

**Office of Research & Graduate Studies**

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# Grants for Graduate Students

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# Liberal Arts Grant Services

**G**rant-seeking is an important part of being a graduate student and an academic. Grants help you advance your studies, conduct research, and prepare your dissertation, and they are an important credential on your curriculum vitae.

Liberal Arts Grants Services, housed in the Office of the Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies, offers assistance to Liberal Arts graduate students and faculty seeking funding outside of The University of Texas at Austin. We can help identify grant opportunities, prepare proposals, and navigate the University's institutional approval process.

The information in this booklet is designed to give you an overview of the grants process and help you begin your own grant-seeking plan. Feel free to contact us at any stage in this process—we are here to help.

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# Creating a Grant-Seeking Strategy

Most graduate students have little experience finding and applying for grants. So where do you start?

## **1. Make a graduate career funding plan**

Think about the different phases of your graduate program and what kind of support you might need and be eligible for in each.

## **2. Search grants for each phase of study**

When you search for opportunities, organize them by what they fund: coursework, small research trips, dissertation research, or dissertation writing. Make a long term plan to avoid scrambling for funding at the last minute. Spend a couple of hours every semester looking for new opportunities.

## **3. Mark your calendar**

Put grant deadlines on your calendar, and set up an alert at least a month in advance to give yourself time to prepare.

## **4. Get your faculty advisers on board**

Always keep your faculty advisers up to date on your plans, and never apply for a grant without their consent.

## **5. Develop project idea(s)**

Don't let the "unknowns" in your research agenda stop you from constructing well thought out and feasible plans for each grant application. Commit to a project for each proposal, and accept that it is okay if this changes once you start.

## **6. Draft proposals**

Make note of all the required elements of the proposal. Have both a generalist, such as a colleague from another discipline, and a specialist, like your adviser or another mentor, read your project narrative.

## **7. Submit**

Submit early, if you can, to avoid online application crashes and other last-minute meltdowns. Proposals submitted 3-5 days in advance are more than twice as likely to be funded. Why? Because their authors were prepared.

## **8. Re-apply!**

Don't be discouraged if you are not selected for a particular opportunity. Only between five and twenty percent of grant applications are funded, depending on the program. Re-submit, find new opportunities, and just keep doing your best.

# What Kinds of Grants are Available?

Grant opportunities are generally specific to your field and phase of study. Here are a few examples of grants you might find for different points in your graduate career:

## **Fellowships for Coursework**

- Fulbright for International Students
- Ford Foundation Pre-Doctoral Fellowships
- Jacob K. Javits Fellowship
- EPA Science to Achieve Results (STAR) Fellowship
- NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)
- Endangered Languages Documentation Project Graduate Scholarships
- NIH NRSA Predoctoral Fellowships

## **Travel Awards: Professional Development & Summer Research**

- Your department & UT Austin research units
- Your destination organization, be it a conference, an archive or research center, a non-profit, or a university
- Professional organizations

## **Dissertation Research Funding**

- National Science Foundation (NSF) Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants (DDRIGs)
- CAORC Multi-Country Research Fellowship
- Humboldt Foundation (Study in Germany)
- IAF Grassroots Development Fellowship Program
- Boren Fellowships for International Study
- Wenner-Gren Dissertation Fieldwork Grants (Anthropology)
- Social Science Research Council (SSRC) International Dissertation Research Fellowship (IDRF)

## **Dissertation Writing Awards**

- ACLS-Mellon Dissertation Completion Fellowship
- AAUW Dissertation Fellowships
- Woodrow Wilson Foundation Fellowships

# Where Do I Search for Grants?

Your professors and fellow students are your most important source for learning about grant opportunities in your discipline. Discuss funding opportunities with your adviser and your colleagues. Also, be sure to subscribe to your discipline's professional organization's email list, and check their website frequently for new opportunities.

## **These online resources may also be helpful:**

### **UT Austin Graduate School**

[utexas.edu/ogs/funding](http://utexas.edu/ogs/funding)

### **Harvard University Graduate Guide to Grants**

[gsas.harvard.edu/current\\_students/graduate\\_guide\\_to\\_grants.php](http://gsas.harvard.edu/current_students/graduate_guide_to_grants.php)

### **Duke University Research Funding Database**

[researchfunding.duke.edu](http://researchfunding.duke.edu)

### **American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS)**

[www.acls.org/programs/comps](http://www.acls.org/programs/comps)

### **Pivot/Communities of Science Grants Database**

[pivot.cos.com/funding\\_main](http://pivot.cos.com/funding_main)

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Consider visiting the **Regional Foundation Library (RFL)**. The RFL offers access to a number of grants databases and printed grant guides. Schedule an appointment with one of the librarians for assistance with your search.

[ddce.utexas.edu/foundationlibrary](http://ddce.utexas.edu/foundationlibrary)

And, of course, visit the **Liberal Arts Grants Office** website or visit in person for more help.

[utexas.edu/cola/research/grants-contracts](http://utexas.edu/cola/research/grants-contracts)

# What's in a Proposal?

A proposal is much more than a narrative project statement. Don't forget that applications can be returned without review for not including all required materials in the specified format. Leave time to prepare supporting materials such as:

## **Letter of Institutional Approval**

Secured through Liberal Arts Grant Services and the UT Austin Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP): This is required for most federal grants, as well as any other grants requesting "institutional approval." Securing this letter can take up to three weeks.

## **Budget and Budget Justification**

Funders look to see that your expenses are reasonable given your proposed project, and that they conform to the conventions of grant budgeting. Contact Liberal Arts Grant Services for help preparing grant budgets.

## **Letters of Support**

Any time you propose to work with another institution or individual on grant-funded research, you must present evidence that the other party supports your proposal. Especially in the case of international collaborators, obtaining such letters can take considerable time.

## **Additional supporting materials may include**

Abstract; Table of Contents; Literature Reviews; References; Project Design, Procedures, and Methodology; Evaluation; Data Management Plan; Curricula Vitae for all contributing researchers; Facilities and Equipment; Lists of Other Current and Pending Support; Appendices; Recommendation Letters; etc.



# What's in a Project/ Research Statement?

This is one of the most important parts of your proposal. It may be called different things (sometimes just “proposal”) and different grantors will require different lengths and formats. Generally, it should answer the following questions:

## **What do you propose to do with this grant?**

Every proposal should contain **one clear, concise sentence** describing the proposed research.

## **Why is your research significant?**

What are its broader impacts? Give the “big picture.”

## **What is the nature of existing research on this topic, and what will you contribute?**

This is your brief literature review.

## **How will you carry out this research?**

Outline your methodology, explain why this particular methodology is appropriate, and give a detailed timeline with milestones and your target completion date.

## **Why are you uniquely qualified to conduct this research?**

## **How does your research address the sponsor's mission?**

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*Remember to begin each paragraph with a strong topic statement—reviewers may skim proposals quickly, don't make them work to find the answers to these central questions.*

# Submitting a Grant at UT Austin

Most graduate fellowships are paid directly to the student, but some sponsors prefer to give to a university or other non-profit organization. If you are applying for a federal grant, such as the National Science Foundation's Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants (NSF DDRIG), or for any grant that requires "institutional" support, you will need the University to approve your proposal before it can be submitted.

**Submit your grant early, per the timeline below, to secure institutional approval:**

**1-12 Months** Feel free to notify Liberal Arts Grants Services as soon as you know you will be applying for a particular opportunity.

**3 Weeks** Notify Liberal Arts Grants Services of your intent to apply, then complete and return the **Proposal Review Form**, available on our website. This form gives us basic information about your grant.

**7-10 Business Days** Submit final versions of all proposal documents to Liberal Arts Grants Services. A member of the grants staff will work with you to make sure your application is complete and that it adheres to sponsor and UT Austin guidelines.

**5-7 Business Days** Liberal Arts grants staff will submit your revised grant to OSP for review. You may be asked to make additional changes during this time.

**0-2 Business Days** OSP will provide a letter of approval to accompany your grant submission, or, if you are submitting a federal grant, will submit your proposal to the sponsor on your behalf.

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*Internal review helps ensure your proposal will not be "returned without review," and facilitates payment when the grant is awarded.*





## **Contacts**

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