



As applying for grants and grant bidding is an integral part of academic publishing, we asked some of our authors and editors on their own experiences of this process and what advice they would give to others.

### **Marcelline Block**

Edited:

*World Film Locations: Paris*

*Directory of World Cinema: Sweden*

*World Film Locations: Las Vegas*

*World Film Locations: Marseilles*

*World Film Locations: Prague*

*Directory of World Cinema: Belgium*

*Fan Phenomena: Marilyn Monroe*

*World Film Locations: Boston*

### **As an author or editor, what would you say are the biggest challenges when applying for grants?**

Some of the biggest challenges include finding a grant for which the author and his/her project meet all the application criteria/requirements. The grant application must also of course meet the deadline (including providing all required information: a letter from the publisher, the introduction and/or a sample chapter or table of contents of your project). Putting everything together is time consuming and can even take away valuable research/writing time from the project. However, it is important to do so in order to obtain a grant. Furthermore, if you are applying for several different grants, each application needs to be tailored to that application's specific requirements.

### **In what ways do you persuade your institution to give you grants?**

--It depends on the different requirements of the grant/type of grant for which the author is applying. But in general, one must show that his/her project will make an important contribution and have a positive impact upon his/her academic discipline. Furthermore, the author will have to demonstrate not only what his/her project contributes to the field in question, but also, to the corpus of human knowledge. Will this project pave the way for new research/scholarship/provocative debate? How is the project different from previous/current competing titles? The institution also needs a guarantee that the project will in fact be published, which is why it often requires that the book be in its final stages (i.e., the grant will cover the final stages of manuscript preparation rather than initial book research), either a signed contract from the

publisher or a letter from the publisher stating that they will publish the book contingent upon final peer/quality review.

### **What advice would you give to other authors who are also looking for grants?**

--Be sure to apply as often and as early as possible, since some grants have rolling deadlines and therefore, the later one applies, the less chance she/he has of obtaining funding. Remember to apply for as many grants as possible, whether from one's home institution, private foundations, educational organizations/societies, government agencies. Several organizations for writers, such as PEN America and Poets & Writers, compile comprehensive grant databases containing thousands of grants for which to apply: <https://www.pen.org/ns-grants-and-awards> and <http://www.pw.org/grants>.

The AAUW (American Association of University Women) also holds a grant competition for short-term publication grants (<http://aauw-ampub.scholarsapply.org/Eligibility>), as well as for postdoctoral research leave (<http://aauw-ampostdoc.scholarsapply.org>).

If your research concerns the cinema or literature of a foreign country, I would suggest also searching grant databases in that country and/or its embassies in your home country for grant possibilities.

Before applying, be sure to check that you meet all eligibility requirements for the grant—there might be only one issue that could disqualify you for a particular grant and therefore, before spending time/energy working on that application, it is best to check to make sure that you and/or the project meet all the criteria (for example, some grant applications may be limited to authors of first-time books or to books published by tenure-track assistant professors, etc).

Attending conferences is also a good place to find out about grant applications from universities/departments/organizations. Many academic scholarly societies/organizations now have competitive applications for publication subventions, such as the ACLA (American Comparative Literature Association), which offers the First Book Subvention Program competition (<http://www.acla.org/book-subvention>), while the NeMLA (the NorthEast Modern Language Association) has an Annual Book Award Fellowship application (<http://www.buffalo.edu/nemla/awards/book-award.html>). If you are a member of an academic/scholarly society, it is important and helpful to ask about any grants competition the society is coordinating.

Finally, if you do indeed receive the grant, please be sure to follow through with its requirements upon the book's publication. This means properly acknowledging the grant's support according to the grant awarding institution's instructions: does the grant awarding institution receive its own separate acknowledgment page, or is it included in the book's general acknowledgments? Oftentimes there is a required statement prepared by the grantee that specifically thanks the institution and the grant it awarded. This statement must be included in the book's acknowledgments/frontispiece. It is imperative that the grant is acknowledged in the book upon publication.

## **How have grants helped you with your research and publications?**

--Obtaining publication grants has helped me a great deal with my own research and publications. Receiving a publication grant certainly increases that publication's prestige, since after receiving a grant, the publication is then considered award winning, which makes a great difference for the publication's reception, recognition, and marketability. The name of the publication grant often appears alongside the book's title when it is listed in library catalogues such as WorldCat and also on bookseller websites such as Amazon.com.

My grant-winning publications have also been strongly promoted by the institution which gave the grant, Columbia University, which displays the publication's title and cover on its website, as well as listing the name of the publication, its author(s) and publisher in the annual grants report.

Obtaining a grant has helped me ensure that the book is published in a timely manner, as well as has allowed for the addition of a final layer of book preparations (such as additional final copyediting/bringing on full-time staff members dedicated entirely to the completion of the publication). In one instance a publication grant allowed me and my co-editor to hire a professional book cover designer who otherwise would have been out of reach due to lack of budget for such expenses. The result was a truly striking and high quality cover that drew readers' attention immediately. This in turn improved the book's visibility and marketability; for example, the book was prominently displayed in the front window of a well-known independent bookstore. This cover would have not happened had it not been for the grant we received.

**Flavia Laviosa**

Edited:

*Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies*

**As an author or editor, what would you say are the biggest challenges when applying for grants?**

Write a persuasive proposal and pitch the journal idea to a senior officer of your academic institution.

**In what ways do you persuade your institution to give you grants?**

Illustrate the aims and scope of the journal, demonstrate the journal's uniqueness in the field and urgency to publish it so that they will be willing to support it financially.

**Do you have any tips on grant bidding?**

Use quotes from scholars in the field that share your vision, provide a detailed list of names of people who will be part of the editorial boards to show that you will be supported by these scholars in your endeavour.

**What advice would you give to other authors who are also looking for grants?**

Infuse passion in your proposal, connect with people in authority and talk to them about your idea. Seek support among institutional alumni.

**How have grants helped you with your research and publications?**

I have been funded by Wellesley College (through an internal competitive grant system) in all my publications with support for travel and research for the past 23 years and I am grateful for this financial support that has allowed me to pursue my academic interests and publish regularly.

**Katherine Larsen**

Edited:

*Fan Phenomena: Supernatural*

*World Film Locations: Washington D.C*

*Journal of Fandom Studies*

**As an author or editor, what would you say are the biggest challenges when applying for grant?**

Just knowing what grants are available either from one's own institution or from other institutions (government grants, etc) is difficult and finding this information is often a large and time-consuming undertaking.

**In what ways do you persuade your institution to give you grants?**

I was fortunate enough to ask for some seed money from my institution at a time when they were in a better financial position and when I had a particularly helpful program director who was willing to offer me a small amount of money just to get things started.

**Do you have any tips on grant bidding?**

Since my funds came directly from my program, I didn't have to engage in this process.

**What advice would you give to other authors who are also looking for grants?**

Begin locally. Find out if your department (or another department at your institution) has funds. Then contact your university's grants/funding office. Most institutions will have one, though sometimes you might have to go digging to find it. Once found, it's surprising how many funding opportunities are out there that you might never have known about. I would also consider other sources of assistance that do not require direct funding. For instance, I had two editorial assistants who received credit from their department (in this case Honors) for helping me with the day to day running of the journal (i.e. processing new submissions, keeping track of reviewer's responses, contacting authors, etc.)

**How have grants helped you with your research and publications?**

The small amount of money I was given helped facilitate the first meeting of the Editorial Board of my journal and helped to pay a \*small\* stipend to an editorial assistant one summer.