

# **How to Obtain Peer-Reviewed Federal Funding for Research: A Proposal-Writing Workshop Series**

**Summer 2006**

**Sandra L. Schneider, Ph.D., Workshop Leader**

**Funded by the USF Office of Research**  
with support from the College of Arts & Sciences

- **This workshop provides intensive hands-on training in writing competitive research grant proposals for peer-reviewed federal programs within agencies such as the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health.**
- **Topics and activities include all aspects of standard research grant proposal preparation, as well as training in navigating agency websites and search engines, understanding the review process, and learning about relevant compliance concerns.**
- **Successful participants will complete and submit a federal-agency grant proposal as part of the workshop, and will also participate in the review of others' proposals.**

For questions or more information, contact *Savita D'silva* at [sdsilva@cas.usf.edu](mailto:sdsilva@cas.usf.edu).

## **How to Obtain Peer-Reviewed Federal Funding for Research: A Proposal-Writing Workshop Series**

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### **Workshop Leader:**

**Sandra L. Schneider, Ph.D.**, is Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship in the College of Arts and Sciences, and Professor in Cognitive and Neural Sciences in Psychology. Dr. Schneider's research is currently funded by the National Science Foundation and her former research has been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. From 2000-2001, Dr. Schneider served as the Director of the Decision, Risk, and Management Science (DRMS) program at the National Science Foundation, which involved coordinating the grant review process, providing information to potential applicants, awarding grants, and managing the DRMS project portfolio. She has also served on NSF panels and site visit teams. In her role as Associate Dean, Dr. Schneider routinely assists faculty with grant-related issues, including an ongoing series of seminars providing tips for successful grant applications. Dr. Schneider has received several teaching awards as well, including two Teaching Incentive Program Awards and an Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award.

**Guest Speakers:** Guest speakers will include a Program Director from the National Science Foundation; **Jeff Ryan**, Professor of Geology and former program officer in NSF's Division of Undergraduate Education; representatives from USF's Office of Research including **Priscilla Pope** (Associate Vice President and Director of the Division of Sponsored Research), **Rebecca Puig** (Director of Research Resources), **Sue Endress** (Director of Research Proposal Services), and **Judy Erickson** (Senior Grants Specialist); and several USF faculty members who are experienced in grant-writing and proposal review.

**Materials:** Several online resources will be used throughout the workshop (e.g., Community of Science, NSF's FastLane and Verity Search Engine, NIH's grant pages and CRISP database, Grants.gov). Participants will also receive a respected published volume to assist with the grant writing process for agencies such as NIH and NSF.

**Overview:** The workshop consists of eight 3-hour meetings throughout the summer, plus several supplementary sessions. Participants will complete a step-by-step process to produce a grant proposal for submission to a peer-reviewed federal agency competition. Successful participants will submit a completed grant proposal by the penultimate session, and then participate in a review panel similar to those conducted as a standard part of the federal agency proposal review process. Weekly recommended assignments will be made to encourage consistent progress. Supplementary sessions include topics such as navigating the Community of Science website and learning about National Science Foundation initiatives. Participants may also sign up for individual meetings with the workshop leader(s).

Workshop sessions are set for Monday or Wednesday mornings from 9:30am -12:30pm including complimentary pizza/sandwich lunch. There will also be an open work session from 12:30 -1:00pm for those participants who would like time in the computer lab & assistance from the workshop leader.

**A post-workshop follow-up** will be held late in the Spring semester of 2006 for all those who submitted their proposals. The follow-up may be especially helpful for those who have received their reviews from the competition. The purposes of the follow-up will be to (1) discuss participants' initial experience of the review process, (2) to evaluate the content of reviews for those factors that contributed most heavily to obtaining awards, and (3) to explore how to evaluate the reviews for the purpose of revision and resubmission. Participants are free to share their reviews with others in the group or keep them to themselves. Participants are encouraged to meet individually with the workshop leader if they would like to discuss their reviews privately.

**Summer 2006 NSF/NIH Proposal Writing Workshop Schedule**  
**Mondays or Wednesdays 9:30am - 12:30pm & open session (Weeks vary)**

**May 8<sup>th</sup> or May 10<sup>th</sup> Overview of the Grant Process and Funding Sources** **Location: SCA 222 (202)**

**Part 1: 9:30-10:45am Overview of Federal Research Grant Proposals** Welcome and introduction to writing research grant proposals for federal agencies. Participants will be provided information on what is involved in writing a grant proposal for a federal agency and how the grant review process works.

**Part 2: 10:50-11:50am Exploring Funding Opportunities on the Internet** Participants will be taken on a quick guided tour of websites for the Community of Science, National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation to get a better sense of how to find out what opportunities are available and what kinds of project topics will be funded. Time will be allotted for participants to explore these websites.

(10-minute break to move to SCA 202 & lunch arrives)

**Part 3: 12:00-12:30pm Hello to USF Research Resources and Research Proposal Services**

**Rebecca Puig**, Director of Research Resources, will give an overview of services offered by her team and talk about upcoming trainings for workshop participants on Community of Science (COS) and Grants.gov. Next, **Sue Endress**, Director of Research Proposal Services, will introduce us to a few of the Senior Grants Specialists including **Judy Erickson**, and will discuss the role of the Division of Sponsored Research in the proposal process.

**12:30-1:00pm Open Work Session (optional)** Participants may use this time to ask specific questions of the workshop leaders or to work on searching websites for information on funding sources and programs.

**Assignment:** Find at least one program announcement (PA) or request for proposal (RFP) to which you want to respond. Review program information or RFP. Fine-tune and outline ideas for project plan. \*Bring project outline with PA or RFP, to **May 15<sup>th</sup> or May 17<sup>th</sup>** session. Also bring any financial information that you might like to have available for our budget session.

**Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> or May 16<sup>th</sup> Supplemental Session on Community of Science (COS)** **Location: SCA 222 (202)**

**9:30 am – 12:00 pm “How to Find Opportunities to Fund Your Research Using Community of Science”**  
**Presented by Rebecca Puig, Director of Research Resources**  
**12:00 - 1:00 pm Lunch and Informal Q&A**

The Community of Science (COS) database contains information for more than 22,000 available research grants worldwide, worth over \$33 billion - updated daily. COS Expertise, their knowledge management service for individuals and institutions, contains more than 480,000 first-person profiles of researchers at more than 1,300 institutions around the world. Promote your research by showcasing your research and expertise among researchers and scholars from university, corporate, government and nonprofit institutions in more than 125 countries.

**Workshop topics include:** "Main" and "Simple" funding search options, locating agency guidelines, accessing forms (electronic & paper), finding a collaborator, establishing a weekly funding e-mail alert, and promoting your research.

**May 15<sup>th</sup> or May 17<sup>th</sup> All About Grant Proposal Budgets** **Location: SCA 222(202)**

**Part 1: 9:30 – 11:20am Budgets** Participants will learn about typical grant budget items for student and senior personnel, equipment, travel, materials and supplies, etc. Issues such as fringe benefits, tuition waivers, subcontracts, and indirect (F&A) costs will be discussed. Participants will prepare their initial budgets using Excel spreadsheets that will be provided.

(10-minute break to move to SCA 202 & lunch arrives)

**Part 2: 11:30-12:30pm Budget Justifications: What Can I Reasonably Ask For?** Participants will learn about what agencies and auditors look for in budget justifications. Issues of financial compliance will be addressed.

**12:30-1:00pm Open Work Session (optional)** Participants may use this time to ask specific questions of the workshop leaders, continue working on their budget and budget justification, etc.

**Assignment:** Complete budget and budget justification. Continue working on outline of project plan. Bring project outline and electronic copy of your updated vita to the session on **May 22<sup>nd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup>**.

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**May 22nd or May 24th    Review of the Pieces of Research Grant Proposals    Location: SCA 222 (202)**
**Part 1: 9:30-10:30am Where Do I Start? Composing the Pieces of a Research Grant Proposal**

Participants will review the sections of a grant proposal, and will be given insight into the typical length, characteristics, and content of the various pieces of the proposal.

**Part 2: 10:30-11:20pm Grant Proposal Forms** Participants will have the opportunity to begin to complete some of the forms for the proposal, including cover page, biographical sketch, and resources page.

(10-minute break to move to SCA 202 & lunch arrives)

**Part 3: 11:30-12:30pm The Most Important Single Piece of the Proposal: The Project Summary**

Participants will learn about the importance of project summaries in panel and reviewer selection, agency documents, impression management, etc. We will focus on tips for constructing a compelling project summary.

**12:30-1:00pm Open Work Session (optional)** Participants may use this time to ask specific questions of the workshop leaders, continue to complete grant proposal forms, etc.

***Assignment:** Complete all peripheral forms and biographical sketch. Develop and fine-tune your Project Summary. Bring four copies of your Project Summary on June 12<sup>th</sup> or June 14<sup>th</sup>.*

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**June 12th or June 14th    Refining the Contents of the Grant Proposal    Location: SCA 202 Only**

**Part 1: 9:30-10:50pm Focus on Project Design and Descriptions** The project is the heart of the proposal. We will take an intensive look at issues in developing and communicating the research plan. Participants will discuss design issues, including the degree of detail necessary, methodological considerations, and the need for focus and clarity in hypothesis generation, plans for analysis, and interpretation of results. Sample proposals will be available.

(10-minute break & lunch arrives)

**Part 2: 11:00-12:30am Reviewing Progress and Project Summaries** Participants will conduct an informal inventory to mark their progress and begin to pull together all of the loose pieces of the proposal into a coherent whole. Participants will have an opportunity to update the group on their progress and to review one another's project summaries to provide advice and encouragement.

**12:30-1:00pm Open Work Session (optional)** Participants may use this time to ask specific questions of the workshop leaders, work together on reviewing drafts, etc.

***Assignment:** Over the next month, focus on fully developing the Research Plan, with a goal of drafting at least one full section per week. Combine all forms and content into a draft proposal and bring it on **July 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup>**.*

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**Week of June 19<sup>th</sup>    Supplementary Session → 1:1 Meeting    Location: CIS 2085**

**Refining Your Project.** Participants are welcome to schedule a private meeting with the workshop leader to discuss progress and potential difficulties in developing your research plan. Appointments will be available on **Monday and Tuesday** only. Contact *Sandy Justice* to schedule a meeting at [sjustice@cas.usf.edu](mailto:sjustice@cas.usf.edu) or her direct line is (813) 974-9149.

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| <b>July 10th or July 12th</b> | <b>Recognizing the Value of Input from Others</b> | <b>Location: SCA 202 Only</b> |
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**Part 1: 9:30-10:50am Participant Exchange of Progress and Issues**

Participants will have the opportunity to work within the group to review their drafts to organize sections more effectively, improve transitions, provide clarifying explanations, etc. Participants will have an opportunity to discuss their projects with other members of the group, both to mark successes and work on concerns.

(10-minute break & lunch arrives)

**Part 2: 11 –12:30pm There's Lots of Help & Expertise All Around: Panel of Experienced Colleagues**

This session will include a panel of colleagues who are successful researchers with extensive experience in obtaining external peer-reviewed funding. The panel will talk informally to workshop participants about experiences with the research process, ranging from proposal recommendations to suggestions about managing projects, students, budgets.

**12:30-1:15pm Video: NIH Grant Review Process -39 minutes (Optional)** Participants are invited to stay to watch a video of the grant review process produced by the National Institutes of Health.

*Assignment:* Continue to work on completing and refining your draft of the grant proposal. For next week's meeting on electronic submission, you will need a copy of your **Program Announcement** or RFP (see assignment for May 8<sup>th</sup> or May 10<sup>th</sup>) as well as an **external storage device** (i.e., thumb drive, memory stick, etc.).

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| <b>July 17th or July 19th</b> | <b>Grants.gov and the Electronic Submission Process</b> | <b>Location: SCA 222 (202)</b> |
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**Part 1 9:30 – 11:50 am Hands-on Training: Everything you need to know about Grants.gov–Really!**  
**Presented by Rebecca Puig (USF Director of Research Resources)**

This session will allow participants to prepare to submit their application through Grants.gov. Grants.gov allows organizations to electronically find and apply for more than \$400 billion in Federal grants. Grants.gov is THE single access point for over 1000 grant programs offered by all Federal grant-making agencies. As participants will see, navigation of Grants.gov is simple. We will use the colored tabs and/or links at the top of the screen to access primary sections of the site and the links to the left and below to access information on specific topics.

(10-minute break & lunch arrives)

**Part 2: 12:00 – 1:00pm Lunch and Informal Q&A**

*Assignment #1:* Submit your grant **proposal draft** electronically to [Sandra@cas.usf.edu](mailto:Sandra@cas.usf.edu) by Mon., **July 31<sup>st</sup>**.

*Assignment #2:* You will receive your **two review assignments** electronically by no later than Thurs., **August 3<sup>rd</sup>**.  
 You must then **submit your reviews** electronically to [Sandra@cas.usf.edu](mailto:Sandra@cas.usf.edu) by Thurs., **August 10<sup>th</sup>**.

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| <b>July 31st or August 2nd</b> | <b>Gearing Up to Submit Your Grant Proposal</b> | <b>Location: SCA 222 (202)</b> |
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**Part 1: 9:30-10:50am Internal Forms and Planning for the Panel** Participants will be guided through the process of completing the university's "Internal Form," obtaining necessary signatures, and providing needed assurances. The panel review process will also be discussed with actual sample reviews provided.

(10-minute break & lunch arrives)

**Part 2: 11:00-12:30pm Becoming a PI/ Principal Investigator Empowerment** (with *Priscilla Pope, Associate Vice President of the Division of Sponsored Research*) Participants will receive information about the processes and responsibilities involved in conducting funded research. Topics will include compliance issues, eligible and allowable costs, direct versus indirect or facility and administrative (F&A) costs, and unacceptable costing practices. Participants will learn about what happens after a proposal has been funded. Topics here will include negotiation of awards, getting a grant started, managing awards and utilizing available resources.

**12:30-1:00pm Open Session (optional)** Participants may use this time to ask questions of the workshop leaders.

*Assignment:* You will receive your **two review assignments** by no later than **August 3<sup>rd</sup>**. You must **submit your reviews** electronically to [Sandra@cas.usf.edu](mailto:Sandra@cas.usf.edu) by **August 10<sup>th</sup>**. Bring a copy of your reviews to the next session.

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| <b>August 14th or August 16th</b> | <b>Participating in a Mock Panel Review</b> | <b>Location: SCA 202 Only</b> |
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**9:30am - 12:30pm From Mock Review to the Real Thing** Participants will serve as both panel reviewers and reviewees in today's session. Participants will provide written anonymous reviews to other members of the group. A general discussion of observed strengths and weaknesses of proposals will ensue, with a focus on constructive recommendations. A mock panel will be conducted.

*(10-minute break & lunch during the mock review session)*

**12:30-1:00pm Open Session (optional)** Participants may use this time to ask specific questions of the workshop leaders, discuss the reviews of their proposals, etc.

**Assignment:** *Don't forget to submit your proposal to the funding agency!*

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**Special Workshop Sessions**

**Location: TBA**

Occasional special workshop sessions featuring a variety of guest speakers and outside experts from funding agencies will be planned during the summer and fall. We'll keep you posted.

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*Wishing you the best in all of your scholarly endeavors. Thanks for joining us!*