

Webinar Presentation

Grant Readiness in Counseling

Understanding Funding Priorities and Developing
Competitive Proposals

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Welcome

Introduction

forum

Housekeeping

Welcome participants and cover housekeeping details, including chat features, Q&A protocols, and the recording notice.

groups

Presenters

Meet your presenters and gain a comprehensive overview of the core webinar objectives.

how_to_vote

Interactive Poll

Participate in our opening poll: "Where are you in your grant-seeking journey?" to share your background.

Agenda

01

Small Research Grants in Counseling: What They Can and Cannot Do

02

Where to Look: Identifying Counseling-Related Funding Opportunities

03

Planning Around Annual and Recurring Grant Cycles

04

Making Sense of a Call for Proposals: Fit and Feasibility

05

From Broad Interest to Focused Research Questions

In counseling, these grants help researchers, graduate students, counselors, or faculty conduct studies with limited time and resources.

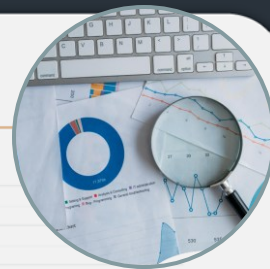
A word cloud visualization of academic terms. The central and largest word is "GRANTS". To its right, "meetings" is also large. Above "GRANTS", "virtual travel grants" is written in green. Below "GRANTS", "biotech" is prominent in orange. Other words scattered around include "publications", "articles", "journals", "posters", "abstracts", "conferences", "equipment", "supplies", "discussions", "peer review", "lectures", "research", "grant", "travel", "meeting", "poster", "abstract", "conference". The background is white.

To successfully secure a small grant, you will generally need to submit:

- **Research Proposal:** A 500–1,000 word outline covering the literature gap, objectives, and methodology.
- **Budget & Timeline:** A detailed plan designed for a standard one-year project period.
- **IRB Approval:** Proof of Institutional Review Board approval (or documentation showing it is under review).
- **Letters of Support:** From supervising faculty (for students) or active research collaborators.

What they CAN support

Allowable Activities & Expenses



01. Supported Research

Small grants fund focused activities like pilot studies, survey development, and measurement validation to establish project foundations.

02. Allowable Expenses

Directly supports participant incentives, essential data collection tools, professional analysis assistance, and critical research materials.

03. Research Assistance

Grants can finance graduate or undergraduate assistants, facilitating project execution while fostering vital academic and practical skill development.

04. Budget Alignment

Successful applications present clearly justified budgets that map directly to the core research methodology and strictly align with funder guidelines.

What they CANNOT support

Common Restrictions & Limitations

01. Scope Limitations

Small grants exclude large multi-site studies and projects requiring extensive coordination and long-term commitments.

02. Funding Restrictions

Common restrictions include limits on travel, indirect costs, and expenditures unrelated to specific research activities.

03. Project Feasibility

Proposals should align with available resources and avoid assumptions about costly infrastructure or extensive staffing.

04. Purpose of Small Grants

Small grants support discrete components of larger agendas, not complete research programs from start to finish.

What to keep in mind

Reframing expectations

01. The Reality

Many first-time applicants assume a grant finances every aspect of their study. In reality, small grants are intended to **fill funding gaps**, not cover total costs.

02. Shift Perspective

Instead of asking:

"Will this grant pay for my entire research study?"

Consider asking:

"Which essential components of my research can this grant realistically support?"



03. Successful Approaches

Successful applicants design proposals with specific strategic habits:

- **Align Limits:** Design projects that fit within the grant's funding boundaries.
- **Itemize Budgets:** Develop highly realistic, item-by-item cost breakdowns.
- **Justify Expenses:** Provide clear, logical rationale for every line item.
- **Advance Field:** Show how funding directly benefits counseling research.
- **Future Leverage:** Use this as a stepping stone to secure larger external grants.

Discussion Prompt

What would a small grant help you accomplish right now?



Where to Look

Identifying Counseling-Related Funding Opportunities

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01

ACA & Divisions

American Counseling Association and divisions (e.g., CSI, ACES, ASGW, AMCD)

02

NBCC Foundation

National Board for Certified Counselors foundation funding opportunities

03

State-Level

State-level counseling associations and regional chapters

Where to Look

Higher Education Institutional Sources

01

Faculty Development

Internal faculty development grants and funding opportunities.

02

Seed Funding

College and school-level seed funding initiatives.

03

Graduate Research

Graduate student research awards and specialized fellowships.

04

Office of Research

Sponsored programs and institutional announcements.

Where to Look

Other Funding Sources

01

Professional Orgs

Related professional organizations (APA divisions, NASPA, etc.)

02

Local Agencies

Community foundations and local agencies

03

Federal Grants

Federal micro-grants or subcontracts (SAMHSA, HRSA)

Where to Look

Identifying Counseling-Related Funding Opportunities

Practical Tips for Staying Informed

01

Resources & Newsletters

Listserves, newsletters, organizational websites

02

Office of Research

Building relationships with Office of Research staff

03

Peer Networking

Networking with funded colleagues

Activity

Interactive Sharing

Share one resource or opportunity in the chat that others may not know about.

Grant Cycle Strategy

Planning Around Annual and Recurring Grant Cycles

Planning Around Annual and Recurring Grant Cycles

01

Understanding Funding Patterns

Many organizations operate on fixed annual cycles (e.g., CSI research grants, ACA Foundation).

Institutional internal grants typically align with academic year calendars.

02

Creating a Personal Calendar

Proactively map out targets and deadlines 6–12 months in advance.

Build in sufficient time for thorough proposal development, feedback, and revisions.

Strategic Planning

Planning Around Annual and Recurring Grant Cycles

01

Timeline Alignment

Aligning your research timeline with funding availability.

02

Proactive Prep

Preparing materials in advance so you're "ready when the call drops".

03

Multi-Submissions

Considering multiple submissions across different funding cycles.

04

IRB Planning

Determining exactly when IRB approval is required and planning accordingly.



Making Sense of a Call for Proposals

Fit and Feasibility

Making Sense of a Call for Proposals

Reading Critically

01. Funder Mission

Stated mission and priorities of the funder

02. Eligibility Rules

Eligibility requirements (career stage, membership, institution type)

03. Budget & Caps

Allowable budget items and funding caps

04. Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation criteria and review process

Understanding Context

01. Institutional Alignment

How institutional priorities reflect strategic plans

02. Societal Responsiveness

How professional organizations respond to societal issues (e.g., equity, access, mental health crises, workforce development)

03. Educational Trends

How counseling/counselor education trends shape what gets funded

Fit and Feasibility

Making Sense of a Call for Proposals

Assessing Fit

01. Project Alignment

Does my project align with what this funder values?

02. Team Fit

Am I the right person/team for this opportunity?

Assessing Feasibility

01. Budget & Timeline

Can I complete this within the timeline and budget?

02. Access & Resources

Do I have access to participants, sites, and resources?

03. IRB Feasibility

Is my IRB timeline realistic?



From Broad Interest to Focused Research Questions

Tailoring your Research

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From Broad Interest to Focused Research Questions

The Narrowing Process

01. Passion & Curiosity

Starting with a broad area of passion or curiosity

02. Literature Gaps

Reviewing the literature for gaps to identify your niche

03. Scope & Parameters

Considering what is doable within small-grant boundaries

Funder Alignment

01. Language & Frameworks

Using the specific language and conceptual frameworks of the call

02. Explicit Connection

Connecting your research program to the funder's mission explicitly

Designing a Project

From Broad Interest to Focused Research Questions

Project Feasibility

01. Budget & Timeline

Matching methodology to budget and timeline.

02. Achievable Scope

Defining scope that is achievable but meaningful.

03. Constraints & Impact

Thinking about deliverables and impact within constraints.

The Funnel Model

01. Narrowing Sequence

Moving step-by-step from general Topic → Problem → Purpose → Research Question.

02. Funding Alignment

Ensuring your final project design is systematically aligned with funding guidelines.

Summary & Next Steps

Wrap-Up

Key Takeaways

01. Start Small

Small grants are powerful stepping stones — design accordingly.

02. Be Proactive

Opportunities exist in many places — be proactive and systematic.

03. Plan Ahead

Plan ahead using recurring cycles.

04. Feasibility First

Read calls carefully for fit and feasibility before investing time.

05. Stay Focused

Narrow your focus to match both your passion and the funder's priorities.

Resources

Shared Documents

Check the resources document for a list of organizations, sample calendars, and links to active calls.

Next Steps

Q&A Session

We will now open the floor for questions and discussion regarding your grant strategy.