Competitive Grantsmanship: Strategic Approaches to Grantseeking and Project Design

Prepared for University of Connecticut
SEPTEMBER 14, 2018

TODAY'S PRESENTER

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Grants Consultant

- 15+ years in academia serving as project manager/leader and research analyst in biotech, clinical and health services research areas

- Harness my skills in competitive intelligence, project management and communication to support academic clients in securing new funding with federal and non-private sponsors

- Consultant with Hanover since 2017

- My greatest loves are these 3 Cs: my children, the Carolina coast, and cooking

OUR PARTNERSHIP TO DATE

- A Series of Webinars

    - <u>Webinar #1:</u> The Grant Funding Landscape (Clinton Doggett, Senior Grants Advisor), May 18, 2018

    - <u>Webinar #2:</u> Competitive Grantsmanship: Strategic Approaches to Grantseeking and Project Design ->> TODAY!

    - <u>Webinar #3:</u> Rejection, Revision and Resubmission ->> January 17, 2019 (10 AM EST)

- The Research Excellence Partnership: https://research.uconn.edu/funding/research-excellence-program/announcement/#

HR

SESSION LOGISTICS

- Today's session, 10:00-11:00 AM

- ~45 min presentation

- Followed by 15 min of Q&A at the end - questions welcome by Skype chat

TODAY'S TOPICS

PART 1
KNOWING THE FUNDER

- -

PART 2
UNDERSTANDING THE SOLICITATION

- -

PART 3
PREPARING YOUR RESPONSE AND DEMONSTRATING ALIGNMENT

- -

OVERVIEW

In a competitive federal landscape, what can you do to make your proposal more competitive? What is important to know about the funder? How can you demonstrate that your project is aligned with funder expectations? During this training, you will learn how to understand and respond to a funding solicitation and develop key design essentials.

THE GRANT PROCESS

Great idea

Find funders

2. Build a concept

3. Sell the concept

4. Formal application

5. Grant award

6. Do the work

7. Prepare for future funding
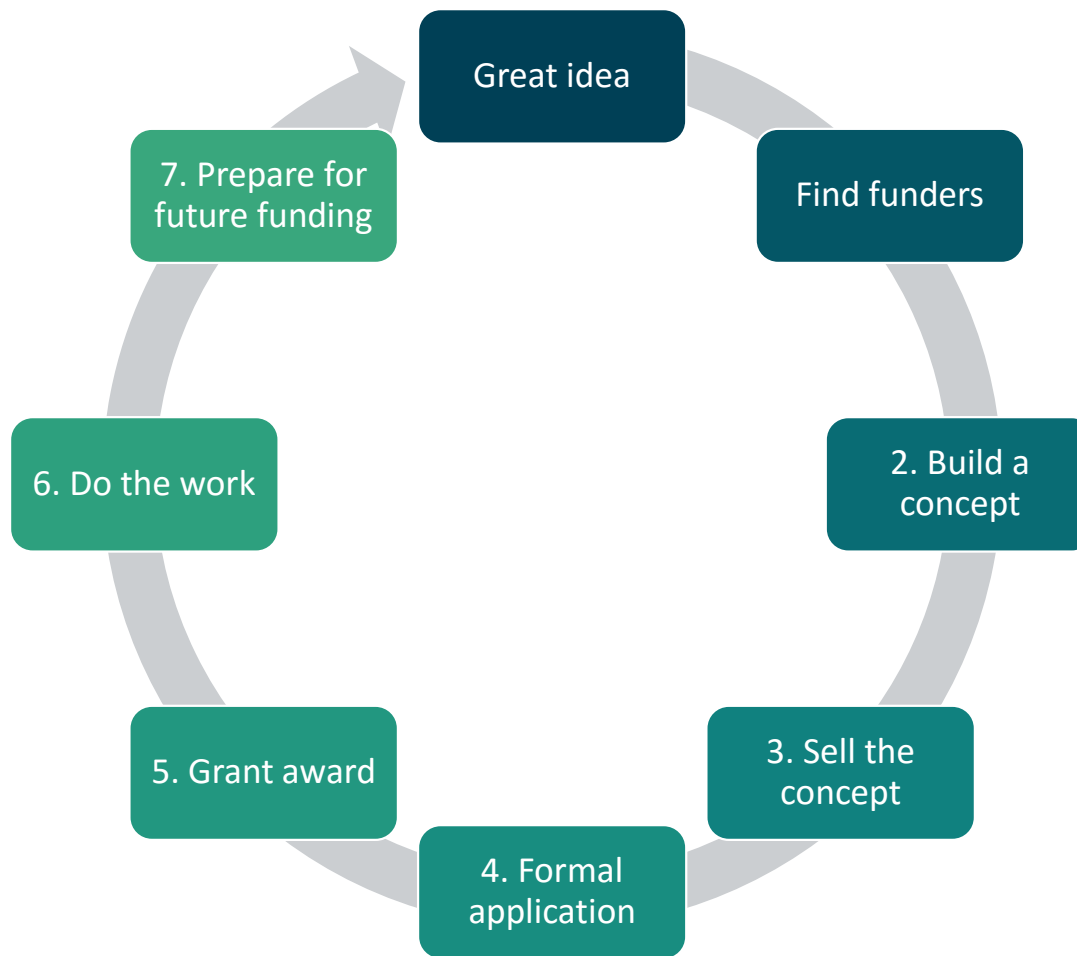
BEFORE WE FIGURE OUT THE FUNDER

Develop a grant funding strategy to support your great idea:

A strategic approach to grant-writing is most effective over the long term.

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 grant-seeking cycle, keep your long-term trajectory and "roadmap" in mind: How will this grant process advance my goals?

PART 1: KNOWING THE FUNDER

FUNDING IN YOUR FIELD

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

- Who are the key funders in your field?
  - Within the federal government: NSF, NIH, DoD, DoE?
- What are their priorities?
  - Stated and unstated
- What are the overall funding trends in your field?
- Are there potential untapped sources of funding in your field?

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

However, it should be noted,
- Funding history is not always a good predictor of future funding.
- Stated priorities are not always current.
- Finding good prospects sometimes requires reading between the lines.
- Program Officers can help you avoid going down the wrong path.

Prioritize prospects based on alignment, potential benefit, ease of pursuit, and timeline urgency

HR

THE FEDERAL GRANTSEEKING LANDSCAPE

- Hyper-competitive research environments
- Earlier research independence is challenging as early-stage faculty struggle to secure their first grant
- Mid- to late- stage faculty risk losing existing funding
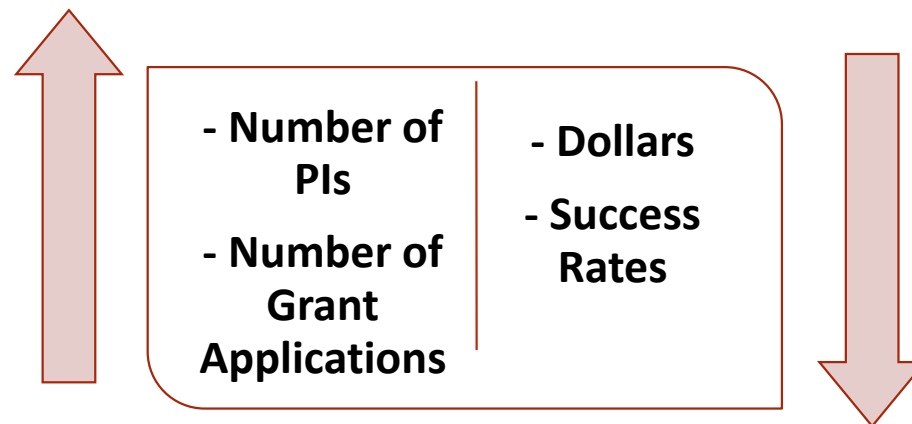
Average age of investigators getting their first R01 is at an all-time high of 46 years old.

-Levitt M, Levitt J. "Future of fundamental discovery in US biomedical research". PNAS June 20, 2017. 114 (25) 6498-6503; published ahead of print June 5, 2017. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1609996114
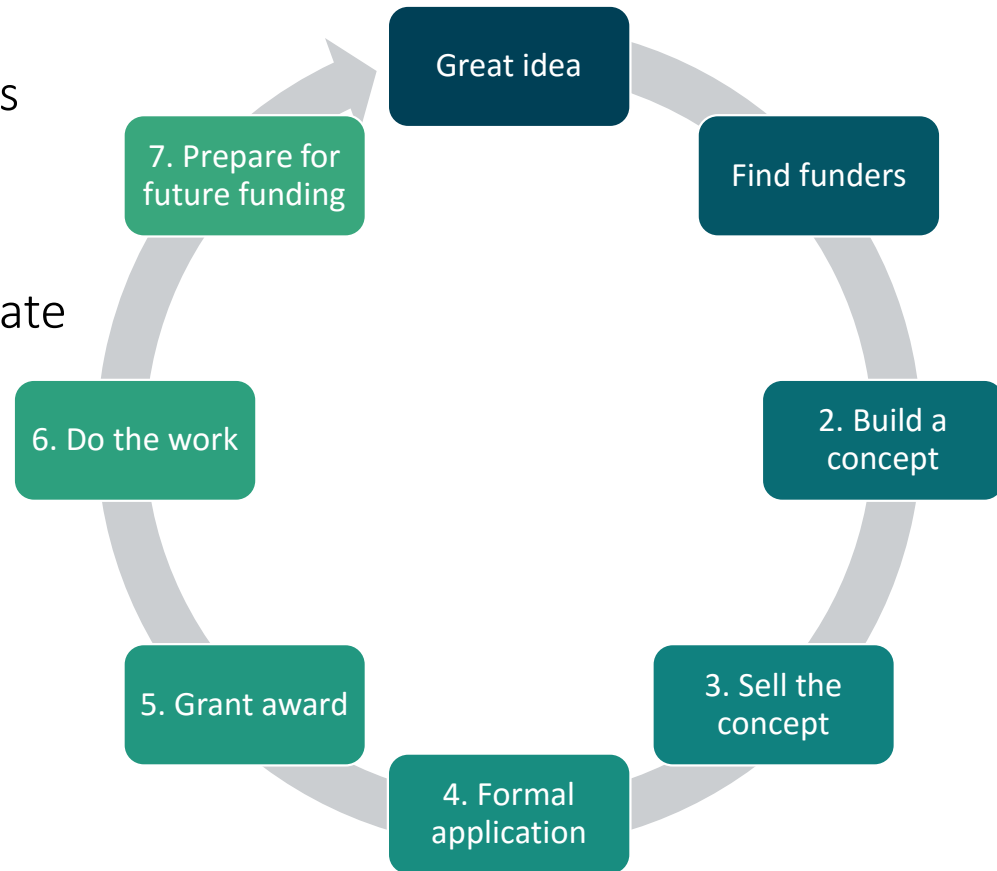
# PART 2: UNDERSTANDING THE SOLICITATION

COMPETITIVE PROJECT DESIGN

Competitive project design is built on:

- Great ideas
- …matched with appropriate funders
- Strong concepts
- …connected to funders' goals

Great idea

Find funders

2. Build a concept

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5. Grant award

6. Do the work

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WHICH ONE?

- Grants.gov is a clearinghouse for information on Federal grants
  - Subscription option to the NIH TOC Email Listserve for Weekly Contracts announcement

- NSF Award Search and the NEH Funded Projects Query Form are good resources for information on previous funding and trends

- The US Department of Education Grants Forecast provides information on upcoming DoE competitions

- Other Resources: Federal RePORTER, Foundation Center, Sponsored Program Websites, COS PIVOT, InfoEd

GRANTS.GOV › Search Grants
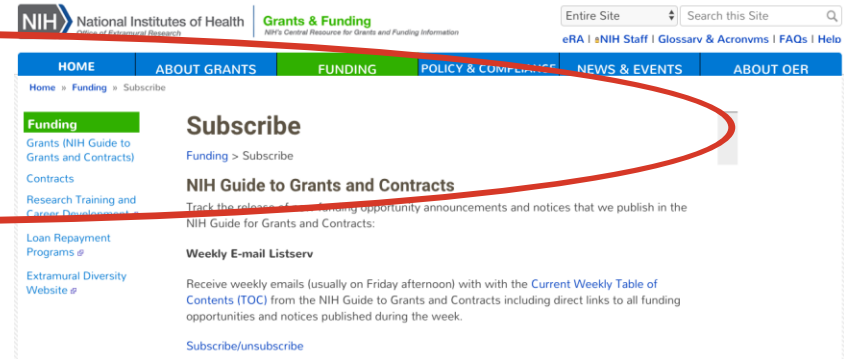
SEARCH GRANTS

BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA:

Keyword(s): exploratory

Opportunity Number:

CFDA:

[SEARCH]

OPPORTUNITY STATUS:
- ☑ Forecasted (2)
- ☑ Posted (136)
- ☐ Closed (52)
- ☐ Archived (993)

▼ FUNDING INSTRUMENT TYPE:
- ☑ All Funding Instruments
  - ☐ Cooperative Agreement (35)
  - ☐ Grant (125)
  - ☐ Other (6)
  - ☐ Procurement Contract (12)

▼ ELIGIBILITY:
- ☑ All Eligibilities
  - ☐ City or township governments (66)
  - ☐ County governments (66)
  - ☐ For profit organizations other than small businesses (69)
  - ☐ Independent school districts (67)

▼ CATEGORY:
- ☑ All Categories
  - ☐ Agriculture (2)
  - ☐ Arts (see 'Cultural Affairs' in CFDA) (3)
  - ☐ Business and Commerce (1)
  - ☐ Community Development (1)
  - ☐ Consumer Protection (1)

▼ AGENCY:
- ☑ All Agencies
- ⊞ ☐ All Agency for International Development

Search Tips | Export Detailed Data

SORT BY: Posted Date (Descending) ⇕ [Update Sort] **DATE RANGE:** All Available ⇕ [Update Date Range]

51 - 75 OF 138 MATCHING RESULTS: « Previous 1 2 **3** 4 5 6 Next »

Opportunity Number	Opportunity Title	Agency	Opportunity Status	Posted Date ↓	Close Date
PAR-18-628	NeuroNEXT Small Business Innovation in Clinical Trials (U44 Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	02/05/2018	01/05/2021
PAR-18-617	NINDS Exploratory Clinical Trials for Small Business (R42) - Clinical Trial Required	HHS-NIH11	Posted	02/01/2018	01/05/2021
PAR-18-618	NINDS Exploratory Clinical Trials for Small Business (R44) - Clinical Trial Required	HHS-NIH11	Posted	02/01/2018	01/05/2021
PAR-18-595	Exploratory Clinical Trial Grants in Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (R21 Clinical Trial Required)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	01/26/2018	11/03/2020
PAR-18-582	Emotional Function in Normal Aging and/or MCI and AD/ADRD (R21 - Clinical Trial Not Allowed)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	01/12/2018	06/22/2020
PA-18-572	Underactive Bladder and Detrusor Activity in Aging (R21 Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	01/11/2018	05/07/2021
PA-18-382	Hearing Health Care for Adults: Improving Access and Affordability (R21 Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	01/09/2018	11/16/2020
PAR-18-561	NIH StrokeNet Clinical Trials and Biomarker Studies for Stroke Treatment, Recovery, and Prevention (U01 - Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	01/09/2018	11/05/2020
PAR-18-563	NIH StrokeNet Small Business Innovation Clinical Trials and Biomarker Studies for Stroke Treatment, Recovery, and Prevention (U44 - Clinical Trials Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	01/09/2018	01/05/2021
PAR-18-528	NeuroNEXT Clinical Trials (U01 - Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	12/21/2017	01/07/2021
RFA-DK-17-018	Ancillary Studies to the NIDDK Inflammatory Bowel Disease Genetics Consortium (R21 - Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	12/18/2017	02/21/2020
PA-18-503	Advancing the Science of Geriatric Palliative Care (R21 - Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	12/15/2017	05/07/2020
PAR-18-433	NIBIB Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program (R21) (Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	12/15/2017	01/07/2021
RFA-NS-18-014	BRAIN Initiative: Targeted BRAIN Circuits Planning Projects TargetedBCPP (R34 - Clinical Trials Not Allowed)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	12/14/2017	07/15/2019
PA-18-482	NICHD Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant (R21 - Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	12/06/2017	01/07/2021
PA-18-489	NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program (Parent R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	12/06/2017	01/07/2021
PAR-18-289	Exploratory/Developmental Surgical Disparities Research (R21 Clinical	HHS-	Posted	11/30/2017	06/07/2019

FIRST, AN EXAMPLE

Department of Health and Human Services

Part 1. Overview Information

Participating Organization(s)   National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Components of Participating Organizations

National Eye Institute (NEI)
National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI)
National Institute on Aging (NIA)
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS)
National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD)
National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR)
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)
National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD)
National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)
National Library of Medicine (NLM)
National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH)

Note: Not all NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs) participate in Parent Announcements. Applicants should carefully note which ICs participate in this announcement and view their respective areas of research interest at the R21 IC-Specific Scientific Interests and Contact website. ICs that do not participate in this announcement will not consider applications for funding.

Funding Opportunity Title   **NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program (Parent R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)**

Funding Opportunity Title	# NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program (Parent R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)
Activity Code	R21 Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant
Announcement Type	Reissue of PA-16-161 for due dates on or after January 25, 2018
Related Notices	• May 18, 2018 - Notice of Information: NIMH Council Workgroup on Genomics' Recommendations for Basic and Clinical Research. See Notice NOT-MH-18-035.
Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Number	PA-18-489
Companion Funding Opportunity	PA-18-344 - Parent R21 Clinical Trial Required Check Components of Participating Organizations and Related Notices for restrictions.
Number of Applications	See Section III. 3. Additional Information on Eligibility.
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s)	93.273, 93.866, 93.855, 93.846, 93.213, 93.279, 93.173, 93.121, 93.113, 93.867, 93.172, 93.879, 93.307, 93.361
Funding Opportunity Purpose	The NIH Exploratory/Developmental Grant supports exploratory and developmental research projects by providing support for the early and conceptual stages of these projects. These studies may involve considerable risk but may lead to a breakthrough in a particular area, or to the development of novel techniques, agents, methodologies, models, or applications that could have a major impact on a field of biomedical, behavioral, or clinical research.

Key Dates

Posted Date	December 6, 2017
Open Date (Earliest Submission Date)	January 16, 2018
Letter of Intent Due Date(s)	Not Applicable
Application Due Date(s)	Standard dates apply by 5:00 PM local time of applicant organization. All types of non-AIDS applications allowed for this funding opportunity announcement are due on these dates.

The first standard application due date for this FOA is February 16, 2018.

Applicants are encouraged to apply early to allow adequate time to make any corrections to errors found in the application during the submission process by the due date.

Application Due Dates

Search for Activity Code: R21

Activity Codes	Program Description	Cycle I Due Date	Cycle II Due Date	Cycle III Due Date
R03, R21, R33, R21/R33, R34, R36, U34, UH2, UH3, UH2/UH3 *new*	**Other Research Grants and Cooperative Agreements**	February 16	June 16	October 16
R03, R21, R33, R21/R33, R34, R36, U34, UH2, UH3, UH2/UH3 *renewal, resubmission, revision*	**Other Research Grants and Cooperative Agreements**	March 16	July 16	November 16

Link to NIH Due Dates: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/due-dates-and-submission-policies/due-dates.htm#review

Key Dates

Posted Date	December 6, 2017
Open Date (Earliest Submission Date)	January 16, 2018

Review and Award Cycles

	Cycle I	Cycle II	Cycle III
Application Due Dates	January 25 - May 7	May 25 - September 7	September 25 - January 7
Scientific Merit Review	June - July	October - November	February - March
Advisory Council Round	August or October *	January	May
Earliest Project Start Date	September or December *	April	July

Scientific Merit Review	Standard dates apply
Advisory Council Review	Standard dates apply
Earliest Start Date	Standard dates apply or Month(s) Year(s)

…it is time to start pulling apart the Solicitation to figure out what is needed for your plan:

- **Full Text of Announcement**
  - General overview of the opportunity – including a brief history/description, objectives of the particular opportunity, high-level requirements and details related to the research team and collaborators.

Part 2. Full Text of Announcement
Section I. Funding Opportunity Description

The evolution and vitality of the biomedical, behavioral, and clinical sciences require a constant infusion of new ideas, techniques, and points of view. These may differ substantially from current thinking or practice and may not yet be supported by substantial preliminary data. Through the NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program, the NIH seeks to foster the introduction of novel scientific ideas, model systems, tools, agents, targets, and technologies that have the potential to substantially advance biomedical, behavioral, and clinical research.

This program is intended to encourage new exploratory and developmental research projects. For example, such projects could assess the feasibility of a novel area of investigation or a new experimental system that has the potential to enhance health-related research. Another example could include the unique and innovative use of an existing methodology to explore a new scientific area. These studies may involve considerable risk but may lead to a breakthrough in a particular area, or to the development of novel techniques, agents, methodologies, models, or applications that could have a major impact on a field of biomedical, behavioral, or clinical research.

Applications for Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant awards should include projects distinct from those supported through the traditional R01 activity code. For example, long-term projects, or projects designed to increase knowledge in a well-established area, are not appropriate for this FOA. Applications submitted to this FOA

/grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-18-489.html   5/24

)18   PA-18-489: NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program (Parent R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)

should be exploratory and novel. These studies should break new ground or extend previous discoveries toward new directions or applications. Projects of limited cost or scope that use widely accepted approaches and methods within well-established fields

...it is time to start pulling apart the Solicitation to figure out what is needed for your plan:

- Award Information
    - Funding instrument
    - Application Types Allowed
    - Clinical Trial – allowed or not
    - Funds Available and Anticipated Number of Awards
    - Award Budget – i.e. up to $275K in direct costs for <u>entire project period</u> and no more than $200K in any single year
    - Award Project Period – i.e. max project period is 2 years

Section II. Award Information

Funding Instrument

Grant: A support mechanism providing money, property, or both to an eligible entity to carry out an approved project or activity.

Application Types Allowed

New
Resubmission
Revision

The OER Glossary (//grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/url_redirect.htm?id=11116) and the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide provide details on these application types.

Clinical Trial?

Not Allowed: Only accepting applications that do not propose clinical trials

Need help determining whether you are doing a clinical trial? (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/url_redirect.htm?id=82370)

Funds Available and Anticipated Number of Awards

The number of awards is contingent upon NIH appropriations and the submission of a sufficient number of meritorious applications.

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-18-489.html   6/24

9/5/2018   PA-18-489: NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program (Parent R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)

Award Budget

The combined budget for direct costs for the two-year project period may not exceed $275,000. No more than $200,000 may be requested in any single year.

Award Project Period

The total project period may not exceed 2 years.

...it is time to start pulling apart the Solicitation to figure out what is needed for your plan:

Eligibility Information:
- Eligible Applicants at the Institution level and the PI/PD level

- Cost Sharing

- Additional Information on Eligibility

Section III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Organizations

Higher Education Institutions

- Public/State Controlled Institutions of Higher Education
- Private Institutions of Higher Education

The following types of Higher Education Institutions are always encouraged to apply for NIH support as Public or Private Institutions of Higher Education:

- Hispanic-serving Institutions
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs)
- Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions
- Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs)

Nonprofits Other Than Institutions of Higher Education

- Nonprofits with 501(c)(3) IRS Status (Other than Institutions of Higher Education)
- Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) IRS Status (Other than Institutions of Higher Education)

For-Profit Organizations

- Small Businesses
- For-Profit Organizations (Other than Small Businesses)

Governments

- State Governments

...it is time to start pulling apart the Solicitation to figure out what is needed for your plan:

- The Application and Submission Information – the real nuts and bolts!

SF424(R&R) Cover
All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed.

SF424(R&R) Project/Performance Site Locations
All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed.

SF424(R&R) Other Project Information
All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed.

SF424(R&R) Senior/Key Person Profile
All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed.

R&R or Modular Budget
All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed.

R&R Subaward Budget
All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed.

PHS 398 Cover Page Supplement
All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed.

PHS 398 Research Plan
All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed, with the following additional instructions:

Research Strategy: Since the goal of this program is to support exploratory and developmental research projects, extensive background material and preliminary data are not required. Appropriate justification for the proposed work can be provided through literature citations, data from other sources, or, when available, from investigator-generated data.

Resource Sharing Plan: Individuals are required to comply with the instructions for the Resource Sharing Plans as provided in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide.

Appendix:
Only limited Appendix materials are allowed. Follow all instructions for the Appendix as described in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide.

PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information
When involving NIH-defined human subjects research, clinical research, and/or clinical trials (and when applicable, clinical trials research experience) follow all instructions for the PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide, with the following additional instructions:

...it is time to start pulling apart the Solicitation to figure out what is needed for your plan:

- Application Review Information

Section V. Application Review Information

1. Criteria

Only the review criteria described below will be considered in the review process. As part of the NIH mission (//grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/url_redirect.htm?id=11149), all applications submitted to the NIH in support of biomedical and behavioral research are evaluated for scientific and technical merit through the NIH peer review system.

Reviewers will provide an overall impact score to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved, in consideration of the following review criteria and additional review criteria (as applicable for the project proposed).

Scored Review Criteria

Reviewers will consider each of the review criteria below in the determination of scientific merit, and give a separate score for each. An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact. For example, a project that by its nature is not innovative may be essential to advance a field.

Significance

Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? Is there a strong scientific premise for the project? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?

Investigator(s)

Are the PD(s)/PI(s), collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project? If Early Stage Investigators or those in the early stages of independent careers, do they have appropriate experience and training? If established, have they demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)? If the project is collaborative or multi-PD/PI, do the investigators have complementary and integrated expertise; are their leadership approach, governance and organizational structure appropriate for the project?

Innovation

Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

✓ Does the program align with the goals of my project?

✓ Does the program support activities I plan to pursue in my project?

✓ Does the program grant enough funding to support my project?

✓ Is there evidence of past support to projects similar to mine?

✓ Is the opportunity well-suited to the stage of my research?

PART 3: PREPARING YOUR RESPONSE AND DEMONSTRATING ALIGNMENT

After you've found the right solicitation

Review Grantmaker Materials:

- Review
    - Grantmaker guidance
    - The specific solicitation
    - Funded grants (if available)

- Confirm eligibility, deadlines, and the submission process and method

Design a Project, Establish a Plan

REVIEW GRANTMAKER MATERIALS

- Review the eligibility requirements
- Evaluate the funding amount and project period
- Map out your strategy to develop and submit the proposal <u>on time</u>
- Note deadlines for Letter of Intent, pre-proposal, and full proposal
- Allow time to get internal approval before submission
- Note character-, word-, and page-limits as well as formatting requirements
- Always allow time for derailments ->> plan to submit well <u>before</u> the deadline

And then review the Solicitation again!

ESTABLISH A PLAN

- Identify your internal capacity and expertise

- Evaluate your timeframe and considerations

- Assess external support

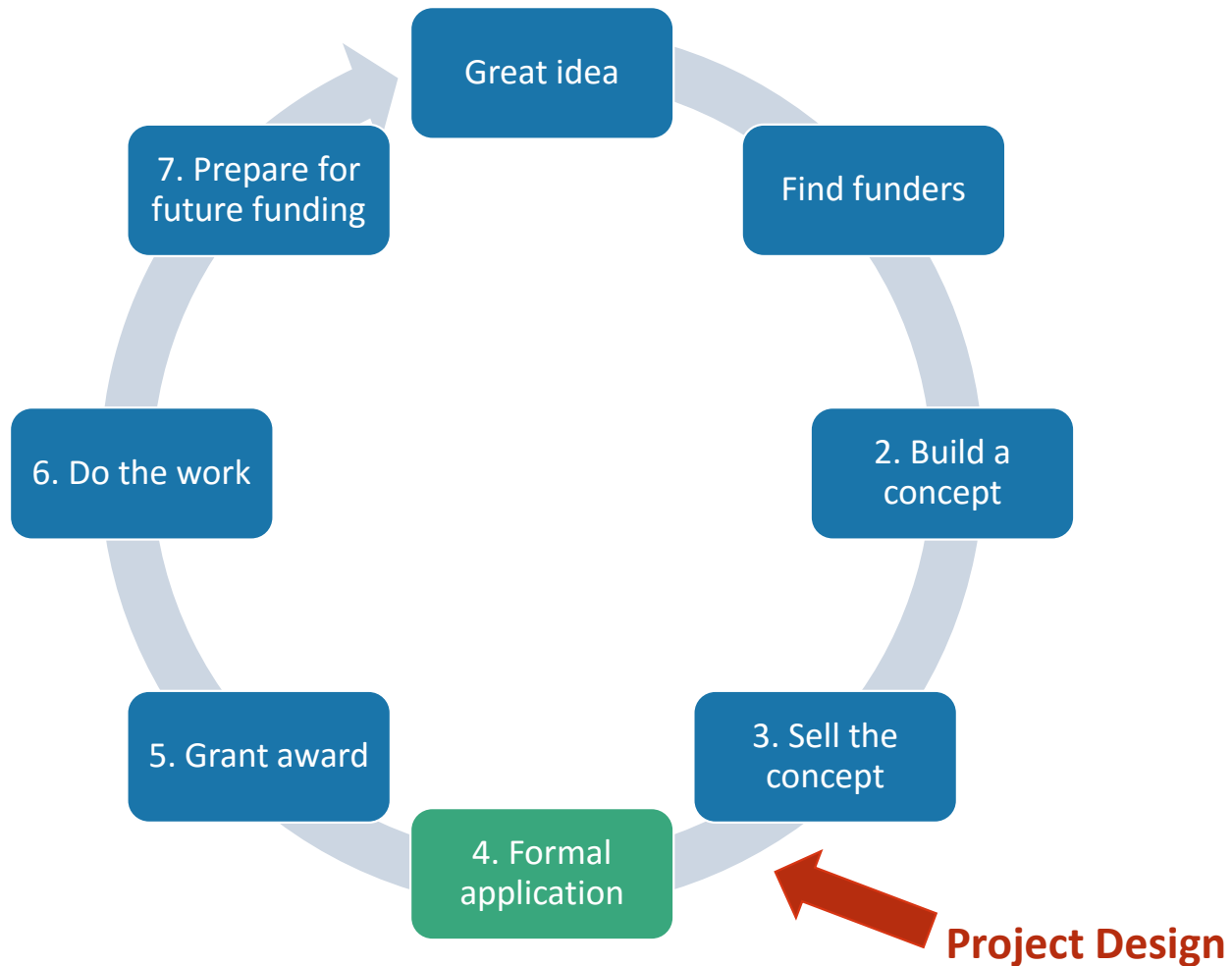- Apply planning tools, if needed

A GOOD CONCEPT

Good proposals come from good concepts.

Strong narratives answer core questions <u>clearly and succinctly</u>:

1. What do you want to do, how much will it cost, and how much time will it take?

2. How does the proposed project relate to the sponsor's interests?

3. What difference will the project make to your institution, your students, your discipline, the state, the nation, and other stakeholders?

4. What has already been done, and how will your project advance that work?

5. How do you plan to implement and accomplish project goals and outcomes?

6. How will the results be evaluated?

7. Why should you, rather than someone else, be selected to do this project?

The best proposals make the reviewers say: "I wish I had thought of that!"

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- Find funders
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Project Design

DESIGNING THE PROJECT

"Project Design" refers to the structure of a grant project that is optimal if it happens <u>before</u> proposal development.

Project Design includes:

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why
- How

...and how those elements work together to accomplish your goal.

An "outcomes-based" design process will ensure a strong project design. Build a concrete logic model beginning with outcomes and impact goals.

MAKE A GRANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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

- Create a Checklist of all required proposal elements.
- Develop a Timeline for proposal development, including key dates and responsibility assignments
  - Note deadline for Letter of Intent or pre-proposal, as well as proposal deadline.
  - Plan at least one conversation with a program officer, if allowed.
  - Allow time to get internal approval before submission.
- Outline the Narrative based on the scoring rubric or key section headings
  - Note character-, word-, and page-limits, as well as formatting requirements.

Always allow time for derailments: Plan to submit WELL BEFORE the deadline.

HR

Activity / Deliverable	Lead*	Due Date	Task Completed
Review solicitation, create a checklist of all requirements, notify Sponsored Programs Services, if appropriate	PI	7/9	
Develop timeline of key dates and responsibility	PI	7/13	✓
Create outline of Research Plan Narrative and its components	PI	7/30	
Schedule calls/meetings with collaborator(s) as needed	PI	weekly	
Draft content of Narrative into Draft #1	PI	8/17	
Draft Letter of Support template and request from collaborators, noted their deadline (if relevant)	PI	8/27	
Refine Narrative into Draft #2, draft Aims (if applicable) Abstract	PI	8/31	
Outline budget and corresponding justification, enlist support from SPS (if appropriate)	PI	9/7	
Develop / collate content for ancillary materials: Biosketch(es), Facilities & Resources, other related materials	PI	9/7	
Request colleague(s) to review Draft #2, requested date for letters of support to be returned	PI	9/14	
Edit Draft after colleague review – create near-final Narrative (Draft #3)	PI	9/28	
Finalize Aims and Abstract based on near-final version of Narrative	PI	10/1	
Finalize budget and justification (and circulate for routing if required)	PI	10/1	
Finalize Research Plan Narrative and prepare all documents for submission	PI	10/5	
Submit full application package to SPO (due by 5 PM local time on 10/16)	PI	10/9	

*or PI designee

- Set monthly (or weekly) goals
- Establish action steps to meet each goals

WRITE THE NARRATIVE

Strong narratives have similar core elements:

- Statement of the Problem
- Literature Review
- Conceptual Framework
- Hypotheses / Research Questions / Goals / Objectives / Aims
- Methodology / Strategy
- Scope of Work
- Management Plan
- Faculty / Staff and Institutional Qualifications

Note that each Solicitation will require information to be presented in specific ways.

HR

THE EVALUATION PLAN

Explain how you will evaluate the project's success.

- Include formative (process) and summative (results) evaluation plans.
- Describe how you will use formative evaluation data to refine the project design.
- Describe the qualifications of evaluators.
- Describe any instruments that will be used to collect data, explain why are they appropriate, and provide evidence of the instruments' reliability and validity.
- Provide detailed data analysis procedures.

A thorough evaluation should include:

Summative evaluation: What did you accomplish?

Formative evaluation: How did the process go?

Feedback mechanisms that allow you to make course corrections based on mid-project evaluation results.

Evaluation plans should reflect activities, outputs, and outcomes in the logic model.

REFINE THE NARRATIVE

Your narrative should communicate your project clearly and appropriately.

Tips for narrative development:

- Know your audience.
- Write clearly and in an appropriate style.
- Use SMART goals.
- Provide logic models where appropriate.
- Present information in tables and figures where appropriate.
- Use skillful repetition.
- Seek feedback from peers and grant professionals.

Above all: give yourself plenty of time.

TONE AND STYLE

- The proposal as sales pitch

- Formality levels

- Use of point-of-view: First vs third-person

- The grant narrative genre

- Use available (successful) examples as models/templates, when possible
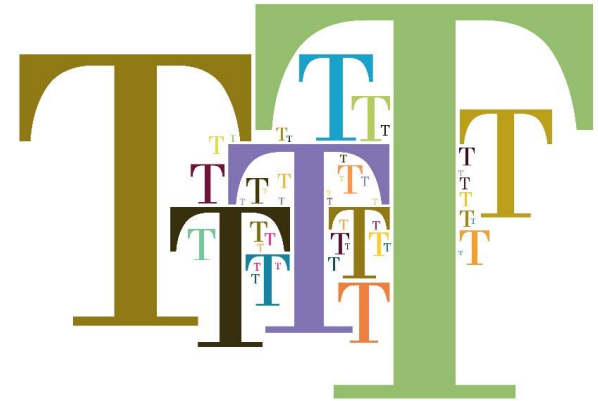
DEVELOP THE BUDGET & JUSTIFICATION

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 only "translate" to the grantmaker's required form after the budget is final.

The budget narrative must be consistent with the project narrative.

Be specific!

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.

CREATE ATTACHMENTS

Attachments vary by funder and solicitation, but often include:

- Abstract / Project Summary (Write it last!)
- Biosketches / CVs
- Quotations or documentation for specific budget items
- Detailed project timelines
- Letters of commitment or Memoranda of Understanding
- Agency-specific documents (e.g., NSF's Current and Pending Support)

Keep careful track of all of your attachments!

ASSEMBLE AND SUBMIT

After each element of the proposal is complete, assemble the final package.

- Review the package as a whole:
  - Is it internally consistent?
  - Does it follow all funder guidelines?
  - Will a reviewer be able to find what s/he needs in the package?
  - Will a reviewer who doesn't know you, your institution, or your work need any additional information to understand your project?
- Double check to make sure the package is complete.
- Obtain internal approval for submission.
- Submit the package <u>before the deadline date</u> if at all possible.

follow instructions carefully

BEING COMPETITIVE

Grant competitiveness is multi-faceted; pay attention to <u>all</u> the elements.

Key elements of grant competitiveness:

1. PI qualifications and experience
2. Established relationships and collaborations
3. Resources available
4. Alignment ->> Responsiveness to funder interests and requirements
5. Rationale
6. Project design
7. Preliminary work

INCREASING YOUR COMPETITIVENESS

- Establish and document appropriate collaborations
- Publish preliminary studies
- Increase the number of publications relevant to the proposed work
- Know your research environment (personnel, equipment, institutional supports) to leverage its strengths, identify and address critical gaps, and minimize other weaknesses
- Establish a record of funding, even if it is internal awards (and publish your findings!)
- Take on trainees and develop / participate in outreach if relevant to your target opportunities
- Serve as a reviewer

LEARN FROM THE PROCESS

To survive and thrive in the grant process:

- Start early.
- Keep checklists and refer to them often.
- Stay connected with Grants staff.
- Stay connected with Program Officer(s).
- Get external feedback from peers and professionals.
- Keep a pulse on trends and priorities so that your design stays aligned.

Remember: Your skills and savvy will improve with each grant.

THE GRANTSEEKING PROCESS IS COMPLEX AND LAYERED.

A STRATEGIC APPROACH IS ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESS.

HANOVER RESEARCH SUPPORT

Proposal Review

We review and critique a client-drafted proposal narrative, providing feedback on alignment with funding opportunity announcement; competitiveness; and general grantsmanship. Reviewers make specific recommendations using margin comments and/or produce a memo outlining high-level recommendations; and provide a debrief phone call.   Timeline: 2-3 weeks

Proposal Revision

We review and critique a client-drafted proposal narrative, providing feedback on alignment with funding opportunity announcement; competitiveness; and general grantsmanship. Reviewers make specific recommendations using margin comments and/or produce a memo outlining high-level recommendations; make suggested revisions to the proposal using Track Changes to focus on achieving clarity and effective use of language; and provide a debrief phone call.   Timeline: 3-4 weeks

Proposal Support

We supplement the work of project teams by providing partial proposal writing support and consultative grant narrative editing and review. These services vary based on client needs and submission deadlines.
                                      Timeline: 6-12 weeks

Contact Matt Mroz in the Office of the Vice President for Research to request Hanover support.

Questions?

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