Overview of Foundation Relations

PURPOSE OF THE FOUNDATION RELATIONS TEAM
The Foundation Relations (FR) team, within the Office of Development & Alumni Relations and serving both campuses, helps faculty and staff seek out, apply for, secure, and steward charitable gifts and grants from private philanthropic foundations and nongovernmental organizations.

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU
The FR team's four-phase approach—identify, cultivate, apply, and steward—is designed to help and add value throughout the entire grant-seeking process by offering expert guidance and support to Principal Investigators (PIs) and Grant Administrators. Our goal is to work with you to match your research and programs with foundations’ charitable goals, which are often to support pilot and proof-of-concept projects and high-risk research that may not be attractive to more traditional funders, such as the NIH and the NSF.

HOW WE PARTNER WITH BU'S FACULTY AND ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP
IDENTIFY: FIND PROSPECTS AND CONNECTIONS
• Discover funding opportunities to support faculty programs, research, and career development (for example, young investigator awards), as well as University priorities
• Leverage connections among BU leaders, faculty, alumni, friends, and foundation contacts
• Stay abreast of trends in advanced research and higher-education fundraising to identify new sources of support
• Alert and remind PIs about upcoming, well-aligned funding opportunities
• Provide faculty with workshops, tools, training, and individual consultations
Develop strategies to approach new or past institutional donors
Introduce specific projects to relevant foundation program officers and directors
Handle logistics for check presentations and site visits
Provide briefings and prospect research in advance of meetings with potential donors
Host tours for donors and coordinate in-person meetings, site visits, or conference calls with PIs
Work closely with faculty members submitting LOIs or proposals:
  - Invite prospective donors to events and other engagement opportunities
  - Remind PIs about reporting requirements and deadlines and help prepare reports
  - Interface with foundation staff as questions arise
  - Recognize donors through events, social media, and articles in BU publications
  - Ensure submission proceeds in a timely fashion
  - Summarize instructions and required components
  - Draft customized cover letters and letters of support, commitment, or application attachments when needed (for example, proof of nonprofit status, institutional budgets)
  - Connect applicants with other BU faculty who have submitted successful proposals
  - Serve as liaison with Sponsored Programs to secure approval for submissions
  - Solicit feedback from foundations when applications are declined

**CULTIVATE: BUILD THE RELATIONSHIP**
- Develop strategies to approach new or past institutional donors
- Introduce specific projects to relevant foundation program officers and directors
- Provide briefings and prospect research in advance of meetings with potential donors
- Host tours for donors and coordinate in-person meetings, site visits, or conference calls with PIs
- Invite prospective donors to events and other engagement opportunities

**APPLY: PREPARE AND SUBMIT THE PROPOSAL**
- Work closely with faculty members submitting LOIs or proposals:
  - Draft and/or edit, especially for clarity, consistency, and responsiveness to guidelines and donor interests
  - Summarize instructions and required components
  - Interface with foundation staff as questions arise
  - Ensure submission proceeds in a timely fashion
  - Draft customized cover letters and letters of support, commitment, or recommendation
  - Provide application attachments when needed (for example, proof of nonprofit status, institutional budgets)
  - Serve as liaison with Sponsored Programs to secure approval for submissions
- Connect applicants with other BU faculty who have submitted successful proposals to foundations
- Solicit feedback from foundations when applications are declined

**STEWARD: THANK THE DONOR**
- Acknowledge awards with personalized letters from BU leadership
- Recognize donors through events, social media, and articles in BU publications
- Handle logistics for check presentations and site visits
- Remind PIs about reporting requirements and deadlines and help prepare reports

For more information on FR and the grant-seeking process, visit bu.edu/foundations or contact Tristan Barako at tbarako@bu.edu or 617-358-2501.