

Southeastern Louisiana University
Office of Sponsored Research and Programs

Locating Funding Opportunities through the SPIN Database

The SPIN database is organized by the categories most commonly used to select search criteria. Search terms should be selected so as to obtain all useful matching opportunities while eliminating those that are not applicable to the current circumstances.

Select a category by clicking on the category name. For most categories, a list of values or choices will automatically appear. You can select one or multiple applicable terms (hold down the CONTROL key to make multiple selections).

To begin, click on KEYWORDS.

This will display general categories of range of interests by topics. The topics are based on the NIH-NSF-DOE thesaurus, modified with the addition of many terms by the vendor.

Go to the **keyword** category that most closely matches your field of interest. Look over the list, seeking the term or terms which describes your area of specific interest. Make multiple selections by holding down the control key while highlighting the terms. You may then go back to the main search page and select another keyword category, if applicable.

OR

Go to the bottom of the category list to the space indicating "SEARCH FOR TERM". Enter a single word that describes your area. Click on SEARCH. The program will return all occurrences of terms that contain that specific word, under all categories. Select all terms that apply.

OR

To select all keywords under a specific category, place a check next to the major subject area in the ALL column.

THEN GO BACK TO THE MAIN SEARCH PAGE.

Continue with the selection of search fields, returning to the main search page after each selection.

NOTE: While you may define your search criteria any way you like, the more search fields used, the more refined your search results will be. To get the broadest possible range of opportunities, use only the keyword delimiter. However, you may find that this returns more opportunities than you can comfortably read.

OTHER CATEGORIES

Applicant types: Describes eligibility. For whom are you seeking opportunities? You may want to see everything available to colleges and universities, or only those open to graduate students or higher education administrators.

Award types: Describes the types of funding desired: curriculum development, funding for sabbaticals, scholarships, etc.

Sponsors: Use this field only if you want to see opportunities from one or more specific sponsors.

Sponsor types: Very useful to select only federal, or only private, etc., funding sources.

Citizenships: Use only in very specific circumstances. Default is "Any/No restrictions".
NOTE: Since the university is the applicant for federal funding, citizenship of the faculty member is generally not relevant.

Geographic restrictions: Since many private foundations restrict funding to specific states or geographical areas, and companies will often fund only in their areas of operation, this is an excellent way to eliminate opportunities for which you may not be eligible.
***Hint: Select **No restrictions** and **Louisiana** and **U S South** and **U S Southeast**.

Locations tenable: Describes where the award may be undertaken. For maximum results, leave with the default "Any/No restrictions".

Deadlines: Caution: Using this field may not return some very important opportunities which are available. Reason: federal programs generally have a yearly deadline. If the year in the deadline field has not been updated after the deadline has passed, you could not receive notice of an opportunity for which you may want to prepare well in advance.

Title Contains: Helpful if you know something about the program for which you are searching, but abbreviations may make matches difficult.

To delete selections, click on **DELETE ITEM**, check the items to be deleted, then click **DELETE ITEM** again.

After selecting criteria, click on **RUN SEARCH**. A screen will appear with an indication of how many opportunities match those criteria, and the program titles. Click on the **title** to see a synopsis of the program. Click on the **BACK** button to return to the titles listing. Programs may be printed directly through the browser, or downloaded to disk for future use.

Other helpful hints:

The HELP file inside SPIN is very useful. Print a copy for convenient reference.

Most program notices will have a direct link to the funding agency's home page, and will also provide address, phone number, for additional information.

If you know the agency to which you would like to apply (ex: U S Dept of Education, NSF, etc.) go directly to that agency's home page.

Take some time to look at search lists and become familiar with the terms. After a while you will be able to get exactly what you are looking for with a minimal effort.

After refining your search terms, register in SMARTS to receive notification of programs that match your interests, as they become available, rather than having to make periodic searches for routine opportunities.