

Analysis Comments #5: Grant information provided to me by SP's staff is...

Comments: Excellent support; SP helps interpret complicated grant requirements; fabulous assistance and services.

Comments: Do not usually apply to my area. It is only helpful to a degree, because I usually don't see opportunities specifically in my field. I have not found grant information helpful. Nice to receive although it seems like it is focused on faculty rather than staff opportunities.

SP Response: Over the next six months, Sponsored Programs is meeting with department chairs to update our knowledge of the department goals and faculty members research interests. SP recently purchased access to a new database capable of improved searches for over 4.6 million grants - now analyzed and categorized, representing granting activity since year 2000 for all 990-PF reporting foundations; valuable information for over 100,000 US foundations including detailed giving trends and patterns for more than 60,000 grant-making foundations; and over 613,000 searchable foundation 990-PFs. SVSU faculty and staff are welcome to meet with SP to discuss their areas of interest.

Comments: Sometimes too late to meet deadlines.

SP Response: The federal postings are purposeful in the timeline offered to reduce the number of applications received. SP considers a six week window from guideline posting to grant due date as typical. Since many federal grants are posted annually, faculty may choose to prepare for next year's opportunity if the deadline does not fit your schedule.

Analysis Comment #9: List any additional workshops you would like to see offered.

Based on the responses received, one hour workshops will be offered summer 2009, fall 2009, winter 2010, and spring 2010 terms. Check the SVSU workshop website for date, times, and location, www.svsu.edu/workshops Please sign up.

Summer 09 workshops...

- Funding for stimulus opportunities state and federal and FY10 funding opportunities
- Grant Process at SVSU – who does what, who is available to help you

Fall 09 workshops...

- The Michigan Initiative for Innovation and Entrepreneurship workshop – three separate programs, due November and March yearly
- **Identifying Funding Sources for Faculty Research and Projects:** Learn to find funding through Foundations Online, Grant Resource Center, Grants.gov, and SVSU funding sources
- Preparing Grant Budgets
- Program specific grant workshops such as: NSF, NIH, Fulbright, SBIR

Winter 10 Workshops

- Long-term strategic planning: Learn how the yearly assessment report from my department determines long-term strategic planning. Learn how to leverage community support.
- Fundamentals of intellectual property: How does IP relate to curricula for technology entrepreneurship?
- Final reports of funded projects: Learn about best practice
- Fulbright Program: Learn how your department can apply to bring a Fulbright Scholar to SVSU? Learn about the application process to become a Fulbright Scholar and SVSU policies that support your award.

Spring 10 Workshops

- Creative approaches to obtain funding
 - The Grant Writer's Toolbox: useful resources
 - AP staff only: learn how to write grants for conferences/training
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Comments:

Many times AP staff is critical to the success of university awarded grants. They are professionals who would benefit the university by utilizing their Project Management expertise in addition to the sponsored programs office and accounting. Are these workshops available to professionals on the AP Staff or just faculty?

This is my first time seeing these offerings and I've been around here for two full years. Perhaps this should be advertised to more than university faculty and go beyond the directors.

SP Response:

The workshops have always been posted and available to the entire University community, and as such administrative professionals are welcome to attend the workshops; please check the website and sign up at www.svsu.edu/workshops

The workshops are also listed on the SP webpage at www.svsu.edu/sponsoredprograms then scroll down and click on "workshops."

Analysis Comments #11: The SP website is...

Comment: Clarify in large font that no grants are given for the current academic year.

SP Response: Done. See www.svsu.edu/sponsoredprograms then click on Internal Grants (left side)

Comments: Internal grant submission processes need revision. The paper Unit Committee proposal was easier for the applicant. The current online method is easier for those who review it. The online application process was so bad I stopped filling out the form and went on to something else.

SP Response: SP held a faculty focus group in January 2009 to identify the troubling points in the submission process, and worked with the programmer to make the changes suggested. We also clarified the directions for the process. As always, let us know how this process can be improved.

Comment: Organize the Quick Links section into categories. Or group the links rather than having a long list.

SP Response: SP is condensing pages, grouping information, and generally deleting redundant information to make the page user friendly.

Comment: Needs clearer idea of who does what with regards to grant mgmt here at SVSU.

SP Response:

Because agencies/foundations award grants to SVSU, not individuals, there are multiple offices that are available to assist you and are invaluable to the Project Director. The Project Director is responsible for the grant/project as submitted; however, the funding agency assumes that you depend on the University systems in place, i.e. SP, Accounting, Purchasing, and Conference Bureau, to carry out the project and meet the compliance regulations.

Once awarded the contract terms are reviewed by Sponsored Programs, the Vice President for Administration, and, if needed, legal counsel. In most cases supporting offices fulfill federal and state compliance regulations in the award contract that SVSU signed in order to access the funding that you need to carry out your project. Other times there are additional “rules” that the project director must follow in carrying out the project.

Funding agencies recognize this valuable network of support that the project director uses. To that end, SP sets up quarterly meeting with each project director to a) review the grant terms and the relevant compliance regulations; b) ensure the budget is accurately reflecting the items charged and that the items are coded accurately; and c) ensure the project director is following SVSU’s standard business operating procedures.

Analysis Comments #12: I view SP as a user-friendly resource.

Comments: They are extremely helpful! I have been hired to work on an existing grant. They are extremely knowledgeable about the requirements of a funding source; however, I have not witnessed their help with doing research. If I know what I want, the office is very helpful; if I just have a general idea, they are less helpful.

Comment: Their attitude is they are in charge rather than providing support for projects.

SP Response: The Project Director is in charge of the grant as written; however, the University charges SP to meet the federal and state training regulations as required by the awarding offices. If SP did not provide this training, auditors would list this as a finding and report this lack of oversight to funding agencies.

Comment: Sponsored Programs people seem to be interested in large grants that help them look good.

SP Response: The data do not support this perception. In FY 2008 SP assisted with the writing and/or submission of 78 grants. Data show that 49% (38) of the grants in FY 2008 requested \$20,000 or less; 22% (17) grants were above \$100,000; 29% (23) applications requested amounts from \$21,000-\$100,000. The amount of the request is dependent on the scope of work and faculty interest.

Analysis Comments #13: Ideas to improve effectiveness in meeting grant writing/implementation needs.

Comments:

No suggestions: staff is helpful, available, and reliable. Staff has done workshops for graduate education classes I have taught as an adjunct and has been excellent. Continue doing what you are currently doing. You are a fun group to work with! I have been very pleased with their support and services. I'm very pleased with the professional assistance that I have received from this office! I like the new location of the SP office. It's more visible than before and thus seems more accessible. The staff in Sponsored Programs is very helpful and efficient. Most of all, the key people are extremely knowledgeable.

Comments:

More coordinated consulting opportunities profiles of faculty backgrounds.

I wonder how hard it would be to establish a database of expertise that could be used for faculty and staff to network with potential collaborators on campus. That's just an idea--you are doing a great job.

Become the leader in getting the word out and matchmaking people within the university to work together so that higher levels of funding can flow into the university. You've already gone from "Good to Great" now adding more resources would get the office to be superb.

Allow more inter-disciplinary teams so that faculty researchers are not staying in their silos, which cause the "best" of the "best" to partner with others [outside the institution] and eventually leave the university.

Have a list of "reviewers" who are willing to look at a proposal and offer critique.

SP Response:

A barrier to this matchmaking is an electronic expertise database that would provide not just matchmaking capabilities, but a valued service to faculty. Last month a colleague in California told me about a system developed for university faculty, called Digital Measures, that would help a faculty member keep their vita electronically and at the same time enroll in this expert database, allowing for match-making. I'm looking into the cost for this system.

The University supports interdisciplinary teams. At the same time it is incumbent for all faculty to network at SVSU to form professional alliances and cross-discipline projects that benefit the faculty members. To facilitate networking, SP will host an event that is similar to speed dating – called **research dating**. The goal is to attend this one hour event to speed date to learn about research interests of other colleagues. Look for this event October yearly.

You know your discipline best; ask your colleagues to read your proposal and give you critical feedback.

Comment: Offer more resources about final report writing that have lead to additional funds being granted to the university, in other words best practices approach.

SP Response: Many times the report format for final projects is required by the funder. In the absence of these requirements/guidelines, SP will hold a workshop focused solely on the best practice of final reports.

Comment: I need more help on specifying program evaluation for grant applications.

SP Response: SP can provide you with names of evaluators who can assist you in writing the evaluation section of your grant application.

Comment: Find out what SP database and resource needs are that will allow others the same level of access.

Identify sources of support for main stream humanities disciplines. More tailored grant information specific to my research programs.

How to obtain funds from State of Michigan.

SP Response: SP and the Foundation's office jointly pay to purchase user ids for Foundation Online database. Unfortunately the terms of the agreement prevent us from sharing those passwords. However if you make an appointment with SP, we will give you access in our office and teach you how to use the database.

SP will assist you in finding funds to support main stream humanities disciplines projects. Make an appointment with SP.

The State of Michigan has few programs that are state funded due to the state of the economy in Michigan; however, the State of Michigan does issue calls for proposals with federally appropriated funds, i.e. Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA); Michigan Department of Education.

Comment:

Send a note/email/phone call to new faculty/staff to introduce office and share information on the services the office offers and ask what they (faculty/staff) might be interested in looking for grants on?

Perhaps send special notices that would impact the department or division they work in -- meet annually with an update of the potential use your department could impact the success of their operation.

Perhaps [offer] discipline-specific workshops/brown-bag lunch groups.

Variety of times for workshops and the whole university needs help on websites and ease of finding things.

SP Response:

SP orients new faculty at the January workshop yearly. You are always welcome to call to make an appointment to tell us of your research interests.

SP will be enhancing the workshops we offer based on the suggestions from faculty and staff to this year's survey. Check www.svsu.edu/workshops.

SP is meeting with every department chair for a one-on-one interview to gather information on how external funding can strengthen your department.

Comment: Providing some grant proposals that were recently awarded, if possible.

SP Response: If a grant receives federal funding, that application is available through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). If you would like a particular proposal, please let SP know. We will issue the FOIA letter for you.

SP has three notebooks on file of funded applications from different agencies; all application written by SVSU employees are available for your review. Let us know your interests.

Comment: Providing researchers with a one portal stop that contains all the information (including contacts) necessary for implementing a grant project. Too much of my time is spent finding the responsible person/office necessary for administering the project. In addition, I often receive conflicting advice on how to proceed. A website that organizes this information would be invaluable.

SP Response: SP already provide a grants manual with pre award and post award information. This same information is posted to our website called Project Management. Please stop in for a “tour” or visit www.svsu.edu/sponsoredprograms/pages/project-management.html

Comment: A one-on-one interview with me would give me an awareness of whether or not my ideas are eligible for any of the offered programs. Such reassurance might stimulate me into applying, or it might guide me toward working for a grant if I felt it was worthwhile.

SP Response: Please call to make an appointment, 964-4295.

Comment:

Encouraging long-term strategic thinking, so we don't scramble (reinventing the wheel) each time we see a grant opportunity publicized.

Have a strategic understanding of the role of research in each school.

SP Response:

Long-term strategic thinking is defined by the faculty members who reference their own long-term research plan, and departments who reference their assessment plan for guidance in long-term strategic planning. Institutional grants always reference the SVSU Strategic Plan which sets the long-term strategic thinking for this office. See <http://www.svsu.edu/president/pages/strategic-plan-2008-2011.html> for reference.

The role of research is determined by the faculty member who is applying for external funding.

Comment: Honesty. Our signatures were removed from a completed grant before it was submitted.

SP Response: Per agency requirements, only one point of contact is allowed. The Project Director for the grant is the person who works with SP to submit the grant application and agrees to the submission terms. If a team of faculty/staff submitted the grant, and it is funded, the SVSU internal grant announcements will include all team member names. Final reports will include all team member names.

Comment: Make sure you understand my (faculty) timeline.

SP Response: At the initial meeting to decide if the grant posting is a good opportunity for you, SP will clearly explain when the grant application is due and how much time is needed for internal review.

Comment: See themselves [SP] in a supporting rather than dominating role.

SP Response:

SP is a pre-award and post award office, which includes compliance training. If a project director is not familiar with University procedures, starting a project will take time as you learn the appropriate compliance regulations. SP will assist you with that process and is responsible for ensuring that you understand how the regulations relate to you everyday work carrying out the scope of work described in the grant.

SP is responsible for understanding the terms of the funding announcement and is charged with explaining the terms to the Project Director. SP is responsible for the University compliance training and uses the JIT (just-in-time) model for training at the quarterly meeting with each funded project director to ensure the project director is carrying out the grant according to the approved scope of work, and uses approved University procedures, i.e. bids, purchased services, contractual work, hiring students.

Analysis Comment #14: Grant Financial Reports provided to me by Grant Accounting are...

Comment:

One for an international project was inaccurate, showing \$\$\$ in account long after it had been spent.

I often found wrong things posted to the wrong accounts.

SP Response:

XMMI access (allows access to account detail as needed) is available to the account manager and supervisor. If XMMI access is not desired, the manager and supervisor will receive an XMMR report from Jane Anderson in the Controller's Office by the Wednesday following the first full week of each month with the prior month's activity detail.

Grant Accounting prepares summary expenditure reports in Excel for all federal accounts on a monthly basis and for any other external grant account based on requests from the project director. The summary expenditure reports differ from XMMI access or XMMR reports in that they show the award amount less current expenditures versus total revenue received less expenditures. Because of this, project directors cannot use the balance in the general ledger account in determining funds remaining. In many cases the general ledger shows a deficit balance since many of our grants are on a reimbursement basis requiring expenditure of funds before receiving any revenue.

Grant Accounting works to have summary expenditure reports out by the 20th of each month. We ask that project managers review the detail to ensure that all expenditures are valid and properly classified by budget category on the summary expenditure report since this is necessary for reporting and proper tracking by line item throughout the grant period. Final reporting budget categories are generally used for the summary expenditure reports, but we are able to track expenditures based on detailed budget line items at the request of the project director. Since these reports are done manually each month we are able to customize them in any way that is helpful for the project director. Any questions or concerns should be discussed with Grant Accounting for proper resolution.

Comment:

I would appreciate more frequent updates.

There needs to be more work in this area because it appears to not be a priority with the University. Have been slow in getting these to me.

SP Response: Grant Accounting has recently added a 3rd staff member to help with the growing volume of grants at the University.

Analysis Comment #15: Quarterly progress meetings for funded projects facilitated by SP and Grant Accounting staff are...

Comments: There needs to be follow up; we discuss things in the meeting and then not much happens.

SP Response: Grant Accounting staff will bring source documentation for general ledger transactions to review with the project director at quarterly meetings. The purpose of this is to ensure items are valid expenditures, properly documented, supporting grant objectives, and allowable. These meetings are also a good time to discuss upcoming expenditures and their compliance with grant terms.

Analysis Comment #16: Supported by SP & Grant Accounting when questions about policies of the agencies associated with sponsored research arise?

Comment:

Depending on how intimate they are with the details, sometimes their "audit" hats limit the capabilities of the outcomes. However it's good to have checks and balances.

Very helpful, though sometimes belated (e.g., this item you budgeted won't work).

SP Response: Grant Accounting staff members are able to help project directors with various University and granting agency policy questions. Due to the variety of funding agencies we work with some research may be necessary to provide accurate information. It is important to remember that just because something has been approved in a grant budget doesn't mean it is allowable. Granting agencies have been known to disallow costs in the approved budget. Therefore, it is very important for project directors to be familiar with specific grant guidelines as well as federal circulars if applicable. Grant Accounting is able to help with questions or concerns and every attempt is made to respond in a timely manner.