SEE? STUFF LIKE MY BANANA AND MY CARROTS ARE ALL BUT UNRECOGNIZABLE.

WHILE MY CHEEZ DINKIES AND CREME WONGOS LOOK JUST LIKE THEY DID WHEN I FORGOT TO TAKE MY LUNCH HOME LAST JUNE.

IF CERTAIN FOODS CAN SLOW THE AGING PROCESS, I THINK I'VE FOUND THEM.

AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I'M WRITING IN MY GRANT PROPOSAL.

CARRIE, I DON'T THINK THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IS INTERESTED IN FUNDING A DITZY MISTAKE.

NUTS, NEITHER WAS THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY.

ONE MORE YOGURT CUP AND I BET YOU'D HAVE QUALIFIED.
WHERE IS MY SLICE OF THE SPONSORED RESEARCH PIE?

Mario J. Crucini
November 13, 2003
BROAD CONTEXT:
WHY DON’T RESEARCHERS SELF-FINANCE?

• Some do: entrepreneurs, inventors
• The research is more important to someone else (or group) than it is to the individual
• It’s too expensive
• It’s too risky
• It’s easier to undertake in groups
• It is complementary to their main activity (e.g. education)
• Value of monitoring by peers, institutions
• and many more
OUTLINE

• YOUR CAREER PROFILE
• STUDY THE SUPPLIERS
• RISK AND RETURN TRADEOFF
• SOURCES: NEAR AND FAR
• CASE STUDY: NSF FELLOWSHIPS AND DISSERTATION IMPROVEMENT GRANTS
STUDY THE SUPPLIERS:
WHAT ARE THEIR GOALS?

- To make the world a better place (how they hope to do so, is often alluded to in the mission statement).
- To advance knowledge
- To gain strategic private or public advantage
- To ‘substantiate arguments’
- and many more
RISK AND RETURN:
WILL MY RESEARCH BE FUNDED?

Most common way:
In the social sciences,
most academic research is funded indirectly
(merit review, tenure track)

In this sense the answer is:
Yes
RISK AND RETURN: WILL MY RESEARCH BE FUNDED?

• maximize return and minimize risk and by carefully considering:
  – the general availability of funds for the type of research you are conducting
  – the alignment of your research with the goals of particular granting agencies
  – eligibility requirements
  – merit criteria
  – the competition
  – luck
WHERE TO LOOK?
NEAR AND FAR

- Economics department
- College of Arts and Sciences
- Private organizations
- Federal agencies
- State and local agencies
ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT

- Summer research grants (3)
- Dornbusch Research Assistantship (1)
- Walter Noel Dissertation Fellowship (1)
- Faculty with sponsored research awards
  - 1994-1999 $ 37K, 2.3 grants
  - 2003 $ 76K, 6 grants (active)
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

• College summer grant program

• University investments in graduate education
PRIVATE AGENCIES

- Most require individuals to have a Ph.D.
- Awarded to institutions rather than individuals.
- Often limited to supporting tax-exempt institutions.

- Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (health)
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

• National Science Foundation
• National Institutes of Health
• U.S. Department of Education
• there may be others, depending on the field of interest and possible cross-disciplinary linkages.
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION: ECONOMICS PROGRAM

Supports basic scientific research designed to improve the understanding of the processes and institutions of the U.S. economy and of the world system of which it is a part. The program supports empirical and theoretical research as well as conferences in almost every sub-field of economics, including econometrics, mathematical economics, labor economics, macroeconomics, industrial organization, international economics, public finance, and economic history. The program also supports interdisciplinary research and conferences that strengthen the connection between economics and other disciplines, including the other social sciences, statistics, mathematics, the behavioral sciences, and engineering.
KEY ELEMENTS (MY VIEW)

• Posing a **precise** research question that will be understood by economists outside your field

• Make a compelling case that the question is **important and interesting**

• Demonstrate **knowledge of relevant literature** and how the proposed research fits into the broader literature.

• Demonstrate **technical aptitude**: theory, data and methods.

• **Convincing** preliminary results.

• How **support** will **enhance** research productivity.
NSF: INTELLECTUAL MERIT

The intellectual merit criterion includes demonstrated intellectual ability and other accepted requisites for scholarly scientific study, such as the ability:

(1) to plan and conduct research;

(2) to work as a member of a team as well as independently; and

(3) to interpret and communicate research findings.

Panelists are instructed to consider: the strength of the academic record, the proposed plan of research, the description of previous research experience, the appropriateness of the choice of references and the extent to which they indicate merit, Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) General and Subject Tests scores, and the appropriateness of the choice of institution for fellowship tenure relative to the proposed plan of research.
NSF: BROADER IMPACTS CRITERION

(1) **effectively integrate research and education** at all levels, infuse learning with the excitement of discovery, and assure that the findings and methods of research are communicated in a broad context and to a large audience;

(2) **encourage diversity**, broaden opportunities, and enable the participation of all citizens—women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities—in science and research;

(3) **enhance scientific and technical understanding**; and

(4) **benefit society**.

Applicants may provide **characteristics** of their background, including personal, professional, and educational experiences, **to indicate their potential to fulfill the broader impacts criterion**.
FACT SHEET

- 900 across all disciplines
- 17 awarded to economics
- 46 in electrical engineering
- $27,500 stipend for a 12-month tenure
- $10,500 cost-of-education allowance per tenure year.
ELIGIBILITY:

- Citizens, nationals, permanent residents
- Fellowships are awarded for graduate study in fields supported by the NSF
- Fellowships are intended for individuals in the early stages of their graduate study.
- In most cases, there are three opportunities:
  - during the senior year of college
  - prior to or during the first year of graduate school
  - beginning of the second year of graduate school.
NSF Dissertation Awards in Economics
Active grants 2004 (2000)

FACT SHEET

• 399 (518) active NSF awards in Economics
• 7 (9) are dissertation awards
• low $ 4,770 ($ 5,130)
• high $ 11,860 ($ 60,000)
• average $ 9,000 ($ 17,400)
NSF: DOCTORAL DISSERTATION (EXAMPLE #1)

Doctoral Dissertation Research in Economics: Age Discrimination, an Audit Study
Award#:0318012 Current Year Award Amount:$0
Cumulative Award Amount:$8,045
Estimated Total Award Amount:$8,045
Original Start Date:Sep 01, 2003
Projected Duration:12 Months
PI: Costa Institution:MIT State:Massachusetts District:08
Doctoral Dissertation Research:
The "Give" and "Take" on Restaurant Tipping
Award#: 0241935 Current Year Award Amount: $0
Cumulative Award Amount: $11,860
Estimated Total Award Amount: $11,860
Original Start Date: Mar 01, 2003
Projected Duration: 18 Months
PI: Eckel
Institution: VA Polytechnic Inst & St U
State: Virginia District: 09