Getting Funded in South Asian Studies

Some hints
Where to look?

- UH Manoa Grad Division’s list of fellowships and grants
- Other South Asia Institutes/NRCs also keep lists (disregard their own institutional grants):
  - Columbia
  - UC Berkeley
  - Here’s a list of NRC’s to browse
- Professional associations of your discipline
- Wenner-Gren Resources Page
Grants Not Limited to US Citizens/PRs

- **SSRC** (All social sciences and humanities)
- **Wenner-Gren** (Anthropology)
- **Toyota Foundation** (New theme every year, usually policy-relevant research)
- Most **CAORC** grants
- **Margaret McNamara Memorial Fund** (women citizens of developing countries only)
- **Smith-Richardson** (must be related to US foreign policy)
- **National Geographic Young Explorer** (ages 18-25, conservation, science, “adventure”)
Grants Available to US Citizens and Permanent Residents

- Fulbright IIE
- Fulbright Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad
- Ford Foundation: Predoctoral, Dissertation, Postdoctoral. Requires you to demonstrate how your research will foster appreciation of diversity.
- NSF
  - Relevant Categories for humanities/social science: Cultural Anthropology, Archaeology, Linguistics (anything resembling linguistic anthropology should apply under Cultural Anthropology), Sociology, some area-specific (currently no South Asia)
- US Institute of Peace
- AAUW (women only). Requires you to demonstrate how you and your research are working specifically to benefit women, in a separate personal statement.
- PEO Sisterhood (women only, requires nomination from a member)
Language Grants

- Summer FLAS - SASLI for most languages, Cornell for Nepali, University of Virginia for Tibetan in addition to SASLI.
- American Council for International Education (has list of language grants)
- NSEP / Critical Language
- Boren
- AllS and other CAORC institutions
- Phi Sigma Iota (requires nomination by member)
Super-Specific Grants

- Bihari Krishna Fellowship for Ethnographic Research (Nepal)
- Niti Foundation (Nepal)
- New Era (Nepal) (see Harka Gurung Research Fellowship)
- University Grants Commission (India) (Nepal) (Bangladesh) (for citizens of these countries who are lecturers at their university campuses); Higher Education Commission (Pakistan) (lists more fellowships than just those for lecturers at Pakistani campuses, but mostly offered to Pakistani citizens)
- UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Center (Sri Lanka)
- WWF, Winrock International, some endangered language documentation organizations, and other NGOs may offer small grants periodically. These are often tied to development goals and follow the trends of major funders.
- This is necessarily a partial list, and you may find more like this by looking for opportunities in your specific field of research.
Deadlines

- **Fall/Winter**
  - Fulbright IIE (Early September)
  - Fulbright Hays
  - SSRC
  - Wenner-Gren
  - US Institute of Peace
  - PEO
  - AAUW
  - Ford Foundation
  - NSF (January deadline but finish everything before winter break)

- **Spring/Summer**
  - AIIS Junior Research Fellowship
  - Summer FLAS
  - Toyota Foundation
  - Wenner-Gren
  - NSF
Application timeline for ethnographic research

- May: This is when most organizations with fall deadlines release their information. Check their websites, and note the requirements for each grant. Start planning your affiliations in your country of research, contact universities and organizations, and find out what you’ll need to get a visa.

- By August: Write a Fulbright IIE proposal regardless of whether you are eligible to apply. This helps you organize your thoughts and have something to send to recommenders to inform them about your project, even if you’re not ready to send them the more involved proposals. This is due in early September.

- By Early September: Write your IRB proposal along with your NSF and/or Wenner Gren proposal. This helps you perfect your methodology, ethics issues, and plans for what to do with your data after research. NSF requires more work from your advisor than other grants, so it’s imperative to get it started early.

- Then do all the rest.
Writing Grants

- Charlotte W. Newcombe Fellowship (ethics related)
- ACLS/Mellon Dissertation Fellowship (all social science and humanities)
- Guggenheim (for projects related to violence)
Other possible funding sources

- Network! Offer your skills and obtain a paid internship or actual job at an organization related to your research (I have seen this done twice, so it really does happen).

- Get a job AS your research (with full disclosure of course; I did this in Bahrain)

- Religious organizations

- Honor societies, fraternities and sororities
Don’t take this TOO literally, but it provides a good structural model.

One problem with this model: Simply filling in gaps in knowledge is not generally enough to get you a grant; the “gap in knowledge” rhetoric is also overused.

Rather: How will your research make us think about things differently? How does it provide us with a new understanding of your topic?
IRB Proposals and Grant Proposals

- The IRB is a board that governs research on “human subjects.” The people on the IRB review research applications to make sure they meet federal ethical guidelines.

- Most research involving people needs to be submitted to the IRB for review.

- Categories:
  - Exempt: No committee needs to meet to approve the research (no risk to participants)
  - Expedited: A small subcommittee needs to meet (low to medium risk to participants)
  - Full IRB: The entire IRB needs to meet (high risk to participants, or participants come from vulnerable groups i.e. children or prisoners [lack rights])

- All research with human subjects now requires CITI training
But how will this help me get a grant?

- Most grants won’t be disbursed until you have IRB approval; if you can show you have it already, this makes you look good.
- The ethics trainings help you think about methodology.
- The requirements for the IRB proposal help you actually develop your methodology.
- IRB requires:
  - discussion of your sample and sampling methods.
  - discussion of potential risks to participants and how you will mitigate them (this includes what you’re going to do with the research data).
  - consent forms and/or oral consent scripts translated into the languages in which they’ll be used; list of interview questions.
- NSF requires all these things plus a data plan (2 pages on how you will manage your notes, recordings, videos, etc. in perpetuity; this should include a discussion of IP licensing and plans to deposit research materials in archives, put them up on the web, etc.)
- Work on the IRB and NSF (and/or Wenner Gren) proposals together, early on in the grant cycle, and you will have a more-fundable project than you otherwise would have. Plus, you’ll have a dissertation proposal already written, and be able to defend it easily.
What goes into a budget?

- Airfare from UH to research site
- Local travel
- Maintenance (rent, food, utilities); some grants include dependent allowances
- Visa fees
- Affiliation fees to local institutions
- Insurance (best to have local health insurance as well as UH; some grants require this)

**Research Expenses**

- These vary, and grants also vary widely on what they cover. Archive fees are usually acceptable. Language training, research assistance, books and other relevant media, office supplies, music or dance lessons, and musical instruments used in the research are often covered as well. Some grants cover audiovisual equipment while others do not; some will cover small items but not large ones (i.e. the memory card but not the camera). Check and recheck what each grant covers and tailor your budget accordingly.

- Ask for a little more than the maximum of the grant.