

1

Introduction to Grant Seeking

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the world of academic grants. Whether you are interested in funding a research project, raising money for community service, applying your math acumen to budgets and grant accounts, or simply putting your good writing skills to use, there is a place for you in university grant seeking.

Universities raise millions, even billions of dollars, every year in research and program grants from various levels of government and thousands of U.S. foundations. For example, in 2012 Johns Hopkins University reported the highest amount of research and development expenditures of any U.S. university at \$2,106,185,000. Eighty-eight percent of this work was funded by U.S. federal agencies, and about 5.42% of it was funded by nonprofit organizations, including foundations (National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, 2014). This type of funding is acquired primarily through grant writing and contracts.

In other words, Johns Hopkins was awarded research and development funds through the preparation of planning documents (proposals) to perform specific work for a specific amount of funding, and the expenditure of these awarded monies added up to more than \$2 billion in 2010.

Many people work together to create this kind of financial value, which translates into important research and community work that build up the university as well as the wider society. Hardworking university grant seekers include

principal investigators (PIs), postdoctoral workers, grants administrators, grant accountants, department personnel, foundation and corporate officers, and graduate students. They fulfill many different roles in grant seeking and administration. Although we will talk about PIs a great deal, it is important to keep in mind that grant seeking is a team endeavor and everyone's contribution is important to winning an award.

For now we will consider a more foundational question: What is a grant?

Box 1.1 Your Project

What are your fundraising goals? Are you interested in research or in building projects to help your institution and the community? If you could make up and run a project, what would it be? How would the project serve the community? Keep these ideas in mind as you read.

WHAT IS A GRANT, AND WHY WOULD I WRITE ONE?

People do not actually write grants; they write grant proposals. A **grant proposal** is a document composed to describe a project and ask for funding to implement it. The proposal includes a vision for the project, the work to be done, how much money is needed, and what outcomes are expected. If the proposal offers a good idea, is written clearly, responds to the funder's request, and the PI is lucky, a grant of money (or other resources) may be made to further the project. The organization that awards the resources is called the **funder**. In the academic context, the person responsible for the proposal, especially when it is a scholarly or scientific pursuit, is called the PI. In academic grants, the PI normally works for a university or college, which acts as steward or guardian of the funds. As such, the monies generally go to the institution and are ultimately under the institution's **stewardship** or control. A **fellowship** is a special type of grant that may go directly to the PI and tends to support his or her time and personal research expenses. Many graduate student grant awards are actually fellowships.

Of course, colleges and universities are made up of many different departments that represent various disciplines and interest areas. Each of these has its own traditions and styles of writing, including grant writing. This book will therefore concentrate on the basic and applied social sciences: anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, sociology, and of course, education (including science education, K-12, and higher education).

This book, *The Nuts and Bolts of Grant Writing*, is dedicated to assisting you with your pursuit of grants in the academic context. Although there are many good books that teach grant writing, grants at colleges and universities need the specific treatment this book offers for several reasons.

WHAT MAKES ACADEMIC GRANTS DIFFERENT?

Colleges, universities, and professional schools form unique work environments dedicated to intellectual activity.

Although they are primarily organized around the most basic service they provide, educating students, higher education institutions also create value through research and scholarship. In other words, unlike the average company, which creates and sells widgets, or the average nonprofit, which provides a specific service to a population, colleges and universities create and disseminate knowledge in a wide variety of ways. Grants are a distinctive part of this complex organizational, intellectual, and business process and they require special treatment.

The Nuts and Bolts of Grant Writing is specifically dedicated to providing firsthand, practical information about grants at colleges, universities, and independent graduate schools.

Colleges and universities have specialized organizational structures around grant seeking that are unique to the academic field.

Some of these structures include **sponsored projects offices**, post award offices, **corporate and foundation relations (CFR)** offices, and so forth. Becoming effective at university grant seeking often requires the ability to navigate an internal organizational environment that is unknown in other parts of the nonprofit world.

Beginning with Chapter 2, specific hands-on information on how to deal with grant-related university offices will be included.

Many (although not all) personnel at universities write grants to fund research projects.

Research is a distinctive and specific type of grant writing with unique considerations, concerns, and funders. *The Nuts and Bolts of Grant Writing* concentrates on research grants and the types of service grants academic personnel are most likely to develop and submit.

All chapters of this book feature extended discussions of research grants and how they differ from service grants. Differences between research funders and service funders (often foundations) will also be discussed.

University academic personnel have a great deal of freedom to submit grant proposals; however, they do not always receive guidance on marketable ideas and project development.

While research universities do provide mentorship and guidance for grant seekers, there are thousands of colleges and universities with primarily teaching missions and a growing expectation that faculty and staff will engage in grant seeking. These institutions often offer few resources to assist PIs as they begin grant development.

While this book cannot replace a mentor, it is designed to assist academic personnel and graduate students who may not have access to immediate grant-seeking guidance and/or mentorship.

In Chapter 2, we will discuss grants in higher education more extensively.

PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT WILL CHANGE YOUR CAREER

The discipline associated with regular proposal development will change the way you think in important ways and create positive change in other areas of your work life—if you engage in it seriously. Effective proposal development requires not only grant writing but also project management: idea development, team leadership, financial analysis, and strong organizational skills. As a function of grant writing, many faculty and staff members even create their own small service and research offices within their schools. In effect, they become the heads of subunits, and they serve as leaders and managers as well as researchers.

In the beginning of the grant-seeking process, the task is grant writing. As soon as you win a grant, however, the task becomes project management. Here are four ways that grant writing will change your perspective:

- 1. Grant seekers learn to evaluate project ideas in terms of their appeal to outside audiences.**

It is often not enough to have a good idea; in order to get a project going, you must convince other people that it is a good idea. Experienced PIs learn to look at ideas in terms of their potential appeal to various audiences. They also learn how to present these ideas in compelling ways.

Effective leaders must learn to evaluate ideas in terms of their “marketability” for internal audiences and external stakeholders as they are planning organizational change, new programs, and so forth. Capable leaders must master the art of persuasion.

2. Grant seekers learn to work in teams.

Most grant proposals are created by colleagues working together. Team grant writing requires some finesse because each individual will have different ideas, writing styles, and work styles. An academic grants team often works with a variety of offices populated with people who may have very different ideas about how grants should be created and administered. Faculty team members at other universities also bring different institutional perspectives. Successful PIs learn how to lead a team of colleagues with diverse outlooks and histories toward the submission and eventual administration of grant projects.

Managers in a variety of fields must also develop leadership skills to keep work processes moving forward, organized, and promptly completed yet maintain a positive work environment.

3. Grant seekers learn to explain administrative matters clearly.

As part of a grant proposal, a PI must write clear plans about how she will use grant money to conduct activities that help accomplish larger goals. She must balance the minutiae with a visionary goal in ways that will convince reviewers that she has a handle on every level of detail: What are the steps involved in establishing a research center? How does one go about creating a new dataset or conducting a national survey? The PI must set out a clear, cogent work plan based on the available budget.

Directors and chairs must also learn to express their plans in writing. They must articulate the details of work processes for strategic plans, department goal setting, and organizational reporting for a variety of audiences.

4. Grant seekers begin to think in terms of what is possible to accomplish, and this translates into a budget.

They develop a sense of what can be accomplished by a certain number of people with a specific type of training within specific time constraints working within the unique context of their institutions. For example, they naturally begin to estimate how many graduate students it will take at 20 hours per week to conduct 100 interviews or how many hours a week they will need an administrative assistant to help with project management.

Chairs and directors must also develop the ability to estimate the resources they need to accomplish the tasks of their department or office, whether the resources are personnel, spatial configurations, or the number of filing cabinets that need to be ordered for the new filing system.

THE PARTS OF A GRANT PROPOSAL

Every grant proposal is different; however, most of them are composed of four basic elements: a fundable idea, a narrative, a budget, and sundry documentation. All of these are created with the guidance of the funder, usually through a set of instructions called **guidelines** or a **request for proposals (RFP)**.

Every funded grant starts with a great idea; however, not every great idea is fundable. Figuring out whether your idea has a chance of success takes some experience and some practice. One way to begin building such experience is to run some grant searches (which we will go over in Chapter 4) just to survey funders and get a sense of what sorts of projects they are interested in. An argument can be made that it is better to survey what types of funding are available before the grant seeker begins to form his idea. This is a very practical way to begin the grant-seeking process, and I recommend it.

You can also talk to advisors, mentors, and trusted colleagues with grant experience about what they see as fundable. Disciplinary conferences, which are often attended by representatives of both foundations and federal agencies, are great places to get information. Attending a presentation by **program officers** (professional foundation and government agency staff) will give you an immediate sense of programs and expectations. You can usually approach program officers and agency representatives after the presentation and ask them questions. In this way you can get immediate feedback on the potential fundability of an idea.

The following are a few attributes of a fundable idea.

Fundable ideas are often practical and will accomplish something useful.

Funders usually like to put their money toward something that will accomplish tangible goals. Even with research, the ultimate goal of the project will be to ascertain the usefulness of a methodology or to discover the links between a potential cause and effect in order to make it available for implementation to help people.

Awarded ideas may help solve a known problem.

Often enough work has already been done by various scholars or programs so that the direction of the solution is already known. If it is a research project, the idea has some literature behind it, and if it is a service project, the idea often incorporates recognized best practice methods.

Awarded ideas are generally described in detail.

While there are funders, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), who are interested in bench or theoretical science, even here an exploratory study will

be conducted in a specific and predefined area. Prep work (like other similar studies or a pilot project) is often expected for research proposals. True exploratory projects where the end result is completely unknown are unusual.

Successful ideas are usually measurable.

The results of the project will be based on the measurement of some aspect of reality, whether this is people's opinions, the rate of incarceration, or how many research articles universities produce. Measurable results drive conclusions forward more effectively and are often more attractive to funders.

Fundable ideas are generally the next logical step.

Simply filling the gaps in literature does not make for great grant ideas, yet many times a funded idea feels like the next logical step in a disciplinary process: Where has your discipline been lately, and where is it headed? Sometimes a funded idea is simply in the right place at the right time in terms of the current thinking.

Finally, for both research and service projects go to the literature. If a question has already been thoroughly answered, you probably will not be funded to answer it again. Similarly, if an idea is too far ahead of current research, this may lead to declines as well. A fundable idea often falls somewhere between obvious and daring, a space that is different for each discipline and changes over time.

Be on top of new discoveries and know the current methodologies of your discipline. You will also need to both prove why you have chosen your methods and make predictions about how well your plans will work. If your techniques are based on stale literature, peer reviewers will know it. If there is an important item that you have left out, they will notice. If you avoid dealing with major controversies, they may think you are unaware of them and therefore not up to date on the literature.

Narrative

The **narrative**, a textual description of the project, is the most familiar part of the proposal for most people. Grant narratives can run from half a page for some online applications to 50 pages for some federal competitions. Proposal narratives are most often written in standard nonfiction, third-person voice with words that are as complex as required to do the job of description.

Grant narratives can also be called project descriptions, and some funders break the narrative down into smaller sections, like "Background," "Need for Project," "Project Description," "Methodology," "Sustainability," and so forth. In this book when narrative is mentioned, it will indicate all the written, descriptive

parts of the proposal. In later chapters, we will delve into the style and organization of a well-written narrative and demonstrate how this process can be enhanced by the accomplishment of sound ancillary tasks, like the use of logic models and the creation of a strong budget.

Budget

The budget is often left to complete last, and yet it is quite literally the backbone of all projects. A poorly completed budget will kill a project, if not in review then in implementation. Poor budgets lead to bad projects, which can lead to problems with the funder and/or problems with your institution.

Beginning PIs often misunderstand the significance of the budget. It is not just another exercise required to effect a submission. The budget is the translation of the project into financial language, the language of the controller's office, or accounting, or whoever handles the organization's books, pays the bills, and signs the checks.¹ The budget is the thing that allows the PI to be sure there is enough money to pay incentives to participants, rent the van to pick up the advisory board, buy validated survey instruments, or buy a round-trip ticket to the archive.

In most cases, the **budget** is a list of items (**lines**) on a spreadsheet with the cost in a separate column to allow for summing (see Figure 1.1). The budget may be broken down into several sections, and the guidelines may call for a **budget narrative or justification**: a written explanation for each item requested. Each institution participating in a project will have a specific, unique budget. In this book *budget* will refer to all budget-related documents for any particular proposal.

A sound budget is a beautiful thing, and it is hoped that this book will help new PIs appreciate the centrality of the budget to a well-executed project.

Sundry Documentation

There are other items that may need to be acquired, created, and submitted with a proposal, and these will be listed in the RFP or in the guidelines. Some of these items will be quite easy to find, while others will seem nearly impossible. Sometimes the PI should begin planning immediately to acquire specific items. Results will vary; however, below is a non-exhaustive example

¹I have heard this sentiment attributed to Patricia Hawk, the Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs at Oregon State University.

Figure 1.1 Example Budget

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J
1			Working (Internal) Budget					
2			Bob Miller, Sociology					
3			Teaching STEM Subjects in Introductory University Courses (TSUIC)					
4			NSF REESE					
5			Deadline: July 17					
6								
7			<i>Item</i>			6/1/2013– 5/31/2014	6/1/2014– 5/31/2015	Total
8	1. Senior Personnel (All salaries subject to 2% rise per year)							
9			A. Bob Miller, PI, 2 months summer effort	\$82,440	2	\$18,320	\$18,686	\$37,006
10			B. Mahmud Jamal, Co-PI, 15% effort (1 course remission per year)	\$76,780	.15	\$11,517	\$11,747	\$23,264
11			C. Mahmud Jamal, Co-PI, 1 month summer effort	\$76,780	1	\$8,531	\$8,702	\$17,233
12			D. Chandra Simms, Statistician, 2 weeks summer effort	\$95,101	1	\$5,283	\$5,389	\$10,672
13			Subtotal Senior Personnel			\$43,652	\$44,525	\$88,176

This example working budget is a snapshot of the budget we will be examining in Case Study 2.

10 THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF GRANT WRITING

list of commonly requested items, ranked loosely from relatively easy to very difficult for the average PI to acquire:

- Organizational mission
- PI list of current and pending grants, biographical sketch²
- Tax forms or 990s
- Organizational budget
- Collaborators' biographical sketches, current and pending grants, budgets, and narratives
- College, department, or office budget
- Presidential signature
- List of pending grants across the institution
- Board chair signature
- Board vote on submission

As defined by the funder, the narrative is composed of all written elements; the budget is composed of all financial elements; and the sundry documentation, altogether, comprise the grant proposal.

HOW DO I GET A GRANT AND KEEP IT?

**The answer to this question comes in three words:
Follow the directions.**

The directions are an intrinsic part of grant writing and are most often represented as the RFP or the guidelines.³ Foundations most often present guidelines (often found on the official website), and federal funders generally issue RFPs.

PIs that ignore the funder's directions are at a high risk of wasting their time: In many cases, the funder's staff will only send correctly developed proposals to reviewers. Even in the case when an incorrectly developed proposal is passed on for review, reviewers are often given a rubric based on the RFP or guidelines to help them evaluate the submissions. A PI who has not created the proposal according to the directions, therefore, also risks losing substantial points, and this generally results in a decline.

²The National Science Foundation (NSF) and National Institutes of Health (NIH) both require biographical sketches (or bio sketches) in lieu of CVs.

³In addition, there may be other labels, such as RFQ (Request for Qualifications) or RFA (Request for Applications). A sense of determination may be required to find all instructions from some funders.

Box 1.2 Grant-Seeking Tip

The RFP or guidelines tell the PI the following:

- Exactly what sections should be prepared
- Formatting, including font, font size, margins, line spacing
- Page limits for each section
- Which items can be included in the budget request
- The maximum amount of money that can be requested

RFPs and guidelines certainly do contribute to the tediousness of the grant writing process. An RFP can include 150 pages of direction, guidance, mission, background, and so forth, perhaps well organized and concise, perhaps repetitive and poorly organized. RFPs do not display humor, sparkling prose, or profound philosophical thinking: They are administrative documents. Yet the time spent dealing with these documents will reap a more competitive proposal and is therefore well worth the investment.

A Grant Is Like a Contract

A grant proposal is a promise to carry out a specific project, and as such, it can be legally binding. The true contractual nature of the relationship becomes apparent when an award is made by the funder and accepted by the institution: This often involves signed documents. The funder will expect that anything promised in the proposal will be completed by the PI and/or the institution. For example, a proposal to study a methadone clinic in Boise will need to be implemented at a methadone clinic in Boise, not Pocatello. Normally major **post-award** changes (or changes made after the award has been accepted) can only be made after consultation with the funder.

What happens if you do not spend a grant out according to plan or if it looks as if the PI has a **conflict of interest** (meaning that she could stand to illicitly benefit from the grant work)? The funder has the right to take the money back. This includes all the money, the entire grant, even the parts that were spent correctly. It is therefore possible to spend out two years (\$200,000) of a three-year (\$300,000) grant and have the funder request the money back if the work is not progressing, has been misspent, or a significant conflict of interest emerges.

This situation happens regularly, as described, for example, in the yearly NSF Inspector General Reports to Congress (available on the NSF website, search for Office of Inspector General). For example, in March 2012, the NSF Inspector General wrote:

Our investigations have recovered nearly \$1.4 million from those who fraudulently sought to obtain funds intended for scientific research. We continue to aggressively pursue cases of research misconduct which undermines citizens' trust in government-funded research and referred eight research misconduct cases to NSF. (Office of Inspector General, 2012)

This wording, "fraudulently sought to obtain funds," does not necessarily mean that those who wrote the proposals in question were consciously seeking to deceive the NSF. One of the institutions cited in the report was noted for having weak internal controls (ineffective internal financial policies and procedures). It is entirely possible that the PI did not know his institution had weak internal controls, and yet the funds for that grant were taken back by the NSF. The point here is that noncompliance can lead to unpleasant consequences, even for the PIs who are careful about conflicts of interest, do not plagiarize, and spend out their grants properly.

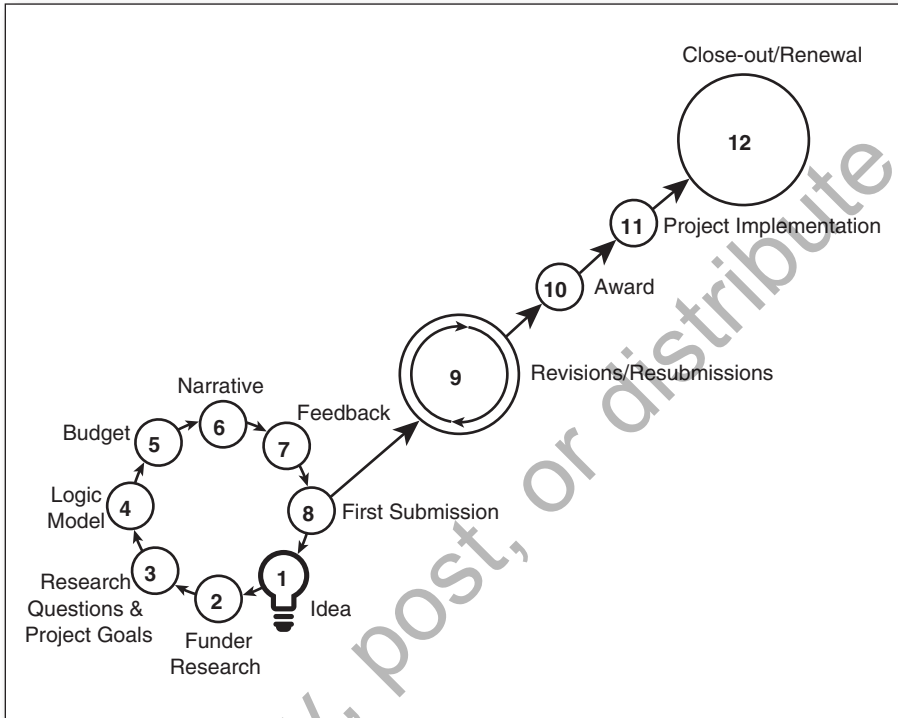
THE GRANT LIFE CYCLE

The grant life cycle spirals between activities as the proposal is prepared and sent out, declines or awards are received, and projects are implemented and closed out. Figure 1.2 illustrates the spiral nature of grant seeking.

Preparing the Proposal (1–7)

This process is the substantial work of grant writing and forms the primary content of this book. Preparing the proposal begins with a great idea (1) and the search for a funder (2). Once a funder has been found, it then continues into all the sundry tasks designed to explicate the project in line with the instructions of the funder, including development of research questions or project goals (3), using your logic model to design the project (4), creating a budget (5), developing the narrative (6), getting feedback on the narrative (7), and ending up with the first submission (8). This process can take four months when working on a large multi-year project with partners, but it can also be belted out in four weeks. Proposals can also be written and delivered in two weeks; however, a two-week investment of work is often quite obvious to reviewers.

Figure 1.2 The Grant Life Cycle



The grant life cycle includes multiple iterations of proposal submissions as well as renewals.

Submission (8)

Submission (8) is accomplished through a variety of systems, including online, email, and by post (post office submission is getting more and more rare, however). Inexperienced PIs may discount the submission process, thinking it will be quick—just the press of a button. Submission is never really a fast process, however, especially if you take the time to check things over carefully. As part of a proper submission process, errors will emerge that can drag the process out interminably, potentially resulting in a missed deadline. It is best, therefore, to give three days to the submission process. When a submission goes awry, this time cushion can save the day.

Decline/Award (9, 10)

First submissions are often (although not always) declined, and the next stage is revisions and resubmissions (9), hopefully not too many, until you are awarded

(10). Declines can be very frustrating; however, they are common, and for most people they are a necessary part of the learning curve. Declines from federal competitions often come with reviewer comments. Although it can be emotionally trying, these comments are extremely important to refining a project and are often a boon to one's grant writing skills. Successful PIs study reviewer comments.

On the other hand, if the PI is awarded, she is well advised to take some time to celebrate. The real work, running the project, will begin shortly! This happy time, the new award period, is often heralded by a negotiation process where the PI may be asked to cut 20 percent from her budget. As soon as the celebration party is over, she calls the sponsored projects office and rolls up her sleeves to begin the next stage.

Project Implementation (11)

Once awarded, the PI moves into project implementation (11), also known as grant administration. This phase begins when money or a convincing award letter arrives and the PI may begin spending on the project, depending on the policy of the institution. As much work as the proposal may appear to take, grant implementation is actually the most work-intensive part of the process.

Closeout and Reapplication (12)

Once the funds have been spent out and, hopefully, the grant objectives have been accomplished, the closeout process begins (12). As the PI sits down to write the "final" report, it may or may not be the true end of the project. Different funders may provide renewals, reapplications, no-cost extensions, and the like, allowing some projects to live long, useful lives. When and how to make the next approach will be on the PI's mind as he or she begins this process again.

Box 1.3 Three Steps to a Great Submission

1. Follow directions.
2. Follow directions!
3. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS!!

ONWARD

External funding can make a dream project a reality, it can jumpstart a career, and it can create additional value in a tenure portfolio. Further, an award of funding,

no matter the size, is a vote of confidence in your thinking and planning. It is an award on the basis of work accomplished. It is professional validation. I have always thought of grant awards as honor and glory, both for the grant seeker and for the institution, but then I am a very enthusiastic person.

Box 1.4 True Story

I was once associated with an underspent grant from a city. The PI had worked extensively with the NSF, which is rather generous with grant extensions, and so perhaps from habit, she did not worry about the pace of her spending. When the end of the grant period rolled around, her grant budget was underspent by about \$25,000. With confidence, she asked the city for an extension to continue the work.

This PI was astonished to hear that not only was her request for an extension refused but the rest of the grant was forfeited. Because the grant was paid out as receipts were turned in, money did not have to be returned; however, the university considered that this PI had lost thousands of dollars by not spending the grant according to the proposal.

Grant development and the work that emerges from grant awards can enlarge your horizon, your potential, your track record, your success, and your list of good deeds accomplished. The grants world is a new world to explore. It is waiting for you to discover, to try, to test yourself, to enlarge your skill set, to increase your scope of competence, to win honor and glory, and to submit a proposal. Who knows? Maybe your idea will get awarded, and you will be off creating the next new thing to save humankind, your local school, or a child.

THE NUTS & BOLTS

Here are a few of the general ideas I hope you took from this chapter.

1. An awarded grant proposal becomes a type of contract in which the PI uses grant funds to perform specific tasks, usually research or services.
2. Some items of a proposal may take longer to acquire or create than others; therefore PIs should carefully evaluate what is required for submission before beginning work.

16 THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF GRANT WRITING

3. The most important thing PIs need to keep in mind when grant writing is to FOLLOW DIRECTIONS.
4. The grant life cycle at the university moves from preparation to submission to decline/award to administration to closeout and/or reapplication.

EXERCISES: WORKING TOWARD MASTERY

1. Write an essay on your own interest in grants. What project are you interested in getting funded? What do you imagine you will accomplish as a result of a grant award? (Write a minimum of one page.)
2. As you look over this essay, what challenges do you foresee in pursuing this project? Do not forget to consider all the potential pitfalls that might be involved: narrative production (writing), budget production (planning and math), availability of funders, methodology issues, facilities, institutional challenges, explanatory issues, and so forth. (Write a minimum of one page.)

CHAPTER TERMS

Budget: A list of items (lines) typically on a spreadsheet with the cost in a separate column to allow for summing.

Budget narrative or justification: A document that features a brief narrative on each line of the budget explaining the need for the item and the method of estimation used to arrive at the amount requested.

CFR (corporate and foundation relations): The university department or office that oversees nonresearch foundation proposals and awards. CFR is part of advancement or university relations.

Conflict of interest: A situation in which a party stands to gain inappropriately from a grant or contract. For example, a PI who had received conference funding from a pharmaceutical company might be considered to have a conflict of interest if he was awarded a grant to carry on clinical trials of that company's new product.

Fellowship: A type of grant often made directly to the faculty member or graduate student to fund time, travel, or other scholarly activities.

Funder: A foundation, government agency, affinity group, or other entity offering grant awards for specific types of research or service.

Grant proposal: A document composed to describe a project for which funding is requested.

Guidelines: Instructions issued by a funder to guide the development of a proposal.

Lines or line items: Items included and costs in a budget. Such items are listed vertically, down the lines of the spreadsheet.

Narrative: All of the project description sections submitted as one document.

PI (principal investigator): The lead investigator on a grant, usually holding authority as the responsible party for grant management.

Post-award: The grants process after an award has been made and/or the individuals who assist the PI with the implementation of the grant.

Program officer: A professional foundation or government agency staff member involved in the grants process.

RFP (request for proposals): A document issued by a government agency or foundation that details a funding opportunity, including the content and format of proposal submissions.

SPO (sponsored projects office), academic grants: The office in a college or university that oversees the submission and often the administration of external grant awards primarily for research.

Stewardship: In fundraising, the careful management of funds or resources given by a funder to the institution (steward) for a specific purpose. Part of stewardship is reporting back regularly to the funder on the disposition of funds and project progress.