Pivot Funding Queries: Tips for Creating Useful Searches

- Even though you may be seeking funding for a narrowly defined topic area, begin your search using broad terms and refine the search one step at a time if necessary. Grant agencies use broader terms to describe what they will fund in order to be inclusive of many different sub-topics.

- If you enter a multiple-word term in the search box, such as "wind energy" or "childhood obesity" or "emergency management," be sure to put quotation marks around the term to 'hold it together.' Otherwise, as with most database searches, Pivot will treat each word separately and your search results will be skewed.

- Begin your query or search by simply entering a broad term describing the topic area. You may end up with thousands of search results, but by following these suggested steps, you should end up with a satisfactory results list:
  - Once you get your first set of results, click on "refine search," which is found above the results column.
  - From the list of fields, choose Activity Location as the next criteria. Click on the 'more locations' link to pull up the Geographic Browser. Click on the small triangle to the left of 'United States' to pull up a list of states. Scroll down to find/choose 'North Dakota.' Close the window. See 'North Dakota' entered in the Activity Location field. Click on the dark blue Search button to generate the refined search.
  - To refine your results further, note the faceted sub-search results that are automatically listed in the left column. You may find just the right results list there – click on each link to view, or back out to your original results list.
  - You may choose to use additional criteria to refine your results still further. Once again, click on "refine search," found above the results column. Try clicking on Funding Type to see all the options you can choose from for the type of funding you are seeking. Click in the checkboxes to make the relevant choice(s), and once again, click on the dark blue Search button at top.
  - You will note that with each step as you go, where it says Your Search: above the results column, you can see the criteria being used to build your query and generate your results list.
  - To refine still further, the Keyword field can be especially useful. Once again, in the advanced search screen where the various fields are displayed, click on Keyword – then click on browse. The Keyword Browser will display. You can see all the subtopic options by clicking on the little triangles to the left of the main headings. In this way, you are able to find the terminology that Pivot uses to describe your expertise area. Choose as many as you like for this particular query. Make note of the terms that apply to your field – you may want to use various terms for future searches.
  - Once you have a satisfactory results list with a reasonable number of grants, click on Save Search at the top of the results column. You will be prompted to name your search (this will be used only by you) and then be sure to check the box to indicate that you would like to receive weekly emails containing new or updated opportunities based on this query/search.

- You can create as many funding searches as you'd like in Pivot, for many different purposes, such as funding for a graduate student, equipment funds, funds for travel, funds to host a conference, funds for curriculum development or funding for research.

- Each search or query you create can be saved to your Pivot homepage, accessible by going to the top gray menu bar and clicking on the little house button to the left. To the right of each saved search listed there, you will note an Options link that offers a number of choices for you to manage your information.