Research Fellowships: Why, What, and How?

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Sponsored Research and Program Development
http://www.rockefeller.edu/sr-pd/?page=Training_Area

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Why Apply for Funding

- Prepare for a career as an independent investigator
- Contribute to the University mission
- Be an active member of the larger research community and participate in the discovery process
- Secure resources for training & research expenses
- Write up your findings (for future publications)

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University Support for Grant-seeking

The process of seeking and applying for external resources to support research is enabled by the University and coordinated by several departments and offices on campus:

- **SR-PD**: Sponsored Research & Program Development (program development, pre-award, post-award non-financial, and training)
- **Financial Administration** (post-award)
- **Compliance Support**
- **Infrastructure – Shared Resource Centers**

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Pre-Doctoral Sponsored Funding

• Fellowships
• Training Grants
• Dissertation Grants
Where to Apply

• Federal
  – NIH
  – NSF
  – Department of Defense
  – Other federal sponsors as relevant funding programs are made available
• Foundations
• Internal (via Deans Office and Development)
Resources for Finding Funding Opportunities

- SR-PD
  - Predoctoral Fellowship Funding Sources
  - Funding Opportunities Database
  - SR-PD weekly Funding alerts
  - Other Grant Seeking Resources maintained by Program Development
  - Mentors and peers
Opportunities for non-US Citizens

- While some sponsors have citizenship requirements, many opportunities exist for international students
  - Opportunities Restricted to US Citizens/Permanent Residents
  - Opportunities Restricted to Other Citizenship/Nationalities
  - Unrestricted Opportunities

- Review [Predoctoral Fellowship Funding Sources](#) and search [Funding Database](#)
NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)

• Program Solicitation NSF 12-599
• Supports outstanding graduate students in NSF-supported science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines
  – Research with disease-related goals, or animal models of such conditions, is normally not supported.
• GRFP provides three years of support for graduate education to individuals with potential for significant achievements in science and engineering research
NSF GRFP Eligibility

• For 2013 GRFP, applicants must have completed no more than 12 months of full-time graduate study by August 1, 2012
• Must be US citizen, US national, or permanent resident by application deadline
Choosing a Field of Study

• Field of Study determines which panel will evaluate your application

• List of all NSF-supported fields is available in the appendix of the GRFP program solicitation

• If interdisciplinary, your application will be assigned to the review panel for the field of study listed first.

• Field of Study determines application deadline
GRFP Fields of Study

• Chemistry
• Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE)
• Engineering
• Geosciences
• **Life Sciences**
• Materials Research
• Mathematical Sciences

• Physics and Astronomy
• Psychology
• Social Sciences
• STEM Education and Learning Research
• Other (specify)
GRFP Fields of Study

• Life Sciences includes:
  – Biochemistry
  – Biophysics
  – Cell Biology
  – Developmental Biology
  – Evolutionary Biology
  – Genetics
  – Genomics
  – Microbiology
  – Molecular Biology

  – Neurosciences
  – Organismal Biology
  – Physiology
  – Proteomics
  – Structural Biology
  – Systematic Biology

• Submission Deadline is 11/19/2012
Tips for Applying

• Start early!
• Demonstrate your personal motivation and excitement for research
• Get input from faculty, previous applicants, mentors, peers, Dean’s office.
• Carefully follow all instructions in Program Solicitation
• Thoroughly address the Review Criteria – Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts
Intellectual Merit

• Strength of Academic Record
• Research Plan
  – Is proposal creative, original, potentially transformative
  – Is proposal well conceived, organized, and well written
• Previous Experience and/or publications
  – Is applicant qualified to conduct the proposed project
• Institution
  – Sufficient access to resources
  – Suitability of Institutional Resources
Broader Impacts

• Educational Experiences

• Effective integration of research & education
  – Advance discovery while promoting teaching, training, and learning
  – Enhance infrastructure, i.e. facilities, networks, partnerships

• Potential to reach diverse audiences and benefit society
  – Broaden the participation of underrepresented groups
  – Results disseminated broadly
  – Impact beyond one’s own institution
Tips for All Fellowships

• Follow guidelines to the letter!
  – Some sponsors are especially interested in more creative/innovative projects (Gates Foundation)
  – Many are focused on applicant’s potential and track record (transcript, publications, patents, etc.)
  – Many also ask for mentor’s track record and institutional environment
  – Always keep the review criteria in mind!
Additional Elements

• Provide easy to read, carefully proofed, logical, succinct and coherent narrative.
• Must meet format requirements:
  – Font type and size
  – Margins
  – Other as needed
• Never exceed the sponsor’s page limit
Summary of Key Resources

• Mentor
• Peers
• RU Sponsored Research and Program Development
  – Forms and format
  – Budget (e.g personnel effort & costs, indirect costs)
  – Boilerplates
  – Your Grants Management Specialist
  – SR-PD Training Area
• Sponsor’s website
• NSF
  – FAQs
  – Sponsor Tips
  – Application Screen Shots

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Preparing the Proposal

- Review scope and requirements of the funding opportunity announcement
- Get your Mentor’s consent
- Make note of the deadline
- Verify eligibility with your Grants Management Specialist
- Read closely the guidelines/instructions – including special submission requirements
- Design your outline and research plan according to the sponsor’s instructions
- Discuss training and research plan with your mentor
- Fully address the review criteria in the order presented by the sponsor

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Submission Process

• Complete University Routing Form
• For full review and institutional sign-off, submit complete packet to SR-PD at least 5 business days before sponsor’s deadline
• If electronic submission: final copy will be submitted by Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)
• If paper submission: after institutional sign-off, send the required # of copies and forward a final copy to SR-PD
• Visit SR-PD’s Application Review Requirements for more information
Helpful References

- Sponsored Research and Program Development
- New Investigators
- Center for Scientific Review
- NIH “Writing Your Application”
- InfoEd
- “Grant-Writing Tips for Graduate Students” from The Chronicle
- Funding Database
- Sponsor’s information on active awards

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Questions and Suggestions