

Enhancing Faculty Grant Success:

A Model for Improving Grant Competitiveness at Two Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions

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What's our story?

Given proposals submitted in the last year, we wondered:

- Which proposals could have been stronger?
- How could they have been stronger?
- What funders or programs were we not approaching that we wished we were?
- What were reasons our faculty weren't applying to these funders/programs?

Our Goal: Increase Grant Competitiveness

Benefits of Strategic Investment Model

Faculty

- Learn about external funding options early in their careers
- Develop mentoring relationships and networks of professional support
- Become part of a culture of grantseeking
- Improve their grantsmanship skills

Institution

- Leadership sees a culture of grantseeking
- Improved faculty grant success: less reliance on internal funding
- Improved university recognition and faculty profile

Sponsored Programs Office:

- More interest in grantseeking by faculty
- Faculty members are more proactive in seeking help
- SPO is able to plan for grant development several years into the future
- SPO becomes part of faculty members' professional development network
- Submitted proposals are better planned - and more competitive
- Creates a space to talk about ways to improve grant competitiveness.

Key Elements in Common - both programs are:

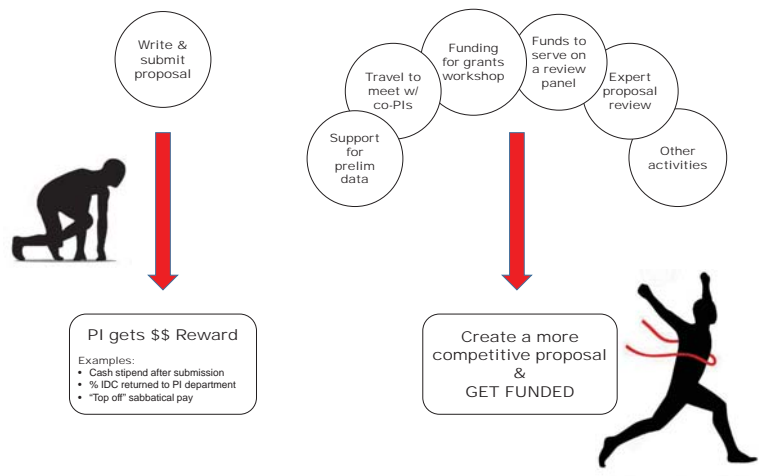
Personalized
Awards are specific to faculty needs

Flexible
Awards support a variety of activities

Proactive
Investments encourage faculty to plan ahead

Traditional Reward Model
(incentivizes action)

Strategic Investment Model
(invests in career development)



Overview - Our Strategic Programs

Colorado College

Supporting External Grants - SEGway Program

Funding source: Returned indirect costs \$50,000 annual investment to date

Willamette University

Grant Improvement Scholarship - GIS Fund

Funding source: central operating budget* of ~\$5,000 per year

*WU also has a separate research seed fund w/ budget of \$25,000 per year

Overview - Why Established?

Colorado College

Create transparent mechanism to support faculty who 1) are planning to apply for external funding and 2) have existing research grants (IDC not returned to CC faculty)

Change perception on campus that grants are too competitive and not worth faculty's time

Willamette University

Increase Competitiveness for Proposals in the Humanities and the Arts

Increase Competitiveness for Proposals submitted by pre-tenure faculty members

Who Are Our Stakeholders?

Colorado College

- Junior faculty members getting sense of their research funding needs
- Faculty who are exploring external funding options (e.g., unsure whether they are competitive & when to spend time on grants)
- Faculty in the science/social sciences needing preliminary data
- College leadership

Willamette University

- Junior faculty members in all disciplines (& their senior colleagues)
- Faculty in the humanities and arts
- Dean of College of Liberal Arts & WU President see culture of grant seeking, how individual faculty grant success can raise institutional visibility, recognition
- Candidates interviewing for TT jobs

Program Features - Funding Categories

Both programs fund faculty development activities to increase grant competitiveness:

- Travel to meet with program officers, grant collaborators
- Grant workshops, webinars, online courses
- Help to defray costs to serve on an external review panel
- Expert proposal review & consultation
- Activities to improve publication record
- Research seed funding to collect preliminary data
- Gap research funding for faculty who have existing grants

Program Features - Consultation & Commitment

Both programs require faculty consultation & commitment

- Consultation:**
- Expected prior to application
 - Discussion of research goals and role of grants in achieving them
 - Discussion of other internal grant options
 - Identify sources of external funding
 - Identify activity to increase competitiveness

Commitment: If funded, faculty are expected to apply for external grant within two years*.

*with some flexibility

Program Features - Review Criteria & Award Size

Criteria:

- Is proposed activity to improve grant competitiveness?
- How will funded activity make specific future grant proposal more competitive?
- Does faculty member have a specific grant deadline in mind?

Award Size:

SEGway: Ranges from \$200 to \$5000
GIS Fund: \$200-\$500

