

# The Office of Graduate Fellowships and Awards

## Three-Day Funding Finding Workshop

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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY | THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

# Schedule

- **Day 1:** Funding 101 – an overview of fellowships and awards; thinking about your needs and fit
- **Day 2:** Finding Funding – using funding databases to identify relevant funding opportunities
- **Day 3:** Applying for Funding – how to organize, plan, and draft funding applications



# DAY 1: Funding 101

Today we will:

- Define terms and types of funding
- Review things to consider when thinking about “good fit” for fellowships and awards
- Review some example fellowships and awards
- Complete a self-assessment to consider what opportunities are a good fit for you!



# OGFA

## What We Do

Assist current FSU graduate students with articulating their interests and ambitions in support of identifying and applying for **external** fellowships, scholarships, grants, and awards.



# Funding Defined...

## Merit vs. Need

- ✓ Merit is awarded based on academic merit or merit other than financial need as defined by the funding agency
- ✓ Need is typically awarded based on financial need

## Internal (funding that comes from units within the university)

- ✓ Assistantships, Scholarships & Awards
- ✓ Graduate School Fellowships & Awards

<https://gradschool.fsu.edu/funding-awards/graduate-school-fellowships-and-grants>

## External (funding that comes from entities outside of the university)

- ✓ Government
- ✓ Foundations, Institutes, and Associations
- ✓ Organizations and Societies



# Why should you apply?

\$\$\$\$  
FUNDING

EFFECTIVELY  
COMMUNICATE THE  
IMPORTANCE/IMPACT OF  
YOUR WORK

DEVELOP  
WRITING SKILLS

NETWORKING &  
COLLABORATION

BUILD  
PORTFOLIO

GAIN USEFUL  
FEEDBACK

SETS YOU APART  
FROM OTHERS

ENGAGE IN  
PERSONAL &  
PROFESSIONAL  
SELF ASSESSMENT

VALUE ADDED  
EXPERIENCE



# Finding the Right Fellowship for YOU

## DEGREE PROGRAM

(Master's, Doctoral,  
Professional, Specialist)

## RESEARCH

## TRAVEL

(Research, Language acquisition,  
Study, Teaching)

## DISSERTATION COMPLETION

## POTENTIAL

(Future Goals)

## DEMOGRAPHICS

(Gender, Nationality,  
Ethnicity)



# Some Examples

Some awards provide funding for language study

## Boren Fellowship

- Provides up to \$30,000 for 25-52 weeks (or up to \$12,500 for 12-24 weeks) of overseas language study
- Requires commitment to public service/government employment and fast-tracks applicant for such a career
- For masters and doctoral students

## Critical Language Scholarship

- Provides funding for 8-10 weeks of overseas intensive language study in one of 15 “Critical Languages”
- For masters and doctoral students





# Some Examples

## Pre-doctoral awards that fund initial years of PhD

### Ford Predoctoral Fellowship

- Provides three years of funding (\$27,000/year) for students enrolled in research-based doctoral program
- Program aims to increase the diversity of the nation's college and university faculties by increasing their ethnic and racial diversity, maximize the educational benefits of diversity, and increase the number of professors who can and will use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of all students.

### AHA Predoctoral Fellowship

- Provides one or two years of funding (\$26,535 stipend plus \$4,200 for health insurance and \$2,000 research support)
- To enhance the integrated research and clinical training of promising students who are matriculated in pre-doctoral or clinical health professional degree training programs and who intend careers as scientists, physician-scientists or other clinician-scientists.



# Some Examples

## Public service/internship experiences

### Florida Gubernatorial Fellowship

- Nine-month internship working in the Executive branch of the Florida government
- Positions range from 20-40 hours/week
- Placement in wide variety of Florida state agencies

### Florida Legislative Fellowship

- Fellows work for Florida House committees, subcommittees, and leadership offices for Legislative session (October through May for 2022-2023 cycle)
- 20 hours/week For October through December, then 30 hours/week for January through May
- Provides 18 credit hours of tuition plus \$13/hour.



# Some Examples

## Funding for STEM

### NSF GRFP

- Provides three years of funding over five-year period (\$34,000/year stipend plus \$12,000 tuition allowance)
- For Masters or PhD students in research-based STEM disciplines

### Florida Sea Grant Guy Harvey Scholarship

- Provides \$5,000 for the purchase of equipment, travel, or other research expenses
- For students conducting research on the ecology, management or policy issues related to sustainable marine fisheries, including the protection of their critical habitats.



# Some Examples

## Funding for Humanities and Social Sciences

### Institute for Humane Studies

- Provides funding for various activities stages of study for grad students doing research on classical liberal ideas, including individual freedom, rule of law, and civil society

### ACLS/Mellon Dissertation Innovation Fellowship

- Support emerging scholars as they advance bold and innovative research in the humanities and interpretive social sciences
- The program seeks to expand the range of research methodologies, formats, and areas of inquiry traditionally considered suitable for the dissertation, with a particular focus on supporting scholars who can build a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable academy.



# Some Examples

## Funding to Study Abroad

### Chateaubriand Fellowship Program

- For doctoral students to spend 4 to 9 months conducting research in France
- Divided into two programs, STEM and Humanities and Social Sciences

### Fulbright U.S. Student Program

- Provides opportunity to conduct self-directed research in academic or creative arts field, to enroll in graduate studies, or to teach English in more than 140 countries
- Program is focused on cultural exchange and person-to-person ambassadorship
- Grant lengths can vary from 6 months to more than a year
- Students from any discipline or degree program can be eligible



# Some Examples

## Identity-based/Demographic Awards

### AAUW and PEO Fellowships and Awards

- Both AAUW and PEO provide multiple awards for women/people who identify as women pursuing graduate degrees
- Both have award programs for U.S. Citizens, International Students, continuing education

### Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans

- Provides up to \$90,000 over two years for “New Americans,” defined as immigrants or the children of immigrants (U.S. Citizens, naturalized citizens, permanent residents, DACA, refugees/asylees)
- Open to wide range of disciplines/degree programs



# Some Examples

## “Niche” Awards

### Meredith P. Crawford Fellowship in Industrial-Organizational Psychology (field)

- Provides a \$12,000 stipend to graduate students conducting dissertation research in Industrial-Organizational Psychology or closely related field.

### Egg Nutrition Center Young Investigator Award (topic)

- Provides a \$25,000 stipend to assist graduate students producing preliminary research results related to egg nutrition.

### American Institute of Indian Studies Junior Fellowship (place)

- Provides up to 11 months of funding for graduate students conducting research in India



# Tips for Getting Started Early

- ✓ Most external fellowship, scholarship, and grant applications are due 6-12 months before the award is disbursed
- ✓ Explore funding databases
- ✓ Generate a list of funding opportunities to pursue
- ✓ Identify faculty, staff, and colleagues who are willing to review your documents and provide feedback
- ✓ Dedicate time to request and organize supplemental documents
- ✓ Identify strong recommenders for Letters of Recommendation, and **give them plenty of time to write good letters!**
- ✓ Dedicate time to prepare and revise application materials  
**WRITE, REVISE, REPEAT!**





# Application Cycles

External fellowships and awards often have **an 8-to-12-month timeline** from application submission to funds disbursement.

- *They are rarely a good source for immediate funding!*
- Generally, the bigger and more competitive the award, the longer the timeline.
- Some smaller awards (\$500-\$3,000) may have multiple/rolling deadlines and may disburse on a quicker timeline, but **this is an exception, not the rule.**



# Typical Application Cycle

Example timelines:

## **The Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship**

- Submission deadline: Early December 2022
- Award notification: Spring 2023
- Funds disbursement: Fall 2023
- **Elapsed time: 8 months**

## **Fulbright U.S. Student Awards**

- Campus submission deadline: August 25, 2022
- Fulbright deadline: October 7, 2022
- Award notification: March-June 2023
- Grants would start in Fall 2023 or Spring 2024 depending on country
- **Elapsed time: 12-18 months**



# Self-Assessment Exercise

In preparing for conducting an in-depth funding search on Wednesday, complete the Self-Assessment Worksheet.

Remember to think broadly about yourself, your interests, your goals, and your work/research



# DAY 2: Finding Funding

Today we will

- Explore the funding booklets and funding databases available on the OGFA website
- Spend time learning how to navigate and make the most of the database Pivot
- Conduct a funding search using the funding databases and the self-assessment worksheet



# DAY 2: Finding Funding

Before we get started, are there any questions from yesterday?



# DAY 3: Applying for Funding

Today we will

- Discuss typical application components and procedures
- Consider how to plan and organize an application process
- Review best practices for application writing, including tips for style/tone of essays



# Common Application Components

- Application Form
- Personal Statement
- Research Proposal
- Short Answer Essays
- Letters of Recommendation
- Supplemental Documents



# Letters of Recommendation

- Letters of Recommendation play an important role in the review process and should not be left to the last minute!
- Who are you asking to write your letters?
- If you're early in your graduate career, begin cultivating those relationships



# Letters of Recommendation

- Think about diversity among your letter writers.
- Different writers can discuss different capabilities/strengths/experiences.
- Having three letters that all discuss you in a seminar setting may be less effective than 1 letter about seminar setting, 1 letter about teaching experience, and 1 letter about lab work.

# Letters of Recommendation

- Ask your potential writers if they can write a “strong recommendation.”
- Provide reviewers with information about the fellowship and give them your essay drafts
- It’s OK to give reviewers some direction: “I’m asking you to write this letter because you supervised my work at the writing center and can discuss my abilities as a mentor.”

# Understanding the Funder & Award

**Developing strong applications begins with studying the particular opportunity.**

- What is the funding organization? What are its missions and values?
- What is the “point” of the fellowship/award? What is its goal?
- Is it funding you, your research, or a specific activity?
- What are the application components?
- What are the review criteria, and who are the reviewers? *Know your audience!*
- What sort of projects/applicants have recently won this same award?

# Understanding the Funder & Award

- The most well-written proposal will not be selected if it doesn't speak to the specific opportunity.
- Funding agencies are using you and your work to forward *their* goal—you must show them that you will help them do this.

“Your proposal is a conversation with [the funding agency], and your research ideas should be formulated in an iterative process that eventually finds **a middle ground between what you really want to do and what will actually be funded.**”

- Walker and Uhrh, *Funding your Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences*

# Understanding the Funder & Award

- Every application is a two-sided argument:
  1. That you fit with the goals/vision of this opportunity.
  2. That this opportunity fits with you and your goals.
  
- Achieving this sort of synthesis of “fit” may require you to “translate” your work into the language/expectations of the award and funding organization.
  - Emphasize aspects of your background, experiences, work/research most relevant to this opportunity.

# Understanding the funder and the award

Funders and Awards typically make it  
easy to find this information

Let's look at some examples!

# Understanding the funder and the award

Exercise: Select one of the opportunities you identified on Wednesday and complete the Fellowship Information Sheet. Be as complete as possible.

# Planning

- To keep all the information organized and clear as you study the award and plan the application, complete the Fellowship Information Worksheet
- Fill out the worksheet in as much detail as possible. It will help you stay organized throughout the application process!



# Planning

First things first:

- *Why me, why now, and why this award?*
- Go to small-group breakout rooms: discuss with each other why you fit with this award and what makes you a competitive applicant.
- As you talk with your group, fill out the **Application Planning Worksheet**. The answers you provide here will help you plan your personal statement, research proposal, or other application essays.

# Planning

Use application instructions to **create a checklist** to guide your planning and drafting:

## **Example: ACLS Mellon Dissertation Fellowship, Research Statement**

**Content:** “A concise statement describing your research project is required. The narrative statement should explain, briefly but specifically, what you plan to do and why, as well as describe progress already made. Discuss the significance of this work within your specific and general fields. Please balance the description of specific work plans against an overview of your goals and the contribution this project will make to the field(s) it engages. Title your proposal in a brief, descriptive way and label sections of your narrative as appropriate to assist readers. Be sure to explain terms that might not be familiar to those outside your field or subfield.”

**Review Criteria states:** “The quality of the proposal will be reviewed with regard to its methodology, scope, theoretical framework, and grounding in the relevant scholarly literature.”

# Planning

Use application instructions to **create a checklist** to guide your planning and drafting:

## Example: ACLS Mellon Dissertation Fellowship, Research Statement

**Content:** “A concise statement describing your research project is required. The narrative statement should explain, briefly but specifically, **what you plan to do and why**, as well as **describe progress already made**. **Discuss the significance of this work within your specific and general fields**. Please balance the description of specific work plans against **an overview of your goals** and **the contribution this project will make to the field(s) it engages**. **Title your proposal in a brief, descriptive way** and **label sections of your narrative as appropriate to assist readers**. Be sure to **explain terms that might not be familiar to those outside your field or subfield.**”

**Review Criteria states:** “The quality of the proposal will be reviewed with regard to its **methodology**, **scope**, **theoretical framework**, and **grounding in the relevant scholarly literature.**”

# Planning

Use application instructions to **create a checklist** to guide your planning and drafting:

## **Have I addressed:**

- What I plan to do and why?
- Progress already made?
- My overall goals for the project and its relevance to my career?
- Significance and contribution of my work?

## **Have I included:**

- A title?
- Section headings?
- Definitions for any technical/field-specific terms?
- An overview of my methodology?
- A description of the work's scope?
- Explanations of the theoretical framework(s)?
- A discussion of the relevant literature?

# Planning

## **Think about the application holistically**

Many applications will require multiple written components as well as an application form. You want to minimize redundancy across the application components. Use redundancy for emphasis.

## **Think about cohesion across the application**

Everyone has more experiences, more qualifications, more to their story than could ever fit into one application. Be strategic about what you include, so that each experience/topic relates to the others and is relevant to the specific award.

# Tone and Style

- Your application is a public document meant to persuade strangers. Tone and style send important messages to readers about your personality, your maturity and seriousness, and your level of preparation.
- Despite being called a personal statement, you don't need to feel compelled to share intimate details or to relate experiences you'd rather not share publicly.

# Tone and Style

## General “Best Practices”:

### **Avoid creative, funny, or cute approaches.**

Reviewers have seen them before, and they’re rarely as cute or funny as you think they are. This is a place to show that you can follow directions and present information clearly.

### **Avoid platitudes.**

Don’t tell the reviewers how prestigious the award is—they already know that. Don’t tell them how honored you’d be to win—submitting the application is evidence enough of your desire to win!

# Tone and Style

## General “Best Practices”:

**Keep it positive:** Be affirming of yourself and your experiences

- Bad: “I didn’t really know what I wanted to do in undergrad, so I bounced around between majors and then settled on engineering because I had enough credits to graduate.”
- Good: “I took a wide range of courses and explored many topics during my undergraduate education, which helped me hone my interests and find my home in Mechanical Engineering.”



# Tone and Style

## General “Best Practices”:

**Don't be arrogant:** It'll come off as immaturity or naivete

Don't oversell your claims. Don't put down other applicants. Avoid saying your work will “revolutionize the field.” Avoid setting lofty and unattainable goals. Be respectful and reasonable in your pitch.

- If you're asking for a year of funding, don't describe ten years of work. (Of, if you're applying for a \$2,000 grant, don't describe \$20,000 worth of research.)
- Reviewers generally need to know that your project is **feasible** and that you have **measurable outcomes**.

# Tone and Style

## **General “Best Practices”:**

### **Be kind to your reader!**

Think about things like paragraph length, what the text looks like on the page, whether your narrative is disjointed/hard to follow. Remember, they’re reading stacks of similar documents.

### **Make it easy to find information!**

Stick to the general order in the prompt—it’s what they expect. Use strong topic sentences and consider boldfacing key points, so that readers can skim. Reviewers may want to return to your essay for a quick refresher.

# Examples

The foremost leading reason why I want to run after a career in medicine is because of a covenant vow I made to my sister when I was but a tender youth of eight. My sister, who was only an innocuous infant, was aware I had been shepherding her health while our parents were working late. Shielding her from harm gave me a feeling of responsibility I had never experienced before. When my sister arose from her slumber with a fever, I felt impotent. Her medical practitioner was able to take care of the most quintessential person in my entire existence by systematically ruling out possible causes for the fever while still helping my sister feel safe, allowing me to see the luminescent beauty of medicine.

# Examples

I am applying for a Fulbright to Spain in order to conduct research for my doctoral dissertation on Andalusian popular religion in the 1800s, a century of belief and practice virtually untouched by scholars. Although a good deal of research has been done on the institutional history of the Spanish Catholic Church in the nineteenth century, the history of popular belief in that period remains largely unexamined. This lack is only emphasized by the excellent analyses that exist for the early-modern era and the twentieth century. As these works have demonstrated, the study of popular religion can offer important insights into how “average” people conceived of, and attempted to influence, the world around them. By focusing on the nineteenth century, an era in which traditional beliefs collided with new ideas introduced by the Enlightenment, industrialization, and other forces of modernization, my study will help explain how the rural population of Andalusia made sense of the rapid changes occurring around it...Indeed, preliminary archival research I conducted this past summer has convinced me that nineteenth-century popular religion effectively articulated collective concerns, both old and new.

# Examples

We'll move to breakout rooms to read and discuss the next example.

As you read, consider what works well.

- What do you notice about the overall organization?
- How would you describe the language?
- Is there much jargon or technical language?
- Of the “best practices” we reviewed, which do you see at work in this essay?
- Do you think this essay was part of a successful or unsuccessful application?

# OGFA Resources

\*all images below are hyperlinked

Fellowships and Awards for  
International Students



Dissertation  
Completion Fellowships



The Office of Graduate Fellowships & Awards  
Florida State University

Fellowships, Scholarships, and Awards  
for Graduate School

Created by the Office of Graduate Fellowships and Awards at Florida State University



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# OGFA

## Services & Resources

- Funding search assistance
- One-on-one & small-group meetings
- Document review/feedback
- Workshops & Info Sessions
- Online application tips & resources
- Check out past award winners here (Grad Student Award Recipient Database)



# Contact Information

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