

Sam Fox School Research Office

The Sam Fox School Research Office fosters a culture of research and creative activity by serving as a facilitator of faculty and student creative initiatives and research projects to generate new knowledge, encourage entrepreneurship, and promote interdisciplinary collaborations in architecture, design, and visual arts. The office works across the school to define projects, seek funding, and identify internal and external partnerships to support research activity. Support also includes budgeting, grant guideline evaluation, application and writing review, and navigating the WU research infrastructure.

Each school/department has a research office that manages the institutional requirements of research activity. We all collaborate to support the ethical practice and management of research activity within our disciplines. We use this network to exchange opportunities or seek out collaborators.

All research offices receive broader institutional guidance and support from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and the Office of Sponsored Research Services (OSRS). All grants and contracts must receive school dean and OSRS approval prior to being submitted.

While you may use the links below or contact other offices, the SFS Research Office is here to help you explore opportunities and plan for research activity.

Please contact Enrique Von Rohr to make an appointment or discuss your project. vonrohr@samfox.wustl.edu

Additional Research Support Websites and Information:

Internal resources list at the Sam Fox School:

<http://libguides.wustl.edu/samfoxfunding>

This site is an internal work in progress and is the main entry point for all resources specific to art, architecture and design. Funding opportunities, competitions, books on writing grants, residency opportunities and much more are listed here and updated periodically. You can sign up for regular updates to opportunities from a number of links provided such as COS and IRIS. If there are additional sources that you would like to contribute please do not hesitate to contact us.

SFS Delicious book marking of websites:

<http://www.delicious.com/samfoxschoolresearch>

This is a searchable book marking systems. We have been building this with relevant sources for funding support in art, architecture and design.

External web page for research activity:

<http://samfoxschool.wustl.edu/artarch/research>

This has various links and information for public, faculty and students. It is our public face of research activity as well as ongoing opportunities.

Proposal Development Resources:

A service provided by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research

<http://proposalhelp.wustl.edu/>

Proposal Writing Short Course:

http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/shortcourse/prop1_print

WU Research Office:

<http://research.wustl.edu/>

Comprehensive resource for all things research at WU. The site is primarily directed towards the institutional requirements and administration of university federally funded research. It is good to be aware of this resource when planning a larger federally funding project, as all grants must receive institutional approval.

Foundation Center:

<http://foundationcenter.org/>

The Sam Fox School has access to one of the largest databases of foundations. If you know of a foundation and would like additional information please contact the SFS Research Office for assistance. We can also conduct a searches based on specific key words and can help identify resources from this list. Please note that all foundation grant applications must receive prior approval by the WU Foundation Office if you plan to apply through WU. If the foundation supports individuals then you may apply directly. Many foundations support individuals and organizations. In either case the SFS research office is here to assist with the application process.

PIVOT Funding

Pivot, formerly the Community of Science (COS), provides a comprehensive database of funding sources and opportunities as well as an expertise database to help you identify potential collaborators within Washington University in Saint Louis and at institutions around the world. The web site also allows users to set up automated funding alerts based on keywords and areas of interest.

<http://research.wustl.edu/PGC/Funding/Pivot/Pages/default.aspx>

Ten Golden Rules for Writing a Winning Proposal

by Cindy Kiel, former Executive Director of the Office of Sponsored Research Services and Assistant Vice Chancellor at WU

1. If you write proposals, you get grants.

The converse is also true: if you don't write proposals, you don't get grants. Set aside a specific time each day dedicated to writing. Research shows a ten-fold increase in the number of ideas by individuals who do this rather than wait for ideas to come before they write.

2. Find the right sponsor for your idea.

Look for the slow, fat rabbits. (high funding ratios with larger awards). Learn the agency's funding priorities. Find a sponsor that is interested in your idea, or shape your idea to the sponsor's priorities. The program director is one of your best resources; talk to him or her.

3. The Golden Rule prevails: whoever has the gold, rules.

The sponsor sets the rules—follow them. Read the RFP. Know what's required of you: deadlines, letters of inquiry, proposal format. And it bears repeating: talk to your program officer. Federal program directors are ready and eager to assist you.

4. Funding agencies (even federal agencies) are managed by people.

Ultimately, people decide whom to fund. It's who you know. Form a relationship with the program directors at the agency. Call them; invite them to hear you speak at presentations; seek their guidance. Use suggested reviewers or non reviewer opportunities if allowed. Remember that reviewers are human beings. Cite them—they're experts in their field. Avoid language that is potentially offensive. Explicitly consider opposing views.

5. Don't annoy the reviewer.

An unprofessional-looking proposal starts out with one strike against it. Choose an easy-to-read typeface and size. Double check spelling and grammar. Avoid editorial mistakes such as "Dave, put info here." Don't even think about handwritten pages. Avoid disorganized and incomplete proposals. That means using headings and subheadings to guide the reader through the text, addressing all required elements, and ensuring an accurate table of contents and page numbers. All referenced citations and appendices, as well as letters of support, should be included, too. Avoid sparse justifications. Important details must not be omitted or vague. All elements must be reasonable and logical, with special attention to the budget justification and how it relates back to the scope of work. Reviewers know what things cost; don't disappoint them by over or under-budgeting your work.

6. Read the guidelines before all else fails.

Read the directions! Both the Sponsor's requirements and internal requirements. RFPs and funding programs have specific formats for all applicants to follow. They might specify whether there should be a title page (and what should go on it), the typeface and size—even margins. There may be budget stipulations, such as unallowable costs or cost-sharing requirements. Make sure you review and meet all of the eligibility requirements. Internal coordination through the University's Research Office or Corporate and Foundation Relations may be necessary.

7. Don't ask for money—provide the grantor with an opportunity to support your project.

Don't make it appear that you are begging for money. Give them a good reason to fund your ideas. Put the punch—your project's "sex appeal"—in the abstract. Proposals are structured similarly to business plans with anticipated outcomes, evaluation mechanisms and outreach/impact plans. Brevity is enjoyed by most reviewers.

8. You need ask only six questions: who, what, where, why, when, and how much?

Proposals are not journal articles or theses and shouldn't sound like them. Instead, think of a proposal as an extended marketing pitch for your idea. Write with enthusiasm and passion; if you haven't hooked the reviewer in the first four pages, you've lost the opportunity. Be the expert or find one. Avoid untested measures or techniques or complex methods where the PI lacks expertise. Provide a backup alternative approach in the event the proposed innovative method fails. Make sure you have the equipment, facilities, supplies, and people you need. And let the sponsor know what you've got.

9. If you resubmit four times and still aren't funded, get a new idea, or find a new sponsor.

Request feedback from the reviewers if it isn't immediately offered. Don't take the criticism personally. Consider it an opportunity to create an even better proposal next time by addressing the reviewers' comments. That said, know when it's time to get a new idea.

10. Edit carefully!

Consider obtaining an outside review prior to submission. Have a nontechnical person read it for organization and understandability. Is the proposal positive? Does it explain why the project is important?

Grant/Proposal Writing Structure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Problem

Write a brief statement of the problem or need (one to two paragraphs). Include the amount you are asking for in the first paragraph. This needs to peak the grantors interest.

Solution

A short description of the project, time frame, people involved like who will oversee the funds.

Funding Requirements

Restate the amount and how you will use it, ie how it will be given out and in what amounts, times and what will the selection criteria.

Organization and Expertise

Talk a bit about your expertise, successes, purpose, and history. Why should the granting organization invest in your expertise?

The above four items should fit on the first page.

STATEMENT OF NEED

Elaborate on the problem further and what is particular to your situation. Give hope, point to some successes, possibly by others as precedent, or from your own experience. Is your situation acute? This can be one paragraph.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This repeats the executive summary in more detail, so depending on what you develop for the summary; you can expand or just make sure you include the following.

Objectives

Must be tangible, specific, concrete, measurable and achievable in a specific period off time.

Methods

Explain what will be achieved. You can use How, When & Why to lead the explanation. State the time frames.

Staffing/Administration

How is the initiative led? Who will lead it? You?

Evaluation

How will you measure the results? What are the metrics for success?

BUDGET

This will be a detailed itemized list of what the project will cost. Sometime they require further justification of each item.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Proposals can average about two pages. This is only a stating point and does not mean it can't be longer. In addition, this is only a starting point to get your thinking started for explaining your needs. Each granting organization will have different requirements and you will have to edit according to those requirements. Follow the instructions exactly. Even things like font size, margin spacing and type of file can be on the criteria for submission. They are all different and the small details count.

Resources List: For Individual Artist

Foundation Center Classroom: Lots of Free knowledge
<http://grantspace.org/Classroom>

Webinar on grants to individuals:
<http://grantspace.org/Multimedia-Archive/Webinars/Grantseeking-Basics-for-Individuals-in-the-Arts>

Pdf file from the above webinar:
http://foundationcenter.org/course_materials/gsbawebinar/

Search for Foundations:
<http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/foundfinder/>

Learn About Grant Applications:
<http://www.youtube.com/TheFoundationCenter>

Foundation Guide to Individuals
<http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/individuals/>

Foundation Center: Find locations across the country that provide access to Foundation Center data.
<http://grantspace.org/Find-Us>

National Assembly of State Arts Organizations
<http://www.nasaa-arts.org/>

New York Foundation for the Arts
<http://www.nyfa.org>

Alliance of Artist Communities
<http://www.artistcommunities.org>