

**October 16, 2023**  
**Geog/Anthro 7901**

Ann Whitmer  
Assistant Dean  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
[awhitme@lsu.edu](mailto:awhitme@lsu.edu)

## **Grants**

A grant can be said to be...

Support from a specific agency for a specific project, with specific activities, for a specific amount of money, and for a specific period of time.

Agency is a generic term to refer to whoever is giving the money. Some examples include:

- American Council of Learned Societies
- National Science Foundation
- Wenner Gren Foundation
- American Association of University Women

Projects or activities can include, but are not limited to:

- Dissertation writing
- Research projects
- Travel
  - Fieldwork or archival sites
  - Conferences
- Workshops
- Exhibitions
- Outreach or educational programs

Financial support can be such costs as:

- Salary or stipends for the person doing the activities
- Travel costs
- Fieldwork costs
- Library or copying fees
- Books, lab, or other supplies
- Research assistants
- Technical support such as transcription or scanning or web site services
- Stipends for other participants such as speakers or workshop attendees

Why

- Financial benefits
- Facilitate research
- Further your career

## SOURCES FOR FINDING OUT ABOUT DIFFERENT PROGRAMS

Word of Mouth: Faculty, Fellow Graduate Students, Faculty advisor, etc.

Posted Notices, Newsletters, etc.

Electronic databases, and search engines

LSU Offices: Graduate School, Office of International Programs, Office of Sponsored Programs, Office of Research and Economic Development

AAG information [here](#)

AAA information [here](#)

LSU's **Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP)** has links to various federal and private agencies and other resource [here](#) and some templates [here](#).

LSU's **Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED)** has a searchable database ([SPIN](#)) and a newsletter that you should be able to sign up for [here](#).

## SELECTED AGENCIES AND ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

### [Graduate School Travel Awards](#)

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences will currently contribute an additional money toward any of these awards that you receive. See [here](#):

### [American Council of Learned Societies](#)

### [Social Science Research Council](#)

### [National Institute of Justice Graduate Research Fellowship program](#)

National Science Foundation –

#### [Social and Economic Sciences](#)

#### [Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences](#) (includes both Geography and Anthropology)

#### [Graduate Student Information](#)

#### [Graduate Research Fellowships](#)

### [Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research](#)

### [American Association of University Women](#)

### [Fulbright Hays](#)

Other [tips](#)

## Typical Components of Proposals

### 1. Abstract/ Project summary

- This is usually a self-contained description of your project, and is often the first thing read by reviewers.
- The specific program instructions may indicate length (typically no more than one page, but could have word limits), components to address (for ex., intellectual merit, broader impacts), language (for ex., whether to make it accessible to a general audience), or other specifics.

### 2. Narrative

- This is the main component of your proposal. In general, this is a statement of what you want to do, why it is important, and how you are going to do it.
- The guidelines will dictate the page limits, and specific components. But these could include:
  - Problem statement
  - Goals and objectives
  - Background and significance
  - Methods and plan
  - Outcome, evaluation, dissemination
  - Personnel and qualifications
  - Resources

### 3. Budget

- This is where you describe what you need the money for. There is often a form and a budget justification i.e. detailed description of the costs and why that is important to the project.
- The program will have limits and restrictions; the university may have other limits and restrictions.

### 4. Biographical Sketch

- This will be your vita information, but usually in a specific format and may have page lengths.

### 5. Forms

- These take longer than you think to complete. They could include cover page information (name, address, etc.), resources information (for ex., available equipment), other grants for this project, data management information, and human subjects information.

### **A few tips for writing proposals and getting grants:**

1. Have a well-thought out project (obvious, but important none-the-less).
2. Read and follow whatever directions are given, and answer/address any and all questions that are posed. You would be surprised how many people don't do this and then are curious as to why they didn't get the grant.
3. Have someone else read your proposal. Sometimes other readers, especially those that have been successful in their own grant-writing attempts, can identify parts of your proposal that could be strengthened or are not clear.
4. If possible, find a copy of a successful proposal to the same funding agency to use as a guide or template.
5. Keep in mind the audience for your proposal. Are they specialists in the subject area? Are they a general group of scholars who may or may not understand what you are doing? Are they local administrators who may know some things about your situation but not others?
6. Keep in mind the goals and priorities of the funding agency. It is their money and they can do what they want with it. Accordingly, you will need to make sure that your project fits the kinds of things they want to fund. On the one hand, you should present your project in a way that reflects their goals. On the other hand, if you are attempting to fund an elephant do not claim it is a duck. Reviewers will clearly see the elephant, not the duck.
7. Pay attention to the criteria that the agency uses to evaluate proposals, i.e. the grading scale. Often, those criteria are published as part of the proposal guidelines or are available elsewhere. For example, NSF asks you to address the "Broader Impacts" and "Intellectual Merits" of the proposal. NEH wants to know a) The intellectual significance of the proposed project; b) The quality or promise of quality of the applicant's work; c) The quality of the conception, definition, organization, and description of the project and the applicant's clarity of expression; d) The feasibility of the proposed plan of work, including, when appropriate, the soundness of the dissemination and access plans; and e) The likelihood that the applicant will complete the project.
8. Keep in mind that the reviewers may have a number of good proposals to read, so you want to make it as easy on them as possible without compromising quality. So, in general, you'll want to be clear, straightforward, and concise, and avoid discipline-specific jargon. Also, you might consider using subject headings (e.g. "Goals," "Outcomes," "Impact," etc.) so the reviewers can easily find the appropriate parts of the proposal, and you probably should not use little tiny fonts just to get the document within the page limits.
9. Allow enough time for the various forms and administrative components. Most grants are submitted on-line, so you may need to register with their system, and there may be more instructions found only once you log in. For grants that are awarded to institutions, they will need to give their approval prior to submission. LSU, for example, requires you to submit for approval seven working days before the deadline.

10. Last, but not least, try again. Some agencies expect to fund you on the second go-around. Often you can obtain the comments from reviewers which can be used to strengthen future submissions.