

A Brief Introduction to SPIN, SMARTS, and GRC

Novice and experienced grant writers alike sometimes struggle with finding funders for their work. Though CMU's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs is happy to conduct a thorough search on your behalf, we recognize that conducting your own search might be an important first step in thinking through your project. Fortunately, CMU subscribes to a number of helpful grant databases to facilitate searches for federal, state and private sponsors. Each of the search engines described below and an electronic copy of this brief tutorial are linked to **ORGS's Faculty and Staff External Funding** website at the following address (at the bottom of the webpage) under the title:

Search Engines and Resources:

https://www.cmich.edu/office_provost/ORGS/FacultyandStaffExternalFunding/Pages/default.aspx

Sponsored Projects Information Network (SPIN)

SPIN is accessible from any campus computer and provides detailed information on funding opportunities offered by more than 1,200 federal and non-federal sponsoring agencies. A variety of qualifiers allow users to filter retrieved data by keywords or phrases, project category, geographic limitations and applicant type. Alternately, users can click the "Funding Guides" tab and read the latest requests for proposal (RFPs) released by the federal government in the Federal Register or browse the current contracting opportunities published in the Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) digest.

Spin Matching and Researcher Transmittal Systems (SMARTS)

SMARTS* is InfoEd Global's proprietary funding opportunity alerts service. Leveraging data in our SPIN funding opportunities database, users can configure automation for any SPIN saved search to generate daily or weekly email notices of newly added or modified opportunities that meet the criteria of the saved search.

Simply configure a search in SPIN, save the search, and setup the automation you prefer. Automation options include whether to receive update notices daily or weekly and whether you want to receive plain text or html-styled email messages. If you choose 'none' for this option, the search will be performed at the frequency selected (daily or weekly) and the data stored in SPIN for you to review online, but results will not be emailed. SMARTS daily or weekly history is always tracked and available online in the Funding Alerts section. *Note: You must be logged in to save searches – anonymous users cannot save searches and therefore cannot configure SMARTS automation.*

Any number of SPIN saved searches can be automated so that you can segregate alerts by different research areas of interest or other criteria. To review, add, or modify SMARTS automation for saved searches, use the **Funding Alerts** menu.

Grants Resource Center (GRC)

Where prompted add username (cmich) and password (service), then click on "Grant Search" at the top of the webpage. ORGS's subscription to GRC provides two helpful services to CMU's applicants – first it offers a useful interface for active searches of federal and private sponsors across academic categories, subjects, activities, sponsors, keywords and monthly deadlines. Secondly, GRC provides a weekly newsletter with information about upcoming grant competitions, profiles of successful grantees and materials from recent training opportunities. One of the duties of your ORGS liaison Program Officer is to select and share information from these newsletters with you, based on your specific areas of interest. If you haven't heard from your program officer recently, it may be time to meet and share an update of your latest progress and project plans.

Like all large databases, the quality of information received depends on the quality of the search terms applied. To improve your results, avoid common words (a, the), capital letters for all but proper pronouns, and plural search terms. Ensure that words with multiple meanings have appropriate qualifiers, and brush up on Boolean logic with the librarians at MIT (<https://libguides.mit.edu/c.php?g=175963&p=1158594>) to search as efficiently as possible. Or if you'd like a hands-on lesson on searching for sponsors, contact ORGS at x.6777 and we will gladly arrange a special time to focus on funding your project.