How to Fund your Research: NaEd/Spencer and AERA Grant Programs

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Where to Begin? Stage 1

- Keeping stages in mind
  - PhD applicant: internal and external fellowships and grants, often related to your IDEA, your statement of purpose
  - Doctoral student stage – small grants associated with:
    - Professional associations such as ACPA, AERA – for ideas and summer/pilot research
    - Scholarships through college, graduate school, department
    - Travel grants to meet with folks at conferences, seeds of ideas

Where to Begin? Stage 2

- Keeping stages in mind
  - Doctoral candidacy
    - https://www.ssrc.org/publications/view/the-art-of-writing-proposals/
    - Fellowships of various sorts – again, similar sources but these also include foundations – AERA dissertation grants & 1x/yr special round for scholars of color, NaED/Spencer dissertation, others
    - Spencer is very inclusive methodologically and re: discipline
    - AERA grants more focused on quantitative methods and use of federally-funded large-scale datasets
  - Postdocs and early career awards
    - Foundations, federal agencies
    - These include Spencer small grant programs & AERA research grants and specific topic funding lines – e.g., deeper learning, or proposals as a co-PI to develop experience and prepare to be a PI

Read successful examples

FSU Successful Example Database:
https://www.research.fsu.edu/successfulproposal

AERA: https://www.aera.net/Professional-Opportunities-Funding/AERA-Funding-Opportunities/Grants-Program/Research-Grants/Funded-Research-Grants

Spencer: https://www.spencer.org/grant-archive

- see also recorded webinar for applicants here and additional resources

You can also reach out to funded folks here and in your networks, and ask program officer

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Importance of editing, developing, networks

- On and close to you – accountability circles, can include NCFDD
- Early feedback with faculty, recommenders
- Revise and resubmit, edits
- Planning timelines for preparedness
- Communication is essential – with letter writers and potentially grant/fellowship contacts.
- Ask letter writers EARLY, before you've even committed to apply, if they would be willing – gives notification AND lets them offer advice

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Follow and Use Guides: Designed on Purpose

Office of Research Development Grant Writing Guide: All Purpose Suggestions

Contact the Program Officer Early! And Follow-Up if Needed Later for Any New Questions
They want to have the strongest pool possible and shaping the field is easier earlier than later

Review/Attend Pre-Submission Webinars for these Opportunities! E.g., Spencer (All Grants)

Spencer: A Guide to Writing Successful Field-Initiated Research Grant Proposals (PDF)

They now have guides specific for Qualitative and Quantitative Designs

AERA webinars for research preparation: https://aera.elevate.commpartners.com/

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Use the Proposal (RFP) as a Strict Guide

- Echo the language – key/buzzwords
- Page limit.
- Font.
- Word count.
- Cover all the sections requested by the agency.
- Focus areas – echo that language/integrate into your proposal.
- Crosscheck your proposal against the Request for Proposals.

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1. Talking it out and sharing with outside readers
2. Codeswitching (formal and informal)
3. Remember your rhetorical situation

FROM KATHERINE YAUN, SENIOR GRANT EDITOR AT COLLEGE OF EDUCATION: FOUNDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL

NIH "plain language" before and after examples:
 https://grants.nih.gov/grants/plain_language_examples.htm

Office of Research Development Plain Language help:

https://www.research.fsu.edu/research-offices/ord/proposal-help/communicating-your-work-to-any-audience/

Plain language is the law!

The Plain Writing Act *of 2010 (H.R. 946/Public Law 111-274) requires the federal government to write documents, such as tax returns, federal college aid applications, and Veterans Administration forms in simple easy-to-understand language…"*

Remember:
YOU are the emerging expert in your focused area

- Avoid saying things like "no one has ever researched" or "no research exists on…" – **straw man problem** -- often not true and irritates reviewers.
- **Gaps are less appealing for funding than puzzles or problems** – better setup: we misunderstand Y if we do not address Z…
- Still – **you** know and read the new work – showcase your motivation with confidence

QUESTIONS?

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