

Tips on UCSB grant and fellowship proposals

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Tips and grant resources from Graduate Division

- ▲ **Fellowships 101:** http://graddiv.ucsb.edu/pubs/studentlife/funding_whattoapplyfor07.pdf
- ▲ **Navigating the Graduate Division funding website:**
http://graddiv.ucsb.edu/pubs/studentlife/funding_finresources07.pdf
- ▲ **Finding Extramural Funding:** <http://graddiv.ucsb.edu/pubs/studentlife/findfunding.doc>

General

- ▲ **Focus on the big picture.** Spend less time on the details of your argument than on the contribution your project makes one or more fields.
- ▲ **Indicate that the project rests on previous accomplishments.** Specify any tangible results that have been accomplished so far, such as preliminary research trips or correspondence, fieldwork or archival research, language or other specialized study, conference presentations or articles related to the work in some way.
- ▲ **Show that you've thought through the details.** Include an extremely detailed budget with itemization and justification, and a detailed research plan, with a timeline for each activity you'll carry out. Make clear that you have confirmation of necessary support for your research (both financial and institutional—e.g., access to a fieldsite or archive, partial funds from your department).
- ▲ **Show that the dissertation is taking shape.** For grants for dissertation writing, provide a chapter-by-chapter description of the dissertation (one sentence to one paragraph per chapter, depending on proposal length), discussing not only the topic but the argument of the chapter; include titles if you have them or append a table of contents. In your timeline, specify your week-by-week deadline for drafting and revising each chapter, by number. For pre-dissertation or dissertation research funding, make clear how the project will further your dissertation plans.
- ▲ **Include references.** For most UCSB grants, you can usually include a page or two of references that won't be counted toward the page total. But be sure to check the guidelines and contact the funding office if you're not sure what the policy is.
- ▲ **Include a letter of departmental support for project.** This should usually come from your advisor, unless the guidelines specify that it should come from the department chair or your department handles these things through the chair.
- ▲ **Indicate prospects for external funding.** Committees often prefer to provide seed money to an externally fundable project, but they are also sympathetic to excellent projects that aren't easily fundable through external means. Make clear what your situation is.
- ▲ **Use your proposal as the basis for an external grant proposal.** UCSB proposals are a good way to ease into grant writing since they're shorter in length and allow you to work out the details before you devote more time and energy to the lengthier proposals

required by many national funding sources. Even very quirky projects may find funding somewhere, so be thorough in tracking down potential funding agencies.

IHC and ISBER/Sciences

- ▲ **Frame it appropriately.** Most reviewers will try to understand where you're coming from, but don't make their work harder than it needs to be; talk to them in their language. For IHC, highlight the theoretical issues, for ISBER and the sciences, focus more on methodology. Use the terminology and writing style appropriate to each field: For IHC, a "just the facts" social science style can come off as simplistic; for ISBER, a heavily theoretical, structurally dense style can be seen not as sophisticated but as opaque or pretentious. You can be more expository or narrative-like for IHC and more technical for ISBER. It's wise to use field-specific citation style: parenthetical citations for ISBER, footnotes for IHC. For the sciences, you need to be able to indicate the significance of the work, even if the details will be impenetrable to everyone but you and your advisor.
- ▲ **Highlight your work's potential to have a wide scholarly impact.** Emphasize the significance of your project to multiple fields at UCSB. For IHC, these should be especially in the humanities, for ISBER the social sciences, and for the sciences, obviously the sciences matter the most, but innovative cross-divisional projects (and those that include the sciences) are often most exciting to reviewers.
- ▲ **Highlight the centrality of your work.** Especially if you're in a smaller or more interdisciplinary field, try to connect in some way to central theoretical concerns of the "canonical" humanities (e.g., literature, history), social sciences (e.g., sociology, political science), or sciences (e.g., physics, biology) to show that your work isn't overly arcane or specialized.

Graduate Division

- ▲ **Write for a wide audience.** Recognize that the may reviewers come from very different fields; you should assume that none of the readers are in your discipline, let alone specialists in your area. Avoid jargon and keep your writing simple and direct.
- ▲ **Special considerations for diversity-related funding.** If you're applying for a diversity-oriented fellowship, point to multiple ways that your background and experiences contribute to diversity at UCSB (e.g., personal background; outreach and/or mentoring of underrepresented groups; research on underrepresented groups—note that *underrepresented group* generally refers to a U.S. ethnic minority or economically disadvantaged group, but other aspects of diversity may also be mentioned). Such details are also worth mentioning in other kinds of proposals if relevant to your work, to demonstrate its broader impact.