

GRANTS

TIPS, ADVICE, AND SUGGESTIONS

Linh T. Tô

Boston University

Not for distribution

Roadmap

Resources

How to find more resources

How to apply

FAQs

RESOURCES

BU Resources

Know your local resources first

- www.bu.edu/econ/research/ied/resources/
- www.bu.edu/cas/admissions/phd-mfa/fellowship-aid/aid-for-phd-students/
 - Bloom Dissertation Fellowship for summer funding
 - Graduate Research Abroad Fellowship (GRAF)
 - Whitney Young, Jr. Fellowship (urban studies, Afro-American studies)
- www.bu.edu/pdpa/for-doctoral-students/pdpa-resources/funding-resources/
- Initiative on Cities Early Stage Urban Research Award



Outside Resources for PhD Students

Restricted eligibility

- NSF Graduate Research Fellowships Program (up to year 2, US residents or citizens)
 - But no restrictions for the NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants (past abstracts can be found at <https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/simpleSearchResult?queryText=%22Doctoral+Dissertation+Research+in+Economics%22>)
- Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans (1st or 2nd generation US immigrants)
- Ford Foundation Fellowship (US residents or citizens)
- Robert Wood Health Policy Research Scholar (underrepresented background)
- Microsoft Dissertation Grant (underrepresented in computing field)



Outside Resources for PhD Students

Restricted fields / topics

- Facebook Fellowship (econ-CS)
- Russell Sage Small Grants in Behavioral Economics (behavioral)
- Upjohn Institute Dissertation Award (employment-related issues)
- Kauffman Dissertation Fellow (entrepreneurship)
- Policy Impacts Early Career Scholars Grant (public economics)
- NAEd/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship (education)
- Washington Center for Equitable Growth (labor, public, macro, often with a theme)



Outside Resources for PhD Students

Restricted fields / topics

- Russell Sage Dissertation Research Grants (behavioral, future of work, race and ethnicity, immigration, inequality)
- Institute for Humane Studies Fellowship (classical liberal ideas)
- The Global Priorities Fellowship—Forethought Foundation (global priorities topics)
- Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations Louis O. Kelso Fellowship (broadened ownership of capital in a democratic society in the US)
- NBER dissertation fellowships (health and aging, retirement, gender, behavioral macro, consumer financial management)



Outside Resources for PhD students

Development

- The Weiss Family Program Fund
- International Growth Centre (growth policies in developing countries)
- J-PAL (many requirements, including experience running pilots)
- PEDL Exploratory Grant
- (But don't forget BU IED resources here)



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HOW TO FIND MORE RESOURCES

How to collect them

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- **Start locally:** Department and school websites

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How to collect them

- **Collect them over time:** When you see one posted in a mailing list (like those I forward)
 - Check if they are relevant now or potentially relevant in the future. Save the names / links to them then.
 - Mark down the deadline and check if it's a regular event (often it's annual) to get the rough timeline to watch out for future events if you are not yet ready.
- **Sign up for mailing lists:** Certain organizations have their own mailing lists
 - If there are an organization that has given out grants that you're interested in, sign up for their mailing list
 - If others forward grant info that you're interested in, note the organization



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HOW TO APPLY

Advice on the application process

General

- Start early
- Email the **grant officer** if you have specific questions
 - To do this, need to start early
- Mark down **keywords in the Call for Proposals** to understand the grant's main objectives
- **Highlight key phrases** in your proposal (by bolding them):
 - Reading only these key phrases should be enough to understand the importance and target of your proposal
 - Match your targets to the grant's targets



Advice on the application process

Writing the proposal

- Keep your **audience** in mind. Your **first audience** who will make a decision on your proposal is not an economist but a **smart person**
 - Quality of the idea in the broader context
 - Implications for policy
- Have an Overview/Introduction section
- In the main body, provide details and flesh out the idea and design to show that the project is thoughtful and with a high chance of success (the audience here will include economists and others)



Advice on the application process

More resources and Examples

- Start close: BU has excellent resources
 - www.bu.edu/foundations/resources/writing-tips/
 - www.bu.edu/researchsupport/project-lifecycle/preparing-a-proposal/writing-your-proposal/
 - The two above are geared towards faculty seeking large funding from large organizations, but general advice will apply
- Other relevant professional development workshops
 - www.bu.edu/pdpa/for-doctoral-students/professional-social-events/



Advice on the application process

More resources and Examples

- Russell Sage has a page on grant writing
 - www.russellsage.org/grant-writing-guidelines
 - Some of this may be specific to them, but generally these are quite general
 - They have examples of Letter of Inquiries (short 4-page single-spaced proposals) and full-length Proposals (20-page double-spaced proposals). Check them out.



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Grants for faculty versus for PhD students?

- The same organizations listed also provide funding for faculty
- Faculty often go for larger funding from federal organizations such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and private foundations such as Russell Sage, Ford, Kauffman
- When you become a faculty at any school, there will be a lot of encouragement to apply for grants because schools get a share of the grant money



FAQs

Is there a specific process through BU?

- Not if you are a PhD student, but once you become a faculty or researcher at any organization you will have to go through them to apply for grants
- As a PhD student, you are most likely able to receive the money directly, though there may be more paperwork if you are an international student



FAQs

What if the proposal funded doesn't work out?

- For PhD students that's perfectly okay.
- Most of the time they are funding a promising project from a new and promising young scholar, it's not a contract, and you get the money upfront. That said, they most likely evaluate how feasible and fleshed out your idea is before deciding to fund you.
- Many fellowships fund a PhD student, not a project.



FAQs

Can you apply to more than one at the same time for the same project?

- Definitely. If they want to avoid funding the same project, they will ask you in the application form if you are applying to other sources.
- For PhD students, most of the time this won't matter because the grant amounts are often not too large (compared to faculty grants funding a whole team for multiple years).



FAQs

How to allocate time to grant-searching activities?

- To do it well, it is time-consuming, and yet there is a lot of randomness in the process
 - The same project may have a high score one time and low score another (this happens)
- Definitely do it if it is necessary to proceed with your research (e.g., fund a costly experiment)
- Do it if you already have a proposal you can easily tweak for a different opportunity
- The cost may otherwise be prohibitively high compared to limited research time
- Benefits on your CV is not as high at this stage of your career

