How do I do grants at NDSU?

I need a grant!

To search for grants, you can use Pivot (http://pivot.cos.com/), grants.gov, the Foundation Directory, ... For Pivot help, see Kay Sizer in Research 1 (ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu); if you’re in AHSS or HDE, you can see Scarlet Gray Bernard, grant coordinator (scarlet.graybernard@ndsu.edu) for help. To search the Foundation Directory, you can contact Jolynne Tschetter or Nicole Boyer in Research, who can search with you on campus, or you can search for yourself at the Fargo Public Library-Main downtown.

I think I found something!

Wait—be sure you meet the eligibility requirements, both personal and institutional, and be sure you can meet all of the submission requirements by the deadline.

I could really use a course release for this project!

Be sure to have a discussion with your department chair early on to learn the logistics of planning and budgeting for a course release. You won’t actually have a budget line for “course release”—you budget for your salary for doing the project, and your salary savings go into paying for the course release.

How can I find a research partner to complement my work on a grant?

Search within our institution using the Pivot Gallery (http://scholars.proquest.com/gallery/NDSU). Search within and outside our institution using Pivot (http://pivot.cos.com/) or by joining and searching on professional social media like ResearchGate and LinkedIn. Ask around, including checking with the Research Development team in RCA (ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu). If you’re in AHSS or HDE, or if you need a collaborator in Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Human Development, or Education fields, you can check with Scarlet Gray Bernard (scarlet.graybernard@ndsu.edu).

Help! This is my first big grant!

Do you have a faculty mentor you can ask for advice? Have you consulted your department head? Does your department or college have a Grant Coordinator? Have you checked the help guides on https://www.ndsu.edu/research/research_development/grant_resources/? Or the resources, policies, and institutional information https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/? If you’re in AHSS or HDE, you can see Scarlet Gray Bernard, grant coordinator (scarlet.graybernard@ndsu.edu), for help at all stages. For really large projects and large budgets, you can seek assistance from the Research Development unit, ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu.

The RFP says I need to register for something...SAM, Fastlane, eRA Commons...?

Stop—before you try to register the institution of NDSU for anything, check with Sponsored Programs Administration (ndsu.research@ndsu.edu). NDSU is already set up to handle all federal grants; we are
registered with SAM (System for Awards Management), and Sponsored Programs can set you up with a login for Fastlane and eRA Commons. Email ndsu.research@ndsu.edu for a login or for questions if you’re not sure.


Yes, NDSU has its own EIN and DUNS numbers, so you do not have to register for those. F&A = Facilities & Administrative costs = Indirect Costs or IDCs, and there is a differing cost depending on the type of activity and whether it is on or off campus. Fringe refers to fringe benefit rates. When budgeting for salaries, you must include fringe benefits. These rates changed in summer 2015 due to ACA, so be sure to look up the appropriate percentage to use for the right salary range and category of employee.

You can find all of these important numbers and information on Sponsored Program Administration's Institutional Information page.

Can anyone help me with budgets?

Yes! First, make a list of what you think you need, and if you know the price of it, write it down. For departmental questions like the rate paid to student workers or grad students, check with your department administration team. If you are committing any department resources or buying out any of your time, talk to your department head. You can check out these institutional web pages for guidance:

- [https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/budget_development/](https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/budget_development/)
- F&A, Fringe rates: [https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/institutional_information/](https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/institutional_information/)
- [https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/policies/](https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/policies/)
- Travel, per diem: [https://www.ndsu.edu/accounting/travel/](https://www.ndsu.edu/accounting/travel/)
- HR Office’s toolbox for calculating costs of salary with ACA: [https://www.ndsu.edu/hr/aca_toolbox/](https://www.ndsu.edu/hr/aca_toolbox/)
- [https://www.ndsu.edu/gra](https://www.ndsu.edu/grants/)

For further help, you can ask the grant budget review officer (Cindy) for help (ndsu.research@ndsu.edu). If you’re in CAFSNR, do you have a grant coordinator in your department? You can also check with the Ag Budget office. If you’re in AHSS or HDE, you can ask the Grant Coordinator (scarlet.graybernard@ndsu.edu).

Can anyone help me with writing?

In some cases, like with NIH R15 AREA grants, there is some institutional information that is required, and you can get a write up of that section by contacting Research Development (ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu). Otherwise, it is typically up to you and your grant team. There are grant writing guides on the Research Development site (https://www.ndsu.edu/research/research_development/grant_resources/). If you’re in AHSS or HDE, you can get some writing help from the Grant Coordinator (scarlet.graybernard@ndsu.edu).

Can I get my narrative reviewed before submitting it?
If you work well in advance of the grant deadline, you can arrange with a trusted colleague to review it. For very large grants, you may check with Research Development (ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu). If you are applying for an NSF CAREER grant or an NIH New Investigators grant, check with Research Development for their assistance and regarding getting an external review prior to submission. If you’re in AHSS or HDE, you can have the Grant Coordinator review it against the RFP and review it for clarity and correctness and proofreading (scarlet.graybernard@ndsu.edu).

What do I need to do to submit this thing? What does SPA want?

Your proposal needs to be checked by NDSU prior to submission, and in some cases, such as with federal grants, NDSU Sponsored Programs submits it for you. Sponsored Programs needs to see your budget, budget justification, scope of work statement or abstract, and the internal Proposal Transmittal Form (PTF) at least five business days before you plan to submit the grant. They review the budget to be sure it is compliant with agency and NDSU policy, and to protect you in case of an audit. If you’re in or collaborating with CAFSNR, Ag Budget needs to review your materials before it goes to Sponsored Programs. When in doubt, check with ndsu.research@ndsu.edu, and if you’re in AHSS or HDE, you can also check with scarlet.graybernard@ndsu.edu.

What is this PTF you speak of?

It is the internal transmittal form that provides your Sponsored Program reviewers a snapshot of your project costs and needs, and gives them the information they need to enter into PeopleSoft for tracking in the event that you get funded. You will need to have your Co-investigators, all department chairs involved, and all deans involved, sign off on the proposal on this form. You can find it here: https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/forms/ Yes, you will need to turn in the page with original signatures to SPA with your budget and other items. Electronic research compliance and signatures are in the works, but probably won’t be ready until spring semester 2018 at the earliest.

So I’ve been hearing about something called indirects or F&A…what’s that all about, and why are they taking so much?

These terms refer to indirect costs or facilities & administrative costs. They are the hidden costs of doing your grant project. NDSU has a federally negotiated rate that we must use on our proposals (unless the funder has a policy that limits the F&A). The rate varies per activity classification (research, instruction, other) and whether it is off-campus or on-campus activity. The rate takes into account facilities use, such as the libraries and core labs, and means we don’t have to figure in our budgets such things as the cost of printing reports and documents (unless the project requires massive print jobs).

You can find the rates at https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/institutional_information/. Sometimes, the F&A doesn’t apply to everything in your budget. When confused, you can ask ndsu.research@ndsu.edu. If you’re in AHSS or HDE, you can get help from the Grant Coordinator (scarlet.graybernard@ndsu.edu).
Where can I get an evaluator to be on my project?

Some grant programs are interested in seeing you have an external evaluator written into your proposal. Sometimes this can be an institutional colleague who is external to your project, and sometimes funders find even that to be “too incestuous” and want someone with no ties or bias to your institution. This can vary between grant programs within the same agency, such as NSF. A good source for an evaluation agency is the Center for Social Research at NDSU; however, the programs/reviewers that are strict about external may find this to be not external enough. Then, look to agencies in other institutions, and ask colleagues at other institutions for recommendations. https://www.ndsu.edu/csr/

What are some important NDSU web pages to know?

AHSS & HDE Grants
www.facebook.com/AHSSandHDEgrantsatNDSU/
https://www.ndsu.edu/hde/grantcoordinator/
https://www.ndsu.edu/ahss/faculty_and_staff_resources/grantresources/

Sponsored Programs Administration
https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/institutional_information/
https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/forms/
https://www.ndsu.edu/research/sponsored_programs_admin/policies/

Frequently Used Numbers
- NDSU's EIN #: 45-6002439
- DUNS Number: 80-388-2299
- Congressional District: ND1
- Cage Code: 40341
- NDSU's Animal Welfare Assurance #: A3244-01
- USDA Research Facility Registration #: 45-R-002
- NSF's Institutional Code # assigned to NDSU: 00 29975 000
- Human Subjects Assurance: FWA00002439

Questions? Please ask!

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