

Graduate Student Funding and Searching on Pivot

Grant funding for graduate students can cover such things as thesis and dissertation writing or research, travel to conferences or archives, scholarships, and fellowships. Some funding opportunities have a wide applicant base, such as the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship Program, while others are specific to an archive, a professional society's members, or a narrowly defined discipline. How do you find one that fits you?



NDSU subscribes to a grant funding database called Pivot. It has a comprehensive, global database of funding opportunities, with scholar profiles, collaborative features, and a database of calls for papers with deadlines regarding forthcoming conferences and special issues of scholarly journals. You can search the Pivot database from being on campus on the network, or you can create an account for off-campus access with your NDSU email as your login. <https://pivot.proquest.com/>

Search tips

- For search terms with more than one word, enclose the terms in quotations marks. For example, "STEM Education."
- To use a search term with more than one ending, use an asterisk at the end of the word's root. For example, psycholog* to represent both psychology and psychological.
- Use Advanced Search or Refine Search in order to specify parameters of Applicant Type, Citizenship, Location Activity, and exclusions.

Search terms that graduate students could use in one search field in Advanced Search along with their disciplinary field keyword in another search field:

"Dissertation Writing"

"Thesis Writing"

"Dissertation Research"

"Graduate Student"

"Travel Award" (with applicant type "Graduate Student")

"Graduate Fellowship"

"Graduate Scholarship"

"Special Collections"

"Internships"

Note: Pivot has good user support. The search tips and help guides on Pivot can be helpful. There are also some videos on YouTube.

Grant Searching Tips and Strategies

Databases

- **Grants.gov** – for U.S. federal grants, free access to use this database
- **Pivot.proquest.com** – Requires subscription—NDSU has one, and you can access it on campus, or remotely if you have an NDSU email address and create an account. The Pivot database, a comprehensive, global database of grants, fellowships, awards; includes a call for papers section; includes researcher profiles.
- **Foundation Center** – a directory of foundation grants where you can look up foundations by areas of interest and of geographical giving, and look up their tax returns to see how much they give and to whom. Subscription required to access the full information, but you can access it for free at the Fargo Public Library Main Library downtown on their computers or on your own device connected to their wifi. (<http://fargond.gov/city-government/departments/library>) (<https://fconline.foundationcenter.org/>)
- **Fundsnet Services** – <http://www.fundsnetervices.com/> a free grant database, less powerful than Pivot
- **ProFellow** – <https://www.profellow.com/> a fellowship finder, requires a free subscription

Using Google or other web browsers

Be sure to use specific terms, not just “grants.” Try something like “grants in geosciences” (or whatever your field) to get relevant results. You may see results like university web pages that have compiled links to grants in their field, or professional societies that award grants or link to external grants.

You could also try setting up a Google alert to email you for new web page results. I have alerts for NDSU Grants and NDSU Research to see news articles about grants our university is receiving.

Subscribe to funding alerts in your field

All of the federal agencies have email newsletters in which they announce RFPs. Some foundations have them too. The Foundation Directory has a *Philanthropy News Digest*. You can unsubscribe later if the email is annoying and not a fit for you. You might also follow agencies of interest on Facebook.

CVs and Journal Articles

- **Look at Curriculum Vitae (CVs)** of people doing the type of work you want to do. If they are getting grants, they are most likely listing them on their CV. Look at the grant origin and search for them online.
- **See if funders are mentioned in research articles** you are reading for literature reviews, then look up those funders.

Use your digital calendar

Many grant programs have recurring due dates. If you find a program that interests you but its due date has passed or you’re not in the right stage of your career yet, set reminders for yourself at the appropriate time in your calendar to look it up again.