Common Funding Sources

# Learn processes and tips specific to agencies such as NSF, IMLS, and the Gates Foundation

While there are countless sources from which to seek funding, a few agencies are likely to pop up as frequent funders. Here is a little extra guidance for proposals to these agencies.

# Writing a proposal for the National Science Foundation (NSF)

The guidance provided by NSF for proposals can be overwhelming. Luckily, the basic process is simpler than it seems at first glance and there are ample resources available online to help you with the details.

# Creating a NSF Proposal:

* The first step is to create a proposal in the online system used by NSF, FastLane. You will complete all of your proposal parts through the FastLane portal. To obtain a username and password for FastLane, contact the Financial Coordinator. It is important to note that there are several types of submissions for NSF grants that you might choose to make at various times, but here we are focused on the standard proposal.
* Once you have created a proposal in FastLane, you can choose to compose the pieces of your proposal in FastLane, or to compose them elsewhere and upload them to the correct sections.
* FastLane will generate a cover letter for your proposal. For specific information needed for the cover letter, consult with the Financial Coordinator.
* The project summary is a one-page description of your project. FastLane offers separate boxes to ensure that you provide an overview and address the intellectual merit and broader impacts of your project.
* The project description is the meat of your proposal. The details of your project description depend greatly on your project, but lots of good advice and sample proposals can be found using the links resources listed at the end of this section.
* The biographical sketch is an opportunity for you to highlight your expertise and experience. It should be about two pages and the NSF provides some specific guidelines with regard to what it should include.
* The budget should be completed with the Financial Coordinator. You may also need to consult with the Financial Coordinator regarding facilities and equipment usage as it pertains to your project description and budget.
* You will need to create a data management plan. Check out some [sample data management plans](http://www.dataone.org/data-management-planning).
* If you will have post-docs working on your project, you will need a mentoring plan. Here’s a [sample](http://www.faseb.org/portals/2/pdfs/opa/sample_mentoring_plans.pdf) from the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology.
* The list of references is a separate required section and another opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge with a thorough and precise list.
* As of January 22, 2016, you will be required to separately list any collaborators you have worked with in the past five years.
* If you are submitting a proposal in collaboration with another institution, work with the Financial Coordinator to link your proposals.
* Note that you can upload supplementary documentation. This area can be used to demonstrate IRB approval, for letters of support from collaborators, or for any other necessary documentation.
* Here is some boilerplate language for budget justification.

[Current and Present Support -Template](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B0nJUfX9G3GUYWVhb1VoS2tNNjA)
[NSF Bio Template](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B0nJUfX9G3GUVmUyamx5QWY3SDg)
[Facilities Equipment and Other Resources - FY2016](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B0nJUfX9G3GURW9YcmkzZTYxd2M)

* When you are ready to submit your proposal, it must be routed through ORA. When you are ready to submit your proposal, you do so by allowing "View," "Edit," and "Submit" access in FastLane. The ORA Contracts Administrator will be alerted with the "Submit" function is allowed. If you have any questions, contact the Financial Coordinator.

# Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS):

IMLS offers useful guidance regarding research funding on their official site. Check it out [here](https://www.imls.gov/grants) and some samples of successful applications [here](https://www.imls.gov/grants/apply-grant/sample-applications).

# The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation:

The Gates Foundation offers advice for applying for grants [here](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/How-We-Work). For further information, check out [this article](http://borgenproject.org/typical-gates-foundation-grant/) about the Gates Foundation process.