

[Science Home](#) >
 [Science Careers](#) >
 [Science Career Magazine](#) >
 [Science Careers Blog](#) >
 Students Are Doin' It for Themselves

Science Careers Blog

< Older: [A European Road Map for Aging Research](#)
 > Newer: [A Meeting to Stem the "Arab Brain Drain"](#)

November 15, 2011

Students Are Doin' It for Themselves



Finding funding during the down economy is a hot topic this week at [Neuroscience 2011](#) in Washington, DC. Times are tough even for seasoned PIs, let alone graduate students. That might be why a [poster](#) here at the meeting caught my eye.

Last year, a group of neuroscience graduate students at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, decided to start a local student-run grant agency. They appealed to their university's [Biomedical Graduate Education Organization](#) and received \$10,000. They formed a student-run review committee and adopted a scoring system based on NIH's review criteria. They invited Georgetown biomedical graduate students to apply for small grants to help them, say, learn a new technique or fund travel to a conference.

That first year, 11 students applied and 5 grants were awarded, ranging from \$1,500 to \$4,500. Considering the project a success, this year the group applied to the university for more funding and received \$15,000. This year, 5 grants were split among 10 applicants.

The grantees aren't the only ones who appreciate the program, says Patrick Forcelli, one of the founders of the program and co-author of the poster. Students on the review committee say the process has helped them prepare their own grant applications and recognize what agencies like the NIH are looking for, Forcelli says.

By Michael Price on November 15, 2011 9:00 AM | [Permalink](#)

 Like
 DISQUS

and 13 others liked this.

Add New Comment [Login](#)

Type your comment here.

Showing 3 comments Sort by newest first

Kad57

I was also a student reviewer for this program. I have to say, that after having sat on the review session, it was one of the first times I actually felt like a "real" scientist. I found myself interested in the grant ideas and the way in which they were presented, even those that were outside my particular field. Additionally, it became clear that this mechanism would be able to supplement the student's thesis and provide an opportunity to entertain a 'pet project' that had the potential to augment the student's career. Further, I was extremely impressed with the concepts of my fellow student whom had written he grants as well as my colleagues whom engaged in the review process. During the review, I felt we each asked relevant questions and highlighted both the strengths and weaknesses of the grants appropriately. Overall, it was a tremendously productive experience!

3 months ago [Like](#) [Reply](#)

Student Reviewer1

I am a graduate student who participated in this grant program as a reviewer. This experience was extremely valuable for me. Reviewing other grants allows one to gain perspective regarding what is required to produce an excellent and competitive grant application, including preliminary data, proposed experiments, logical flow and writing style etc. This experience will undoubtedly help me as I move forward in my career and write my own grant applications. In addition, the review process allowed for very interesting scientific dialogue amongst all the reviewers. I learned about other areas in biomedical science that I am not very familiar with and also had a great time!

4 months ago [Like](#) [Reply](#)



scicareers

Student Reviewer1: Thanks for sharing your first-hand experience. Your experience, I think, is not unusual. Many who have participated in grant-reviewing panels have found the experience illuminating and enjoyable.

Come back and contribute often!

Jim Austin, Editor
Science Careers

4 months ago [in reply to Student Reviewer1](#) [Like](#) [Reply](#)

 [Subscribe by email](#)
 [RSS](#)

blog comments powered by [DISQUS](#)

Science Career Magazine

About this Blog

Get frequent updates from the science-career trenches including advice, opinion, news, funding opportunities, and links to other career-related resources. Our bloggers include Science Careers editors and staff, and select outsiders, including:

- » Jim Austin, Editor of Science Careers, @SciCareerEditor on Twitter
- » Elisabeth Pain, Barcelona-based Contributing Editor
- » Donisha Adams, Science Careers Publications Assistant

Our guest bloggers include:

- » [Dan Albert MD, MS](#), Emmett A. Humble Distinguished Director of the Eye Research Institute at the University of Wisconsin.
- » [Beryl Lief Benderly](#), author of the [Taken for Granted](#) column on Science Careers;
- » [Siri Carpenter](#), a regular contributor to Science Careers;
- » [Chelsea Wald](#), a freelance science writer and contributor to Science Careers;

If you are interested in blogging for Science Careers, send us a writing sample and tell us what you're interested in. Our standards are high, but you never know.

Subscribe to this site's RSS feed [RSS](#)

Archives

- » [January 2012 \(11\)](#)
- » [December 2011 \(16\)](#)
- » [November 2011 \(30\)](#)
- » [October 2011 \(20\)](#)
- » [September 2011 \(26\)](#)
- » [August 2011 \(26\)](#)
- » [July 2011 \(24\)](#)
- » [June 2011 \(17\)](#)
- » [May 2011 \(22\)](#)
- » [April 2011 \(31\)](#)
- » [March 2011 \(28\)](#)
- » [February 2011 \(16\)](#)
- » [January 2011 \(20\)](#)
- » [December 2010 \(22\)](#)
- » [November 2010 \(8\)](#)
- » [October 2010 \(18\)](#)
- » [September 2010 \(18\)](#)
- » [August 2010 \(15\)](#)
- » [July 2010 \(19\)](#)
- » [June 2010 \(26\)](#)
- » [May 2010 \(24\)](#)
- » [April 2010 \(28\)](#)
- » [March 2010 \(28\)](#)
- » [February 2010 \(28\)](#)
- » [January 2010 \(27\)](#)
- » [December 2009 \(20\)](#)
- » [November 2009 \(23\)](#)
- » [October 2009 \(21\)](#)
- » [September 2009 \(26\)](#)
- » [August 2009 \(13\)](#)
- » [July 2009 \(20\)](#)
- » [June 2009 \(18\)](#)
- » [May 2009 \(17\)](#)
- » [April 2009 \(20\)](#)
- » [March 2009 \(13\)](#)
- » [February 2009 \(14\)](#)
- » [January 2009 \(27\)](#)
- » [December 2008 \(15\)](#)
- » [November 2008 \(10\)](#)
- » [October 2008 \(17\)](#)
- » [September 2008 \(19\)](#)
- » [August 2008 \(17\)](#)
- » [July 2008 \(22\)](#)
- » [June 2008 \(25\)](#)
- » [May 2008 \(9\)](#)
- » [April 2008 \(15\)](#)
- » [March 2008 \(16\)](#)
- » [February 2008 \(22\)](#)
- » [January 2008 \(28\)](#)
- » [December 2007 \(14\)](#)
- » [November 2007 \(28\)](#)
- » [October 2007 \(25\)](#)
- » [September 2007 \(16\)](#)
- » [August 2007 \(34\)](#)
- » [July 2007 \(33\)](#)
- » [June 2007 \(36\)](#)
- » [May 2007 \(11\)](#)
- » [April 2007 \(4\)](#)
- » [March 2007 \(7\)](#)

[ScienceCareers Blog Archives](#)

Categories

- » [Academic Careers \(106\)](#)
- » [Alan Kotok \(84\)](#)
- » [Alternative Careers \(21\)](#)
- » [Americas \(371\)](#)
- » [Angela Martin \(1\)](#)
- » [Angela Posada-Swofford \(10\)](#)
- » [Asia \(43\)](#)
- » [Beryl Lief Benderly \(201\)](#)
- » [CTSciNet \(45\)](#)
- » [Chelsea Wald \(2\)](#)
- » [Conference Board Analysis \(19\)](#)
- » [Dan Albert \(23\)](#)
- » [Donisha Adams \(3\)](#)
- » [Editor's Blog \(149\)](#)
- » [Elisabeth Pain \(88\)](#)
- » [Europe \(211\)](#)
- » [Feedback \(7\)](#)
- » [Interviews \(7\)](#)
- » [Jose Fernandez \(2\)](#)
- » [Kate Travis \(28\)](#)
- » [Michael Price \(12\)](#)
- » [MvSciNet \(27\)](#)
- » [Pharmaceutical \(2\)](#)
- » [Siri Carpenter](#)

Blogroll

This Week on Science Careers

- » [Shifting Sands in Northeastern Brazil](#)
- » [Building Up Brazilian Brain Research](#)
- » [Science in Northeastern Brazil](#)
- » [Brazil's Science Culture Shock](#)
- » [Wanted: B.S. and M.S. Scientists in Life Sciences Industries](#)

[More from Science Careers](#)

[SEARCH JOBS](#)
[BROWSE JOBS](#)

Search for Jobs

Enter Keyword

Select a Region

Choose...

[Advanced Search](#)
[Search](#)

Quick Links

For Jobseekers My Science Career Find a Job Meetings & Events Tools & Tips Job Seeker's FAQ	For Employers Search Resumes Post a Job Contact	Career Magazine Previous Issues	Grants & Funding Funding News	About Our Company Our Staff Partners & Alliances Testimonials & Awards	About Our Site Terms of Use Privacy Policy	Advertise with Science Careers
---	---	---	---	--	---	---------------------------------------