How to be successful in obtaining external grant funding

Presented by
Grace Reynolds, D. P. A.
Associate Professor
Director, Center for Behavioral Research and Service
What I Will Cover

• My experience with external funding; employed from 2000-2007 on “soft money.”

• How external funding fits into faculty development—why write proposal for external funding?

• Elements of success (besides following written guidelines).
Greeting research participants
Partnership with Nursing for Hepatitis vaccinations
Los Angeles County DPH—funded mobile HIV testing
Faculty & Student Collaboration
Why seek external funding?

- It is never just about the money.

- Applying for and obtaining funding is fundamentally about faculty development, the on-going process of becoming better educators, researchers and scholars.

- Research grants are especially focused on creating new knowledge, and bringing greater visibility and prestige to the organization as well as resources.
Why seek external funding?

• Writing a proposal is a part of research and is a creative activity in itself.

• Provides an opportunity to think critically about your work and articulate ideas more fully, identify goals, outcomes, and the intellectual merit of the project.

• Proposal development is a form of scholarship that helps focus on a larger context for the project, define why it matters beyond one individual’s interest or program.

• Often the work done as part of a proposal translates into other scholarly production, such as the outline of a book chapter or a peer-reviewed manuscript as a preliminary study.
Why seek external funding?

- The advanced timeline of proposal submission creates a timeline for professional development activities.
- This can involve outlining a project, establishing a research agenda, developing data collection or field work schedules, or developing a writing plan (i.e., conference papers, manuscripts, book chapters).
- Because most research proposals are peer-reviewed, they require the same amount of academic rigor as scholarly articles or conference papers.
- New lines of collaborative research can help expand professional networks.
- Grant proposals should never be thought of as isolated activities.
Elements of Success …

Having a common language and goals with potential collaborators.

Research can be time and labor intensive—watch your time commitments.

Think twice before chasing $$$. 

Organization-to-organization collaborations were most successful when organizational “translator” existed with knowledge of workings of both CBRS and partner organization—often this was a student of CSULB, trained at CBRS, who then got a job at the partner organization.
Elements of success …

• Choose the funding agency you apply to, and the call for proposals, carefully.

• External funding agencies are heterogeneous so knowledge of one may not translate many not translate to another.

• Foundation grants have a much shorter turnaround time and much smaller amount of $$ compared to research grants, but here is still effort and planning required—they want strong proposals to fund as part of their portfolio.
Elements of Success …

Leverage ALL resources, including data resources.

Take time to learn how the partners and collaborators manage and use data; what types of data they usually work with.

Take time to learn individual goals (RTP, release time, publications) as they may not be your goals or they may be easier to meet than anticipated.

Don’t aim too low!

Respect individuals’ interests and areas of strengths.
Thank you!

Questions?