

Research Funding Online - Carol A. Rudisell

Ok, why don't we go ahead and get started. Good morning, and thank you all for coming out. I'm Carol Rudisell. I'm a member of the Reference and Instructional Services department and I'm really happy to have the opportunity to speak with you today about the library's resources that pertain to philanthropy, fundraising, and grants. So my goal today, though, is to help you learn a little bit about the process here at the University of Delaware for securing grants, and to spend a fair amount of time going over the databases that we have that are good for zeroing in on funders. I don't think I need to remind you that funding is very competitive, and you know it pays to kind of do your homework, make sure you're approaching the right people. And that's what we're going to be focusing on.

Normally we try to begin the workshop with representatives from the Research Office and the Development Office, but they were unable to attend today. But they did ask me to pass along their good wishes, and make sure that you knew they existed and how to find them.

You'll notice I gave you an agenda, and at the bottom of the agenda there is a box with various links that are useful for grant seeking, and there is a link here to the Research Office, and also a link to the Development Office. I mentioned this because if you are applying for grants through the University, not necessarily to fund your own personal research, but if you are engaged in a project that is going to be sponsored by the University, you truly need to touch base with the Research Office and the Development Office. They can then guide you through the process, particularly any grants (federal grants that go out of the University) - they have to be submitted by the Research Office. Similarly, the Research Office looks at grants that are going out from other institutions to make sure that everything is in place. My understanding is that if you're applying, say, as a faculty member for summer funding, it depends on how the funding opportunity is written as to whether or not you need to apply as an individual person or apply through the University. So if you have any questions at all about that, I would highly recommend you're giving the Research Office a call. Besides they're good people to get to know. And you should have in your department, too, a liaison who can help to guide you through the process.

Let me just take a minute and go over to the Research Office website. So here we are at the university homepage, and if we go over to "Research and Innovation," we can link through to the Research Office. Then you have the exact address on your on your page. And so here you have the Research Office website. There is a category for researchers. You can go straight in there. And here you have the "Researcher's Toolbox". But there's also a staff directory, and this is where you can begin to see who in your department is responsible for managing grants. So here you'll see who your contact person is in the Research Office, and then you'll also see who your department administrator is. That's what you would...those are the people that you would need to talk to as you begin to think about who you're going to approach.

Let's just say you've found a great private foundation that you would like to contact, or submitted a proposal to. You're not sure whether or not you need to go in as an individual or as a foundation? What you wanted - or, I mean, "or an *organization*." What you want to do is contact the Development Office, for a couple of reasons. The Development Office is very critical in developing relationships with private foundations and companies. And a lot of times they can kind of clear some paths for you. What they generally ask before you come to them is that you have a budget, a brief description of the project that you want to do (in a timeline), and departmental approval to pursue it. So, and then you set an appointment with them, and they'll ask you why you think the foundation you're interested in is a good match. So with that information, you can then be prepared to go forward.

But anyway, here you have the website for corporate and foundation relations. You can go through and read what they have on what's called "prospect clearance." That's the...the discussion that you have with them prior to making an approach to a corporation or a foundation. Not only can they clear the way for you sometimes because of the relationships they've established, but also, there are instances where certain foundations or corporations are targeted for really large gifts. Say for capital campaign for the University...and they plan on approaching the foundation to ask for over a million dollars. And if that's the case, they may not welcome a lot of independent researchers from the University approaching the same foundation asking for much *smaller* grants. Because then, when the University makes its official approach they...the foundation could say, "Well, I've already given to the University of Delaware - The Disaster Research Center." And that wouldn't be so good. So that's another reason why you want to reach out to the Development Office and have a conversation with them.

So just to reiterate: grant seeking really is a process. You know what they say, "There's no such thing as a free lunch." You really do have to work for your grant. It's a lot more than just sitting down and shooting off a canned proposal. First of all, you know, start as early as you can. Regardless if you're going in for a grant for an organization or for an individual, it always pays to start as early as you can in the process. A lot of times particularly, if you're looking for funding as part of an organization, you need to think about projects that can be funded, rather than necessarily looking for ongoing funding. So you'll want to think about fundable projects. And you'll want to, early on in the process, make sure you have all of your internal ducks lined up. And that's again what I just was reiterating. In a university setting, you know, you'll...you'll want to make sure you've touched base with your department administrator, your...your department chair, who will probably then go forward with the Dean Provost (depending on the size of the grant), the Research Office and the Development Office... If you're in a non-profit world, generally you're going to be working with your Executive Director; or, if they're a larger organization, they will have their own Development Office that you work with, and sometimes you will be working with the Board of Trustees of that - or Board of Directors, rather - for that organization.

So, one of the things as you're putting projects together...you want to, you know, make sure you evaluate them and make sure they're high-impact, that they really are working very closely with your mission and goals, and that they are achievable. So you want to make sure that you have the resources in order to carry out the project that you're proposing. And that can be just as simple as having an office space for a staff person to work in. Or if you're going to be carrying out certain work, making sure you have the equipment in place. And if not, including it in your proposal. There's nothing worse than having a grant and then realizing, "Oh gee, you know, I forgot to include money for benefits for the person - we can't hire them if they don't have benefits." So you want to make sure that you have everything in place in order to carry out that project.

So, I mentioned that you want to think about fundable projects organizations, charitable organizations, often don't like to permanently carry a non-profit. They want to be able to help them get started. Provide discrete funding, one-time funding that can sometimes be renewed depending on the organization. So it becomes your job as a fundraiser for your organization to try to creatively think about, "Well, which of our needs can we pull out and form into a project that would be attractive to a funder?" So be thinking along those lines. There are funds available for general support for organizations, but those are highly competitive. So if you can think of it in terms of one-time funding projects, that's a little bit better. And this gives you just an idea of some of the types of projects that you can come up with. Again, to take stress off of your ongoing budget. Staff, renovations, equipment, programming, and then of course you guys know, research. That's an obvious, too. Travel. Okay, for students looking to travel to go to conferences, that can also be something that you look into.

Researching your funders is key, and I can't emphasize this enough, and this is really what the major emphasis of today's workshop is going to be: how to go about researching the funders. Because generally what you're

trying to do is find funders who...whose mission and goals are going to be furthered by your research. Ok? Or your work your organization's work. So that it becomes a marriage of sorts. You know, by funding your work, they're getting their goals and missions accomplished. So we recommend that you start by using a database or two, generating a list, and then refining it using other sources to gain more information about the funder. Looking at...at other criteria. And what *are* those criteria? These are some of the things you're going to be looking for:

You're going to be looking for funders who are interested in funding in your geographic area. That is a big one. Believe it or not, there are a lot of foundations there that focus just on their own community. So you want to be sure that your area - where you're located, where your research is going to be carried out (or your project) - that it matches the funder's interests.

The subject area. So you're interested in Disasters? Physical therapy? That's something you would want to make sure that the...the funder is interested in.

Types of support. The most obvious one that I can think of are scholarships, fellowships for graduate students, for example. You'll want to make sure that the organization funds scholarships to individuals, okay, and/or fellowships to individuals. Other types of support: Capital Campaigns. Or research is another type of support.

So those are the kinds of things that you can put in. Other factors come...become critical when you're looking at support for individual research or for individual scholarship. There are fellowships out there for things...categories that pertain to your own personal experience. So if you have a veteran status, there may be other opportunities available. If you're a woman, there may be other opportunities. Person of color, etc. So you're going to be on the lookout for that as well.

I want to just make sure we understand the types of funders that we're talking about. Because in a minute, I'm going to show you a few databases, and they differ in terms of the types of funders that are included. So I won't go into great detail, but what you see up here on the screen are the most common funders. I'm gonna try to put a little bit more focus on private foundations simply because - well a number of reasons - but, we are affiliated with the Foundation Center. "We" meaning, University of Delaware, affiliated with the Foundation Center that's located in New York City. And they basically serve as a clearing house for information on private foundations.

Private foundations are organizations - *non-profit* organizations - that are set up with the sole purpose of giving away money. And they are required by law to give away a certain percentage a year. So they are really good sources to apply, and a lot of times, researchers, fundraisers, prefer to approach private foundations because sometimes the process is much simpler. The application can be as simple as a letter with a budget attached. So it can be that simple. On the other hand, your larger foundations have a much more robust application procedure. There can also be fewer red tags, say, than applying for federal funding. Again, that's not across the board, but *generally* those are some of the things that I hear as to why researchers like to approach private foundations.

Let me interject too, because I don't want to forget this, oftentimes people will ask me, "Well okay, we're going to be researching private foundations and other funders - why do I need to go through a database? Why can't I just Google this?" Private foundations in particular often have...many of them have small staff. They don't want applications from all over the world. So they don't have websites. **There are less than half private foundations - and there are more than 140,000 private foundations - less than half have websites.** So if you're only relying on Google to find your funders, you're missing out on a lot of money. So that's why we recommend using a

database. And in particular, for private foundations, I highly recommend using the “Foundation Directory - Online Professional,” which is one of the databases we’re going to take a look at.

There are other useful sources for funding:

For graduate students particularly, you’ll want to look at the professional associations in your area - they often give grants for travel. Prizes for research, that kind of thing. So you’ll want to be on the lookout for that.

Public charities are another good source. Public charities are non-profit organizations that conduct programs, but also make grants. Sometimes they call themselves a foundation, but that...their tax status really is not the same as a private foundation's. A good example is the Make-A-Wish foundation. Although, I think they've now dropped the foundation from their name. Because they're not a foundation, they're a public charity. They raise money, but they also give money.

So corporations are a good source. They often want to fund projects that are going to provide a little goodwill in their community. Give them some good publicity. So they can also be helpful. They're probably the most elusive category to find though, because they're not required by law to say who they give to. So that can require a fair amount of digging to find corporations that are good for support.

Government agencies - we will take a look at some of those. For those...for those of us here in the state of Delaware, if you're looking for funding from the state, the state website is the best source. None of the databases that I'm going to show you are especially good for locating Delaware state funding.

Any questions about that so far?

I'm guessing you guys probably don't care where your money comes from right? Is that true? Okay. So we'll...we'll...we'll take a look at all of the databases, and then you can pick and choose who you actually apply to. So you're going to use the databases to generate a broad list. These are the primary ones that are available to you here at the University of Delaware. The first three are subscription databases (i.e. - the Library pays for them so that you can have access to them). The fourth one is the only one that is free on the internet. And that's “Grants.gov.” That is the primary portal for government funding. I'm not going to show you “Grants.gov” today because the information that is provided in “Grants.gov” is also available in “COS Pivot,” and I think the searching interface in “COS Pivot” is better. So we will look at “COS Pivot,” “Foundation Directory Online Professional,” and the “Foundation Grants to Individuals.”

So I have mentioned private foundations a little bit. The “Foundation Directory Online” is the best source for private foundations. It includes all private foundations. So we know if we go there, we have got all of them. And over the years, they have added different types of funders to the database. So, they do include now some of the larger corporate givers. And they also include now some of the federal government funders as well. So it's this is a great source. You can access it anywhere on campus. You can also access it from home, although you'll have to proxy and login with your UDel net and password. If you follow the instructions on the sheets that I gave you, you'll have no trouble getting into “Foundation Directory Online” from home should you choose to do so.

“Foundation Grants to Individuals” is a companion database as the title suggests. Though it is geared for those of you who are looking for funding to apply not as part of an official University project, but as an individual scholar. So students who are looking for funding - this is a great database for you to try. This particular database, though, is only searchable from within the library on library computers. Hardwired computers - not

even laptops. So we have special logins for you to use today, but normally what you have to do is physically come into the building, and sit down, use one of the library computers to get in to that database. And just so you know, that...as I said, the companion database is the "Foundation Directory." If you're looking for funding as part of the University, definitely stick with the "Foundation Directory." Individuals, again, you'll want to use this database.

"Pivot" I have alluded to. "Pivot" started down at Johns Hopkins in their research office. So it has a very heavy emphasis on research. But if you are working with a social service organization, you can also find funding in there as well. It is really good for finding federal funding. And that's what I really like about it best. It also includes a very little bit of state funding, and also some nonprofit other nonprofits and professional associations are represented there.

Both this database, "Pivot," and the "Foundation Directory" are attempting to become international. They're slowly moving in that direction, and I'd say right now, you can count on Western Europe being fairly well represented, especially the UK. And they're now also branching down into Australia, up to Canada, and starting to pick up China as well. So you're starting to see some diversification, but it does have a very significant Western slant.

Let's see... This one ("Pivot") is also accessible from anywhere on campus and again at home. This one also has some special features that I'll mention a little bit later. But if you're looking for funding on an ongoing basis, I would highly recommend for this database that you create your own username and password, and set up a login. And that way you can take advantage of the special features.

And then "Grants.gov," as I said, is the place where you can go to search for federal funding. And once you leave the University, if you're totally unaffiliated with any other university that provides "COS Pivot" or another funding database, you can always use "Grants.gov" to find federal funding. And I want to emphasize again, you can use it now to look for funding, but *please* do not attempt to apply for any grant going out under the University's name through "Grants.gov." Only the research office can do that, okay? You can look and see what's available, but the site is also the portal where people submit applications. *But only the research office is authorized to submit on behalf of the University.*

So once you go through the databases and come up with a list - and all the databases allow you to download information to a spreadsheet or you know download individual PDFs - what you want to do is think of that information as a starting point, just a list to help you figure out who it is you want to look at. And then you really want to take a much closer, more...more in-depth look at the organizations on your list. The first place to go would be to see if they have a website. The databases will give you a link to the website if they have them. So you'll definitely want to go over to the website and do more comprehensive reading at the website. Also, a lot of them are now pushing out publications, newsletters, annual reports. Again, you'll take a look at those kinds of things to see if they just clarify the "giving picture" for that particular organization. A lot of the funders too are engaging in social media, so you can follow them on Twitter, friend them on Facebook, etc. Okay? And again the...the purpose of doing that is twofold: it's to help you understand what they're doing, but it's also to get you on their radar as well. Particularly if you're working with a community organization, you want people to be seeing what your organization is doing so that, you know, when you approach them, you know they know! It's like, "Oh yeah, I've heard of them!" So that helps.

Newspaper sources can be great particularly if you're going after funding for corporations. As I said, corporations tend to give in their own communities. So your local newspaper is a great source. So get used to looking and finding, you know, out who's giving in the Delaware area. And the library has a number of

newspaper databases that are good for searching online. Not only local newspapers, but other newspapers throughout the U.S.

Lastly there's personal contacts. And you'll notice that in all of the databases, they give you information about who the Executive Directors are, who the staff is, who the Board of Directors are, etc. And the "Foundation Directory" in particular has started relying on "LinkedIn" as a what...as a way, too, of connecting. And again, it's to take advantage of person-to-person contacts. So...but particularly if you're working in a nonprofit organization, you're gonna want to have chats with your Board of Directors and find out if they know of any of the people who may sit on the Board of Directors with these other foundations. Because as much as we like to think that this is an open process and anyone can apply, people-to-people relationships still weigh pretty heavily. So you don't want to ignore that.

Well, I think we are getting close to moving over into the databases to do our search. But I want to mention before we do: for those of you who have never written grant proposals before, I highly recommend going to visit "grantspace.org." And that's one of the websites that's in your...on the agenda in the little box at the bottom. That website has references to tutorials that you can walk through that will tell you how to write a grant proposal, how to put a budget together, how to approach a funder... Basically everything! It's all there. It's a really great website. I cannot recommend it highly enough. There are also links to some sample documents. Not a lot, but a few.

There are also links to the "Foundation Center" publications. And I brought just a few of them to show you. They don't give away their books that they sell online. So alas, they'll give you excerpts but but they won't give you the full book. If you've never written a grant proposal before this is a great one [Guide to Proposal Writing]. Walks you through the whole process. And I'll leave these up here - if you want to come and take a look later, you can. They also put out "The Grantseeker's Guide to Winning Proposals," which has not only copies of proposals - the actual proposals that have gone to private foundations - but it also has the reviewer's comments on why they liked the proposals and opted to fund them. And then the last thing that I brought - they put out a lot of publications but these three I think are particularly useful - [Carol holding the book: "After the Grant"]. This one [Carol holding the book: "After the Grant"] is basically what to do after the grant. And again, this is the relationship building piece. You know, how to steward your grant once you get it. What do you need to do to try to cultivate a good relationship with that funder and also perhaps build some with others? So those are the key publication guides that you'll find there.

For graduate students, you'll also find bibliographies there on sources that you can use to help you put together fellowship applications, fellowship essays, that kind of thing. And I brought just a couple that we have from our collection here in Reference that talk about how to write winning essays for various foundations and scholarly organizations that are putting out funding. And then, if you've never seen the "Chicago Guide To Your Academic Career," this is also a nice publication that will talk to you a little bit about the various processes and concerns that you might need to consider as you're looking for dissertation support, etc.

We also have a web page which I'm going to take you to next that collects all of this information - gives you a link to the "Foundation Center," "grantspace.org" (which I just talked about), gives you the links to the library databases, etc. We also have some of these scholarship and proposal writing books online as ebooks that you can check out or read. So I know nobody likes to come over here and read books the old-fashioned way anymore, so we are buying more and more and putting them online as well as we can.

When it comes to writing - just a very few tips - make sure, and I can't emphasize this enough, make sure you follow the funder's guidelines meticulously. You know print them out, read them, highlight them, make sure you

fully understand what it is they say they want included in the grant. And make sure you address every single thing they say they want to see. This is not the time to be super creative in terms of what you come up with. Give them what they want. That's really very, very important. So if they say they want to hear about the sustainability of your project, you make sure you address that. And sometimes those opportunities can have a lot of very specific details that they want you to touch on. They can even be so detailed as to tell you what font they want the proposal in. What size they want the proposal in, etc. So you need to make sure you know all of that - you don't want your proposal getting thrown out because, you know, you went over the page limit, or you used the wrong font. Federal agencies in particular receive so many applications that those first cuts are just based on technical things. So they're not even going to read...to see if you gave them a great proposal that's just one page over the limit - just one page over the limit, you...you don't make it to the first cut. So there are a few exceptions, but generally, don't put yourself into that category of getting cut because, you know, of a technical issue.

Also, if you can, get someone else to proofread it for you, because by the time you have written the proposal, you'll be pretty sick of the topic, and you will have been staring at it for probably way too long. And a lot of things that are problematic, you may not see at that point. So if you can, let someone else look at it. It also helps too if you get someone who's a little bit out of your field - they'll be able to catch any jargon that you may be using that might be unfamiliar to the funder. So that's another thing to keep in mind. Once you submit your proposal, again, you have to remember there are *people* on the other end. It does not usually hurt to call, inquire that they got your proposal. That doesn't work with some of the larger funding agencies, although even the larger funding agencies have program officers that can be very helpful.

Many of the program agencies too will even read drafts of proposals. Like I've been working with a project here on campus called "The Colored Convention Project," and we worked very closely with the program officer for the "National Endowment for Humanities" who read our draft, gave us positive feedback critical feedback, and then you know we went back to the drawing board. And most of the agencies can do that if you give them enough time. So that's another thing to take advantage of. And you know, be nice to the person on the other end! Remember again: it's people-to-people. So you may be stressed out, but try not to pass that stress onto the person on the other end of the phone or email.

Lastly, don't get discouraged if you don't get that funding. There are a lot of really excellent proposals that don't get funded. And it's really just a matter of...it can be a matter of volume. There's just so many good proposals, limited dollars - yours may not get funded. If that happens, by all means contact them. Thank the agency for considering your proposal. And ask them if you can get feedback that on your proposal. A lot of times you can go through, read the feedback and decide whether or not you should re-apply. And sometimes the funder will encourage you to re-apply. If they encourage you to reapply, by all means do so. Because there are a considerable number of grant proposals that don't get funded the first time, but they do get that consideration the second time. So you know, don't give up. On the other hand, if you go through and you read the comments and you see that your work is just way out of scope of the funder, you know, don't waste your time, don't waste their time. Move on to another organization and start over.

So...and if you *do* get the grant and it's positive, you know, by all means, you'll start to work on developing that relationship. You write a letter of thanks (actually, you do that whether or not you get funded or not). And then you work with the the funder to make sure that the award gets proper recognition. Because you know the funding agency likes to be appreciated, and know that their work is appreciated. So that's basically where you take it from there. So I think that is the process from idea to submission. And let us now jump into the databases and see where you can take a look.

Continue workshop by viewing: Research Funding Online 2 (Databases) below