



## **Grants & Sponsored Programs Strategic Plan FY19**

### **Our Mission**

*The Office of Grants & Sponsored Programs is dedicated to assisting faculty, staff and administration in the identification and acquisition of extramural funds, promoting a vibrant and supportive environment for scholarly and extramural activities, and fostering sustainable, principled and ethical conduct in research and extramural activities.*

### **Objectives for FY19**

The Office of Grants & Sponsored Programs (OGSP) has three primary objectives during FY19, as detailed in the sections below

- Grow and Diversify our research and external funding portfolio
- Advance Strategic Communication among internal & external stakeholders
- Improve processes for OGSP operations

### **Grow and Diversify our Research Portfolio**

With the beginning of new presidential leadership and vitalized interests in pursuit of external funding at Mansfield University, the Office of Grants & Sponsored Programs is responsive to a transformation to becoming a more research-intensive university. The primary purpose of this document is to outline a strategic plan and culture change focused on actions that will increase extramural sponsored research funding. There are several reasons to focus on extramural sponsored research funds:

- Extramural sponsored research funds bring much needed financial support to researchers to conduct their research activities – it allows researchers to purchase equipment, to hire students and postdoctoral researchers, and travel to collaborate and disseminate research results.
- Extramural sponsored research will provide students with research experience and increase their interests, knowledge base and preparedness for post-graduate and professional experiences.
- Extramural sponsored research helps introduce our students to the forefront of scholarly activity, either directly as a participant, or via classes with funded faculty.

- The amount of extramural sponsored research expenditures is a common metric by which research universities are ranked.
- Extramural sponsored projects contribute to new knowledge, the local economy via salary lines, and direct expenditures.

While the amount of extramural funds received is viewed as an indicator of research productivity for a university, the real value of extramural funds is that they help provide the Principal Investigators (PIs) the personnel, equipment, and travel funds needed to achieve their research goals. It is incumbent upon the university to ensure that our researchers who receive extramural sponsored research funds are provided the environment required to achieve their research goals. In this document, I focus on strategies that we can implement to help grow our extramural sponsored research funds, recognizing that this is but one imprecise measure of research and scholarly excellence. By necessity, this will be a 'bootstrap' process, given that our capacity to implement some of the recommendations below will be limited by available funds – as our extramural sponsored research grows, our ability to foster additional growth will increase in tandem.

### **Specific Recommendations**

1. OGSP will support faculty capacity to submit competitive proposals. We are working to identify faculty with a strong potential to prepare and submit competitive proposals, and we will provide the preparation of the non-technical aspects of grant proposals, arrange for program officer consultations, and assist in coordinating resources to develop narratives, budgets, timelines, etc.
2. SPINPlus training available for all faculty members, including helping all faculty members set up an account and understand grant search protocols and establish email alerts. SPINPlus is a subscription-based resource that enables principal investigators to quickly and easily identify funding opportunities relevant to their research and/or creative interests. OGSP also can establish targeted funding opportunities search and notification through government and foundation sources.
3. OGSP will identify, disseminate and interpret at least 60 notices of funding opportunities originating from government, foundation and/or corporate sources, with at least 20 funding extramural sponsored research.
4. OGSP will help identify, pursue and maintain collaborative research arrangements with other academic institutions, private industry, etc. that could qualify for external funding.
5. Relationships with funding prospects will be cultivated and maintained for the purpose of promoting faculty research and advocating for external support, including federal, state and regional government agencies and officials, foundation officials, and key community leaders involved in grants.
6. OGSP sets a goal of submitting a minimum of 15 new grant applications in FY19, with at least 5 having the expressed purpose of supporting extramural sponsored research.
7. OGSP will work with faculty in the response to PASSHE FPDC RFP by identifying and promoting the highest-caliber of professional development concepts, preparing competitive proposals, and navigating procedures of the Council.
8. Faculty and staff will be encouraged to provide input concerning academic, departmental and grant-seeking goals, including new initiatives and enhancements to existing programs.

## Advance Strategic Communication

It is important for the campus community be aware of the presence and services offered through the Office of Grants & Sponsored Programs. Since the re-establishment of a grants development presence at Mansfield University, the Interim Provost has proactively notified the community of our presence and services, and actively encourages faculty and stakeholders to contact the OGSP Director to explore external funding possibilities.

OGSP maintains and continually updates the dedicated website pages that support our mission and which provides easy navigation to all of our services and information. The web pages for the Office of Grants & Sponsored Programs retains the historic content and adheres to the protocols and design developed by the Communications & Marketing office. In addition to permanent content, such as forms, policies and common grants-related links, the office will incorporate dynamic features, such as news items, trainings, and workshops that are available to the campus community.

OGSP has met with many academic and administrative departments to learn of goals and objectives, gather information about funding needs and priorities, and to develop the quality of relationships necessary in an effective grants program. Further, OGSP Director has presented a grants development seminar through the Center for Advancement of Teaching & Learning and has been an invited lecturer on the topic in a Professional Writing course.

Since the university lacked a grants and sponsored programs presence for many years, grant searches and pursuits were left to the efforts of individuals. As a result, the pursuit of external funding lacked prioritization, collaboration, leveraging, or evaluation. OSGP has collected some information about past and recent funding pursuits and has initiated control over the administration of existing grant awards. Also, the office continues to seek out information about failed proposals - when they were generated, by whom, and for what purpose. It is the intent of this process to grow from past experiences and create a well-informed portfolio of past, current and future prospects and a proper strategic plan for a cohesive, coherent approach to institutional grantsmanship.

Proactive measures are taken to discourage the practice of faculty members contacting external funding sources on their own without notifying OGSP first of their plans to do so. As we build our capacity to secure external funding for university needs, we need to make sure such efforts are coordinated and prioritized. We stress it is critical that any ideas or plans regarding the pursuit of external funds first be shared with the Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs, who will provide the necessary guidance and feedback. We want to avoid situations where the university may be planning to apply for a large grant from an agency or foundation, when, unbeknownst to the office or the administration, a faculty member communicates with the same agency or foundation seeking funding for an idea or project that hasn't been vetted through the OGSP.

OSGP is connected with PASSHE grants officers and the Colleges of Liberal Arts Sponsored Programs (CLASP) to connect our work to the broader environments of state and national higher education and sponsored programs.

## Improve Processes for OSP Operations

We have been working to improve our processes. We will continue to train departments and faculty to use Pivot and to alert specific faculty with extramural funding information that may be pertinent to their research. We have asked all department heads to let us visit their regular department meetings so we can do a quick demonstration of SPINPlus and discuss how OGSP can help their faculty identify extramural funding opportunities, and help them prepare and submit a competitive proposal.

Our university endeavors to ensure a high level of satisfaction with interactions with, and the services of, OGSP staff, and we will continue to provide top-shelf service and support. OGSP Director, Phillip Swank, will assist with seeking funding opportunities for faculty – we've sent out email to department heads to forward to faculty, asking the faculty to forward the research and project-interests that will help OGSP find funding opportunities. Notices of funding opportunities are readily shared with faculty, staff and stakeholders that may meet these interests and institutional needs. This practice keeps the campus community well-informed of opportunities, prompts dialogue on internal goals and funding applicability, and refined understanding and strategy for grantsmanship.

OGSP will work towards identifying interdisciplinary initiatives to increase the likelihood of receiving extramural funding and advancing team-based research. we will facilitate dialogue and relationships with local and regional agencies to improve community development when possible and make an impact in our community's and region's future.

OGSP Director conducts outreach with various departments - Student Life, Facilities, Alumni Affairs, Career Services, Library, etc. - to ensure that pursuits of external funding aligns with institutional mission, goals and integrates broad input and planning/design. Director meets with Academic Affairs and Financial Services to discuss pre/post-award issues, both general and specific. The Assitant Controller, Colleen Jackson, maintains fiscal management practices and records for each grant award, and keeps close communications with the Director to ensure the effective administration of external funds and the completion of programs and projects on-time and on-budget and compliant with regulations and contract terms.

OGSP hopes to help facilitate and work with an Advancement team that would promote a culture of philanthropy with stakeholders, coordinate the pursuits of external support, and leverage the grants and gifts received by the University.

OSGP maintains files and spreadsheets for funding opportunities identified, shared and disposed; for tracking status of grant application preparation, submission and outcome, and for contracts management. A system is in place that facilitates a quick review and understanding of the external funding possibilities, pursuits and results. OSGP will utilize these spreadsheets in the annual performance evaluation of the Director's work performance and the effectiveness of our operations and services.

## Current Major Funding Strategies

Project	Potential Funding Sources
1. Interdisciplinary Simulation Learning	U.S. Department of Labor Appalachian Regional Commission Josiah Macy Foundation
2. Active Assailant Response Program	Walmart Foundation Shell Oil, Dominion Energy U.S. Department of Justice
3. STEM Outreach and Programs	PA Department of Education National Science Foundation
4. Grant Science Laboratory Enhancements	Gladys Brooks Foundation National Science Foundation
5. Cancer Tumor Research	National Institutes of Health Elsa U. Pardee Foundation
6. Microplastics Research	National Science Foundation National Institutes of Health Heinz Endowments, Beckman Foundation
7. Strait Planetarium Enhancements	Institute of Museum & Library Services NASA Office of Education
8. Undergraduate Research	Council on Undergraduate Research National Science Foundation
9. Ecosystems Studies	Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units - Chesapeake Watershed CESU - North Atlantic Coast CESU Repsol Energy
10. Student Wellness Programs - Campus Sexual Violence, Substance Use	PA Department of Education PA Alcohol & Other Drugs Coalition