# **How to Apply for External Funding Opportunities at the University of Oregon**

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[**LINK TO VIDEO**](https://uoregon.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=1fad96b7-b705-4404-aed0-b03001674cdb)

The Office for the Vice President for Research and Innovation, commonly called the OVPRI, welcomes you to the research enterprise at the University of Oregon.

Whether you are a faculty member, postdoctoral scholar or a graduate student, there are numerous opportunities for external funding to support your academic pursuits.

Funds are available in the form of grants, contracts, and industry agreements to support research costs such as personnel, travel, equipment, and more. Also, there are numerous residential and non-residential fellowships providing stipend support including faculty undertaking writing books and articles and graduate students drafting their dissertations or conducting research outside this institution.

In this video, we share our top ten tips for successfully submitting an application for external funding at the University of Oregon. Note that online links to the resources described here are in a companion document for this video.

## **Tip #1: Find Funding Opportunities**

How do you find funding opportunities appropriate for you?

First, we suggest you look at the [Pivot](https://research.uoregon.edu/plan/find-funding/external-funding-opportunities/pivot-funding-database) funding opportunities database, which contains thousands of awards and fellowships across the globe. The advantage of Pivot is that you can track opportunities and create saved searches. Any tracked opportunities that change or new opportunities that match your searches will appear in a weekly email sent to you. Pivot provides brief tutorials on how to use it, or you can contact [Research Development Services](https://research.uoregon.edu/about/administrative-units/research-development-services) for one-on-one or group training.

Next, review the OVPRI funding opportunities newsletter that is sent weekly to your email inbox. It contains links to requests for proposals from federal funders, private foundations, and more. You can also find federal funding opportunities at the government website Grants.gov.

You should also check the websites of the professional societies and associations you belong to because they often provide funding for research, conference travel, and more.

Finally, ask peers in your discipline about any opportunities they know of that might be right for you.

## **Tip #2: Understand Different Kinds of Funding Opportunities**

Some external funding opportunities must be applied for by you as an individual, such as fellowships and travel awards where the funds are directly distributed to you. Note that you are responsible for the tax implications of such awards. However, some faculty and students may choose to run these funds, if allowed by the funding agency, through the university. Hence, applicants will follow internal processes prior to submission and after the award is made.

Other external grants require the University of Oregon or the University of Oregon Foundation to be the applicant. This means that the grant is awarded to the institution or foundation, and therefore, must run through the university’s internal process for applying, compliance, and spending.

It is important to know from the outset the nature of the funding opportunity you intend to apply for so that you can successfully receive an award if funded. The language in the funding opportunity will indicate whether the individual or the institution receives the funding.

## **Tip #3: Understand the Nature of Limited Submissions**

Sometimes an external funder will limit the number of submissions allowed in a grant cycle for individuals or the university. These are called [limited submission opportunities](https://research.uoregon.edu/plan/find-funding/external-funding-opportunities/limited-submissions).

These opportunities require faculty and students to put forward a [Notice of Intent to Submit](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/cfecb40078e84cde8757a4db4d28ae0b) so that the institution may gauge interest in the funding program. If there is more interest in the opportunity than the number of applications allowed, the OVPRI will coordinate an internal competition to determine who may move forward with an application.

Limited submission opportunities are listed in the OVPRI funding opportunities newsletter. If you know of a limited submission opportunity that has not been featured in that publication, please contact [Research Development Services](https://research.uoregon.edu/about/administrative-units/research-development-services).

## **Tip #4: Know that Institutional Support is Available**

Some external funding mechanisms require what is called cost share which is sometimes called matching funds. Cost share is when a quantified portion of costs of an award are not paid by the external funder but paid using university resources. Faculty members who need cost share support in order to submit an application may apply for it through the OVPRI.

Faculty may find that the external fellowship they wish to apply for does not provide enough funding to replace their salary and benefits. The [university may supplement an award](https://policies.uoregon.edu/policy/by/1/0201-personnel/fellowships-payment-uncompensated-salary-and-other-personnel-expenses-ope) to compensate the employee at their full salary if it meets various guidelines for additional support. Contact your grant administrator to find out more about this program.

In a similar vein, some graduate students will find that external fellowships do not cover the tuition, fees, and health insurance that they rely upon to support their education. Fortunately, the university will cover the differential for [preselected highly prestigious fellowships](https://research.uoregon.edu/plan/plan-project/proposal-development/institutional-support/external-fellowships). Contact the [Research Development Services](https://research.uoregon.edu/about/administrative-units/research-development-services) to find out more.

Note that any potential fellowship recipient who intends to receive the aforementioned institutional support must notify appropriate university officials before submitting an application and must run the award through the University of Oregon.

## **Tip #5: Know Who to Contact for Help**

Staff at the University of Oregon play distinct roles in supporting your efforts to seek external grants.

First, you need to introduce yourself to the person who supports grant submissions for your unit. The title for this position varies by school and college. This [Grant Administrator](https://research.uoregon.edu/apply/apply-external-funding/prepare-your-application/roles-responsibilities-proposal-preparation-submission) supports grant-budget development, navigation of the university’s internal grant proposal system, and post-award administration. Check with your department office manager if you don’t know who serves in that role.

Second, you and your Grant Administrator will be working with Sponsored Project Services, the central grant administration office at the university. A [Sponsored Project Administrator](https://research.uoregon.edu/apply/apply-external-funding/prepare-your-application/roles-responsibilities-proposal-preparation-submission) or SPA will help you set up any necessary IDs for funder portals, review and approve your application budget, audit your application to ensure it is in full compliance with funder and university guidelines, and submit the application to federal funders and some private foundations. Third, you have the option to work with [Research Development Services](https://research.uoregon.edu/plan/plan-project/proposal-development) staff. They can provide a proposal checklist and templates customized for grant solicitation, boilerplate language for certain grant documents, and in-depth critique and assessment of the components of your application. Faculty may want to take advantage of the OVPRI external reviewer program, which is run through Research Development Services. This program provides funds to hire an external content expert in your field to review your draft proposal and give feedback specific to your disciplinary content. This office can be reached at [rds@uoregon.edu](mailto:rds@uoregon.edu).

Fourth, the staff in [Foundation Relations](https://research.uoregon.edu/plan/find-funding/external-funding-opportunities/proposals-private-foundations-and-corporations) provide many of the same services that Research Development Services provides, but for applications to private foundations. In fact, this office must be consulted on proposal development for a specific pre-identified list of foundations. Faculty and students interested in submitting a proposal to such an entity should contact Foundation Relations at [foundationrelations@uoregon.edu](mailto:foundationrelations@uoregon.edu).

Fifth, the OVPRI offers a [suite of on-demand training videos](https://research.uoregon.edu/plan/research-and-innovation-support-and-education-rise) covering such topics as animal research, human subjects research, intellectual property, responsible conduct of research, and finding and applying for external funding. These videos can be accessed at https://research.uoregon.edu.

Finally, the UO libraries are staffed with librarians who can assist you with performing research by subject. The libraries also provide online tools for developing bibliographies. If you need help finding data storage options and crafting a data management plan, which are sometimes required by funders, the libraries’ Data Services department also has online tools and staff to help you. These services can be accessed at <https://library.uoregon.edu/>.

## **Tip #6: Understand Your Role in the Proposal Development**

Now you know the distinct roles of your proposal development team. But what is your role in proposal development?

Well, you write most if not all elements of the proposal. Ideally, you will solicit feedback on drafts from colleagues, mentors, advisors, and/or Research Development Services.

At times you are responsible for submitting the proposal to the funder, while at other times the university must do so. Contact your Grant Administrator to find out whether you or the university is responsible for your submission.

## **Tip #7: Request Principal Investigator Status**

If the grant program you are applying to must run through the university, you will need to have what is called Principal Investigator or PI status.

A PI at this university is an individual who leads externally sponsored projects and who has both sufficient authority and the appropriate accountability to carry out all aspects of the project. Per federal rules, the university must define who has automatic PI status.

Tenure-track and tenured faculty have automatic PI status as well as some research professors and research associates. Graduate students and post-doctoral scholars have automatic PI status if they are applying for an award that is specifically targeted to them.

Please review [UO guidance](https://research.uoregon.edu/plan/plan-project/proposal-development/principal-investigator-responsibilities-and-eligibility-requirements) for who does and who does not have automatic PI status. If you do not have it automatically, you may submit an exemption request via a form located on our website. Your Grant Administrator can assist you with this. Your Department Head will need to review and approve your request before OVPRI staff may do so. Note that requests are not guaranteed automatic approval, but most are approved.

## **Tip #8: Create a Record in the Electronic Proposal Clearance System**

When applying for external funding that will come to the UO, proposals must be reviewed and approved by Sponsored Projects Services using the Electronic Proposal Clearance System or EPCS. To be enrolled in the system, you will need to [request access to EPCS](mailto:RSCH.SPS.Pre-Award@uoregon.edu) and complete Principal Investigator certifications. Next either you or your Grant Administrator will create a record for the proposal.

Please keep in mind that:

* Faculty and staff are not authorized to submit proposals for the university without Sponsored Project Services review and approval.
* The final proposal budget, if applicable, must be uploaded to EPCS seven business days before the application deadline.
* The EPCS record must be completed, reviewed, and approved at least three business days before that deadline.

## **Tip #9: Know What Happens After Submission**

The processing and review for external grants can take as long as six months to a year though a few funders have shorter turnarounds. This means you really must plan ahead so that the funds come in when you are ready to engage in your funded project.

If possible, you should apply to other grant programs in case your first proposal is not funded. Some funding organizations provide reviewer remarks to applicants, which are particularly useful if your proposal has been declined. You can incorporate this feedback when you resubmit your application.

Note that proposals are more likely to be funded on resubmission than at the outset. So don’t feel defeated nor give up. Resubmitting your proposal is normal and often increases your chance of funding. Remember, you have the support of numerous staff across the university who are committed to your success.

## **Tip #10: Know the Next Steps if Funding is Awarded**

If you are funded, what do you do next?

All applicants must review the university’s [Financial Conflict of Interest policy](https://research.uoregon.edu/manage/integrity-compliance/conflict-interest-and-commitment) and submit any potential conflicts for review and resolution.

All applicants will also work with their Grant Administrator to spend the funds in compliance with external funder rules and university guidance.

If you proposed including [human subjects research](https://research.uoregon.edu/manage/research-integrity-compliance/human-subjects-research), you will need to submit your research plan, consent form and other materials to the Institutional Review Board for review. If changes are needed to ensure your study meets regulations or other requirements, you will receive feedback. When the study is determined to meet criteria for approval, you will receive an approval letter.

If you proposed including vertebrate animal research, you will need to submit your research plan and animal use protocol to [Animal Welfare Services](https://aws.uoregon.edu/), who submit it to the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee for review, which will either result in feedback for improvement or an approval.

Some funded applications require students, postdocs, and / or faculty to have training in [Responsible Conduct of Research](https://research.uoregon.edu/manage/research-integrity-compliance/responsible-conduct-research). This can be provided through OVPRI’s Research Compliances Services but may also be provided by your academic department.

If the applicant’s project includes a collaboration with a private company or may lead to an invention, patent, copyright, or trademark, you will need to contact [Innovation Partners](https://research.uoregon.edu/about/administrative-units/industry-innovation-and-translation) for guidance.

During the course of research, faculty may undertake international activities that fall under [export controls](https://research.uoregon.edu/manage/export-controls), which are federal laws restricting the transfer of goods and technology to and performance of services of persons and entities outside the United States. Note that most research at the university does not fall under export control regulations.

Finally, in addition to undertaking the proposed project, it is the responsibility of the PI to submit interim and final reports as required by the funding agency.

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And we have now reached the end of our training. Thank you for watching this informational video about applying for external grants at the University of Oregon. An annotated list of weblinks provided along with this video should help you access the resources mentioned here. If you are struggling with where to start seeking support, contact [Research Development Services](https://research.uoregon.edu/about/administrative-units/research-development-services).