

Getting a Foundation to Fund Your Research

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- The search process
- Finding the right fit
- Establishing personal connections

Types of Funding

- Federal
- State
- Corporations
- Industry Associations
- Foundations
- Research Institutes
- Professional Associations & Societies

Search Mechanics

- Search independently using PIVOT
- Contact Adeline Gonzales to search via Foundation Directory Online

Private Foundations

- Private foundations are established to maintain or aid social, educational, religious, or other charitable activities serving the common welfare, primarily through the making of grants.
- Their endowment is usually donated by a single source, such as an individual, family, or corporation, which also defines the mission and the program of the foundation.

Corporate Foundations

- Corporate foundations are private foundations created by businesses and corporations. They are separate legal entities that maintain close ties with the parent company, and their giving usually reflects company interests.
- These foundations might be particularly useful for the translation of research results into commercial or otherwise practical use.

Community Foundations

- Committed to local, public benefit
- Established for philanthropic purposes
- Typically fund “things” rather than “ideas”
- Like to fully meet a local need

Foundations: Mission and Focus

- Always mission-based versus broad/basic science
- Mission often supports a specific purpose or set of purposes (e.g., disease-specific research, peace and security, literacy), sometimes targeting a limited geographic area
- Priorities will be mission-driven and clearly established, and most do not accept proposals outside of those priorities

Foundations: Funding

- **Contacts:** Large foundations will have numerous programs led by program officers and assistants; smaller foundations may not have full-time staff to even answer the telephone
- **Funding mechanisms:** often limited to basic proposals submitted in response to foundation funding priorities
- **Resources** are often limited and vary widely by size of foundation. It is common for smaller foundations to exclude certain costs (e.g., administrative costs, personnel salaries, major equipment, etc.)

Foundations

Advantages

- More likely to focus on emerging issues, new needs, populations not yet evolved into special interest groups
- Some make large grants
- Better source of funds for start-up or experimental projects
- Proposals are not as complex or lengthy
- Often more flexible to unique needs, circumstances and time frames
- Less likely to have bureaucratic requirements in grant administration
- Usually have fewer applicants
- Often better sources for more local needs

Disadvantages

- Average grant size is smaller
- Priorities can change rapidly, making continued support harder to predict
- Applicants have little influence on the decision-making process
- Some unwilling to pay all project costs
- Limited staff size lessens opportunities for preliminary discussions
- May not explain a rejection, making resubmissions difficult

Why should early-career faculty apply for this kind of funding?

- The smaller grant awards are usually sufficient for gathering pilot data
- A foundation award is another step on the path of independent investigation
- Awards earn you a track record as a responsible and responsive PI

Later Career Stages

- It might be time for career-development grants, from foundation such as Robert Wood Johnson, the Sloan Foundation, Pew.
- Foundations might offer a little more flexibility than a federal grant of similar prestige.

Finding the Right Fit

- Align with Mission/Purpose
- Align with career stage
- Do not apply where you do not belong

Establishing a personal connection

- Foundations fund who they know
- Get your work in front of foundation staff
- Invite them to programming
- Go where they are
- Find out what THEY want
- Elevator speech
- [Positioning](https://www.wiznet.com/oaklandmi/login.jsp)
(<https://www.wiznet.com/oaklandmi/login.jsp>)

Next time



Grant writing for foundations