



Opportunities & Strategies for Doctoral & Dissertation Research Funding

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Why Dissertation Grants?

The student benefits by...

- Skill development
- Increased marketability
- The money

Yet, dissertation grants are a relatively new trend and somewhat confined to a handful of institutions and funding sources.



Literature is Limited for Social Work Dissertation Grants

General Social Work Funding

- Federal Grants (Leukefeld & Ries, 1993)
- Social Work Funding Resources (Austin, 1999)
- NIH K-Award (Holleran & Thompson, 2005)
- NIH R03 Award (Langhorst & Svikis, 2007)

General Career Development

- Surviving the Ph.D. (Cohen, 2002)
- Job Talk Advice (Wuffle, 2006)
- Job Market Strategies (Simien, 2002)



Limited Literature (Continued)

Social Work Doctoral Training

- Research Training (Proctor, 1997)
- Musings (Khinduka, 2002)

Social Work Dissertation Grants

- HUD Dissertation Grant Example (Grinstein-Weiss, 2006)



Agenda

- Overview of Key Questions
- Private Funding Sources & Case I
- Public Funding Sources & Case II
- Institutional Strategies
- Summary of Strategies



Key Questions



What Types of Grants Exist?

- Public *and* Private
- Dissertation Specific *and* Not
- Substantive Area *and* Not

The key is to find the funder most aligned with your research. So, ask who has funded similar research?



How do You Find Grants?

- Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research (IASWR)
<http://www.iaswresearch.org>
- Federal Government's CRISP of TAGGS
<http://crisp.cit.nih.gov/>
<http://taggs.hhs.gov/AdvancedSearch.cfm>
- The Foundation Center
<http://fdncenter.org>
- The Community of Science
<http://www.cos.com/>



What Should You Know About Grants?

- Research Priorities
- Eligibility for Researcher and Institution
- Allowable Costs
- Deadlines and Resubmission Timelines



Preview of Strategies



Match Your Interests with the Funding Source's Priorities

- Develop your argument of significance. (who and how many the issue affects, what are the societal costs?)
- Know the literature and how your work will build on it/fills gaps.
- Use the funding source's language to frame your argument.
 - Mission Statements, National Reports, Program Announcements (PA's), Requests for Proposals (RFP's) and Program Officers.



Make the Timing Work for You by Preparing in Advance

- Preparation time: 9 months to 1 year.
- Work with mentor to plan grant submissions according to program milestones.
- Consider submitting to multiple sources or accounting for resubmission time.
- Plan dissertation work for different levels of funding.



Most of All, Learn From Others, Over and Over Again

- Review examples of funded grants.
- Use multiple peer reviews at all stages (i.e., from concept papers to the full grant).
- Revise, revise and revise.
- Consider comments from rejected grants as a guide for resubmissions.



Private Grants

Examples of Private Foundations that have Funded Social Work Research

(adapted from IASWR, 2007)

- Academic Council of the United Nations System
- American Association of University Women
- American Cancer Society
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- Fahs-Beck Fund for Experimentation and Research
- Guggenheim Foundation Violence Research
- Hartford Geriatric Social Work Doctoral Fellows Program
- Influencing State Policy-Dissertation Award
- NASW Foundation Doctoral Fellowships
- Nonprofit Sector Research Fund
- Phi Delta Kappa
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality
- The Melissa Institute
- The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation



Private Foundations Have Few Commonalities

- Applications vary greatly in priorities, eligibility, allowable costs, and deadlines.
- Also, consider looking within one's university for university- or department-specific grants.
- Contact program officers early to discuss dissertation's fit with funding source.



Common Grant: Fahs-Beck Dissertation Grant

- Priority: "Problems in the functioning or well being of children, adults, couples, families, or communities, or about interventions designed to prevent or alleviate such problems."
- Provides up to \$5,000 support
- Application includes: 2-page abstract, dissertation proposal, C.V., budget, timeline, and proof of committee approval and IRB approval.
- Deadlines: May 1 and November 1



Common Grants: Hartford Doctoral Fellows

- Priority: "Improving the health and well-being of older persons and their families."
- \$25,000 per year for up to 2 years.
- Up to \$10,000 per year for research and training expenses. Remainder provides stipend to protect 50% of student's time.
- Cost-sharing of \$10,000 per year (i.e., tuition waivers, research assistantships, teaching assistantships, grants-in-aid or scholarships).
- Deadlines: February 1 and August 1.



Common Grants: Guggenheim Foundation

- Priority: Increase understanding of the causes, manifestations, and control of violence, aggression and dominance.
- Provides \$15,000 to support doctoral candidate in “writing phase” and in the final year of study.
- Deadlines: February 1



Case I:

**Private Funding,
Primary Data Collection**



Matching My Area to a Funder's Area

- Initial Interest: Depression care for community-based older adults
- Potential Funders: Hartford Doctoral Fellow, NIMH, and NIA

Matches:

Hartford Doctoral Fellowship: "Improve health and well-being of older adults"

NIMH: President's New Freedom Commission Report; IOM's Quality Chasm in Mental Health Care; NIH's Healthy People 2010 Mid-Course Review; White House Conference on Aging in 2005

Timeline

Year 1

- Complete coursework
- Refine research area
- Identify funding sources

Year 2

- Complete coursework
- Prepare for qualifying exams, paper
- Discuss timeline with chair

Year 3

- Take exam
- Peer review (concept paper)
- Contact school officials, funders, community partners, consultants
- Defend proposal
- Write grant proposal
- Peer reviews of proposal
- Get support letters, IRB approval
- Finalize budget
- Final proofreading of grant
- Submit Grants (Feb and April)

Revise, Revise, and Revise

<u>Version</u>	<u># of Revisions</u>
Hartford Doctoral Application	21
NIMH F31 Application	14
Proposal to Committee	8

First Draft of Aim 1: Describe the barriers and facilitators to collaborative care for the treatment of depression in social service agencies serving older adults.

Last Draft of Aim 1: Describe aging network services' current depression practices and key informants' perceptions about these practices.



Outcome:

Life as a Hartford Doctoral Fellow

- Hartford was awarded in May 2007.
- F31 was not funded—did not resubmit due to timing and Hartford support.
- Fellowship supports:
 - Stipend for living
 - Research expenses (RA's, subject payments, trainings, equipment)
 - Conference attendances (SSWR and GSA)
 - National mentorship and networking, along with pre-conference workshops on career development



Public Grants

Examples of Government Institutes that have Funded Social Work Research

(adapted from Austin, 1999)

- Administration for Children and Families
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Department of Defense
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of Justice
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- National Academy of Science
- National Cancer Institute
- National Institute on Aging
- National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- National Institute of Drug Abuse
- National Institute of Mental Health
- National Perinatal Foundation
- National Science Foundation



National Institute of Health (NIH)'s Common Terms

R## = Research Grant: R03, R36

F## = Individual Training Fellowship: F31

K## = Career Development Grant

T## = Institutional Training Fellowship

P## = Program Project Grant/Center



Common Grants: NIH R03 & R36

- *R03*: Supports small, time-limited projects (dissertation or otherwise) with maximum annual funding of \$50,000, for 1 to 2 years.
- *R36*: Designed to promote doctoral candidates from underrepresented groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, disabled, disadvantaged backgrounds) to pursue research careers with a maximum \$35,000 funding for 2 years.
- Deadlines: February 16, June 16, and October 16



Common Grants: NIH F31 (Dissertation Grant)

The F31, Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards (NRSA): Provides research & training support for up to 5 years of aggregate predoctoral support (T32 and F31).

Support

- Stipend for 2007: \$20,772
- \$4,200 institutional allowance
- 60% of tuition/fees, up to \$16,000

Deadlines: April 8, August 8, and December 8



Common Grants: National Science Foundation

- Priority: “Development of innovative methods and models for the social and behavioral sciences”
- The advisor is principal investigator; student is co-principal investigator.
- Maximum of \$12,000 for up to 2 years for data collection, subject payment, equipment. ***No stipend provided.***
- Deadlines: January 16 and August 16



Case II:

**Public Funding,
Secondary Data**



F31 Application

Research plan must fit mission:

- NIDA
- NIMH
- NIAAA
- NIBIB
- NIDCD
- NINDS



F31 Major Review Elements

- Applicant
- Sponsor and Training Environment
- Research Training Plan
- Training Potential

*(NIH GUIDE FOR REVIEWERS'
PRELIMINARY COMMENTS of
NSRA F31)*



F31 Applicant

- Potential for, and commitment to, a productive scientific career
- Applicant's history as a student, as well as past and current involvement in research activities"
- Letters of recommendation

*(NIH GUIDE FOR REVIEWERS'
PRELIMINARY COMMENTS of
NSRA F31)*



F31 Sponsor & Environment

- Qualifications of the sponsor as a mentor
- Evidence of understanding of the applicant's research training needs and a demonstrated ability to assist in meeting these needs
- Quality of training environment

*(NIH GUIDE FOR REVIEWERS'
PRELIMINARY COMMENTS of
NSRA F31)*



F31 Research Training Plan

- Merit of the research proposal and the general approach
- Potential of the training plan to provide the fellow with individualized supervised experiences that will develop the candidate's knowledge and research skills

*(NIH GUIDE FOR REVIEWERS'
PRELIMINARY COMMENTS of
NSRA F31)*



F31 Training Potential

The value of the proposed fellowship experience as it preparation for a career as an independent researchers and scientist

*(NIH GUIDE FOR REVIEWERS'
PRELIMINARY COMMENTS of
NSRA F31)*



Application Overview

- NIDA
- Research Training Plan:
 - “The Influence of Psychiatric Comorbidities on Dropout from Substance Abuse Treatment”
 - Secondary data, NTIES
- Training & Environment:
 - Independent study (w/committee members)
 - ICPSR Summer Quantitative Institute
 - Conferences and Workshops
- Sponsor:
 - Enola Proctor, Washington University



Timeline – Years 1 and 2

2003-04

- Coursework
- Refine research area
- Learning about grants

2004-05

- Coursework
- Refine research area
- Establish timeline
- Start qualifying paper



Timeline – Year 3

- August 31, 2005: Oliver
- November, 2005: Qualifying paper, exam
- November, 2005 – April 2006
 - NIDA pre-submission consultation
 - NIMH pre-submission consultation
- April, 2006: Application submission
- May, 2006: Dissertation proposal
- July, 2006: F31 Application scored



Timeline – Year 4

- August, 2006:
 - Job market preparations
 - Dissertation activities
- October, 2006: F31 funding begins
- December, 2006: Job
- April, 2007: Dissertation completed
- August, 2007: F31 completed
- September, 2007: Job begins



What helped?

- Revise, revise, revise
 - Internal reviews
 - External reviews
- Review strategies
 - Staggered approach
 - Purposeful selection
- Structured timeline
- Daily, weekly, monthly objectives
- Careful accounting of opportunity costs



Rookie Mistakes

- Big picture
 - *Research AND training ...*
- Focus
 - *Reigning it in ...*
- Balancing viewpoints
 - *Responding to all reviewers ...*
- Motivation
 - *Regroup following a bad review*
 - *Thick skin ...*



Institutional Strategies



Formalized Peer Reviews

- Faculty organize and participate in bi-weekly peer reviews.
- Faculty invite students to attend their consultation meetings/peer reviews.
- Faculty model process of providing and integrating critical feedback.



Research Methods Course

- Papers and presentations:
 - Review funding priorities
 - Develop argument of significance
- Conduct mock review sessions
- Final paper follows structure/ organization of NIH's R03



Student and Expert Workshops

- Upper cohort students present grant experiences to new students.
- Junior faculty share grant experiences and how to discuss their grant skills on the job market.
- Senior faculty and guest consultants discuss submitting, mentoring, and reviewing grants.
- University staff provide instruction on IRB applications, budget preparation, and project coordination.



Awareness of Funding Sources

- Distribute funding announcements on a routine basis.
- Develop staff's skills in searching for funding opportunities.
- Maintain a resource file on funding agencies, their research priorities, and application procedures.



Institutional Knowledge

- Develop resource files of previous grant applications.
- Create templates of common grant requirements (i.e., timelines, budgets, descriptions of university resources, human subjects protections).
- Identify staff as resources (i.e., budgeting, editing, designing electronic diagrams/models, planning for data collection).



Final Thoughts



Strategies for Overcoming Gaps in Funding Areas

- Do you qualify for grants that do not specify research priority areas?
- Can you modify your interests to match a particular funding source?
- Do you have a second or third choice topic that does match a priority area?



Ideas for International Students

- Several Public and Private grants require U.S. Citizenship as part of the eligibility requirements.
- Mentors can help navigate international students to possible funding sources.
- Universities and mentors can consider developing local means of supporting international dissertation work.



Final Suggestions, Part I

- Start early...
 - For example, for the F31, you may submit in April, be reviewed in July, and receive the money anytime from August to December.
- ...But not too early
 - Grant funds should be available when you're ready to start, but not too far in advance
 - You must complete program milestones too.
- Thus, set a timeline with your mentor.



Final Suggestions, Part II

- Start simple
- Tailor your application carefully to reflect the funding source
- Aims, aims, aims. . .
- Establish a writing plan
 - Set daily, weekly or other goals
 - Be productive when motivation is low
 - Plan for multiple revisions



Final Suggestions, Part III

- Use feedback from multiple sources
 - Concept paper and full drafts
 - Staggered reviews
 - External reviews by potential consultants, funding representatives
 - Delphi Method
 - Dissertation committee
 - Other doctoral students who have submitted grants



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Questions