

Motivating Grant Proposals

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Setting the Scene....

Stevenson University (Villa Julie College) was a small college with...

- ▶ ...no history of significant external funding
- ▶ ...no Office of Sponsored Research
- ▶ ...few faculty who had any training in grant-writing
- ▶ ...a culture of teaching where most research was performed in training students via research classes

This equals **STARTING** from **SCRATCH!**

Enter...the EARDA Grant...

How can the research climate of the college be changed?



and



How can the faculty be motivated?



The Key...

It is absolutely essential that you begin working from the top down!

Make sure that the Administrators are all on Board.

They provide the greatest incentive for motivating the faculty – in recognition, encouragement and promotion!



At Stevenson University, “starting at the top” was our first step.

Although the EARDA grant only permitted one PI, the Dean of the School of the Sciences and the Chairs of the Chemistry and Biology Departments, known as “Key Advisors,” worked with me to get things started.

They lent credence to my new office and position, and because they knew the inner workings of the University, they were able to provide much needed support and advise.

Meetings were held with all concerned officials...

...the Academic Dean, the Chief Financial Officer, the Key Advisors, and others who were concerned with the grants at the University.



This allowed us to establish the responsibilities of each office, outlining what I could expect from them and what they could expect from me.



I was invited to speak to the Deans of the various Schools within Stevenson University.

They were asked to **support** the Office of Research Development (ORD) and encourage their department chairs and faculty to apply for the Seed Grants.



An Advisory Board was carefully selected.

The members of our Advisory Board represent all areas of the University, even though the Seed Grant funding is only distributed to those whose research is biomedical or behavioral.

The Board currently consists of...

- ▶ The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and University Dean
- ▶ The Dean of each School
- ▶ The Key Advisors
- ▶ The Chair of the Psychology Department
- ▶ Associate Director for Corporate, Foundation, and Government Relations
- ▶ Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs
- ▶ Several Faculty members

Once the administrators were on board....

...we were ready to approach the faculty.

The first step was to **make everyone aware** that the University officials were committed to the EARDA grant and the ORD. All eligible faculty were encouraged to seek the Seed Grant funding for their research.



Getting the faculty on Board...

Time was provided during a School of Science faculty/staff meeting to discuss the EARDA program.

In subsequent meetings, I reported on the progress and services of the Office of Research Development.



Motivating the faculty...

Meetings were held with faculty in other Schools in small groups and individual sessions.

Flyers were created and placed in every faculty and staff member's mailbox.

E-mails were sent to all who might apply for the Seed Grant funds.



Motivating the faculty...



A mini workshop was presented to the faculty and staff.

- ▶ Part I focused on the EARDA Grant – its specific aims and the application process for the pilot projects.
- ▶ Part II discussed the basics of grant-writing, providing tips that would help them write successful proposals.

Motivating the faculty...

The faculty appreciated the opportunity the EARDA grant afforded to write a proposal that had a good chance of being funded, while still honing their grant-writing skills.



A website was created to disseminate information about the ORD and its services.

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window with the address bar displaying <http://www.stevenson.edu/services/ord/default.asp>. The page title is "Stevenson University - Office of Research Development - Mozilla Firefox".

The website content includes a navigation menu on the left with the following items: Office of Research Development, Seed Grant Guidelines, Seed Grant Recipients, Advisory Board, Funding Sources, Training/Events, Resources, Forms & Policies, External Grant Submissions, Grant Writing Tips, NIH CRISP Database, and Student Opportunities.

The main content area features a breadcrumb trail: [Home](#) > [Campus Services](#) > Office of Research Development. The heading is "Office of Research Development".

The text describes the ORD's establishment in 2006 through an EEARDA award provided by the NICHD of the NIH. The mission is to facilitate the entry and participation of faculty from underrepresented minority and women's institutions into biomedical and behavioral research and research training, through activities targeted to minority and women's institutions.

- [Extramural Associates Program](#)

Stevenson University was granted funding through EEARDA by the NICHD:

1. To establish an Office of Research Development (ORD).
2. To expand and strengthen faculty and undergraduate research, particularly in the biomedical and behavioral sciences.

An annual total of \$40,000 has been provided to support faculty research initiatives. The goal of these grants is for faculty to gather preliminary research data that would then serve as a basis for writing future grant proposals to obtain more substantial extramural funding for their research.

Mission of the Office of Research Development

- To identify and disseminate grant opportunities to the faculty.
- To assist faculty in grant proposal preparation.
- To expand and formalize existing collaborations and fostering new ones with local institutions, government research facilities and private industry in order to provide high quality research opportunities for faculty and students.
- To connect students with appropriate summer research opportunities.

Contact information is provided for M. Diane Payne, Director (Phone: 443-334-2197, Fax: 443-334-2172) and Rebecca Van Horn, Administrative Assistant (Phone: 443-334-2591, Fax: 443-334-2172).

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button, several application icons, and open windows for "money cartoon - Goo...", "Stevenson University...", "ORD", "Document1 - Microsof...", and "Microsoft PowerPoint...". The system clock shows 11:22 PM on Sunday, 10/18/2009.

Motivating the faculty...

A bulletin board was placed outside the office showcasing current Seed Grant recipients and their students, providing listings for funding opportunities, and highlighting the mission of the ORD.



Motivating the faculty...

Initially most faculty had only a vague notion about how to write a grant and little time to learn the ropes on their own.

As no one else was seeking funding, there was little pressure to spend time and effort applying for funds that might never materialize.

Motivating the faculty...

Workshops are now being regularly offered and grant-writing materials are provided in the ORD Conference Room.

Faculty are encouraged to visit with ORD for assistance in making necessary connections and trouble shooting problems.

All this has instigated a new atmosphere where faculty are energized and willing to try their hand at writing a grant.

Motivating the faculty...

All of our Seed Grant recipients are required to write an external grant within 18 months of receiving their funding.

This has also stimulated grant-writing on campus by providing incentive for further involvement.



In summary...

- Get the Administration on Board
- Implement a vigorously advertising program, taking advantage of opportunity to inform the faculty of the Seed Grant funding.
 - Meetings – group and individual
 - Flyers and e-mails
 - Phone calls – the personal touch is most effective
 - Websites – be sure to advertise how to access the site
 - Bulletin boards – showcase faculty and students already involved, list upcoming activities
 - Work with the Marketing Department

Final Thoughts...



The more exposure the Office of Research Development receives, the better! Never pass up an opportunity to talk about the program.

When faculty response slows down, ask the Department Chairs and School Deans to help motivate their faculty.

Even better – Contact the faculty individually.