JMU Corporate and Foundation Relations

Grant Funding
Working with Corporate & Foundation Relations

The Office of Corporate & Foundation Relations (CFR) in the Division of University Advancement coordinates and facilitates communications with JMU's corporate and foundation partners. We provide comprehensive support to university programs, departments, faculty, administrators, and staff in pursuing and successfully managing private gifts from foundations.

Additionally, we can partner with you in securing corporate gifts and sponsorships. For more information, please contact our Senior Director, Carrie Combs.

CFR staff provide services related to grant funding:

1. Identify and connect with funding sources
2. Interpret application guidelines
3. Discuss and develop project concepts
4. Develop proposals and budgets
5. Acquire required institutional documentation
6. Review and submit reports
7. Coordinate stewardship activities such as donor visits and acknowledgment letters

If you are a faculty or staff member who would like to work with CFR, please contact us so that we may provide resources and guidance as you seek funding for your important work.

Your CFR Partners:

Carrie Combs, Senior Director, (540) 568-4122 or teicheca@jmu.edu
Debbi Long, Grant Writer, (540) 568-4606 or long2da@jmu.edu
Ryan Boals, Development Assistant, (540) 568-3196 or boalsrt@jmu.edu

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Will my proposal go through CFR or the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP)?

Below is a checklist to guide you in determining the classification of your funding. Our CFR staff is available to assist you as you progress through the process.

Corporate and Foundation Relations - Gifts
Funding is provided by private foundations, non-government entity or individuals.

Office of Sponsored Programs – Grants
Funding is provided by government agencies at the federal, state or local level. Funding should be processed through OSP if it:

- Contains personnel costs
- Requires that unused funds be returned to the funder
- Requires detailed financial reporting beyond summary of expenditures
- Allows the university to be penalized for nonperformance
- Commits the university to a specific line of scholarly or scientific inquiry to be documented by research plan or statement of work
- Specifies commitment regarding the level of personnel effort, deliverables, or milestones
- Includes terms and conditions for disposition of tangible or intangible property

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Overview of the Grant Seeking Process

1. Develop a specific, meaningful, actionable project

2. Compose a one-page summary of your project to share with CFR

3. With assistance from CFR, research funders whose mission aligns with your project

4. Coordinate with CFR proposal preparation, review, and submission

5. If awarded, carry out the project as outlined in the proposal

6. Practice good stewardship by coordinating with CFR all communication with funder, such as sending acknowledgements and submitting reports on time

Finding Funders

CFR can help identify private funders that may take an interest in your project. We conduct this prospect research for projects that have been identified as high priority by University Advancement in coordination with the president, provost, deans, and/or unit heads. To request corporate or foundation prospect research, please contact us at cfr@jmu.edu.

CFR staff use an array of industry-standard tools and resources to identify potential funders. These include both paid subscription services and free and publicly available services. The tools listed below are made available to the JMU community and can help you stay informed about new and upcoming Requests for Proposals (RFPs), as well as philanthropy trends and news.

If you prefer to begin researching potential funders on your own, the following are options:

Grant Forward is a search engine dedicated to helping institutions and individuals find grants to support their research. Its powerful system helps to lessen the hassle of searching for funding opportunities with adaptable search filters and specialized search features. You can use this search engine without establishing an account or paying a fee. Our team uses this tool extensively. Access GrantForward.

SPIN by InfoEd Global provides JMU faculty, staff and students with access to a comprehensive repository to search current funding opportunities. Instructions for accessing SPIN.

Foundation Directory Quick Start allows you to find a foundation by name, EIN, location and assets, or giving range. Search the IRS Forms 990 and 990-PF for those funders by those facets or by keyword. Access FDO QuickStart.

Philanthropy News Digest publishes Requests for Proposals (RFP) and notices of awards as a free service for US-based non-profit and grantmaking organizations. Use "Search RFPs" to find current requests for proposals in your subject area. You can filter by state as well as set up a free account so you can sign up for alerts by topic. Access Philanthropy News Digest.

Developing a Successful Proposal

Where do I start?
Start with a Request for Proposal (RFP) from a corporation or foundation. If the RFP is related to your area of interest, CFR can help you develop a description of your current research that corresponds to the requirements listed in the RFP.

<div align="center">**-OR-**</div>

Start with an idea for a project. If it involves partners in other departments, units, or schools, begin talking with them early. Contact CFR for help finding funders with priorities that match your project.

To determine if a funder is a good match, follow these steps:
1. Go to the funder's website and read their goals and grantmaking philosophy.
2. Review the funder's proposal guidelines and grant database or list of recently funded proposals; these resources are usually the best indication of whether or not the funder would find your project compelling. CFR can provide research support, including tracking current and past gifts made to other universities and similar organizations. This information can be very helpful in preparing your request.
3. CFR can then help you confirm that the funder is a good fit, and determine the approach and how to begin preparing for your submission.

I've located the foundation that is a good match for my project. Now what?
Contact CFR for support. We ask that you complete the [Grant Proposal Request Form](#) so that we can get an idea of your work, and so that you can also think through the questions that will be further developed in your formal proposal:

- What is the idea or problem you want to tackle? Why is it important? To whom is it important?
- What gap does your project fill? What does your project aim to do? What are the outcomes? What will your research/project contribute? What will be understood when it is complete?
- How will you achieve your goals? How long will it take?
- Why will your project succeed? What will success look like and how will it be measured? How will you share the results?
- Will the project/research continue once grant funding ends? If so, how might it be funded?

Upon receiving your request, **our office will consult with you** to determine where we can assist you.

CFR will help you create a checklist of everything the funder requires you to submit with your proposal.

Develop a realistic timeline, working backward from the deadline for proposal submission (see page 7 for more information).

Schedule time to work on your grant budget. The funder may have an official budget template on their website.

If required, **request letters of support or commitment**. Make sure your recommenders are aware of all deadlines. CFR will draft letters for the president and/or provost if they are required.

If there are no submission guidelines, what format should I use?
If there are no submission guidelines, speak with CFR on the best course of action.

Most proposals include the following:
- an executive summary
- background information about your institution and project
- an explanation of why the project is important
- a description of your project methodology
- a description of what will be done and who will do it
- the expected results and how they will be evaluated
- a plan for sharing the results
- a case for the sustainability of the project after grant funds are expended
- the project timeline and budget

What should I do once I complete a draft of my proposal?
Ask colleagues to read your proposal. Provided advance notice, a *CFR staff member can serve as an educated general reader and provide feedback and edits.* Additionally, we will help you ensure that the budget reflects everything described in the proposal narrative and that the proposal narrative discusses everything listed in the budget. Then, you can make any remaining revisions and finalize the proposal for submission.

Suggested Timeline for Submitting Private Grant Proposals

CFR suggests that you plan your timeline by working backwards from the submission due date. Below are a series of steps that can help you in your grant seeking efforts.

1. **Three to six months before deadline**
   - Carefully read through the RFP; contact CFR for help with interpreting guidelines and starting the submission process
   - Draft a one-page summary (no more than 500 words) and submit the [Grant Proposal Request Form](#) to CFR.

2. **Two months before deadline**
   - Draft the proposal, budget, and timeline for your project and share these with CFR
   - If required, contact colleagues for letters of support or commitment

3. **One month before deadline**
   - Share proposal draft and budget with CFR and colleagues for edits and feedback

4. **Three weeks before deadline**
   - Incorporate edits and feedback into proposal draft and budget
   - Coordinate with CFR for a successful submission
   *** Important that this is done in ample time for CFR to coordinate signatures and submission with the JMU Foundation. ***

5. **If awarded**
   - Share acceptance letter and any communication with the funder with CFR
   - Take note of reporting requirements and deadlines
   - Develop a list of what will be needed for reporting
   - Coordinate with CFR for review of draft, reports, and successful submission of reports

Reporting

Most funders will require you to prepare a grant report, or multiple reports. Reporting requirements and due dates are typically listed in the award letter. Reports are generally due every six months or one year from the award date. **Please note that providing the funder with accurate, detailed, and timely reports is not only good stewardship practice, it is mandatory.** CFR is happy to assist with report drafting and submission.

A well-crafted report can have a positive effect on the way funders view your work, as well as JMU, and greatly increase the university's chances of receiving future funding. *Failure to comply with reporting requirements will jeopardize JMU's chances of receiving future grants.*

Should your proposal be funded, your primary responsibilities include:
- Ensuring that all elements of the project are successfully completed and follow the proposed timeline
- Providing the impact and results of the project as spelled out in the grant application
- Working with the appropriate accounting personnel to manage the budget and obtaining financial reports — expenses need to conform to the budget submitted with the proposal
- Timely submission of reports

Grant reports generally include the following:
- A summary of project activities conducted during the grant period
- A discussion of outcomes, including successes, challenges, and lessons learned
- A description of the impact of the project and funding
- An accounting of expenditures

Other Forms of Stewardship

Stewardship refers to activities performed to ensure that the appropriate gratitude and recognition are expressed to funders. This also includes communication regarding the impact of the project and the use of the grant funds, i.e. reporting. Stewardship is both the last phase of securing a grant and the first phase in developing the next request. With every interaction, we are building a relationship, whether or not we receive the funding requested.

If the proposal is funded, CFR will coordinate with appropriate parties (president, vice president of Advancement, and/or dean), and will send a letter acknowledging receipt of the gift on behalf of JMU.

If the proposal is not funded, CFR can help coordinate a time to speak with a funder's program officer to receive feedback on your application, if this is an available service. This is an opportunity to understand what worked and what didn't. It also is a stewardship activity as it shows you are serious about a future partnership and are willing to put in the effort to make your proposal successful.

Additionally, as part of stewardship, CFR often hosts corporate and foundation representatives on campus. These events enable the university community to recognize and thank our partners for their support, and to cultivate future philanthropy.

To ensure that an event is successful for all participants, CFR works with campus partners that have a significant role in the relationship and the corporation or foundation representatives. A multi-unit visit may include tours of facilities; meetings with student organizations; or convenings of university leadership and faculty, depending on the interests of the corporation or foundation. If you would like to discuss the stewardship of a particular grant, please contact our office first before coordinating activities.

Ready to start? Reach out anytime!
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