Getting Started in Grant Writing:
An Introduction for Graduate Students, Postdocs, and New Faculty

March 3, 2021 – 2 pm EST / 11 am PST

Presented by:
Nancy L. Devino, PhD
University of Houston – Clear Lake

©2021 Biomedical Research Alliance of New York LLC
CITI Program is a division of BRANY

Today's Moderator & CITI Program

The Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program) is dedicated to promoting the public's trust in the research enterprise by providing high quality, peer-reviewed, web-based educational courses in research, ethics, regulatory oversight, responsible conduct of research, research administration, and other topics pertinent to the interests of member organizations and individual learners.

Webinar Features

Questions and Answers

- You can submit a question during the presentation by selecting “Q&A” icon on the bottom of the screen.
- It opens a separate window where you can type and submit questions.
- Questions will be addressed after the presentation.

CITI PROGRAM

About Today's Presenter

Nancy L. Devino, PhD
Executive Director, Office of Sponsored Programs
University of Houston-Clear Lake

Dr. Devino is Executive Director of Sponsored Programs at the University of Houston-Clear Lake. She holds a PhD in chemistry and served as a faculty member at two-year and four-year colleges before transitioning into full-time research development and administration. In her current position, she directs proposal development and grant management activities for faculty and staff in all disciplines.

Conflicts of Interest Disclosure: Nancy L. Devino

I have no relevant personal/professional/financial relationship(s) with respect to this educational activity.

CITI PROGRAM

Learning Objectives

- Identify major phases in grant proposal development.
- Locate relevant sources of information on funding opportunities.
- Summarize information found in a Request for Proposals.
- Outline the steps to go from proposal concept to proposal submission.

Phases of Proposal Development

Funding Opportunity Searches

Analysis of a Request for Proposals (RFP)

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Phases of Proposal Development

Funding Opportunity Searches

Analysis of a Request for Proposals (RFP)

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Six Phases of Proposal Preparation and Submission

CITI PROGRAM

Phase 1: Idea Development

- Proposal idea development can take a month or longer
- Idea centers on a problem statement or statement of need
- Grant funding provides the resources to implement an original, creative, and effective solution
- Involves thorough knowledge of what has already been done:
  - How is/are existing knowledge, practice, or resources inadequate?
  - How is your idea new, unique, or better?

CITI PROGRAM

Phases 2 – 4: Searching, Planning, and Writing

- Funding Search (Phase 2): discussed in section two
- Proposal Planning (Phase 3): discussed in sections three and four
- Proposal Writing (Phase 4): discussed in section four

CITI PROGRAM

Phase 5: Proposal Submission

- Best practice is to allow about a week.
- Most institutions and organizations have an individual or office that oversees submission.
- Determine their guidelines and requirements as soon as you begin thinking about a proposal.
- Obtain any accounts for online submission portals and have your login information at hand.

Phase 6: Proposal Review

- Proposal review is often the longest phase in the proposal timeline.
- Federal agencies use various methods of peer review.
- Other funding agencies may use different methods of proposal review.
- Understanding what reviewers are looking for is essential for writing a successful proposal.

CITI PROGRAM

Phases of Proposal Development

Funding Opportunity Searches

Analysis of a Request for Proposals (RFP)

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Connecting Ideas to Funding Opportunities

Three General Strategies for Finding Funding:

1. Database search (“all” grants or federal only)
   - Grants.gov
   - Subscription services
2. Exploration of grants/funding pages on agency or organization website
3. Email alerts that come from professional societies, registration on a search site, or registration on an agency site

CITI PROGRAM

Three Types of Funders

CITI PROGRAM

Government Funding

- Includes federal, state, and local government organizations
- Federal funding opportunities are posted in the Federal Register and on Grants.gov
- State funding may be posted on a main state government page or on state agency page

CITI PROGRAM

Federal Funding: Grants.gov

- Online system for finding federal funding and applying for federal grants
- Comprehensive search engine with multiple criteria and the capacity to sort the results and save a search
- Register to create a user account and subscribe to email alerts about new opportunities of interest

Image Source: Used with permission from Grants.gov

CITI PROGRAM

Agency-Specific Federal Funding

- Most federal grant-making agencies have web pages dedicated to grant opportunities.
- These pages allow you to browse, search, and subscribe to email alerts.
- Large agencies like NSF or DoEd may have program-specific grants pages.
- Staying on top of opportunities – through regular browsing or reading the email messages – is key to getting timely information.

CITI PROGRAM

State Government Funding

- Points of access vary by state
- Type “grant” in search box on main state page
- Example: Texas.gov search lands on state’s e-grants page
- Includes only a fraction of state grants that are submitted on the e-grants system; remainder are on agency pages
- Challenge: find out where state-funded opportunities are posted where you live, then search regularly and subscribe to email lists

CITI PROGRAM

Foundation Funding: Subscription Services

- These can be harder to find because access to search engines that charge a subscription fee.
- Your institution may already subscribe; talk to the grants office, the development office, or possibly the library.
- Examples include PIVOT-COS, SPIN, Foundation Directory Online, GrantSelect, and more.
- Most allow you to sign up for email alerts on topics of interest, save your searches, and save opportunity information.

CITI PROGRAM

Phases of Proposal Development

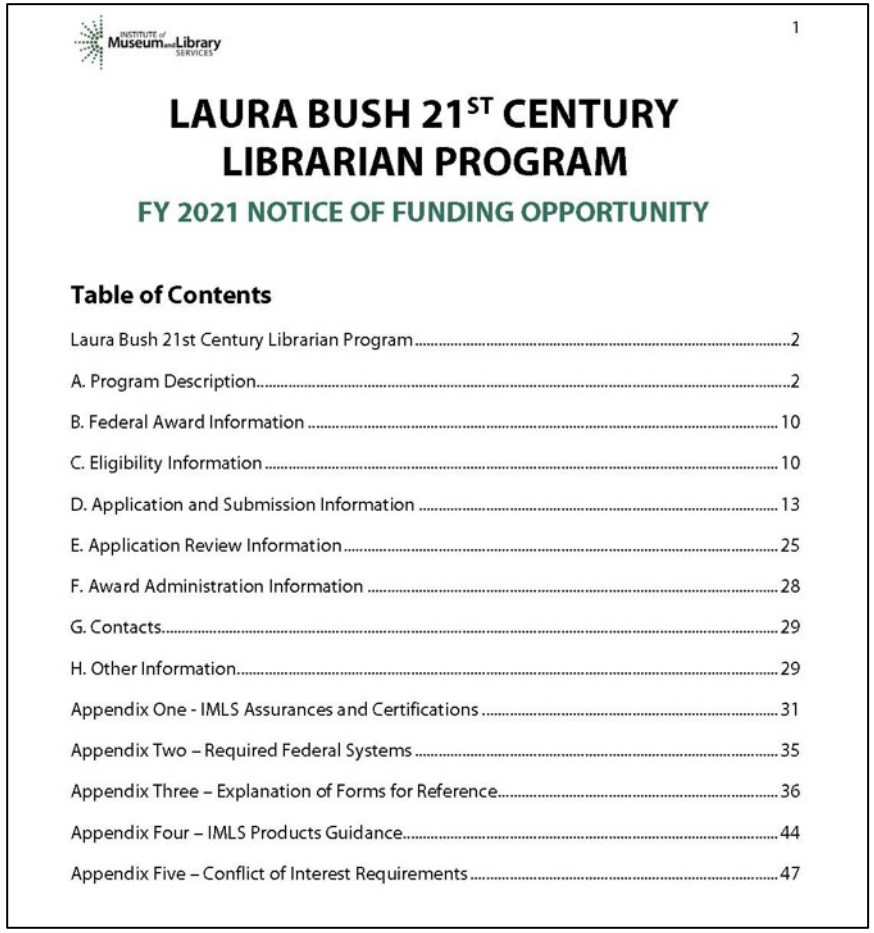
Funding Opportunity Searches

Analysis of a Request for Proposals (RFP)

Proposal Preparation and Submission

A First Look at a Request for Proposals (RFP)

- RFPs range from very vague to highly detailed and prescriptive.
- Many will reference agency resources and information in other documents.
- Some (not all!) provide a table of contents.



1

LAURA BUSH 21ST CENTURY LIBRARIAN PROGRAM

FY 2021 NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Table of Contents

Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program 2
A. Program Description 2
B. Federal Award Information 10
C. Eligibility Information 10
D. Application and Submission Information 13
E. Application Review Information 25
F. Award Administration Information 28
G. Contacts 29
H. Other Information 29
Appendix One - IMLS Assurances and Certifications 31
Appendix Two – Required Federal Systems 35
Appendix Three – Explanation of Forms for Reference 36
Appendix Four – IMLS Products Guidance 44
Appendix Five – Conflict of Interest Requirements 47

Image Source: Used with permission from IMLS under CC0 1.0 Universal

Key Items in an RFP

- Due date(s)
- Preliminary proposal or letter of intent requirements
- Eligibility
- Award period (start date, # months or years)
- Award amounts (min, max, average)
- Detailed program information
- Proposal content and format requirements
- Review criteria

CITI PROGRAM

Your Task: Follow the Instructions

4. Preliminary Proposal Narrative

Write a Narrative that includes the elements described below, and save it as a PDF.

- Limit the Narrative to two (2) numbered pages. We will remove any additional pages, and we will not send them to reviewers as part of your application.
- Be clear and concise with a minimum of technical jargon and acronyms.
- Make sure your organization's name appears at the top of each page.
- Use at least 0.5-inch margins on all sides and a font size of at least twelve points.
- Include a project title at the top of the first page.

Image Source: Used with permission from IMLS under CC0 1.0 Universal

Some RFPs Include Detailed Proposal Requirements

D3a. Table of Application Components for Invited Full Proposals

Component	Format	File name to use
Required Documents		
The Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form (SF-424S)	Grants.gov form	n/a
IMLS Supplementary Information Form	Grants.gov form	n/a
IMLS Library - Discretionary Program Information Form	IMLS PDF form	Programinfo.pdf
Organizational Profile	PDF document	Organizationalprofile.pdf
Narrative (ten pages max.)	PDF document	Narrative.pdf
Schedule of Completion (one page per year max.)	PDF document	Scheduleofcompletion.pdf
IMLS Budget Form	IMLS PDF form	Budget.pdf
Budget Justification	PDF document	Budgetjustification.pdf
List of Key Project Staff and Consultants (one page max.)	PDF document	Projectstaff.pdf
Resumes of Key Project Staff and Consultants (two pages each max.)	PDF document	Resumes.pdf
Digital Product Form	IMLS PDF form	Digitalproduct.pdf
Conditionally Required Documents **Please see the guidance in Section D3d for more information.**		
Proof of Private, Nonprofit Status	PDF document	Proofnonprofit.pdf

Final Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement	PDF document	Indirectcostrate.pdf
Letter of Departmental Endorsement for an Early Career Development grant	PDF document	Endorsement.pdf
Supporting Documents **Please see the guidance in Section D3e for more information.**		
Information that supplements the Narrative and supports the project description provided in the application	PDF document	Supportingdoc1.pdf Supportingdoc2.pdf Supportingdoc3.pdf

Image Source: Used with permission from IMLS under CC0 1.0 Universal

RFP May Specify Narrative Organization

Invited Full Proposal Outline

Your Narrative should include sections with the following titles: Statement of Broad Need, Project Design, Diversity Plan, and Broad Impact. Each section should address questions listed in the Invited Full Proposal Outline below. The Project Design for an Invited Full Proposal for a Research in Service to Practice application must also include clearly defined research questions. See Guidance for Research Applications.

Image Source: Used with permission from IMLS under CC0 1.0 Universal

CITI PROGRAM

RFP May Include Review Criteria and Scoring

V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this program are from section 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows. Applicants should address each of the selection criteria separately for each proposed activity. The total weight of the selection criteria is 100 points; the weight of each criterion is noted in parentheses.

Image Source: U.S. Department of Education (Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Document)

CITI PROGRAM

Phases of Proposal Development

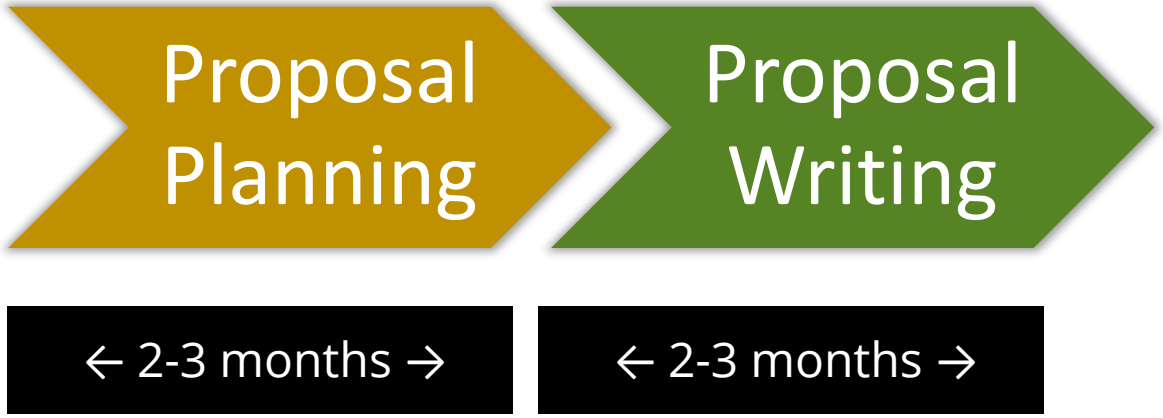
Funding Opportunity Searches

Analysis of a Request for Proposals (RFP)

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Proposal Preparation Includes Planning and Writing

- Start 4-6 months before deadline, if possible
- Dedicate 10-15 hours per week on planning, writing, and completing documents
- Collaborate with grants office for assistance with some components



CITI PROGRAM

Complex Proposals Require More Planning

- Multiple investigators multiplies the number of documents
- Multiple institutions multiplies the number of approvals needed
- More meetings are needed to coordinate ideas, approach, and resource needs
- More time is needed for revisions and consensus

CITI PROGRAM

Creating the Proposal Narrative

- Narrative tells the story of a research or program project
- Answers questions: who, what, when, why, where, and how?
- Goes by different names at different funding agencies:
  - NSF: Project Description
  - NIH: Research Strategy
- Typically has page limits
- Should follow organization in RFP (if provided) or commonly-used proposal sections

CITI PROGRAM

Common Sections of a Proposal Narrative

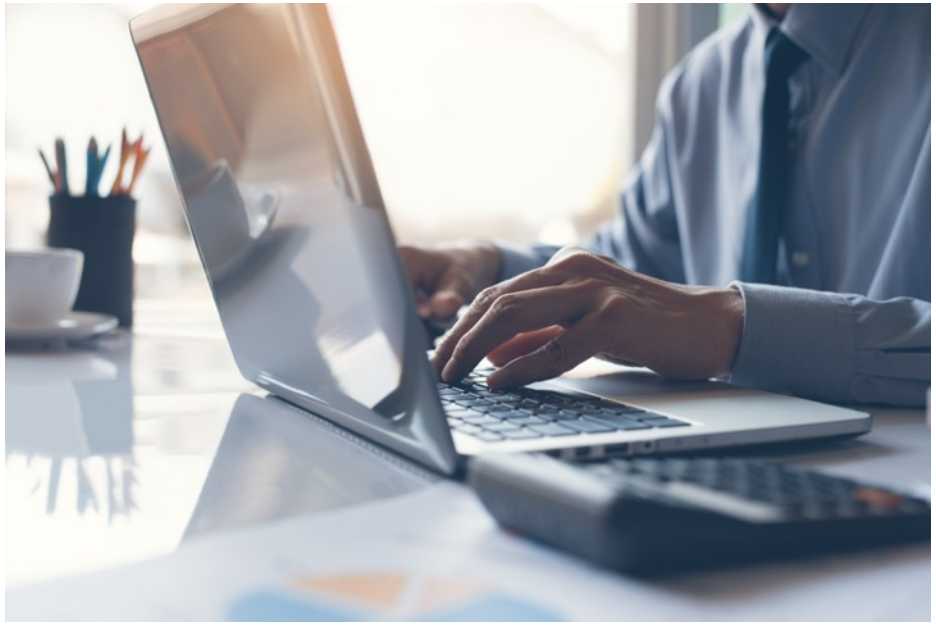
1. Problem Statement – ***why*** do you need the money?
2. Goals and Objectives – ***what*** will you do with the money?
3. Methodology – ***how*** and ***when*** will you use the money?
4. Personnel and Project Management – ***who*** will do the work?
5. Expected Outcomes – may be part of Goals and Objectives
6. Dissemination Plan – how will others learn of your results?

CITI PROGRAM

Writing the NIH Research Strategy

Three Main Sections:

1. Significance
2. Innovation
3. Approach
    - Specific Aim 1
    - Specific Aim 2
    - Specific Aim 3



Preparation of Additional Components

- Biographical sketches
- Letters of commitment or collaboration
- Budget and budget narrative
- Additional agency- or program-specific forms
  - Current and Pending Support
  - Collaborators and Other Affiliations
  - Data Management Plan
  - Digital Products
  - … and more!

CITI PROGRAM

Proposal Submission

- Managed centrally or at department/college level (institution-specific)
- Meet with submitting office representatives early in preparation process so that:
  a. they are aware of your planned proposal;
  b. you are informed about process and timelines; and
  c. you have an active account in the electronic submission portal (if required)

CITI PROGRAM

Summary

1. Grant proposal writing takes time.
2. Finding funding opportunities requires effort.
3. Following the RFP guidelines is critical to success.
4. Effort pays off in personal satisfaction and career success.

References

Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program. FY2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity. https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/fy21-ols-lb21-nofo.pdf. Accessed 1/4/2021.

Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) Program Assistance Listing Number 84.200A. https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-01-15/pdf/2021-00766.pdf. Accessed 2/25/2021.

Additional Resources

Gerin, W., Kapelewski Kinkade, C., Page, N. L. (2017). Writing the NIH Grant Proposal: A Step-by-Step Guide. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Li, P., Marrongelle, K. (2012). Having Success with NSF: A Practical Guide. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Licklider, M. and the University of Missouri Grant Writer Network (2012). Grant Seeking in Higher Education: Strategies and Tools for College Faculty. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Contact

Contact Person – Nancy L. Devino, PhD
devino@uhcl.edu

CITI PROGRAM

Questions?

Additional Questions?

Join us on Twitter
@citiprogram

Pose additional questions using
#CITIGrantWritingWebinar

CITI PROGRAM

Evaluation

Following the webinar, you will receive an email with a link to an evaluation.

CITI PROGRAM

Thank You

www.citiprogram.org

CITI PROGRAM