SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH FUNDING: Identifying Sources, Strategic Proposal Writing, and the Submission Process

Barbara L. E. Walker
Institute for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Research (ISBER)
University of California, Santa Barbara
Institutional organization of research at UCSB
What is “research development”?

- Developing a sound research plan
  - Competitive—on the cutting edge
    - Theoretically grounded
    - Methodologically sophisticated
  - Ethical (human subjects)
  - Feasible
- Securing funds necessary to execute and complete
Developing research plan

- Know prospective research in your field
- Lay foundation now for work you will do several years from now (logical next step)
- Start writing/discussing as soon as possible (float these ideas); don’t let proposal be the first time you address
Adding new skills/knowledge

- **On campus**
  - Network
  - Create or join reading or working groups w/ shared interests
  - Collaboration
- **Extramurally**
  - Postdoctoral and mid-career training
  - Special skills (e.g. language, GIS, etc.)
Personnel available to help

- **Graduate Division**
  - peer advisors
  - workshop series
- **ISBER**
  - Barbara Walker, Director of Research Development for the Social Sciences
  - Paula Ryan, Proposal Coordinator & Research Development Assistant
- **Office of Research (OR)**
  - Carla Whitacre, Director of Research Development
  - Jackie Hunt, Research Development Officer
I. Finding funding sources
Steps in fund source seeking

- Find out who funds the work you admire
- Do electronic database and internet searches
- Narrow the list, determine feasible targets
- Research each funder
- Contact program officer (caveats)
Finding Funding Sources

• Electronic searching (IRIS, COS, GRAPES, Grants.gov, etc – refer to handout)
• Consultation (Grad Division, ISBER, OR)
• Web Research – google, etc.
• Electronic distribution lists/Alert services
## Forms of funding - I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Fellowships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• submitted by institution</td>
<td>• submitted by individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• funded to institution</td>
<td>• funded to individual (as income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• indirect costs apply</td>
<td>• no indirect costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• monitoring of expenditures</td>
<td>• no monitoring of expenditures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• final report required</td>
<td>• letters of reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• unexpended funds returned to funder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Forms of funding - II

- **Contracts**
  - submitted by institution
  - funded to institution
  - indirect costs apply
  - fixed deliverables and timeline
  - final report required
  - Failure to perform = breach of contract

- **Gifts**
  - donated to UCSB for your project
  - Institutional Advancement handles account
  - no indirect costs
  - no monitoring of expenditures
  - irrevocable — UCSB keeps unexpended funds
Types of sponsors

- Campus (intramural)
- UC systemwide
- State funding agencies
- Federal funding agencies
- Private professional foundations-with regular funding cycles and open proposal competitions
- Other private and corporate foundations
- Businesses & corporations
- International sponsors
UC Systemwide funding for social science dissertation and post-doctoral research

- **President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program**
  - $40-50 K per year, up to 2 years
- **Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC, at UCSD)**
  - Dissertation Fellowships, $20 K
  - Public Policy and Biological / Nuclear Threats 2008 Summer Boot Camps
- **Pacific Rim Research Program** (at UCOP)
  - Doctoral fellowship, up to $22 K
  - Minigrants, $3 K
- **UC MEXUS – UC Institute for Mexico and the United States** (at UCR)
  - Doctoral Dissertation Grants, up to $12K, 2 yrs.
  - Post-Doctoral Fellowships, up to $34 K
- **Labor and Employment Research Fund** (at UCOP)
  - Doctoral Dissertation fellowships, up to $30K
  - Mini-grant, up to $4K; awarded 2X/year, spring and the fall
- **UC Linguistic Minority Research Institute**
  - Graduate student awards, up to $15K; February 1 and October 1
  - Graduate Student Conference Travel Grants
  - Post-Doctoral Grants
UC systemwide health research (including social science students)

- **University AIDS Research Program**
  - Dissertation grants, up to $12K; February/March annually
  - Postdoctoral, Biomedical Translational, and Clinical Fellowship Awards, $37 K - $45 K per year for 2 years

- **Breast Cancer Research Program**
  - Dissertation and Postdoctoral Fellowship career development awards,
    $76 K (over 2 years) for dissertation; $135 K (over 3 years) for postdoctoral fellowships

- **Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program**
  - Dissertation awards, up to $20K per year for 2 years
  - Postdoctoral Fellowship Award, up to $37 K per year for 2 years

- **Toxic Substances Research & Training Program**
  - Student fellowships, $25 K per year for 2 years
Federal funders in social sciences

- National Endowment for the Humanities
- National Institute of Justice
- National Institutes of Health - 27 institutes and centers including NIMH, NIDA, NICHD, NIA, NIAAA (e.g., National Research Service Awards predoc fellowships)
- National Science Foundation
- US Department of Education (e.g., Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Projects Abroad)
- Environmental Protection Agency
Leading social science funders among private foundations

- American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS)
- Ford Foundation
- Kellogg Foundation
- MacArthur Foundation
- National Geographic Society
- Packard Foundation
- Pew Charitable Foundation
- Rockefeller Foundation
- Rockefeller Brothers Foundation
- Sloan Foundation
- Social Science Research Council
- Templeton Foundation
Community of Science (COS) is the leading global resource for hard-to-find information critical to scientific research and other projects across all disciplines. We aggregate valuable information so you spend less precious time and money searching for the information you need, leaving you more time and money for your projects.

Find funding with COS Funding Opportunities: search the world's most comprehensive funding resource, with more than 24,000 records representing nearly 400,000 opportunities, worth over $33 billion.

Identify experts and collaborators with COS Expertise: search among 500,000 profiles of researchers from 10,000 institutions throughout the world. Discover who's doing what -- current research activity, funding received, publications, patents, new positions and more.

Promote your research with a COS Profile: showcase your research and expertise among researchers and scholars from universities, corporations and nonprofits in more than 170 countries. Use convenient tools to keep your CV updated and accessible.
Search COS Funding Opportunities

The most comprehensive source of funding information available on the Web, with more than 24,000 records, representing over 400,000 funding opportunities, worth over $33 billion.
### COS Funding Opportunities Search - Windows Internet Explorer

**All Fields:** (e.g., gen** or genetic**)  
**Sponsor:** (e.g., "National Institutes of Health" or NIH)  
**Title:** (e.g., medical w/3 fellowship)  
**Abstract:** (e.g., "economic development")

**Deadline:**
- on or after [day] [month] [year]  
- on or before [day] [month] [year]

**Internal Coordination:**  
- Internal Coordination Required

**Amount** (e.g., 25000)
- Include: [ ] Unspecified

**Keywords:**  
- add keywords | clear

**Activity Location:**
- [Select from the List]  
- more locations | clear

**Requirements:**
- PhD or MD or Other Professional  
- Graduate Student  
- Undergraduate Student  
- Academic Institution

**Citizenship or Residency:**
- United States  
- Canada  
- United Kingdom  
- Australia  
- Include: [ ] Unrestricted

**Funding Type:**
- Training or Scholarship or Fellowship  
- Prize or Award  
- Postdoctoral Award  
- Collaboration or Cooperative Agreement

**Sponsor Type:**
- Federal, U.S.  
- National Government, Non-U.S.  
- Private Foundation  
- Academic Institution
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>Grant Title</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Fellowships in Southeast European Studies</td>
<td>American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS)</td>
<td>Nov 14, 2008</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>UC MEXUS - CONACYT Postdoctoral Research Fellowships</td>
<td>University of California, Riverside (UCR)</td>
<td>Mar 10, 2009</td>
<td>$34,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Research Position</td>
<td>Ohio State University, East Asian Studies Center</td>
<td>Feb 28, 2009</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hayward R. Alter Postdoctoral Fellowship Competition 2008-09</td>
<td>University of Southern California Center for International Studies</td>
<td>unspecified</td>
<td>see record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Clinical Overseas Fellowships</td>
<td>Australia Department of Health and Aging National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) - Australia Training (Postdoctoral) Fellowships</td>
<td>Jul 06, 2008</td>
<td>$254,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>International Postdoctoral Research Link Program - Linked Postdoctoral Awards for Scientists and Engineers (NRC/AH) for U.S. Applicants</td>
<td>von Humboldt Foundation, Alexander (AvH) Scholar Award Programs</td>
<td>continuous</td>
<td>see record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chinese Studies Postdoctoral Awards</td>
<td>Stanford University Center for East Asian Studies</td>
<td>Jan 15, 2009</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ford Foundation Diversity Postdoctoral Fellowships</td>
<td>National Academies National Research Council (NRC) - USA Policy and Global Affairs</td>
<td>Nov 29, 2008</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program for Academic Diversity</td>
<td>University of California, Berkeley</td>
<td>Nov 02, 2008</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program</td>
<td>Office of the President (UCOP)</td>
<td>Nov 15, 2008</td>
<td>$34,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Carolina Postdoctoral Program for Faculty Diversity</td>
<td>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</td>
<td>Jan 03, 2009</td>
<td>$71,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Fellowship Program</td>
<td>University of Minnesota</td>
<td>Nov 01, 2008</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>NRF Free-Standing Postdoctoral Fellowship</td>
<td>National Research Foundation (NRF) - South Africa Scholarships and Fellowships Programme</td>
<td>Jul 31, 2008</td>
<td>see record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Residential Research Fellowships</td>
<td>University of Virginia Woodrow Institute for Afro-American and African Studies, Carter G.</td>
<td>Dec 01, 2008</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Fellowships</td>
<td>Santa Fe Institute (SFI)</td>
<td>Nov 15, 2008</td>
<td>see record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Fellowships</td>
<td>Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Fellowships</td>
<td>Oct 01, 2008</td>
<td>$76,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Research Leave Fellowships</td>
<td>American Association of University Women (AAUW) Educational Foundation Fellowships and Grants</td>
<td>Nov 15, 2008</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Federal Outlook

FY08 Budget Closes with Disappointing Omnibus Appropriations Bill

• The federal government's fiscal year (FY) 2008 began on October 1
• On December 29, Congress gave final approval to an omnibus appropriations bill combining the 11 unfinished 2008 appropriations bills, which the President signed into law
• The Federal investment in basic and applied research will gain just 1.1 percent ($57.5 billion), less than inflation and far less than earlier congressional appropriations.
  • NSF would see only a one percent increase in its R&D funding instead of a larger requested increase
  • Most National Institutes of Health (NIH) institutes would get flat funding at FY 2007 levels instead of requested cuts.
• UCSB is #6 in NSF SBES funding. For Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences expect flat or slightly decreased funding.
Contacting Funders

- Can be helpful if judicious
- Personal contacts are helpful

Goals:
- Learn the funder’s perspective
- Learn about preferences/biases
- Who are their reviewers, board, advisory committee?
- Learn about the review process
- Determine Program Officer’s role in funding decisions
- Submit concept paper for review and feedback (LOI often required)
- Find out if your project “fits”
- Offer to become a reviewer
- Submit concept paper for review and feedback

Concerns:
- Do not call to ask about information that is available on website
- Don’t appear to be fishing for unfair advantage
- Don’t want multiple uncoordinated contacts from same agency
III. Submitting Proposals
Who may be a UC Principal Investigator?

- Ladder faculty (not lecturers)
- Professional researchers (research faculty) who have been granted PI status – ≥50% appt.
- PhD students, as an exception to policy, w/ their advisor as co-PI
- Some senior staff, when necessary, e.g. student services director applying for grant
- NOT: visiting scholars, colleagues at other institutions, non-PhD’d folks, your friends and family
Timeline for preparing and submitting

- 3-6 mos. to prepare proposal if 1st time, major grant (e.g. NSF, NIH)
  - Circulate draft to specialist colleague(s)
  - Request comments from BW
  - Discuss proposal idea with program officer
- 7 days minimum in advance of deadline for ISBER staff to process, prepare budget (communication key)
- Sub-contracts may add weeks to the process
- 3 days minimum for OR to review
How it works

- Let ISBER know asap (Paula)
- Staff prepare budget, table of contents, cover sheet, and other supporting documents
- You (PI) provide proposal narrative, abstract, bibliography, budget narrative, c.v.
- Staff check for compliance w/ agency guidelines, any problems
- Staff route to OR for review and sign off by an Officer
- Be available for revisions, clarifications, etc.
Human Subjects review

• Your duty as PI to obtain approval
• Many funders will want info. in the proposal about your plans
• Need not be done before submitting, but no funds will be released until all approvals in place
• Summer is a slow time if you need full review
• Completion of online IRB training required
• Kathy Graham, Office of Research (graham@research, x3807) is the staff support to the Human Subjects Committee
II. Writing Competitive Proposals
Most common errors

- Inadequate time planning
- Fail to follow directions
- Bad fit between project and funder (fail to understand audience’s interests)
- Do not provide key framing up front
Working Conditions of Reviewers

- Large stack of proposals
- Seeking to eliminate (red flag!); all deviations from guidelines can be lethal
- Low tolerance for distraction, parenthetical comments, obfuscation, jargon, didactic tone
Keys to Success

- Good match between your idea and agency mission
- Understand the review process
- Review successful proposals or abstracts
- **Follow directions obsessively**
- Understand that a proposal is an instrument of persuasion
- Clarity is essential in both ideas and writing
- Present main problem up front, then provide background
- Certain amount of redundancy good
- Guideposts along the way (use headers!)
- White space, legible, 12 pt font
Parts of a proposal narrative

- Prior Results (NSF)
- Research Question
- Significance
- Hypothesis
- Background
- Theoretical Framework (emphasizing your contribution to it)
- Methodology
- Timeline / Workplan
- Broader Impacts (NSF)
- Evaluation and Assessment (NSF)
Additional parts of proposal

- Abstract, Executive Summary, or Project Summary
- Budget
- Budget justification
- C.V. (full or abbreviated)
- References or bibliography
- Personnel
- Current and Pending Support
- Preparation of Applicant
- Letters of Recommendation or Collaboration
- Names of Potential Reviewers
- Appendices (caution)
Budgets...

- Senior Personnel
- Other Personnel
- Fringe Benefits (institution sets percentage)
- Equipment (over $5000 at UCSB)
- Travel
- Other Direct Costs (Equipment over $5000 and Miscellaneous)
- Participant Support Costs
- Subcontracts
- Indirect Costs (overhead) (51.5% at UCSB)
- Budget Justification
Getting help

- Sample successful proposals
- Proposal writing manuals/texts
- Practice is essential
- Critical reading/editing by colleagues
  - Within discipline/subdiscipline
  - More general
- Ask for reviewer comments whenever possible; revise and resubmit as appropriate
- Serve as a reviewer
Dealing with rejection

- It’s inevitable
- Accept it as part of the process
- Get reviewers’ comments when possible
- Value the reviewers’ comments and use them to make the project/research stronger
- Take responsibility for comments – don’t write off reviewer as biased, stupid, etc.
- If resubmitting, speak to Program Officer in regard to responding to comments
- Get advice from colleagues – ask them to read review comments (don’t go hide somewhere)
IV. Using your grant funds
Duties as PI

• Fulfill all requirements of funder re: budget reallocations, final reports
• Comply w/ all UC policies re: use of funds
• Signature authority
• Responsible for all employees on the project (proper hiring, labor practices, research conduct, etc.)
Award administration—how to obtain and use your funds

- Hiring personnel
- Travel; travel advances
- Purchasing
- Entertainment
- Conferences and workshops
- Computer support (e.g. web site hosting)
Getting Help with Awards

• ISBER Staff
  – Jana Bentley, ISBER MSO
  – Grants Managers
    • Jan Jacobson, A-K
    • Lacy Olivera, L-Z and ISBER grants
  – Personnel/hiring—Monica Koegler-Blaha
  – Purchasing, travel, etc.—Katie Bamburg

• OR Sponsored Projects Officers (SPO)
  – George Hopwood—SP Officer assigned to ISBER