

Accessing Grants and Fellowships:
Workshop for Doctoral Students in Public
Policy and Public Administration

Amy Ellen Schwartz
New York University

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A Learnable Skill

- Getting grant funding for research is like publishing scholarly articles:
 - A good idea is (usually) necessary but it is not at all sufficient for success.
- It is learnable – if you want to learn.
- Similar to learning to:
 - Write a thesis
 - Publish an academic article.
- You can do it:
 - Effort, Persistence, Resourcefulness, Flexibility, Humility
- A thick skin helps

A Process

- Start with an idea.
- Sketch out the broadest contours of the agenda you can.
- Are there alternative ways to frame the underlying work?
- Are there ancillary projects that may have broader appeal (that might be more easily funded) and would pay for data collection etc... to subsidizing your pet project?
- Brainstorm about who might care about your results: your population, policy..
- Review Literature: what fields/ areas does your work fit in?
How/who has funded the work you cite?
- Generate a list of potential funders and RFPs

Listen to the funders

- They will tell you what they want to fund
- Read their materials
- Address their questions
- Write for the appropriate audience
 - Pay attention to language, disciplinary backgrounds
 - Priorities
- Solicit feedback if offered
- Respond to comments/questions if asked.

No Need to Go it Alone

- Think about teams and partnerships
- Are there colleagues with related interests who can help make your grant application more compelling?
 - Consider an advisory board with subject area experts/practitioners
- Can you find a researcher partner with complementary research ideas that can make a whole that's bigger than the sum of the parts?
- Advice:
 - learn from others
 - be generous with your collaborators including your adviser (if you are unsure about how to be a great mentee – find out!)
 - be strategic
 - discuss coauthorship issues, etc. early



Non-Academic Collaborations

- Has previous work been published in academic journals?
- Why or why not?
- What does the funder/organization expect about the ownership of the results?
Do they hold the right to refuse permission to publish?
- Can you use the data for additional projects?
- What's the process for approval?



Start Small

- Build your resume/ portfolio
- Find the right “pond”
- Small Grant Programs:
 - Universities;
 - Professional organizations;
- Fellowships, Post-docs, Pre-docs;
 - Often quite specialized
- That said, applying for a large grant is sometimes not a lot harder than applying for a small grant... If you can justify the cost.
- Establishing a track record matters.

Contracts Are Not Grants

- What are you promising?
- Who owns the intellectual property?
- Is there a right to review /approve AND DENY APPROVAL for publication?
- Are there restrictions on the use of funds?

The Small Stuff Matters

- A complete grant proposal includes many parts – only ONE of which is the research narrative.
- The other parts matter A LOT:
 - CVs, biosketches
 - Letters of support
 - IRB/Human Subjects issues
 - Budgets
 - Checksheets/forms for the organization.
- These Matter!

The Office of Sponsored Research Matters

- The Sponsored Research personnel at your University (or organization) provide critical support and assistance for your grants both pre and post-award.
- Get to know them.
- Ask for their advice/feedback when you can.
- Be appreciative and considerate
 - Give them advance notice
 - Get materials in early
 - Let them know about successes
 - Thank them.



You can do this

amy.schwartz@nyu.edu

