

GRANT WRITING: AN OVERVIEW

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Preamble

- “We've won \$12 million in research grants in 6 months” – UNIOSUN VC
- \$2million in one month, How did they do it,?
- (Source: Vanguard, 18 June 2023)

- That was a rhetorical question which this workshop sets out to answer with the conviction that what one university can do, another can equally do.

- It is not only the University of Asun and others that we don't know; Godfrey Okoye University should be on the list of institutions so endowed.

The Topics

- The programme of this workshop is richly structured, with “How to write a Good Proposal” to be discussed in two parts, thus highlighting the importance of this exercise.
- The whole of tomorrow shall be devoted to it.

- My part in this workshop is to provide a brief overview of grant writing, a kind of general introduction of the task at hand.

The Fundamentals

- Before we start, there are certain fundamental facts that must be considered.
- **Top on the list is Research**
 - Research is an integral part of any institution of higher learning.
 - It seeks new knowledge and innovations.
 - Fosters the quality of teaching programmes and
 - enhances the academic visibility of both staff and institution.

The Fundamentals Cont'd

The Second fundamental fact is that funding is essential to achieve these research objectives.

The emotions and virtues required in the quest for research funding include:

- Enthusiasm
- Passion
- Motivation
- Persistence

- Thirdly, bear in mind that funding agencies will never come to you to offer financial assistance no matter how badly they need your expertise for their own goals.
- You must approach them: Make a proposal and send and an application.

The Merits of Funding Assistance

- Grants and fellowships make educational programmes and research projects possible where they otherwise would be impossible.
- They aid the visibility of emerging scholars and often act as a stepping stone to academic excellence.
- International collaboration through a fellowship is beneficial to a scholar's career
- Articles written during sojourns abroad give researchers access to
 - expertise, facilities, favourable research environments and broader experience and networks.

(Source: Dr Claire McNulty, "Advice on applying to funding schemes.")

- Wining a grant or fellowship elevates the prestige of a scholar to a degree of achievement worthy of inclusion in his or her CV

(Source: Akachi Cornelius Odoemene, "Making Applications for Research Grants and Fellowships," Paper presented at the 1st Methodological Workshop of the Historical Society of Nigeria, 16-17 August 2021.

Grants and Fellowships

- Funding schemes exist for:
- Research purposes,
- Training Programmes
- Scientific Experiments
- NGOs
- Community developers, etc.
- We are interested solely in academic grants and fellowships.

- Grants and Fellowships are similar in the sense that both are free financial assistance to a researcher.
- However, recipients of fellowships are normally postgraduate students and established scholars.
- Both Undergraduate and postgraduate scholars can receive Grants

- Nuances between the two do exist as a result of donor interest, type of research and field of study.

FUNDING AGENCIES

- The internet is awash with information on funding agencies.
- Notable online platforms include:
 - [Researcher Links initiative](#),
 - [Researchers Database](#),
 - Funders' websites, etc,

- Other sources of information include:
- Institutional listserv/Websites
- Verbal communication between colleagues and collaborators

The Nigerian TETFund

- TETFund does not extend funding to Private Universities, an anomaly
- But it funds partnership with researchers of federal and state universities

- **TETFund 5 Funding Pathways for Academic Staff include:**
- Academic Staff Training and Development
- Institution-based Research (Conferences, Publications)
- National Research Fund (NRF)
- TETFair (TETFund Alliance with Innov8 Hub)
- Academic Journal Publication and Manuscript Development.

- Be on the lookout for funding agencies that make similar eligibility concessions such as
- The British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grants – United Kingdom.

Grants Proposals

Successful proposals include those that:

- Tally well with the grants or fellowship schemes
 - target group, duration, amount of funding etc
- Are well structured
- Are timely, pertinent and innovative
- Provide pilot data and conform with established findings

Conversely, proposals that are rejected include:

- Submissions that are very poorly written
- Those that lack sufficient proof of previous expertise in the area of research
- Proposals that are over ambitious

CONCLUDING ADVICE

- Follow this Grant-writing Workshop with Passion and commitment
- Work out a research project if you have not done so
- Look for a competent and reliable research collaborator