 2021) OMB and OSTP review
- First Monday in February (2021) – President's FY22 budget released
 - OMB and OSTP websites – high-level info
 - **Agency budget office** web pages – more informative
 - You want to read the budget **REQUEST**, not the justification
 - **AAAS analyzes the budget:**

<https://www.aaas.org/programs/r-d-budget-and-policy>

NSF FY2022 Budget Request to Congress

The image is a screenshot of the National Science Foundation (NSF) website. At the top left is the NSF logo with the tagline "National Science Foundation WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN". To the right is a search bar and links for "Contact" and "Help". A dark blue navigation bar contains the following menu items: "Research Areas", "Funding", "Awards", "Document Library", "News", and "About NSF". The "About NSF" item is circled in red. Below this bar is a sidebar with a list of links: "About NSF", "About", "Broadening Participation/Diversity", "Budget and Performance" (circled in red), "Budget" (circled in red), "Evaluation and Assessment Capability", "GPRA Modernization Act of 2010", "Performance and Financial Reports", "Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) Results", "Career Opportunities", "Contracting Opportunities", "History", "National Science Board (NSB)", "NSF and Congress", "NSF Toolkit", and "Office of Equity and Civil Rights". The main content area is titled "FY 2022 Budget Request to Congress" and features a large graphic with the NSF logo and the text "UNITED STATES National Science Foundation". Below the graphic is a section titled "FY 2022 BUDGET REQUEST TO CONGRESS" with a red arrow pointing to it. Underneath is a "Table of Contents" section with the text "To view more information about the budget request, please use the links below:" and a bullet point for "Budget, Finance & Award Management (BFA)".

Home > About NSF Email Print

FY 2022 Budget Request to Congress

Table of Contents

Entire Document (7.6MB)

Internal Cover
[Notes Page](#)
[Table of Contents](#)

OVERVIEW
[Tables in Excel Format](#)

SUMMARY TABLES/CHARTS

Total NSF Funding
[NSF Summary Table](#)
[NSF Funding Profile](#)
[Number of People Involved in NSF Activities](#)
[NSF Requests and Appropriations by Account: FY 2000 - FY 2022](#)

Major NSF-wide Investments
[NSF Administration Priorities Summary](#)
[NSF NSTC Crosscuts Summary](#)
[NSF Big Ideas Funding](#)
[NSF Selected Crosscutting Programs](#)
[NSF Programs to Broaden Participation](#)

STEM Education Investments
[NSF EHR Funding by Division and Program](#)
[CoSTEM Inventory and Postdoctoral Fellowship Programs by Level of Education](#)

Research Infrastructure
[NSF Research Infrastructure Funding by Account and Activity](#)
[NSF Research Infrastructure Summary](#)
[Tables in Excel Format](#)

NSF AUTHORIZATIONS
[NSF Current Authorizations](#)
[Computer Science Education Research Report in Compliance with Public Law 114-329](#)
[EPSCoR Report in Compliance with Public Law 114-329](#)
[Tables in Excel Format](#)

NSF-WIDE INVESTMENTS

[Administration Priorities](#)
[U.S. Global Change Research Program](#)
[Clean Energy Technology](#)

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- NSF-WIDE INVESTMENTS**
 - Administration Priorities
 - U.S. Global Change Research Program
 - Clean Energy Technology
 - Advanced Manufacturing
 - Advanced Wireless
 - Artificial Intelligence
 - Biotechnology
 - National Nanotechnology Initiative
 - Networking and Information Technology R&D
 - Quantum Information Science

- NSF Research Big Ideas
 - Harnessing the Data Revolution for 21st-Century Science and Engineering
 - The Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier
 - Navigating the New Arctic
 - Understanding the Rules of Life
 - Windows on the Universe

NSF Enabling Big Ideas

Additional Questions?

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Interested in receiving the weekly **RD funding opportunities newsletter**? Email Cailey and ask to be added to the list!