



GRANTS 101

Penn State University – November 11, 2020

Hanover Research

Hanover Research supports Grant Academy participants throughout the grant development process.

- Content Director Mallory Waters is the University's primary point of contact at Hanover, managing projects and workflow.
- Hanover's researchers and consultants work on one project at a time, using a "queue" model.
- Hanover can provide prospecting, proposal revision, proposal review, training, and grant strategy support.
- Each project type has specific requirements for preparation and lead time.



ROB GUROFF, MPP

Senior Grants Consultant

Rob Guroff holds an MPP in Public Policy and a BA in English and Economics. He joined Hanover after six years in the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations at Brown University, where he raised funds for financial aid, guided the grantseeking efforts of education outreach programs, worked closely with the new School of Engineering, and supported student group grantseeking. Before that, Rob worked in the American Red Cross National Headquarters Development Department in a variety of analyst roles. At Hanover, Rob is focused on helping postsecondary clients develop compelling cases for new and existing programs. He has helped company clients secure more than \$20 million.



AGENDA

- Grant Funding Landscape
- Matching Ideas with Suitable Funders
- Prospecting
- Developing Compelling Proposals
- Grantseeking Strategy: Playing a Long Game



GRANT FUNDING LANDSCAPE

GRANTS: WHAT? WHO? WHY?

WHAT IS A GRANT?

Grants are (generally) non-repayable funds or products disbursed by one party, often a government agency, foundation/trust, or corporation to a recipient, often a nonprofit entity, educational institution, business or (rarely) an individual.

WHO MAKES GRANTS?

- Federal agencies
- State and local government agencies
- National, regional, local, family, community, and corporate foundations
- Public charities
- Professional or industry associations
- Businesses and companies

WHY DO THEY MAKE THEM?

- Local / Regional / National / Global Need
- Promote Change & Improvement
- Philanthropic Investment
- Public Recognition



FEDERAL GRANTMAKING

Government agencies and organizations fund a variety of projects, programs, research, and product development through grants. Each agency exists to advance a specific agenda. This agenda is typically outlined in a public document called a [strategic plan](#).



KEY FEDERAL GRANTS STATS

26

TOTAL FEDERAL
GRANTMAKING AGENCIES

1,000+

TOTAL GRANT PROGRAMS
ACROSS ALL AGENCIES

\$961.4 Billion

TOTAL FEDERAL OBLIGATED
AMOUNT FOR GRANTS IN
FY 2018

(SOURCE:USASPENDING)

FOUNDATION GRANTMAKING

A foundation is a non-governmental entity that is established as a nonprofit corporation or a charitable trust, with a principal purpose of making grants to unrelated organizations, institutions, or individuals for scientific, educational, cultural, religious, or other charitable purposes.

(SOURCE: [FOUNDATION CENTER](#))



KEY FOUNDATION STATS

86,726

TOTAL NUMBER OF FOUNDATIONS

\$60.2 Billion

TOTAL AMOUNT OF GIVING

\$865.3 Billion

TOTAL FOUNDATION ASSETS

(SOURCE: [FOUNDATION CENTER](#), 2014)

FEDERAL GRANTMAKERS VS FOUNDATIONS

They have very little in common beyond a mandate to give away money with strings attached.

FEDERAL GRANTMAKERS

- Get their funding from **taxpayers**
- Are responsible to **legislators** and administrations
- Are required to be **transparent** in their activities
- Follow **clearly defined criteria** and processes

FOUNDATIONS

- Get their funding from **donors**
- Are responsible to **trustees**
- Are **not required to explain** their decisions to the public
- Often **lack clear definition** for their criteria and processes, or **choose not to follow** those they adopt



MATCHING IDEAS WITH SUITABLE FUNDERS

What makes a grant idea competitive?

To be competitive for grant funding, you need to have an exciting idea that:

- Fills a demonstrable gap or need (e.g., in services or knowledge)
- Produces something of value within a specified timeframe
- Is new, original, innovative, or cheaper/faster/more efficient
- Has a strong, measurable impact
- Is timely

If people in your field get excited about your idea, you are on to something.

Idea Development: Define the Gap

A great grant idea fills a key gap that is hindering your field.

- What are the most important challenges in my field right now?
- What is missing that could help advance the field?
 - Is it a tool? What kind?
 - Is it knowledge? What knowledge, specifically?
 - Is it a program model?
 - Is it implementation of existing models?
 - Is it evaluation of current implementations?

Articulate the pertinent gaps in your field as clearly as possible.

Idea Development: Define the Impact

Great grant ideas are high-impact.

- What would be the impact on my own work?
- What would be the impact on my students?
- What would be the impact on the field?
- What would be the impact on society?

Your idea's impact is what grant funders would get for their money.

A Good Idea vs. a Fundable Idea

A good idea:

- Helps someone
- Advances an important agenda
- Serves a wise/substantial purpose
- Creates interest
- Involves growth or learning
- Can have undefined steps or processes
- Builds something of value
- Has form that follows function
- Can be of any scale
- Can be a one-time effort

A fundable idea:

- Addresses the funder's target audience
- Advances the funder's agenda
- Serves a wise/substantial purpose
- Aligns with funder priorities
- Measures/analyzes growth and learning
- Has a clear path from A to B to C
- Builds something of value
- Fits in a pre-set spectrum of activity types
- Is scaled by prior experience and budget
- Should be replicable/sustainable

More information: [Helping Faculty Differentiate Between the Good and the Fundable](#)



PROSPECTING

Prospecting: Who will fund your idea?

Prospecting is the art of matching grant ideas with likely funders.

Good prospective funders have:

- A mission that aligns with your mission
- A history of funding similar or related projects
- Stated priorities that encompass your project area
- No restrictions that would preclude funding your project

Prospecting: Grants.gov

SEARCH GRANTS

BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA:

Keyword(s):

Opportunity Number:

CFDA:

SEARCH

OPPORTUNITY STATUS:

- Forecasted (20)
- Posted (141)
- Closed (353)
- Archived (4,370)

FUNDING INSTRUMENT TYPE:

- All Funding Instruments
- Cooperative Agreement (93)
- Grant (92)
- Other (43)
- Procurement Contract (29)

ELIGIBILITY:

- All Eligibilities
- City or township governments (16)
- County governments (16)
- For profit organizations other than small businesses (16)

CATEGORY:

- All Categories
- Agriculture (8)
- Arts (see 'Cultural Affairs' in CFDA) (11)

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SORT BY: **Update Sort**

DATE RANGE: **Update Date Range**

1 - 25 OF 161 MATCHING RESULTS: [« Previous](#) **1** [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) [Next »](#)

Opportunity Number	Opportunity Title	Agency	Opportunity Status	Posted Date	Close Date
2021FCAHDOM01	NEA Arts & Artifacts Domestic Indemnity Program, FY2021	NEA	Posted	07/14/2020	12/14/2020
NEAPS2003	NEA National Folklife Network, FY2021	NEA	Posted	10/14/2020	12/17/2020
20-526	NSF Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Program	NSF	Posted	12/06/2019	03/31/2021
CDC-RFA-GH21-2135	Scaling Up Comprehensive Facility and Community HIV Prevention, Care and Treatment Programs for the Key and Vulnerable Populations, and People Living with HIV (PLHIV) in the Tanzania under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)	HHS-CDC-CGH	Forecasted	09/17/2020	
CDC-RFA-GH21-2150	Sustaining HIV Epidemic Control through Efficient Case Finding and Quality Care and Treatment Services Beyond COVID-19 Pandemic in Malawi under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)	HHS-CDC-CGH	Forecasted	09/21/2020	
2021NEA03LFTP	NEA Literature Fellowships: Translation Projects, FY2022	NEA	Posted	10/08/2020	01/13/2021
PAS-JAKARTA-FY20-03	U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP)	DOS-IDN	Forecasted	05/22/2020	
DOS-MEX-PD-CJ-2019-1	Annual Program Statemen PAS US Consulate Juarez	DOS-MEX	Posted	04/03/2019	12/31/2020
DOS-MEX-PD-CJ-2020-21	Annual Program Statemen PAS US Consulate Juarez	DOS-MEX	Posted	07/31/2020	12/31/2021
PAR-19-134	Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP) for Health Professional Schools and Graduate Schools (R15 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	12/21/2018	01/07/2022
PAR-19-135	Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP) for Health Professional Schools and Graduate Schools (R15 Clinical Trial Required)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	12/21/2018	01/07/2022
PAS-CB-600-20-PAS-0003	Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation Large Grants	DOS-KHM	Forecasted	11/08/2019	

Prospecting: Grants.gov Notifications

Subscribe to Grants.gov to track existing and new opportunities.

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Prospecting: Foundations

- Funding Institutional (PSU Subscription)
- Philanthropy News Digest (PND)
- Google/Bing
- Peer/Mentor CVs
- Hanover Grant Alerts
- Hanover Prospecting Reports

PND by Candid.

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2020 Nonprofit Compensation
Benchmark your non-
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Volunteers of America million for veterans' h



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- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Aging | Disabilities | Mental health |
| Agriculture / Food | Education | Native Americans |
| Animal welfare | Environment | Philanthropy / Voluntarism |
| Arts / Culture | Health | Public affairs |
| Athletics / Sports | Higher education | Racial equity |
| Children / Youth | Hispanics / Latinos | Science / Technology |
| Civil / Human rights | Human services | Social justice |
| Climate change | International affairs / development | Social science |
| Community improvement / development | Journalism / Media | Substance abuse |
| Conservation | LGBTQ | Veterans |
| COVID19 | Medical research | Women / Girls |

RESEARCH, EVALUATE, AND PRIORITIZE OPPORTUNITIES

GATHER INFORMATION

- ✓ Funder type and mission
- ✓ Relevant grantmaking history
- ✓ Key Contacts, Staff and Trustee names and profiles
- ✓ Funding process (e.g., eligibility, timing, amounts, requirements)
- ✓ Indicators of competitiveness
- ✓ Opportunities for connection and communication

Keep notes in a list, spreadsheet, or database for further analysis.

EVALUATE ALIGNMENT

Government:

- Does the program align with the goals of your project?
- Does the program support activities you plan to pursue in your project?
- Is there evidence of support to projects similar to yours?

Foundation:

- Are your mission and the funder's mission well aligned?
- What is the long-term potential of the relationship?
- How challenging will it be to develop a relationship with the funder?

PRIORITIZE PROSPECTS

Pursue prospects with:

- Good mission alignment
- Strong program alignment
- Good potential ROI

Do not pursue if:

- Alignment is not good
- ROI is not good

Prioritize prospects based on alignment, ease of pursuit, timeline, etc.

CONTACTING PROSPECTIVE GRANTMAKERS

Discuss your work with program officers from priority grantmakers.

For most opportunities, it is not worth applying for a grant without first contacting a program officer to discuss your proposal.

Email a 1- or 2-page concept paper to the program officer, and ask:

- Is your agency/organization interested in this type of work?
- Would you be willing to provide some guidance regarding my plan?

Program officers are there to help you.



DEVELOPING COMPELLING PROPOSALS

Grant Competitiveness

Grant competitiveness is multi-faceted; pay attention to all the elements.

Key elements of grant competitiveness:

1. Responsiveness to funder interests and requirements
2. Need / Rationale
3. Project design
4. Preliminary findings
5. PI qualifications and experience
6. Established relationships and collaborations
7. Resources available

Compelling Proposals: Review Your Project Design

Refine your project design with funder aims, Program Officer guidance, and RFP requirements in mind.

- Make any necessary adjustments to the overall goals, objectives, and activities articulated in your concept paper.
- Plan the details of your project: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How in chronological order.
- How will you know if the project is successful?

Compelling Proposals: Make A Grant Development Plan

Map out your strategy to develop and submit the proposal on time.

Create:

- **Checklist** of all required proposal elements
- **Timeline** for proposal development, including key dates
 - Note deadline for Letter of Intent or pre-proposal, as well as proposal deadline.
 - Allow time to get internal approval before submission.
- **Narrative Outline** based on the scoring rubric or key section headings
 - Note character-, word-, and page-limits, as well as formatting requirements.

Always allow time for delays: plan to submit well before the deadline.

Compelling Proposals: Outline The Narrative

Strong narratives have similar core elements:

- Statement of the Problem / Gap / Need / Opportunity
- Literature Review (if applicable)
- Conceptual Framework
- Hypotheses / Research Questions
- Methodology / Strategy
- Scope of Work
- Management Plan
- Staff / Institutional Qualifications

Each solicitation will require information to be presented in specific ways.

Compelling Proposals: Write The Narrative

Statement of the Problem / Gap / Need / Opportunity

Include a clear and concise statement of the purpose of the project.

For research grants, provide:

- Specific question(s) to be answered
- Brief explanation of the need for or significance of the study
- Explanation of how the results will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and the expected results

For program grants, provide:

- Statement of need, including statistics and qualitative data.
** Do not simply restate or paraphrase the RFP*

Literature Review (if applicable)

Convey your understanding of relevant literature and how the proposed study or project fits in context.

- Make it comprehensive but concise.
- Trace the central themes in the literature, highlight major areas of disagreement, and reflect a critical stance toward the materials reviewed.

Compelling Proposals: Write The Narrative

Conceptual Framework

Identify theories or concepts that will guide the project.

- Describe strengths and weaknesses of the proposed framework.
- Show understanding of the theoretical perspective and relevance.
- Describe how or why they suggest the specific hypotheses or research questions.
- Connect your conceptual framework to your logic model, if applicable.

Hypotheses / Research Questions

Provide clear statement(s) regarding the research hypotheses (formal or informal) and key questions/expectations.

- Explain why testing the hypotheses or answering key questions is appropriate for elucidating the research problems.
- Be absolutely sure that your “hypotheses” are actual hypotheses—they must be fully testable and falsifiable.

Compelling Proposals: Write The Narrative

Methodology / Strategy

Describe implementation methods.

- The description of the proposed methodology should contain enough detail to indicate that the applicant knows what s/he is doing and allow reviewers to assess both feasibility and appropriateness to the research questions.
- Include details for all procedures, work, and implementation protocols.
- Describe the instruments that will be used for collecting data, explain why are they appropriate for this study, and provide evidence of the instruments' reliability and validity.
- Provide detailed data analysis procedures.

Scope of Work

Indicate exactly what will be done, including the sequence of the proposed activities and the anticipated outcomes and/or deliverables.

- Specify the tasks, outcomes/deliverables, and schedule in sufficient detail.
- Include all activities necessary for completing the project.
- Provide a viable schedule for carrying out the tasks (work plan).

Compelling Proposals: Write The Narrative

Management Plan

Explain how you will manage the project.

- Indicate who will be responsible for each work component
- Describe how each element of the project will be coordinated.

Staff / Institutional Qualifications

Explain why your staff and institution are qualified to implement the project.

- Include discussion of the qualifications and experience of the proposed staff (be brief but comprehensive), including how they are qualified to conduct the project.
- List capabilities of the institution (applicant and/or partners).
- Where applicable, include information on facilities and equipment.

Compelling Proposals: Budget

Typical budget lines include:

- Personnel
- Fringe Benefits (standard rates)
- Travel
- Equipment (durable, long-lasting)
- Supplies (expendable, short-term)
- Contractual
- Construction
- Indirect Costs (note limitations)
- Other

It is often helpful to develop the budget in a separate spreadsheet using categories that make sense internally and transfer to the grantmaker's required form after the budget is final.

Compelling Proposals: Write The Budget Narrative

The budget narrative must be consistent with the project narrative.

Tips for budget narrative development:

- Show a clear method of calculation for each item.
- Link each item back to grant activities and grantmaker goals.
- Use the same terminology that you used in the project narrative.
- A table can make the information easier to digest, even in the budget narrative.

Be specific!

Vague: The University will subcontract with a program evaluation company. Funding is requested at \$25,000.

Specific: The University will contract with an independent professional evaluation service to conduct a rigorous program evaluation to verify impact and results as outlined in the Evaluation Plan. This cost is estimated at \$100/hour and includes 200 hours of work plus \$5,000 in travel costs associated with two site visits during the grant term. Total: \$25,000.

The Bottom Line

Successful grantseeking takes time and energy.

To maximize return on investment:

- Build adequate grant timelines, including time to:
 - Communicate with stakeholders
 - Create strong project design
 - Get feedback
 - Develop and refine the application
- Be wary of quick-turnaround grants.
 - Remember that it can be damaging to submit a bad proposal.
- Be strategic about the grants you choose to pursue.
 - Make sure each proposal process supports your long-term goals.



GRANTSEEKING STRATEGY: PLAYING A LONG GAME

Start with a Strategy

A strategic approach to grantwriting is most effective over the long term.

Steps for grant funding strategy development:

1. Articulate your long-term goals.
2. Delineate the role of funding in achieving your goals.
3. Map out an ideal grant funding trajectory.
4. Make a plan to stay on track.
5. Work the plan.
6. Revisit the plan and revise as necessary.

In every grantseeking cycle, keep your long-term trajectory and “roadmap” in mind: how will this grant process advance your goals?

Know the Territory: Funding in Your Field

With the overall field in mind, survey the funding landscape.

- Who are the key funders in your field?
 - Federal, state, foundation, corporate
- What are their priorities?
 - Stated and unstated
- What are the overall funding trends in the field?
- Are there potential untapped sources of funding in your field?

Keep an eye on changes and trends.

Develop a Long-Term Strategy

Design a long-term strategy to build your grant funding.

- Identify individuals (or institutions) in your field who have had exceptional success with grant funding.
 - Retrace their steps: what contributed to their success?
 - Establish mentoring relationships if possible.
- Given the lay of the land in your field, map out an ideal funding trajectory.
 - Identify long-term targets. What grants will you need to get in the short- and medium-term in order to be competitive for these key opportunities?
- Create a concrete plan with action steps; implement it.
 - Revisit and revise this plan regularly.

Return on Investment

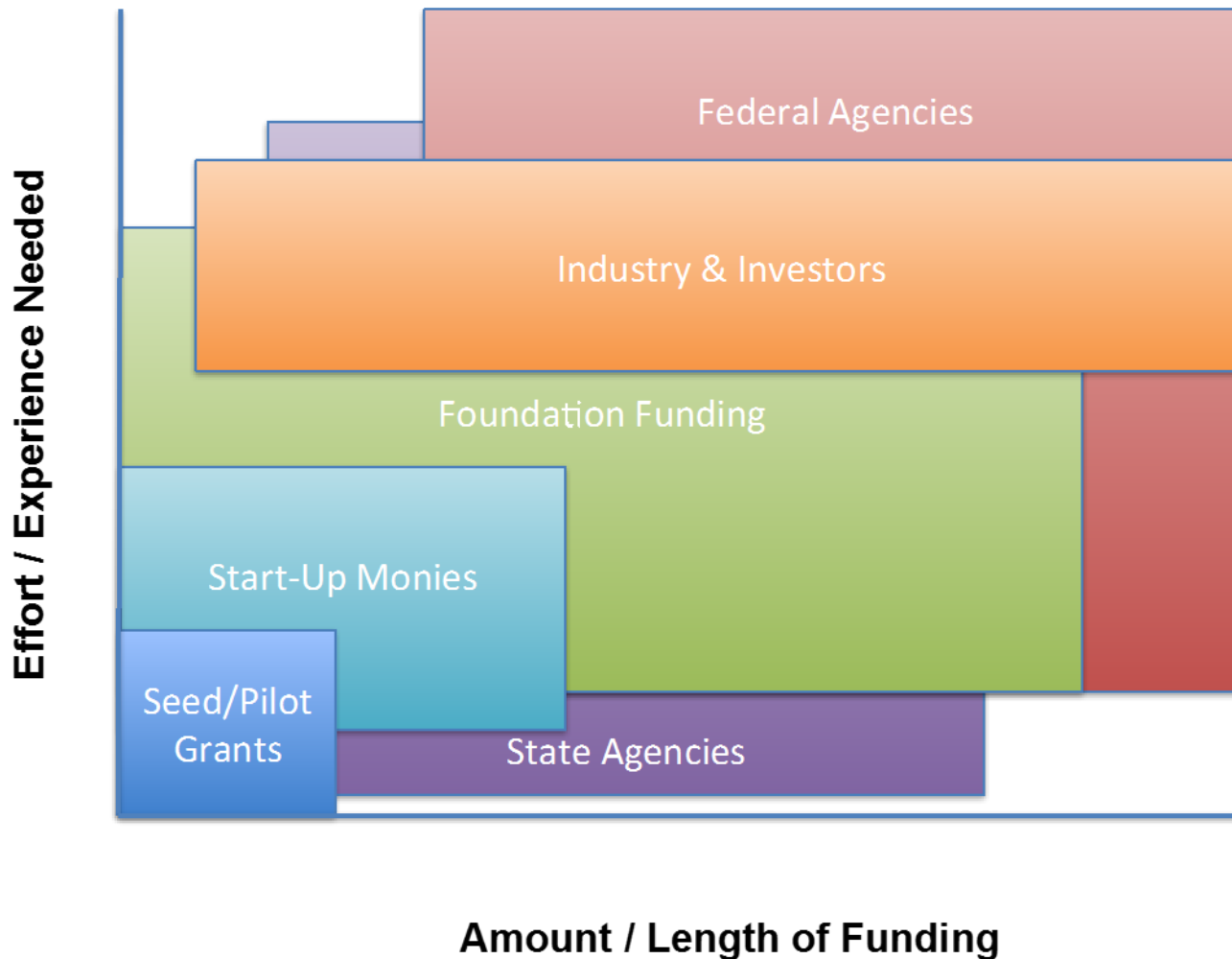
The return on your investment in grantseeking will be multifaceted; grantseeking is not just about money.

ROI from grantseeking may include:

- Grantseeking skills
- Relationships
- Prestige
- Money

Grantseeking takes time and energy. Be clear about what you are getting from each grantseeking process.

Survey the Funding Landscape: Difficulty and Payoff



Grant-Funded Career

Four actions to take to improve your odds of being funded, now and later:

1. Start small, with pilot projects and internal funding mechanisms.
2. Publish, publish, publish.
3. Serve as a grant reviewer.
4. Apply!

You will build your grantseeking skills with each application cycle.

Learning from the Grant Process

Grantseeking is a competitive, iterative process.

- Many grants aren't funded on the first submission.
 - For some opportunities, the expectation of resubmission is built in.
- Learn as much as you can from each grantseeking process.
- Reviewers' comments are very valuable: pay attention.
- A grant decline can be the opening step in funder relationship development.





QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU