

# Developing a Funding Strategy

Michigan State University •  
Bill Hart-Davidson • @billhd  
• hartdav2@msu.edu

Welcome! This series is designed to help folks at all stages of career in the arts & humanities to do two important things. 1) plan and 2) practice those things that allow you to grow the reach and impact of your work so that more people can benefit.

Each week we'll have a framework – a heuristic or thinking tool that I will introduce to you and ask you to spend some time with in order to make plans for yourself and the folks you collaborate closely with. My hope is that each week will inspire more questions and ideas we can take up in the next session!

## Agenda

- I: Charting Your Path to Intellectual Leadership
- II: Creating an Idea Others Will Invest In
- III: Building a Collaborative Team
- IV: Developing a Funding Strategy



In our final session of this series, my message will be simple. You should not chase funding. Your Path to Intellectual Leadership need not be guided by someone else's RFP.

You should, instead, develop a plan for getting others to invest in your work. This is a funding strategy, but it goes a bit beyond that too.

▶ Questions we'll try to answer ...

- I: Where is my career taking me? when is the right time to go after grant funding?
- II: What kinds of projects need grant support and what kind of projects get funded?
- III: How can I build a track record of success with a team that will make funders confident in our ability to be good stewards of resources?
- IV: How can I attract sustained support for my work without selling out my goals and values?

Over the full project lifecycle – which we talked about last week – you will need others' help and you may also need resources. Last week we practiced some planning techniques and team-building strategies so you can better know what you need and when you need it.

Now we'll talk about those things in more detail. But the message remains the same: it's always about asking folks to invest in your idea. And when you do that, there is one very important rule to remember.

Rule #1



# You Must Invest In Your Own Work!

(or Nobody Else Will)

You must invest in your own work! Conceptually, this is key because it is a very loud signal of your priorities. But pragmatically it is important too. Because the most important ingredient for success of your idea is something that you have a lot of control over: your time and energy. Your focus. Your attention.

This is not to say that you don't have obligations elsewhere, but it is a recognition that when you have time to allocate, your willingness to focus on your own work will be a make or break proposition. With it, you may succeed...but without it, you will almost certainly fail to bring your idea to fruition.

What do you need?  
Who has it?      **\_YOUR PROJECT HERE\_**

- Time .....
- Expertise .....
- Connections/Referrals.....
- Feedback .....
- Space .....
- Consumables .....
- Money .....

So...time is at the top of the list of things you need. Here's the rest of the list. And yes...this is pretty much it. And I would submit that this list of items, with modifications for specificity, is the basis of just about every grant budget. Money is at the bottom for a few reasons. But let's talk about the most important of those reasons.

Money can't get your work done! Especially the kind of wonderful, creative, transformative work most of you here do and want to do more of. Money, alone, can't buy it.

So working down from the list, ask yourself, at each stage of my project's lifecycle, what do I need to get to the next stage? And who has it or has control of it?

Having worked on, consulted, and reviewed hundreds if not thousands of grant proposals...I've put the items here in order that I think is most crucial, most often. If I'm reviewing, I'm going to look for these things in this order: Do the team members have the time to do the work? Do they have the expertise on the team? Do they have the right relationships as represented in the supporting materials? Are they getting the advice and counsel they need along the way (critical for a long project), Do they

have the right space? Equipment? Access to materials? And do they have the money to ensure that everyone can start and stay with this as a priority (or will they have to do something else to sustain their livelihood instead?)

## \_"Greening Green" - Bioremediation of Arsenic Paint & Paintings\_

- Time .....
- Expertise .....Molecular Biologist .....
- Connections/Referrals.....
- Feedback .....
- Space .....Wet Lab.....
- Consumables .....RadiolIsotopes.....
- Money .....

**Where are the opportunities for *you* to invest?  
Where do you depend on others?**

Let's look at an example... this a real project, an interdisciplinary Art & Science effort. The artist was examining the tension between the toxic substances needed to create the pigments for green paint – which famously include arsenic – and the procedures necessary to bioremediate these toxins, which also change the colors. TL;DR – Green isn't green!

The project required some interesting things, like radioisotopes and a place to safely store and use them. Also people who knew what they were doing in a biochemistry lab as well as an art studio!

**YOUR PROJECT HERE**

**Sharing time!**

What do you need?  
Who has it?

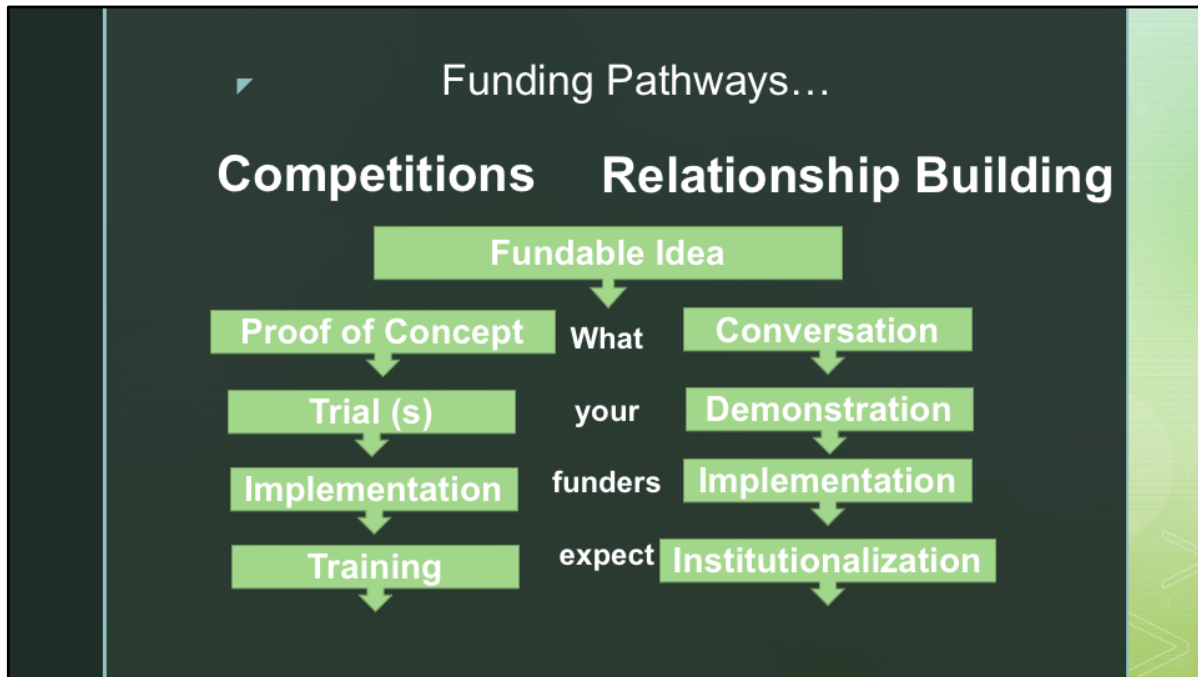
- Time .....
- Expertise .....
- Connections/Referrals.....
- Feedback .....
- Space .....
- Consumables .....
- Money .....

**Where are the opportunities for *you* to invest?  
Where do you depend on others?**

Take a moment to make a list for your project. Consider what phase your project is at now...and what it would take to get it to the next level. What do you need? Who has it? (Tip: it's fine if some of these things are blank or if you already have them!)

Request: if you are a TT faculty person, don't forget that in many cases you are already paid to do research up to 40% of your effort. So consider that on the top line here: how much of that can you/will you invest?






Once you have your shopping list, or lists, and can make clear requests for what you need, when, and what it will allow you to do...you no longer need to be limited to asking for those resources from just one source.

For Artists and Humanists, we have two viable funding pathways that ask and/or expect slightly different things... It is a good thing to pursue both whenever you can.

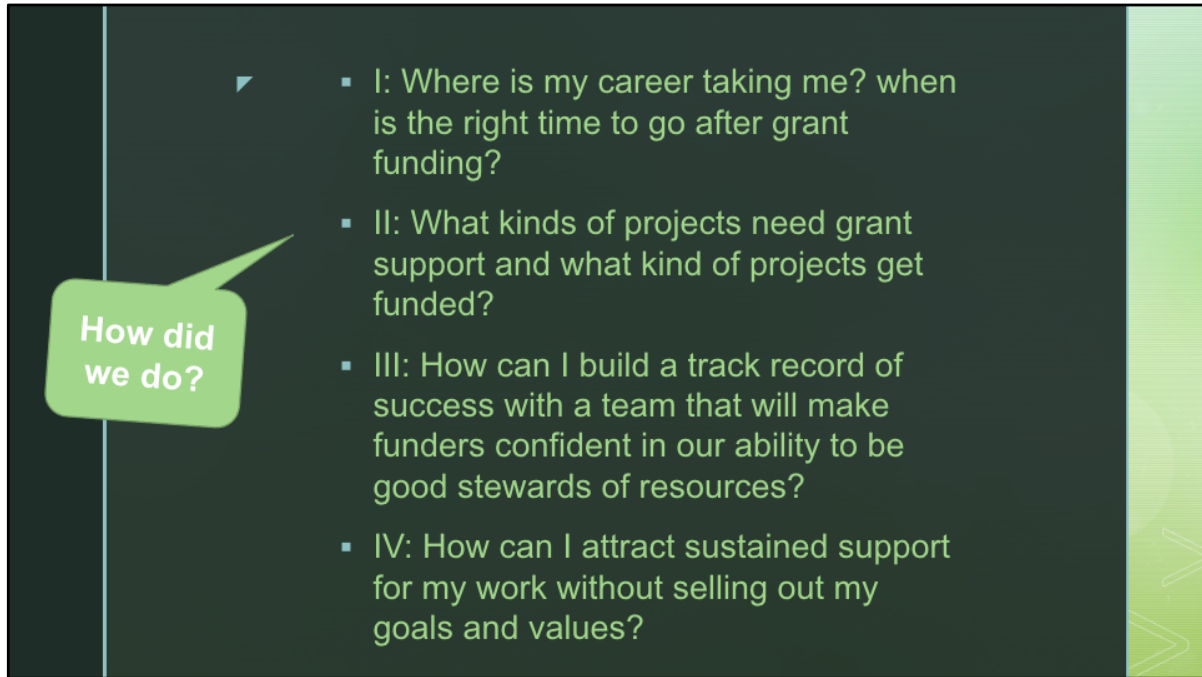
Competition pathways are generally via open RFPs and include government agencies, foundations, and internal programs. Relationship Building, as a pathway, includes both foundation sources as well as donors.



Good Funding Strategies...

- Have multiple options in both funding pathways
- Create *new fundable ideas* as they move others through the lifecycle
- Seek only the investments they need at the appropriate stage
- Don't chase money, attract investors

Good funding strategies change your approach to grant seeking in a positive way. You'll submit more proposals, with less effort, because you have more of the key components ready to hand.



How did we do?

- I: Where is my career taking me? when is the right time to go after grant funding?
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How did we do? Do you feel confident that you know how to practice these things?  
That you can get better at them?



It's been a pleasure to be with all of you! Please be in touch if I can help you!