

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
OFFICE OF FOUNDATION AND CORPORATE RELATIONS

Physical Sciences Mentoring Committee Symposium:
Research Support from Foundations and Corporation
February 21, 2008

Types of Foundation Funding:

Competitive Fellowships Program

- offered by a number of foundations, usually on a yearly basis.
- internal selection process by the Provost's Office to determine each year's nominee(s) for each program.
- The Foundation Relations Office staffs the internal process and assists in preparation of proposals.

For a list of competitive fellowships go to:

<http://foundationrelations.uchicago.edu/intranet/cfp/limitedlist.php>.

Individual or Small Group Research Grants

- may be more difficult to identify because they are not solicited by the foundation through an RFP or formal invitation and are often not defined by a specific discipline.
- The Foundation Relations Office can provide information from a variety of research resources—including subscription databases of funders and grants—to help identify prospective foundation supporters for research and programs and can help in preparing proposals geared specifically to private funders.

Large-scale and Special Opportunities

- for collaborative research programs or building projects
- typically directed to priorities set by the dean, provost or president and involve those campus leaders in discussions and negotiations.

What is distinctive about foundation funding:

- Foundation funding should be sought *strategically*.
- Foundations can provide seed money to launch novel, high-risk research that would likely not be eligible for federal funding or to support specific programmatic interests (e.g., underrepresented groups in science, science education).
- Foundations are *not* good sources of mega-scale or long-term funding—they want to support *new* initiatives, not provide incremental or operating support for ongoing efforts. They often require evidence of institutional support and usually pay little or no indirect costs.
- Approaches to foundations should be coordinated and sequenced even if they are not strictly limited-opportunity programs; multiple awards to the same institution in the same grant cycle are rare.
- Foundations are generally not good sources of funds for graduate students.

Resource for Researching Possible Foundation Prospects

- Foundation Directory Online: <http://fconline.fdncenter.org/ipl.php> (from a University of Chicago computer)

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Overview:

The Office of Foundation and Corporate Relations (OFCR) works with faculty and staff to raise funds for priority programs and institutional initiatives. The staff can help:

- Develop program concepts.
- Identify potential funders.
- Build strategic relationships with foundation and corporate leaders and program officers.
- Draft and/or edit proposals and reports.

We maintain an archive on the history of University relationships with major foundations and corporations as well as current foundation/corporation profiles and information on most recent contacts.

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