COEHD Pathways to Knowledge

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NSF Grant: Universal Design and Technology for Students with Disabilities in STEM Fields
Using a Research Agenda to Find Funding

- Clearly articulated research agenda
- Review RFPs to see if there is a match
- Take opportunities to attend sessions if they offer them
Committing to Submitting

- Once committed to submitting, read, read, read
- Review other funded grants in that category
- Use the grant’s wording to introduce your ideas and plans
- Outline all requirements that you must include and clearly identify the program priorities that your grant will address
Identify the Research

- Since you have chosen to submit a grant related to your research agenda, the questions you decide to explore should extend what you do every day.

- There are two types of categories I use for questions: questions that are evident from the project description and questions that arise from your plan and activities.
Example of a question related to the project description

- This grant asked for interventions for supporting student transitions across critical academic and professional junctures.
- So, we developed a research question for this: What accommodations, research-based practices, and assistive technology are provided for students with disabilities who have interest in STEM fields in local high schools, community colleges, and UTSA?
Example of a question from the plan

- The grant was not specific about interventions that were to be used. This is where they wanted us to be creative. So, in our plan we included universal design for learning, among other things.

- Question: Did the change in practice and use of universal design enhance instruction and lead to a greater number of Hispanic students with disabilities succeeding in STEM courses?
Grant Feedback

- Previous grants
- This grant:
- Rating: Very Good from all three reviewers
- Proposal is clear, concise and thoughtful, with some very innovative components that are the framework for the project.
• The applicant conducted interviews with students, parents and administrators and arrived at very current and accurate issues related to the transition from school to adult life that is in agreement with the literature.

• Goal 2 is particularly innovative, given that the online learning center for faculty and students provides opportunities to engage in learning using the latest technology tools such as podcasts, vodcasts, wikis and blogs.

• Wording form RFP: Enrichment projects explore the use of innovative Alliances models (I had read through prior funding and continually asked myself if the ideas were innovative or cutting edge then I asked Co-PI’s review and to the ideas)
Managing the Grant

- Prioritizing
- Organizing
- Always looking and planning ahead
- Weekly review of grant activities
- Monthly meetings with external evaluator
- Delegating tasks to others
- Asking questions: RDGO, OSP
Implications for Practice and Future Research

- This grant is a test bed for an Alliance proposal which we have informally and formally committed to submitting.
- The activities in this grant can be continued and used for research in others STEM areas such as science and engineering.
- Opportunities for sustained research over several years.
Ending thoughts

- One well thought out grant that is directly related to your research agenda can provide you with years of data and research opportunities. It can also lead to ideas for other funding to build on the work you have started.

- Spend your time writing grants only when you have the time to dedicate to writing a solid grant that you feel has the potential to be funded (don’t agree to work on a grant just because the submission will look good).
• Do not wait until last minute. It seems like everyone rushes around at the last minute. This is stressful and does not provide you the opportunity to do your best work.

• Be choosy when it comes to working with others. It is a fact that your ideas and research interests align better with certain people and if you are giving up your time it needs to be time well spent.

• Remember, it’s not personal, it’s research.