Support for Faculty in Developing Competitive Grant Proposals

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Office of the VP for Research
Norman Campus
First, a Clarification

- At OU, we speak not of research, but of scholarship: the creation and dissemination of new knowledge & works of creative expression.
Investing in Faculty

- Individual Faculty and Researchers
- Informal Self-Organized Clusters
- Formal Research Centers
- Strategic Initiatives
Second, a Valuation

- Different disciplines within a comprehensive research university have different modes of conducting their scholarship.
- Dollars brought in are but one of many measures of activity.
- Virtually all disciplines have an opportunity to obtain external funding, and to do so usually means:
  - Competing against peers, thus increasing quality or creativity as well as visibility.
  - Providing independence.
  - Pathways to future, perhaps increased funding and thus ideas that can be pursued.
- At OU, we value all dimensions of scholarship.
- Yet hiring good people and turning them loose isn’t enough! We need to support and nurture.
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<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Article Count</th>
<th>% of All OU Articles for the Period</th>
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Dimensions of Support

- Opportunity awareness
- Internal funding for idea development
- Process education and support
- Bridge building and networking
- Personalized mentoring
- Start-up and cost sharing
- Agency interaction
Opportunity Awareness

- Research Information Services
  - Provides funding and other announcements via email

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**Visual Arts Initiative Program**

Deadline: May 19, 2009

[http://exchanges.state.gov/media/pdfs/rrgsp/rrgsp05192009.pdf](http://exchanges.state.gov/media/pdfs/rrgsp/rrgsp05192009.pdf)

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State seeks an organization to assist the Cultural Programs Division of the Office of Citizen Exchanges in all logistical and administrative aspects related to its support of U.S. Embassy sponsored visual arts programs. The visual arts programs to be supported are intended to foster good will, engage foreign audiences, and provide insight into American culture and values. The Visual Arts Initiative (VAI) program will provide funding on a competitive basis for posts to showcase American talent overseas. Over a period of two years, grantees will be responsible for one-way exchanges in the visual arts, providing support to ECA to include cyclical solicitation and review of proposals received from U.S. Missions abroad using ECA-established criteria, packaging and submitting proposals to ECA for final decision; extending financial support to selected U.S. partners, and; to reporting on program results. The Bureau anticipates that approximately $500,000 will be available to support this program. The Bureau is interested in receiving proposals from organizations with a strong background in thematic expertise in the visual arts, institutional commitment to cultural diplomacy and the role of the United States in the arts, and a successful track-record in conducting international programs in the arts. Organizations that have the expertise, interest, and institutional commitment but lack the required experience of conducting exchanges may wish to consider developing proposals based on consortium type relationships with more experienced, eligible organizations. Please note that for these proposals, the role of each organization must be clearly defined and any sub-granting agreements must be included in the proposal submission.

To begin a proposal for this program, fill out the InfoSheet at [http://research.ou.edu/proposal/Infosheet/InfoType/InfoMain_2008.asp](http://research.ou.edu/proposal/Infosheet/InfoType/InfoMain_2008.asp)

Search for additional funding opportunities at [http://funding.opress2.cos.com](http://funding.opress2.cos.com)

Contact Research Information Services at 325-3508
Contact Proposal Services at 325-3903
Contact Research Administration at 325-4757

Disclaimer: While Research Information Services makes every effort to ensure that correct information is released regarding all Sponsor funding solicitations, it is still incumbent upon the sponsor and his/her designee(s) to reconfirm the accuracy of any information provided in the Sponsor links. Sometimes, Sponsors change or revoc funding announcements without notice to the recipients. Therefore, please review the most current guidelines and conditions of a proposal solicitation thoroughly and carefully before submitting your proposal.

Distributed to: Film Video, FJ Art Museum, Art
Opportunity Awareness

- Research Information Services
  - Provides funding and other announcements via email
  - Can subscribe to a number of services at OU and elsewhere (e.g., grants.gov)

- By the time a solicitation hits the street, you’re already behind unless you anticipated it!
  - We’re working harder to mine “intelligence” from agencies to anticipate solicitations

- Must have awareness by engaging with funding agencies, monitoring activities in your discipline

- Get onto review panels

- Visit agencies, participate in advisory committees
  - We should be driving the national agenda, not just waiting for opportunities to arrive
Internal Funding for Opportunity Development

- **Research Council**
  - Provides funding ($130K/year) in a number of categories via competitive internal competition
    - PI Research Investment Program
    - Arts & Humanities and Creative Activity Program
    - Over $1200 Requests
    - Small Grant Program
    - Junior Faculty Research Program
  - Several avenues, most importantly the Research Council

- **VPR Office Direct**
  - Matching support for grant proposals (if required)
  - Reprint/Purchases and Page Charges
  - Faculty Travel Assistance Grants Program
  - Sponsored Research Incentive
  - Informal mechanisms (making the case)
Internal Funding for Opportunity Development

- **Competitive College Investment Fund (CCIF)**
  - Yearly competition to seed new ideas
  - $50K/year for 1-year, renewable once
  - Cross-college activities preferred
  - Stimulates interaction across disciplines
  - Awarded $250K last year

- **University Strategic Organization (USO) Program**
  - Base funding (up to $75K/year) to underpin activities that are foundational to the University’s strategic direction
  - Usually for organizations that are mature and receive substantial external funding
  - Awarded $400K last year
Process Education and Support

- Considerable guidance about proposal process on the Office of Research Services (ORS) web site
- Workshops offered by ORS
  - Fundamentals
  - Cost sharing
  - Indirect costs
  - Managing a budget
  - Managing a project
- OU has a wonderfully complete support environment from proposal development through award administration (see http://research.ou.edu)
Bridge Building and Networking

- **Alpha Time**
  - Sharing of an idea to a broad audience to help develop it and build collaborations
  - Run by the Research Cabinet (Dr. Paul Risser)
  - Usually 2 hours in duration, led by a faculty member

- **Faculty Capabilities and Interests System**
  [http://research.ou.edu/ci](http://research.ou.edu/ci)
Bridge Building and Networking

Research Roundtables

- Started fall 2005
- 1-hour lunch of about a dozen faculty across all areas of scholarship
- Four major goals
  - Help me learn about the broad enterprise
  - Connect faculty to me
  - Connect faculty to one another
  - Explain resources, expose problems and find solutions
- Year-1 focused on clusters (e.g., bridges/roads, radar, nanoscience/engineering)
- Now focus on new hires and early career faculty
President’s Monthly R&D Highlights

- Started fall 2006
- Issued monthly
- Goal: Keep President Boren, alumni apprised of scholarship enterprise
- Provides talking points for everyone

People
- Drama Profs. Rena Cook and Matthew E. Ellis are co-directing the U.S. Premiere of Ernesting Shuswap Deta Her Trout. Prof. Cook also was an invited speaker at the Educational Theatre Association Sponsors Conference in New York City.
- Meteorology Prof. Michael Biggerstaff led an expedition, including two undergraduates, of the first overseas deployment (to Costa Rica) of his mobile Doppler radar system. CCI President Oscar Arias Sanchez visited the deployment, which was sponsored by NASA.
- Prof. Michael Moore was appointed Chair of the Biological Sciences Graduate Advisory Committee of the National Science Foundation. This committee advises the NSF Director and staff on all matters of biological science research and education funded by the NSF.

Scholarship
- The two-volume Encyclopedia of American Jewish History, edited by OU Prof. Stephen H. Norwood and UNT Prof. Charles G. Palese, was published recently by ABC-CLIO.
- Journalism and Mass Communication Prof. Robert Kerr’s Justifying Corporate Speech Regulation Through a Town-Meeting Understanding of the Marketplace of Ideas is the featured monograph in the current issue of Journalism and Communication Monographs. It addresses a particularly intense dispute in constitutional law: the extent of First Amendment protection that should be granted corporate political media spending.

Feature: New VPR Statistics Group
- The Office of the Vice President for Research has established a new Research Statistics and Analysis (RSA) group led by Prof. Calvin Grogemel, Ernest Abrogar and Deborah Marsh.
- RSA gathers, analyzes and disseminates a variety of research enterprise statistics for helping achieve success in academic scholarship on the Norman and Tulsa Campuses.
- In addition to maintaining an online archive of relevant data and facts, the hallmark of RSA is a series of one-page analysis papers on key research indicators, an example of which may be found at http://okid.oct.edu/rsa/08-02.pdf. For more information, visit the RSA group online at http://research.oct.edu/rsa.

Funding
- Zoology Prof. Richard Broughton is the lead investigator of a new 5-year, $1 million grant from the National Science Foundation’s Assembling the Tree of Life program. The project seeks to understand the evolutionary history and diversity of the world’s fishes.
- Prof. Jiahong (Joe) Zhou’s team at the Institute for Environmental Genomics (IIG) and Department of Botany and Microbiology received $665,000 from the US Department of Agriculture and $700,000 from the US Department of Energy for research on microbial community diversity and behavior.
- The National Resource Center for Youth Services, a program of OU OUTREACH, received $1,783,714 for continued work in FY08 by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.
Personalized Mentoring: Excellence in Proposals (EIP) Initiative

- Pilot project started in spring 2008
- Personalized peer mentoring to faculty who are working toward the submission of a grant proposal
- Emphasis on
  - Early career faculty
  - Senior faculty who seek to broaden the scope of their activities via interdisciplinary collaboration and/or develop new linkages with industry
- First 2 years: 8 mentors and 35 protégés
- Mentors receive $5K in discretionary funding if they mentor 3 people to proposal submission within a year
- More than mentoring → culture change
- Writing Center is a key component
I was working with George Richter-Addo on my NEH Fellowship grant. I am very glad I signed up: I learned a lot about the grant writing process itself and he worked with me at every step of the application process. Even though I am in the Humanities and George is in the Sciences, I got a lot out of the meetings we had. George studied the NEH site and mastered the language and the angle they use or look for. Thus, his feedback to me was tailored to the actual grant I was working on. He read every draft I wrote and gave me plentiful feedback. He also encouraged me to network with others in my own field to get the last insights I could gain. George is very organized and he is generous with his time and comments. It was a rich and rewarding process in itself.

- Prof Rita Keresztesi, Department of English
I managed to get some pretty good information on interpreting the comments from a less-than-successful proposal that I was able to integrate into a recent CAREER submission; I don't think I would have had the confidence to get this turned around without the direct insight.

- Prof Matthew Kane, Electrical and Computer Engineering
Musharraf Zaman and I have been working together this semester on my proposal and his input and help have been INVALUABLE to me. His critiques of my grant drafts have been on point. He has taken the time to engage with my proposal which is in a field far afield from his own expertise. [A colleague of mine], an associate professor in the History Department who read my proposal and offered insightful comments for revision, said she wants to participate in the program next year.
I am touched and honored that people with his professional responsibilities have taken the time to mentor folks like me. The humanities is not a very lucrative university area, and it is comforting that scientists and engineers like Musharraf support them through this project when you have much more important things you could be spending time on.

- Prof Julia Erhardt, Honors College
Personalized Mentoring: Large Activities

- Center-type proposals and similar large activities require substantial effort to develop
- OU provides personalized mentoring for months to years
  - Content development
  - Mock reviews/panels
  - Dealing with reviewer comments

- Examples
  - EDGE
  - NSF STC, ERC
  - ARRA initiatives
Start-Up and Cost Sharing

- The VPR Office has participated in start-up costs for new faculty, along with the Provost and departments/colleges.
- The VPR Office has developed creative ways to ensure new space for scholarship (e.g., Research Campus).
- Cost sharing is provided if required by programs.
- But cost sharing also takes the form of lab renovation, facilities development, etc.
Agency Interaction

- Writing a good proposal isn’t the only ingredient to scholarship
- Developing relationships with agencies is key
- OU supports travel for doing so (should get to know the agency by serving on review panels, etc)
- Case study from the EIP Program…
Where Do We Go From Here?

- We have lots of very good pieces but not a coordinated effort
- Faculty don’t arrive at OU with
  - Complete knowledge of the grant process
  - The ability to write competitive proposals
  - Everything they need to be leaders (of their research group, of large centers, of departments and colleges)
- Faculty development initiative
  - Leadership
  - Proposal development
  - Idea stimulation and maturation
  - Formalization of mentoring program