

The Mid-Career Faculty Experience of... Grant Writing at UVM

Presented by:

Ingrid Barcelo

Grant Proposal Developer
Research Development

Jeannine Valcour

Grant Proposal Developer
Research Development



The University of Vermont

Housekeeping & Ground Rules

- **All forms of participation are okay**
 - Video on or off
 - Speak, type in chat box, gesture, emoticons/reactions, mix/match
 - Walk, move around, fidget, eat/snack, take breaks
- **We affirm all aspects of identity**
 - neurotypes, gender, sexual orientations, race, disability, ethnicity, and all other forms of diversity

Purpose of the Presentation

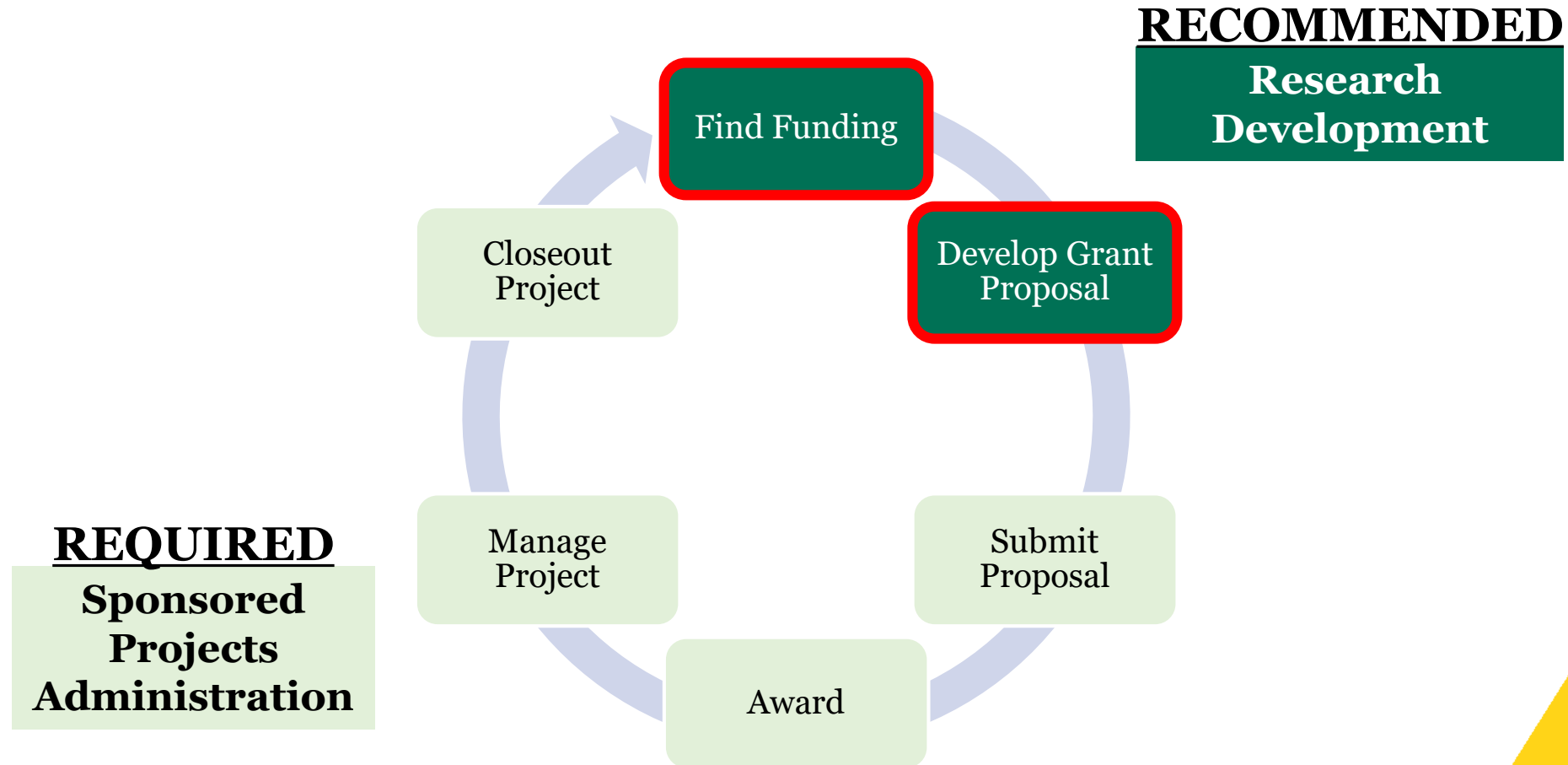
Participants will:

- Learn about UVM services and tools to support you in finding funding, writing, and submitting grant proposals
- Refresh re: the concept of a “sponsored project”
- Strategies and best practices for developing grant proposals

Getting to Know You...

What are the most **intimidating or stressful** aspects of writing grant proposals for you?

Where does UVM Research Development fit in?








UVM FY23 Sponsored Research Snapshot



\$262.8M

In External Research Support

Source	Amount	Awards
 Federal Government	\$205.5 M	531
 Nonprofits	\$13.1 M	108
 State and Local	\$8.2 M	27
 Industry	\$3.2 M	22
 UVM Foundation	\$32.6 M	—
Total	\$262.8 M	688

UVM FY23 Sponsored Research Snapshot



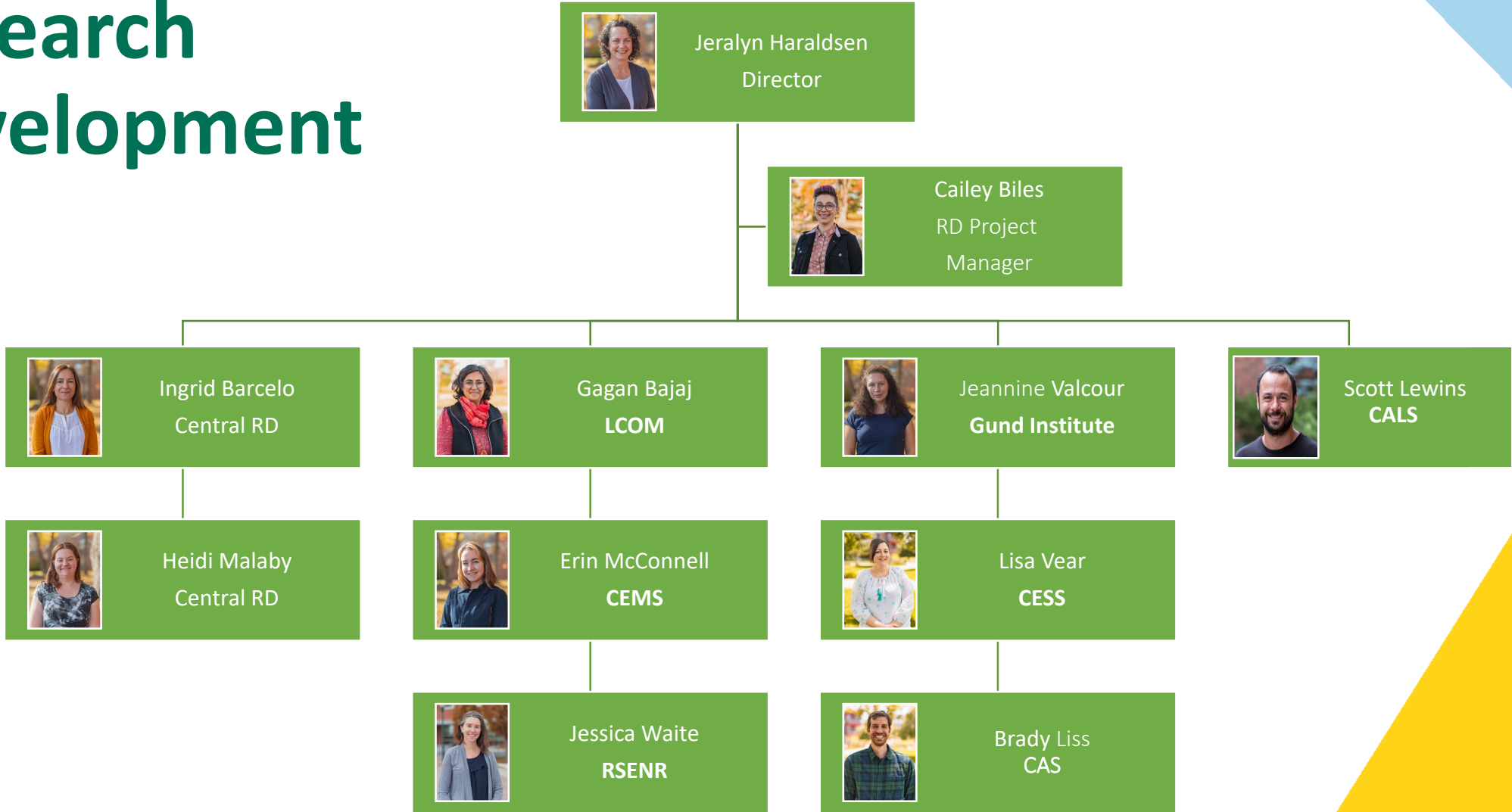
- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. LCOM \$94.4 M | 6. CAS \$7.7 M |
| 2. CALS..... \$39.5 M | 7. CESS.....\$6.8 M |
| 3. OVPR\$27.5 M | 8. CNHS.....\$2.3 M |
| 4. CEMS \$25.8 M | 9. Other\$4.7 M |
| 5. RSENR....\$21.3 M | |



- | |
|---------------------------|
| 1. Research586 |
| 2. Extension 60 |
| 3. Instruction37 |
| 4. Public Service 5 |

Research Development Support

Research Development



Research Development

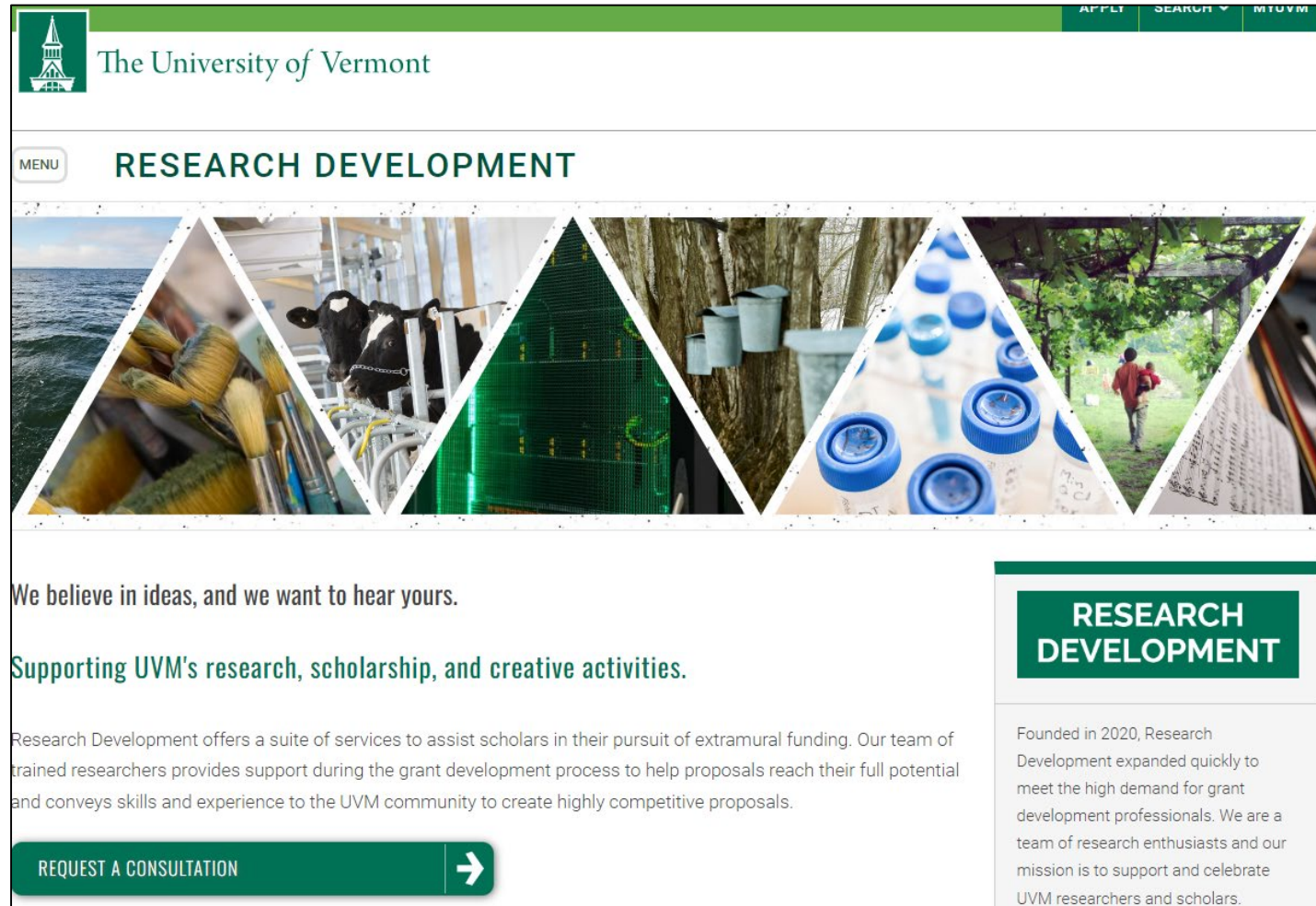
- **Communicate funding opportunities**
- **Manage Limited Competition process**
- ★ • **Provide Grant Proposal Development Support**
 - **Including Project Management for large proposals**
- **Develop Grant Writing Resources, Programs, Tools**

RD Project Management for Proposals

- Tailored checklists
- Tailored timelines
- Custom outlines for the main proposal document
- Templates for supporting documents

Date	Deliverable(s)
March 19 – April 1	Write Specific Aims
April 2	Specific Aims (1st Draft) Completed
April 3 - 29	Write Research Strategy
By April 20	Begin budget development with business manager support
April 30	Research Strategy (1st Draft) Completed
May 3 - 19	Iterative revisions to Research Strategy (<i>as needed</i>)
By May 7	Enter grant information into UVM Click
May 10 - 24	Write/update Supporting Documents
By May 11	Complete first draft of full budget (in UVM Click)
May 19	Revise Budget if needed, write Budget Justification
May 20	Full, "near final" Project proposal completed
May 21 - 26	PI, grant developer, colleagues review of text
May 26	All final, signed Letters of Support due (<i>if applicable</i>)
May 26	All final biosketches and Other Support due
May 26 – June 1	Finalization of all documents
Wed, June 2	Upload all final documents into <u>UVMClick</u> and ROUTE proposal
On or before Fri, June 4	GOAL: proposal submission
Mon, June 7	NIH Proposal submission deadline

Strategic Resources – Research Development!



The University of Vermont

MENU RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

We believe in ideas, and we want to hear yours.

Supporting UVM's research, scholarship, and creative activities.

Research Development offers a suite of services to assist scholars in their pursuit of extramural funding. Our team of trained researchers provides support during the grant development process to help proposals reach their full potential and conveys skills and experience to the UVM community to create highly competitive proposals.

[REQUEST A CONSULTATION](#) →

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

Founded in 2020, Research Development expanded quickly to meet the high demand for grant development professionals. We are a team of research enthusiasts and our mission is to support and celebrate UVM researchers and scholars.

Our website: <https://www.uvm.edu/ovpr/resdev>

Finding Funding

- Tools for finding funding opportunities
- Limited Competitions
- Concept of solicited vs unsolicited funding opportunities

Tools for Identifying Funding Opportunities

- UVM Internal funding opportunities (OVPR and college websites)
- Funding Databases
 - **PIVOT** (UVM subscription – SPA website, Res Dev website)
- Funding agency announcements, e-alerts, **social media**
 - Grants.gov - Funding opps for 26 federal agencies
 - Individual federal agency websites (e.g., NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts, National Science Foundation Update)
 - Philanthropy News Digest (Candid.)

Pivot Database

- Searchable – funding database and expertise
- Updated daily
- Sources:
 - Federal and regional governments
 - Foundations
 - Professional societies, associations
 - Corporations
- Can create customized, saved searches, e-alerts
- Claim and keep your **profile** updated!
- **PIVOT training available through Research Development**

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

<https://www.uvm.edu/spa/pivot-funding-collaboration-tool-searchable-databases>



UVM Res Dev Funding Opportunities Newsletter

- **Weekly Funding Opportunities Newsletter**
 - Highlights new opps, diverse disciplines (NOT comprehensive)
 - Announcement of **UVM *Limited Competitions***
 - Links to curated searches – by broad discipline
 - Links to federal agency funding websites
 - Self-subscription – Click on “Communication of Funding Opportunities”

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

Limited Competitions

Limited Submission: Funders sometimes **restrict the number** of applications an institution can submit to a particular program.

UVM Internal Competition: Internal process to ensure we do not exceed a stated limit, jeopardizing multiple applications.

- Announced in weekly funding opps newsletter
- Brief LOI
- Convert to pre-proposal and internal review, if needed

<https://www.uvm.edu/spa/active-limited-competitions>

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

There are Two “Flavors” of Federal Funding Opps

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

Unsolicited (investigator-initiated) Opportunities:

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



Foundation Opps come in MANY “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



Takeaway:

You May Not Need to Find a “Specific” RFA

Many funding agencies have a mechanism for accepting **unsolicited (investigator-initiated)** grant applications

- “Core” programs
- Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs)
- “Parent” Announcements

You need to understand that process at the funding agency of interest

- Full proposal?
- Pre-proposal or white paper?

Develop a Process for Identifying Funding Opps

Many funders have recurring opportunities with relatively predictable due dates

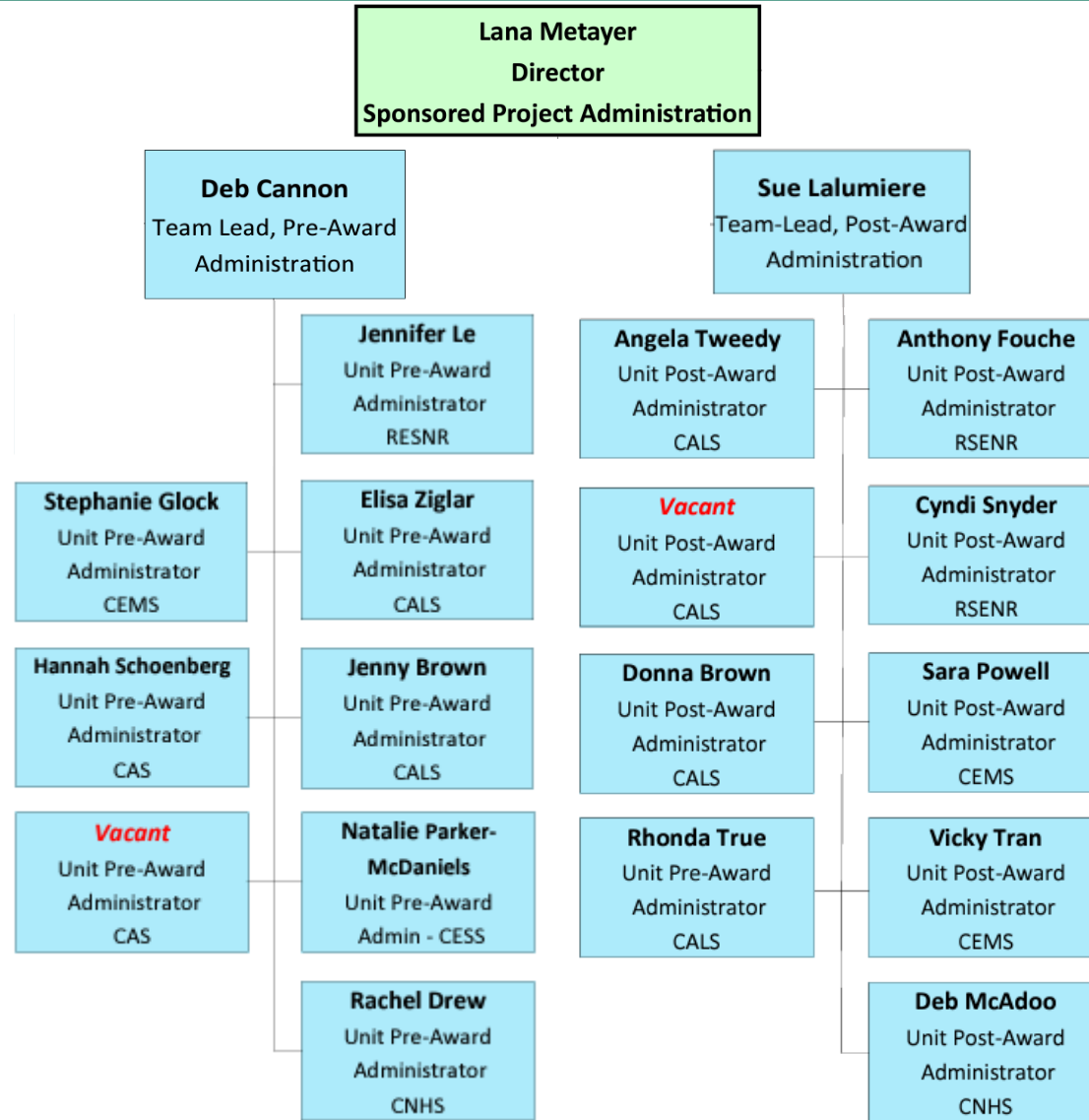
Process should:

- provide **early/timely** notification
- cover your target funding agencies
- cover a range of other potential funders
- meet your needs (i.e., doesn't overwhelm)

Sponsored Project Administration (SPA) & SPA 2.0 Support

SPA 2.0

SPA 2.0
Administrators serve the faculty on a more individual and personal level and act as a liaison between the faculty and the central team



What Is A Sponsored Project?

- Externally-funded activity 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)
- Supports research, public service, or instructional efforts

Fundamentals

- Whose grant is this?
 - Awards are made to the **institution**
- Who gets to call the shots?
 - A Principal Investigator (PI) is the lead researcher for the grant project
 - PIs and Central and Department administrators form a partnership
 - ✓ PIs direct the science
 - ✓ Administrators manage the business processes and compliance functions
- Who answers to whom?
 - Science without administration would not receive grant funding
 - Administrators without science would not receive grant funding

Proposal Development and Submission

- Collaboration between:
 - Principal Investigator, Business Unit Administrator, and SPA Research Administrator (RA)
 - SPA/RA Contact: <https://www.uvm.edu/spa/departmental-assignments>
- Determining Principal Investigator (PI) eligibility:
 - Faculty or professionally qualified staff
 - Emeriti faculty, with Department & College approval
 - <https://www.uvm.edu/spa/principal-investigator-eligibility>

Systems for Managing Sponsored Projects

UVMClick

- Proposal Development is used by Principal Investigators (PIs) to:
 - Initiate proposal in UVMClick
 - Prepare budgets
 - Upload proposal documents
 - Route proposals for internal approvals
 - System-to-system proposal submissions
- Proposal Tracking is used by the PI & business unit administrators to:
 - Track & report – current & pending support data
 - Storage of finalized documents relating to proposals, awards and subawards

Systems for Managing Sponsored Projects

PI Portal

Project Summary | Payroll Information | Transaction Detail | Financial Documents | Personnel Commitments

Project Summary

PS Project 038299 UPenn PCORI LITE Study
 Project Mgr Piette,Evan
 PM Home Dept
 College COM
 Status ACTIVE Cost Share? Y
 Start Date 12/15/2020 End Date 03/31/2023
 Includes 90 Day Pre-award spending:

Sponsored Total Direct Remaining 316.28

Search
 Sponsored Budget/Expenses Cost-Share

PS Award AWD00000348
 Award PI Piette,Evan
 Award Title A pragmatic trial of home versus office based narrow
 Award Dept Med-Dermatology
 Sponsor University of Pennsylvania
 Sponsor Award ID PCS-1608-35830
 Prime Sponsor PCORI Patient Cntrd Outcomes Res Inst
 Prime Award ID
 F+A Rate (%) 0.00
 F+A Base Modified Total Direct Cost
 Contract Type Fixed
 Award Purpose RESEARCH - Developmnt/ClinTrls

Go to Search Page

Budget Summary / Chartstrings | Download Results to Excel | First 1-14 of 14 Last

Account	Account Description	Budget	Open Encumbrances (Thru 6/30)	Expenditures	Remaining Amount
1 F5000	Personnel Salary			2,592.35	-2,592.35
2 F5990	Fringe Benefits			506.37	-506.37
3 F6000	Other Expenses and Services	3,415.00			3,415.00
4 F6002	General Supplies & Services				
5 F6004	Lab Research Supplies & Serv				
6 F6011	Publication Costs				
7 F6020	Computer Services				
8 F6021	Computer Devices				
9 F6050	Domestic Travel				
10 F6104	Research Subject Costs				
11 F6120	Consultant & Contract Services				
12 F6510	Equipment Maintenance				
13	TOTAL DIRECT	3,415.00		3,098.72	316.28
14	TOTAL	3,415.00		3,098.72	316.28

Notes

1. Data is refreshed nightly.
2. Source of the expenditure data is the General Ledger.
3. Keep in mind current unspent balances do not include expenses that are in progress. For example, PurCard purchases take 30-45 days before they are posted as an expenditure. Travel reimbursements are posted as an expenditure when paid.

Notify

Grant Proposal Development

Getting to Know You...

What do you think are typical reasons that proposals don't score well?

What Drives Success?

- Knowing your “audience” – who are your reviewers?
- Alignment between your goals and the funder’s goals/mission
- Significance/relevance of your idea
- FEASIBILITY and technical approach
- YOU as an investigator
 - Credentials and track record (publications, scholarly productivity, awards)
 - Expertise of you and your team
- AND... Leaving enough TIME to write – it takes longer than you think!

It Starts with a Good Idea!



when I think it



when I say it



when I try to write it down

Ideas are the product of preparation

Mid-Career: Can be both Exciting and Overwhelming

- What do your next 5 years look like?
- **Expanding or growing** research/scholarship you're already engaged in?
 - Could be a good time for a New Direction, or
 - Move into a completely new research/scholarly direction
- Take on areas of research that you have been interested in for a while, but have been postponing
- Have different type of responsibilities that may allow new explorations
- At a point in your career when you can afford to take on bigger and riskier projects

Create a Strategic Plan for your Research

Grants for Mid-Career Faculty

- They focus on professional development at a mid-career level
- They provide protected time that sometimes can be used to buyout teaching, to develop/learn new techniques that the PI would like to explore
- They provide support during longer periods of time
- They provide support during sabbatical periods

How Can an Award Database Help Me?

- Compare your work with funded projects – assess “fit” and competitiveness
- Has something similar been funded already?
- Where is my “home” within the funding agency?
- Identify funded colleagues
- Determine number of grants awarded in the previous funding cycle

Before You Write You Must Understand Your Audience



- Reviewers take the role seriously, but... busy, over-committed, tired
- Inherently skeptical and critical mindset
- Perhaps only peripherally interested in your research

Make Their Job Easy



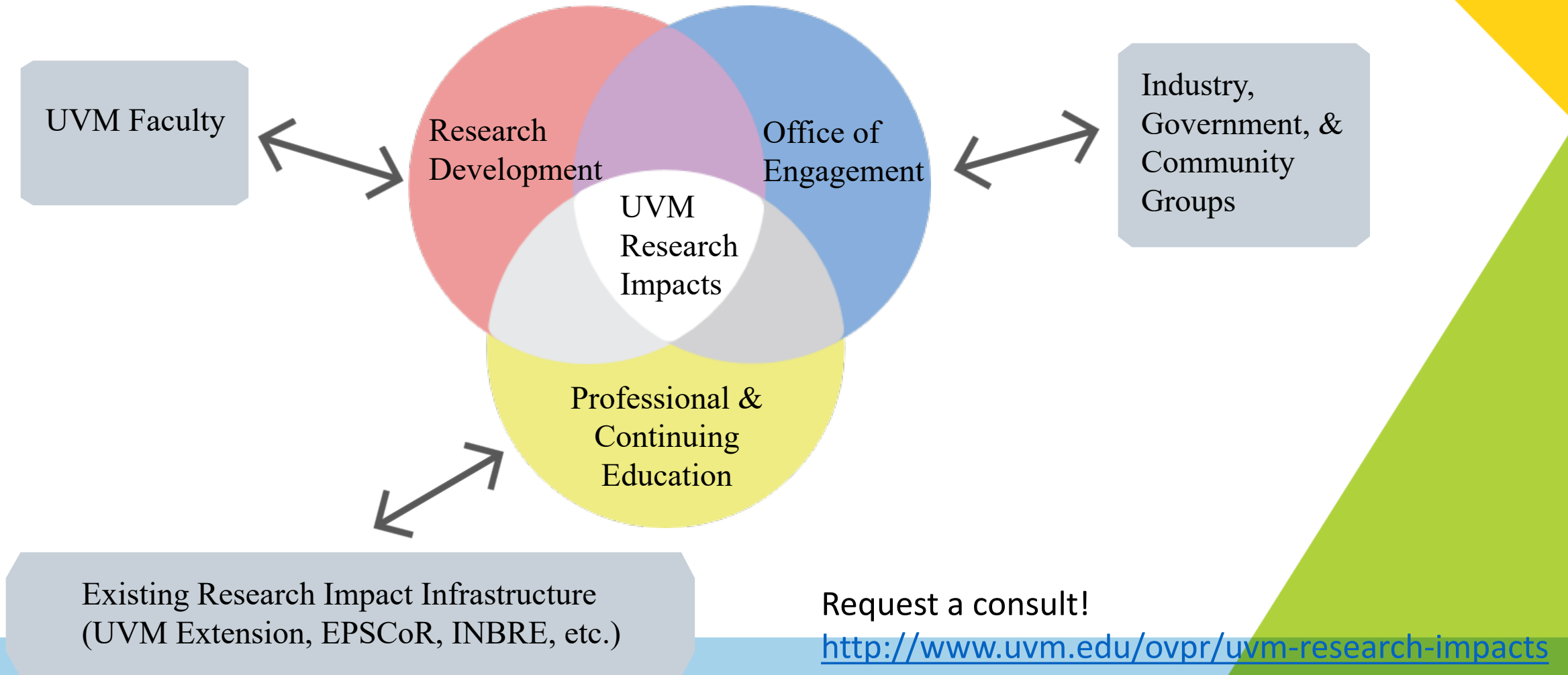
- Understand the review criteria and give the reviewers the words they need to defend your proposal to the rest of the panel
- **Explicit** statements
- Clear and concise writing

What Are They Looking For? Review Criteria

NIH	USDA	NEH	NSF
Significance	Relevance	Significance	Intellectual Merit
Investigators	Investigators	Applicant	Broader Impacts
Approach	Scientific Merit	Feasibility	
Environment	Facilities	Design and Work Plan	
Innovation		Cost	
		Clarity of Expression	

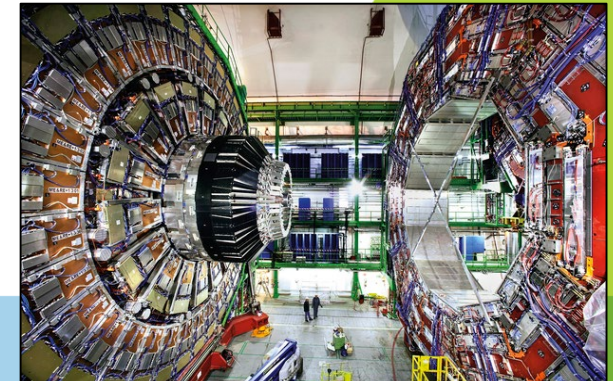
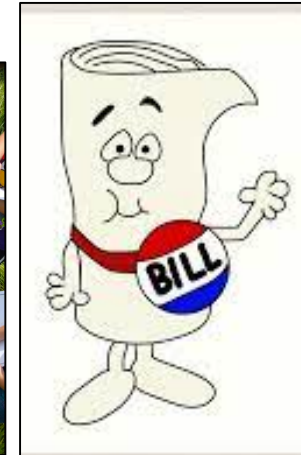
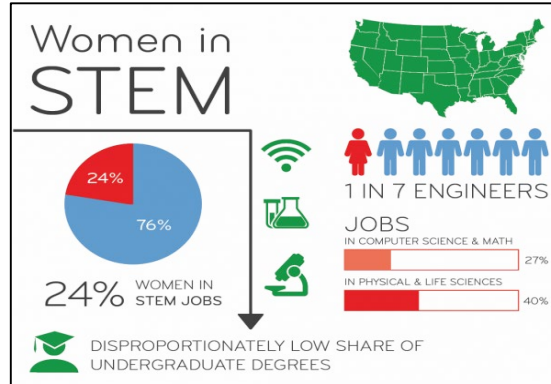


Strategic Resources – UVM Research Impacts Hub



What are broader impacts?

The potential of a research project to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.



Don't Take Negative Reviews Personally

Distinguishing between **excellent science/ scholarship** and *slightly less excellent science/ scholarship* is exceedingly difficult



Responding to Critiques

- Respect the reviewers' opinions
- Assume reviewers' comments are intended to be helpful
- Read the critique thoroughly and dispassionately
- In general, respond from the perspective that “the reviewer is always right” (even if you disagree with them!)
 - Errors in clarity and grantsmanship
- Be appreciative, not defensive
- Be persistent and consider resubmission

How to Request Research Development Support:

- Initiate contact early – **6-12 weeks in advance*** of your deadline
- **Complete intake form** on website with info about **funding opportunity** and **deadline**

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

- Contact us to set up a phone call or coffee meeting:
 - Meet our team – tell us about your research!
 - Help with using Pivot funding search database
 - New to grant writing or need help navigating the process
 - Early consult to answer questions or if unfamiliar funding agency



Additional Questions?

Ingrid Barcelo

Grant Proposal Developer, Res Dev

Office: Peirce-Spaulding Building

Email: Ingrid.Barcelo@uvm.edu

Jeannine Valcour

Grant Proposal Developer, Res Dev

Remote

Email: Jeannine.Valcour@uvm.edu