



Foundation Relations at Michigan State University

The MSU Office of Foundation Relations is the central point of contact for private foundations seeking to connect with Michigan State University's research, programs, and people.

We foster strategic partnerships between MSU and philanthropic organizations to advance shared priorities and create lasting impact in Michigan and around the world.

Our team combines deep knowledge of MSU's faculty, academic strengths, and institutional goals with experience in private philanthropy. We help foundations invest in opportunities across the university. From innovative research and student support to community engagement and academic programs.

| <u>Help for MSU Faculty & Staff</u> | <u>Current Funding Opportunities</u> | <u>Meet With Our Team</u> |
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| Our team can assist faculty & staff through all stages of the funding process. | A curated list of new and upcoming funding opportunities | We're your partners in building impactful, foundation funded initiatives |

How Can We Help?

The MSU Office of Foundation Relations supports faculty at every stage of the foundation funding process. From identifying potential funders and reviewing proposals to building relationships and navigating reporting requirements. With strong ties to private foundations and a deep understanding of MSU's research strengths, we're here to help you move from idea to impact.

How We Support You

We partner with faculty and staff through every stage of the foundation funding journey:

- **Strategic Proposal Development** – We help align your ideas with foundation priorities, shape your narrative for clarity and impact, and provide lessons from successful submissions.
- **Funding Identification** – Receive curated lists of open opportunities, or request tailored prospect research based on your project's scope and goals.
- **Foundation Engagement** – Tap into our network of philanthropic relationships. We coordinate visits, advise on communications, and guide you on stewarding funder relationships.
- **Pre- & Post-Award Support** – From budgeting and compliance to reporting requirements, we collaborate with College Research Administrators and the Office of Sponsored Programs to ease the administrative load.
- **Resources & Training** – Access funder profiles, sample proposals, institutional data, RFP lists, and workshops on prospecting and proposal writing.

Resources for Faculty

Access tools to support your fundraising efforts, including:

- **Funder & Grant Readiness Resources** – [Library of funder profiles](#), based on topical research.
- **Training & Proposal Development**– Group and individual workshops in prospecting and proposal writing.
- **Standard Institutional Information for Proposals** – [990s, operating budgets, board lists, and standard proposal information](#).
- **Requests for Proposals (RFPs)** – [Active Foundation RFP List](#) – Listings of new and upcoming funding opportunities.

Sponsored Project Support

For proposal development and award management, explore:

- [Office of Sponsored Programs](#) - Tools and guidance for proposal development.



The Funding Process: Step by Step

Getting Started with Foundation Funding

Whether you're pursuing your first foundation grant or seeking support for an established initiative, MSU Foundation Relations is here to help every step of the way. Below is your step-by-step guide to the funding process.

1. Define Your Project

Clarify your project's goals, team, timeline, budget, and anticipated outcomes. Thinking strategically from the start ensures a stronger funding pathway.

2. Understand How Foundations Work

Foundations fund initiatives that reflect their missions and values. They typically support well-defined programs or research, not broad operational costs. The closer the alignment, the stronger your proposal.

3. Explore Our Resources

Leverage our curated [RFP database](#), [Prospect Library](#) of top foundations by research area, and [Foundation Directory Online](#) (Free access through MSU Library.) These tools can help you identify promising funding matches.

4. Connect with Our Team

When you're ready, share your project with us. We'll analyze funding patterns, identify potential partners, and help shape your approach.

Ready to begin? [Click here to schedule a consultation.](#)

5. Align Your Goals with the Right Funders

Dig deeper than keywords, study funders' past grants, restrictions, and true giving patterns. We'll help you "speak their language" and position your project for fit.

6. Strengthen Your Proposal

We provide targeted feedback on clarity, structure, and strategy. Our experience with past submissions – and existing foundation relationships—helps you craft a compelling case.

7. Prepare Your Application

Start early. Gather all required materials, tailor your proposal to the specific funder, and carefully follow instructions. Each foundation is unique; attention to detail makes the difference.

8. Submit with Confidence

Allow time for internal review and submit ahead of deadlines. Our team will help ensure your proposal is polished, compliant, and competitive.

9. Follow Up and Stay Connected

If funded, MSU supports stewardship, reporting, and future relationship-building. If not, we'll help you learn from feedback and refine your approach. Persistence is often the key to eventual success.

Ready to Get Started?

Whether you're pursuing your first foundation grant or leveraging established funding, **MSU Foundation Relations is here to help.**

Together, we'll transform strong ideas into funded initiatives that advance knowledge and create lasting impact.