Grant Writing Basics for Graduate Students
First, why bother to write grants?

(Because it is a bother.)
Writing grants can... 

- Build your reputation in your field
- Gain you recognition in your department, college and university
- *Provide funding for you to complete your dissertation!*
Getting funded in graduate school offers:

- **Limited competition** – odds are that the pool of competitors will probably never again be this small...

- Money to complete your research project!

- A track record that will help you achieve professional success as a faculty member or researcher.

- Students who seek funding while still in graduate school may be more attractive to future employers – whether they plan to work in the academy, consulting or business worlds.
What are you looking for?
Be deliberate.

Any road will get you there if you don’t know where you’re going.
Use ODU’s Funding Search Engine to find funding and sign up to receive alerts regarding relevant grant opportunities.
Other Strategies to Find Funding...

- Look for general funding opportunities that cross disciplines.

- Join relevant professional societies – do this now if you haven’t already! Some offer funding and awards; they are also an excellent way to network.

- Ask mentors and others in the field about their dissertation funding.

- Attend conferences and seek opportunities to meet funding officers from government agencies and foundations.

- Search with a variety of terms

- If your topic is related to another discipline, search for funding using that terminology as well.

- Look at funding databases at other universities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Funding Agency</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Who's Eligible</th>
<th>Award Amount</th>
<th>Date Posted</th>
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<tr>
<td>1/15/2018</td>
<td>Adelle and Erwin Tomash Fellowship in the History of Information Processing</td>
<td>Charles Babbage Institute</td>
<td>Arts &amp; Humanities - Social Sciences</td>
<td>Grad/Prof Students</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
<td>2/27/2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/16/2017</td>
<td>SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM - Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Awards (So-DDRI)</td>
<td>National Science Foundation</td>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>Grad/Prof Students</td>
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<td>9/18/2017</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>National Science Foundation</td>
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<td>Faculty - Grad/Prof Students</td>
<td>See invitation for details</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/01/2017</td>
<td>AHRQ Grants for Health Services Research Dissertation Program (R36)</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health</td>
<td>Medical Basic Science - Clinical Science</td>
<td>Grad/Prof Students</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
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<td>6/07/2017</td>
<td>NICHD Early Career Research (ECR) Award (R21)</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health</td>
<td>Medical Basic Science - Clinical Science</td>
<td>Junior Faculty - Medical Fellow/Residents - Post-Doctoral Fellows</td>
<td>See invitation for details</td>
<td>3/01/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/16/2017</td>
<td>Drug Abuse Dissertation Research (R36)</td>
<td>National Institutes of Health</td>
<td>Medical Basic Science - Clinical Science</td>
<td>Grad/Prof Students</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>3/07/2017</td>
</tr>
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</table>
You found a grant!

...but is it right for you & your research project?

**Consider:**

- **Type of funding:** fellowship, dissertation funding, research, etc.
- **Mission/stated goals of the foundation or organization**
- **Goals of the particular grant**
- **Proposal due date**
- **Grant start dates**
- **Grant period**
- **Amount available**
- **Eligibility**
- **Level of experience expected/required**
It’s about “fit.”

Make sure your research interests and goals align with those of the funder.

How do you know what the funder’s goals are?
Explore the funder’s website.
How does the funder describe its overall mission?
You must also consider:

The deadline: Is it feasible?
Funding amount: Is it enough, but not too much?
Eligibility requirements: Are you eligible?
Level of experience expected: Are you qualified, but not overqualified?
Information about funding is often on its own page on the funder’s website. The funder may offer multiple funding programs, so read descriptions carefully.
What/who has the funder previously supported?
If the funder allows you to contact the Program Officer, this is **HIGHLY** recommended.

- Do email to arrange a time to talk by phone.
- Don’t ask about anything that’s already in the solicitation.
American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American Fellowships Dissertation Fellowships Application Instructions

Program Purpose

AAUW’s American Fellowships program has been in existence since 1888, making it the oldest non-institutional source of graduate funding for women in the United States. The program provides fellowships for women pursuing full-time study to complete dissertations, conducting postdoctoral research full time, or preparing research for publication for eight consecutive weeks.

The purpose of the Dissertation Fellowship is to offset a scholar’s living expenses while she completes her dissertation.

Applications are open August 1–November 15

For questions or technical support, please e-mail aauw@applyists.com.

Award Amount

Award Amount: $20,000

Time Line

November 15, 2016, by 11:59 p.m. Central Time
Deadline for online submission of application, recommendations, and supporting documents

April 15, 2017
Notification of decision e-mailed to all applicants. AAUW is not able to honor requests for earlier notification.

July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018
Fellowship year

Eligibility

- American Fellowships are not open to previous recipients of any AAUW national fellowship or grant (not including branch or local awards or Community Action Grants). Members and officers of the AAUW Board of Directors are not eligible to apply for fellowships and grant awards. AAUW staff or volunteers with decision-making authority who wish to apply for an award must recuse themselves from the decision-making process.
- American Fellowship candidates must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the United States as of November 15, 2016.
- American Fellowships are open to women scholars in all fields of study.
- The American Dissertation Fellowship must be used for the final year of writing the dissertation. Applicants must have completed all coursework, passed all preliminary exams, and had the dissertation research proposal or plan approved by November 15, 2016. The doctoral degree/dissertation must be completed between April 1 and June 30, 2018. Degree conferral must be between April 1 and September 15, 2018.
- Dissertation Fellows are not required to study in the United States.
- Students already holding a fellowship or grant for the purpose of supporting their final year of writing or completing the dissertation the year before the fellowship year are not eligible to apply.
- Applicants may apply up to two times for a fellowship for the same dissertation project.
- The fellowship is intended for applicants who are completing their first doctoral degree.
- Distance learning/online programs: American Fellowships support traditional classroom-based courses of study. This fellowship program does not provide funding for distance learning programs or for degrees heavily dependent on distance learning components. Final decisions about what constitutes distance learning under these fellowships will be made by AAUW.
Who will review your proposal?

Criteria for Selection and Application Review

The American Fellowships panel meets once a year to review applications for funding. Awards are based on the selection criteria outlined here. The panel's recommendations are subject to final approval by the AAUW Board of Directors. Fellowships are awarded on a competitive basis according to funds available in a given fiscal year.

To ensure a fair and objective review process, AAUW does not comment on the deliberations of its award panels. No provisions exist for reconsidering fellowship proposals after the board has acted. AAUW does not provide evaluations of successful or unsuccessful applications.

Applications and supporting documents become the sole property of AAUW and will not be returned or held for another year.

In selecting fellowship recipients, the following criteria will be considered:

- Applicants' scholarly excellence
- Quality of project design
- Originality of project
- Scholarly significance of project to the discipline
- Feasibility of project and proposed schedule
- Qualifications of applicant
- Applicants' commitment to women's issues in the profession/community
- Applicants' mentoring of other women
- Applicants' teaching experience
- Potential of applicant to make a significant contribution to the field

The primary criterion for fellowship awards is scholarly excellence. Applications are reviewed by distinguished scholars and should be prepared accordingly.

+ Regulations

+ Application Components and Instructions
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Regulations

American Dissertation Fellowships funds are available for:
• Educational expenses
• Living expenses
• Dependent child care
• Travel to professional meetings, conferences, or seminars, as long as it does not exceed 10 percent of the fellowship

American Dissertation Fellowships funds are not available for
• Purchase of equipment
• Indirect costs
• Research assistants
• Previous expenditures, deficits, or repayment of loans
• Publication costs
• Institutional (overhead) costs
• Tuition for dependent’s education
• Tuition for coursework that is in addition to credits required for maintaining full-time status while completing a dissertation
• Extended field research

AAUW regards the acceptance of a fellowship as a contract requiring fulfillment of the following terms:
• All American Fellowship recipients are required to sign a contract as acceptance of the award. Retain these instructions as they will become part of the fellowship contract if the applicant is awarded a fellowship.
• An AAUW American Fellow is expected to pursue her project full time during the funding period (July 1–June 30). No partial fellowships are awarded. Fellowships may not be deferred.
• Fellows may work up to 15 hours per week, or teach one section of one course per semester or term, with prior written approval from AAUW.
• The AAUW American Fellowships stipend must be larger than any other single award or remunerative position received during the fellowship year and must be acknowledged as the major award. Acceptance of concurrent funds of a lesser amount than the AAUW award is permitted but requires prior written approval from AAUW. Dissertation fellows cannot hold concurrent fellowships or grants for the purpose of supporting their final year of writing or completing the dissertation.
• Any major changes in plans for the fellowship year must have prior written approval from AAUW.
• AAUW must be notified promptly of any change in the status of an application resulting from acceptance of another award.
• Stipend checks are made payable to fellows, not to institutions.
• Fellows are responsible for reporting the fellowship as income to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.
Get Ready to Write:

- Understand how the final grant will be submitted... format, page limits and character count.
- Identify all grant components – including ‘extras’ like letters of support, data management plans, etc.
- Prepare an outline using the headings given.
Application Components and Instructions
Please follow the directions carefully and complete all sections of the application for successful submission of your application. Only completed online applications will be reviewed by the selection panel.

**Required Components**

Start the application process by clicking on the link to access the application and create an account through our vendor site. Complete all required components in the following tabs.

1. **Eligibility**
   Applicants must pass the eligibility quiz to be reviewed by the selection panel.

2. **Applicant Recommendations**
   Provide three recommenders who are the applicant’s advisers, colleagues, or others well acquainted with her, her project/work, and her teaching. One of the three recommendations must be from the applicant’s dissertation director. Standardized or form letter recommendations are discouraged.

3. **Academics**

4. **C.V./Résumé**

5. **Narratives**

6. **Budget**

7. **Uploads**
   - Transcripts*: Submit official transcripts for all graduate work and courses listed in the application. Transcripts must show grades for coursework transferred in. If the transcript shows transfer courses and credits without grades, a transcript from the institution where the courses were taken is required. If you studied at an institution that does not require coursework or provide transcripts, an institutional letter stating that is required.
   - Institution certification form: Submit a form verifying the completion of all required coursework and qualifying examinations for the doctorate and approval of your dissertation research proposal (plan of research) signed by the department chair, graduate dean, or dissertation director. No substitutions for this form will be accepted.
   - Project institution letter*: If you will conduct your project at an institution other than your own during any part of the fellowship year, submit a letter indicating permission from, invitation by, or arrangements with the institution or other location where study will be carried out and the authority with whom the work will be done, as well as verification that you will receive laboratory or office space, library privileges, and institutional affiliation during the fellowship year.

8. **Payment**
   - The $40 filing fee is required to cover the cost of administering the application process. Payment will be accepted through PayPal.

* A certified English translation is required for all documents provided in a foreign language, including transcripts, letters, and diplomas. Translations must bear a mark of certification or official signature that the translation is true and complete.

**Tips for Proposal Preparation**

1. **Read and follow all guidelines.** Many proposals are disqualified each year because applicants omit a key step in the guidelines or ignore instructions. If you are unsure whether you are qualified to apply, e-mail aauw@applyists.com for assistance.

2. **Proofread all work thoroughly.** Proposals that are unclear or contain numerous mistakes distract the reviewer from focusing on the content and reflect poorly on your ability to produce a high-quality product. Check to be sure that sentences are complete, clear, and grammatically correct.

3. **Have someone else read the completed proposal.** An objective reader can often identify areas that need more explanation and may find errors you have overlooked.

4. **Be concise.** Reviewers must read dozens of proposals. Proposals that are clear and concise are more compelling.

**Applications are open August 1–November 15**

For questions or technical support, please e-mail aauw@applyists.com.
PROPOSAL OUTLINE of REQUIREMENTS

Summary Overview of the Project.
- Identify major themes and activities of project;
- explain how activities will address the concerns in the Call for Proposals.
- Identify activities to be delegated to sub-contractors.

Detailed Timetable.
- Specify dates for starting and completing the project (typically January 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012).
- Provide a timetable for carrying out EACH ACTIVITY of the project, including any dissemination of results.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

2.A.1. Activities: Conferences and/or Competitions.
Provide a summary of all conferences and/or competitions, including
- when they will take place.
- For each, indicate: themes,
  - any resulting information products,
  - means of dissemination, and
  - expected results.
- How will activity further the goals in the Call for Proposals?
- Provide measurable criteria for evaluating implementation.

2.A.2. Activities: Publications, Information Booklets and Brochures about Europe and the EU.
Describe all
- publications, booklets and brochures and any other
- information products such as posters, leaflets, newspaper features, radio/TV programs, including
- quizzes and talk shows, videos websites, and
- advertising of project events, to be implemented during the grant period.
- Include when they will take place,
- targeted audience(s),
- likely number of recipients, and
Get Ready to Write:

- Write the Abstract or Project Summary LAST.
- Use section headers provided by the funder and organize them in the order given in the Solicitation/ Guidelines.
- Check the criteria and make sure you address each fully in the appropriate section(s).
- Get someone else to read your grant – choose someone representative of the proposal audience if possible.
Important Perspectives on Grant Writing

- Allow yourself time - do not rush - do not submit subpar applications - have peers and mentors review.
- Learn from others - attend webinars - network - learn from both successful and unsuccessful proposals.
- Research funding agencies - find those that align with your work and your research path.
- Know the review criteria and pay attention to details.
- Don’t give up - learn to use feedback and learn the best way to respond.

“Okay. Now let’s slowly lower in the grant money.”
Plan ahead to prevent problems...

- The stress of an impending deadline, which can will contribute to errors.
- Trouble getting required components like *Letters of Support*.
- Problems actually submitting.
What if your grant isn’t funded?

Keep it in perspective. What can you learn from the experience? Consider review feedback and talk with the program officer about whether to re-submit.

“Our grant didn’t get funded, but they want us to teach proposal writing.”
It can be hard to get funded...

If you’re a young investigator or don’t have a record in the field, it will be more difficult to convince the reviewer that you can do the work.

Most common review comments—no track record, too ambitious…
What You Can Do:

- Publish.
- Work with younger students, the community.
- *Publish more.*
- Raise your profile:
  - Present at conferences.
  - Join societies – be active.
Other Strategies:

- Work with established, funded researchers.
- Partner with researchers in other disciplines.
- Contribute to your discipline – join the conversation!

“It’s a foolproof formula for writing grant applications.”
"I know I've been hard on you at times, pushed you when you were tired, studied you, probed you, but it was all in the interest of science."