



BMC Research Town Hall: Foundation Funding

Strategic Research Growth





General Considerations

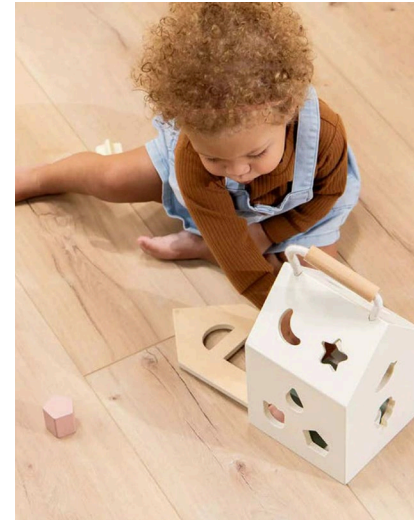
Time is your most valuable resource, and it's worth doing a thorough vetting of any opportunity you come across to make sure the opportunity is right for you and your work in THIS moment in time. **A few extra minutes up front can save you days and weeks of time down the line.**

Questions to Ask Yourself

- What is the funding mechanism – is it actually a grant?
 - **Grant:** no substantial programmatic involvement on part of sponsor
 - **Cooperative Agreement:** substantive programmatic involvement of sponsor (sometimes coordination by sponsor)
 - **Contract:** providing service or “good” for sponsor benefit and/or use
 - **Subaward/Subcontract:** subaward institution performs substantive programmatic scope on another institution’s (prime) award
- Are you eligible to be PI? Is BMC eligible to be applicant?
- Does the funder require a cost-share?
- Is this a limited funding opportunity, i.e., does the funder limit the number of applications from an organization?
 - If so, requires coordination with SRG
- Does your project align with your academic/clinical department’s priorities?
- Is the project period appropriate in terms of anticipated start date and project length?
 - Do you have necessary time for project start-up (hiring, IRB approvals)?
 - Can you accomplish your scope in the allotted time?

Questions to Ask Yourself (continued)

- Does this opportunity “fit?”
 - Does the budget support the anticipated scope?
 - Is the cost cap a TOTAL cost cap or a direct cost cap? How many *direct cost* dollars are available for your project?
 - What information do you need to do a cost feasibility assessment?
 - How much of your effort will the project require? Does the foundation have a salary cap?
 - Remember: Personnel effort is typically THE most expensive cost category, and it adds up quickly (consider fringe rates of 31.2% for BU faculty and 36.5% for BMC employees)
- If this opportunity is awarded, what levels of post-award support will be required?
 - Size of grant does not necessarily reflect reporting burden



The “Long View:” How does this grant fit into your research trajectory?

- Is this opportunity a good “bang” for your scientific “buck?”
 - How might this project set you up for future funding?
- Consider “narrative arch” of your research portfolio and research career development – does this opportunity make sense?
 - Does it fit where you are in your career trajectory?
- What is the turnaround time for the award? What else do you have in your pipeline?
 - Consider scientific and/or budgetary overlap
- What is the opportunity cost of going for this grant?
 - Time is your most valuable (and limited) resource – if you apply for this opportunity, what other opportunities will you have to forego?





Foundation Funding

Foundation Funding: Benefits

- Foundation funding can be a great fit for pilot projects, projects that are high-risk and/or high-reward, or projects outside the scope of NIH research institutes
- A number of foundations, especially trade organizations and professional societies, offer really great career development-type research awards (for mid-career investigators, even – not just early stage)
- Foundation funding is often “fast-tracked” in comparison to NIH - Review timeframe can be quicker/accelerated
- Some foundations are willing to offer “supplemental” funding for projects already underway – willing to fund elements of projects that are not “stand-alone”



Foundation Funding: Common Challenges

- Small funds available – not enough to fund a full project, but sometimes a part of one
 - Can you break out any aims? Fund a larger project piecemeal?
 - Is the foundation willing to provide “supplemental” funding to expand an existing project, or must project funded by foundation be stand-alone?
- Odd budget rules can be tricky (i.e., artificially low salary caps, restrictions on funding of fringe benefits, etc.)
- Semantics: Foundation funding language mimics federal funding language – but different foundations use terms differently from the feds – and from each other
- Ultra-specific funding opportunity announcements and/or areas of focus can be a double-edged sword
 - How easily will you be able to re-purpose your idea if the project isn’t funded?
- Can be very competitive – especially for opportunities with broader scope
 - Not all trade associations are well funded
- **SRG can discuss these common challenges with you and determine if opportunities are worth pursuing**

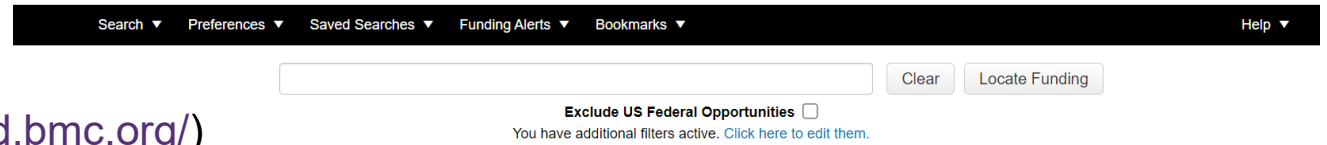


Finding Foundation Funding: There is no “dark web”

- Talk to your mentors and your colleagues – who have they been funded by? Who have *their* mentors and colleagues been funded by?
- Look at acknowledgments on papers in your field – which sponsors are supporting this work?
- Stay “in the know” – let the funders come to you!
 - Subscribe to listservs for foundations, professional and trade societies
- Check foundation websites often – get sense of cyclical vs. one-time RFPs
- **Search tools:**
 - Many tools are subscription-based, e.g., Pivot
 - Don’t underestimate Google
 - Look at recent foundation news - helps with mapping shifting priorities
 - CTRL-F web articles with massive lists of foundations (i.e., “100 Places to Find Funding for your Research”):
https://www.oedb.org/ilibrarian/100_places_to_find_funding_your_research/



Finding Foundation Funding (continued)



- **SPIN** – accessible via your InfoEd account (<https://infoed.bmc.org/>)
- International Research: **Fogarty International Center's directory of non-NIH Funding Opportunities:** <https://www.fic.nih.gov/Funding/NonNIH>
- Candid Philanthropy News Digest RFP Bulletin – customized RFP alerts: <https://philanthropynewsdigest.org/user/register/>
- Let us help!
 - Reach out to us early and often
 - We can dig into BMC's history with the foundation– have we been successful in the past? Why and why not?
 - We can confirm there are no competing asks in the works
 - We can use our subscription database (Foundation Directory) to map geography, amount, and type of giving
 - Policy: Engage SRG team for any foundation grantseeking





<https://www.bmc.org/external-funding>

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