Early Investigators: Launching a Successful Research Career

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Provided by:

Principal Investigators Association™
A Note from the Editor

Dear Professional:

Thank you for ordering this webinar from Principal Investigators Association Library. We developed this series of topic–specific publications so our members could have practical, how-to guidance addressing some of their most critical challenges all in one place, without searching far and wide for information on their managerial and funding activities.

In addition to the special reports that make up the Library, we offer a weekly e-Alert, Principal Investigator Advisor monthly newsletter, and a year-long series of audio conferences – devoted to helping you improve performance and spend more time doing what you love.... the research.

Our goal as a association is to be the world's leading source of real-world, results-orientation information for our members in all fields of science. Our unique approach -- delivering targeted guidance, case studies, success strategies, and best practices -- has earned us a reputation for depth, usefulness, and high-value information as well as a loyal group of members who rely on that information to help them with their administrative and funding duties. We’re glad you’ve joined them, and invite you to review all of our products and services at www.principalinvestigators.org.

We are always on the look-out for interesting topics, researcher needs, and ways we can be of service to you. If you have a success story you'd like to share with your colleagues, please do not hesitate to contact me. I'd be thrilled to hear from you, and I look forward to serving you and your organization with the best advice and information available in the months and years to come.

Best Regards,

Leslie Norins
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Early Investigators: Launching a Successful Research Career

Playing by Whose Rules?

- Make your research expectations clear, and be sure that your Dean and Department Chair agree with you.
- Get acquainted with your Office of Sponsored Programs.

Forming your own research group

- You’re the boss now.
Forming your own research group

- You're the boss now.
- Recruit undergraduates as well as graduate students.

Responsible Conduct of Research.

Getting Grants
Getting Grants

• A grant is a collaboration.

• Matching funder priorities.

NIH Priorities

• to foster fundamental creative discoveries, innovative research strategies, and their applications as a basis for ultimately protecting and improving health;

• to develop, maintain, and renew scientific human and physical resources that will ensure the Nation’s capability to prevent disease;

• to expand the knowledge base in medical and associated sciences in order to enhance the Nation’s economic well-being and ensure a continued high return on the public investment in research; and

• to exemplify and promote the highest level of scientific integrity, public accountability, and social responsibility in the conduct of science.
Take advantage of restricted grant programs

- Early investigator:
  - NSF CAREER, NIH K-series grants, PRF UNI.

- Primarily Undergraduate (If these apply to you).
  - NSF RUI, NIH AREA, PRF UNI and UR grants, Research Corporation Cottrell College Science Awards.

- Geographically restricted.
  - By state, or region, or characteristics (e.g. NSF EPSCOR). Ask your OSP about any that apply to you.
Getting Grants

- A grant is a collaboration.
- Matching funder priorities.
- Understanding the proposal review process, and its three (or sometimes 4) audiences.

Proposal review: who is your audience?

- Stage 1: Fit to funder priorities and guidelines (Program Officer).

Proposal review: who is your audience?

- Stage 1: Program Officer.
- Stage 2: Scientific merit (Expert peer reviewers and program officer).
Scientific Merit in Early-Career Proposals

- Demonstrate that you are well-trained to carry out the research that you propose.
- Demonstrate independence of your mentors: a clear departure from research done under someone else’s supervision.

Avoid Data-Gathering Surveys

- Center the proposed research on testing a small number of related, significant hypotheses.
- Postpone survey research until later in your career (if ever!)

Proposal review: who is your audience?

- Stage 1: Program Officer.
- Stage 2: Scientific merit (Expert peer reviewers and program officer).
Proposal review: who is your audience?

- Stage 1: Guidelines (Program Officer).
- Stage 2: Scientific Merit (Expert peer reviewers and Program Officer).
- Stage 3: Merit, Impact, and Funder Priorities (Panel ranking).

Proposal Review: NSF’s Broader Impacts

- How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning?
- How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)?
- To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships?
- Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding?
- What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

Proposal review: who is your audience?

- Stage 1: Guidelines (Program Officer).
- Stage 2: Scientific Merit (Expert peer reviewers and Program Officer).
- Stage 3: Merit, Impact, and Funder Priorities (Panel ranking).

There can be a Stage 4, for research with potential for political controversy (Administrators and politicians).
### Getting Grants

- A grant is a collaboration.
- Matching funder priorities.
- Understanding the proposal review process, and its three (or sometimes 4) audiences.
- Denial of funding as a step toward success.

### Multiple and Parallel Submissions

- You **must** submit more than one proposal at a time.
- Proposals submitted to different agencies should reflect the different goals and priorities of those agencies.
- You must be honest and transparent about submitting same or similar ideas to more than one agency for funding.

### Support: Moral and Practical

- Do you have a mentor?
Support: Moral and Practical

- Do you have a mentor?

- Networking: CUR, Gordon Conferences, Regional and national professional organizations.

- Volunteer to review proposals.
Webinar Survey

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We value your opinion and your input helps us improve on areas that are most useful to you.

Evaluation Scale:    (5) Superior     (4) Excellent     (3) Good     (2) Fair     (1) Poor
Overall Experience      5 4 3 2 1
Quality of Content      5 4 3 2 1
Quality of Speaker      5 4 3 2 1
Conference Company      5 4 3 2 1
Customer Service       5 4 3 2 1

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