

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO**  
**OFFICE OF FOUNDATION AND CORPORATE RELATIONS**

Physical Sciences Mentoring Committee Symposium:

*Research Support from Foundations and Corporation*

February 21, 2008

***Types of Foundation Funding:***

**Competitive Fellowships**

- Offered by a number of foundations, usually on a yearly basis.
- Some are for junior faculty only, with eligibility limited to individuals who are within a few (~5) years of receipt of PhD
- Nominees(s) for each program are determined through an internal selection process by the Provost's Office.
- The Foundation Relations Office staffs the internal process and assists in preparation of proposals.

For a list of competitive fellowships, including those for senior researchers, go to:

<http://foundationrelations.uchicago.edu/intranet/cfp/limitedlist.php>.

**Research Grants to Individuals or Small Groups**

- These types of grants may be more difficult to identify because, unlike those from federal agencies, they are not solicited by the foundation through an RFP or formal invitation and are often not defined by a specific discipline.
- The Foundation Relations Office can provide information from a variety of research resources—including subscription databases of funders and grants—to help identify prospective foundation supporters and can help in preparing proposals geared specifically to private funders.
- Associations and societies (e.g., Amer. Chem. Soc, National Geographic Soc.) are often more like federal agencies, with well-publicized proposal requirements and deadlines. For a list of groups where PSD faculty have had success, contact Jennifer Woods: [jqwoods@uchicago.edu](mailto:jqwoods@uchicago.edu)

**Large-scale and Special Opportunities**

- These are for collaborative research programs (multi-million dollar and often cross-divisional projects) or construction projects.
- They are typically directed to priorities set by the dean, provost or president and involve those campus leaders in discussions and negotiations.

***What is distinctive about foundation funding:***

- Foundation funding should be sought *strategically*.
- Foundations can provide seed money to launch novel, high-risk research that would likely not be eligible for federal funding (uncertain outcome//too risky, or translational between fields) or to support specific programmatic interests (e.g., underrepresented groups in science, science education).
- Foundations are *not* good sources of mega-scale or long-term funding—they want to support *new* initiatives, not provide incremental or operating support for ongoing efforts. They often require evidence of institutional support and usually pay little or no indirect costs.
- Approaches to foundations should be coordinated and sequenced even if they are not strictly limited-opportunity programs; multiple awards to the same institution in the same grant cycle are rare.
- Foundations are generally not good sources of funds for graduate student programs overall (but it is fine to include student support as part of a particular research effort).