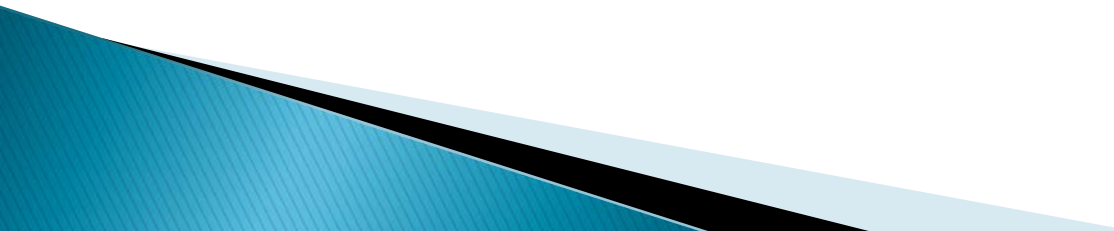


# Proposals, competitive at the next level

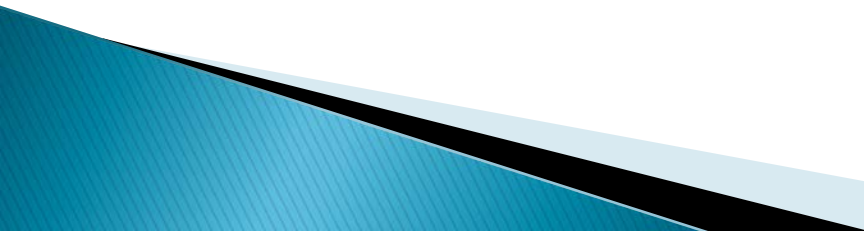
Barbara Crutchley  
Director  
Research Services  
University of Manitoba  
TRU August 2014



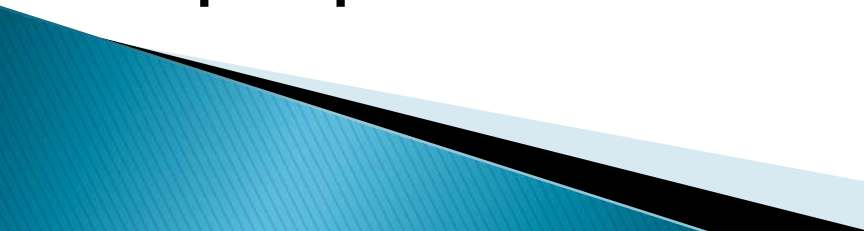
# Increasing effort in research

- ▶ What does it mean for you?
  - ▶ How will it affect your institution?
  - ▶ How will it affect your colleagues?
  - ▶ How will it affect your students?
    - This takes strategic thinking
- 

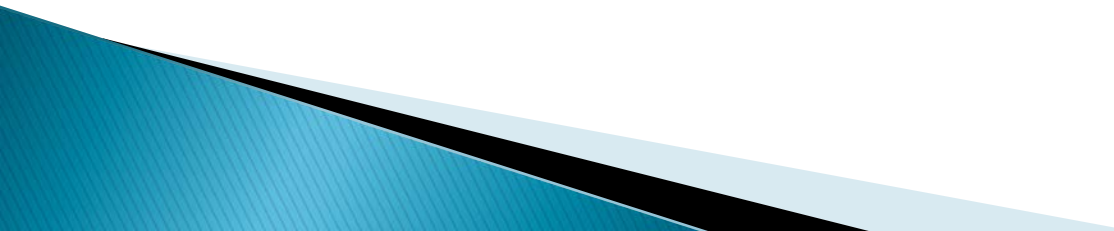
# There is a disconnect: understanding the tensions

- ▶ How do we reward academics and how do we reward research activity?
  - ▶ What different supports are needed to ensure success? Can the institutional operating budget carry this?
  - ▶ What changes in behaviours and policies may occur?
- 

# The Changing Research Environment

- ▶ Understand what impact the new complexity will have on the institution.
  - ▶ No longer just a researcher managing the initiative.
  - ▶ Bring the other departments into the mix early on.
  - ▶ New levels of accountability: be prepared.
- 

# Sustainability

- ▶ The individual researcher's ability to sustain research activities depends largely on the ability to develop a continuum in the team of expertise at all levels
  - ▶ Project funding puts the individual at the mercy of the market place and depending on timing can mean a significant amount of time lost in training new research assistants with each new grant.
- 

# Project Funding

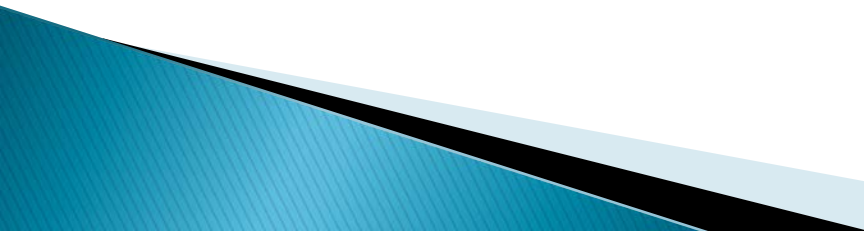
- ▶ This is an important first step for every research program
  - Allows you to get your feet wet in managing HR issues, equipment purchases and managing an award in general
  - Shows you what areas you need to seek other experts in if you are not interested in that particular skillset

# Program funding

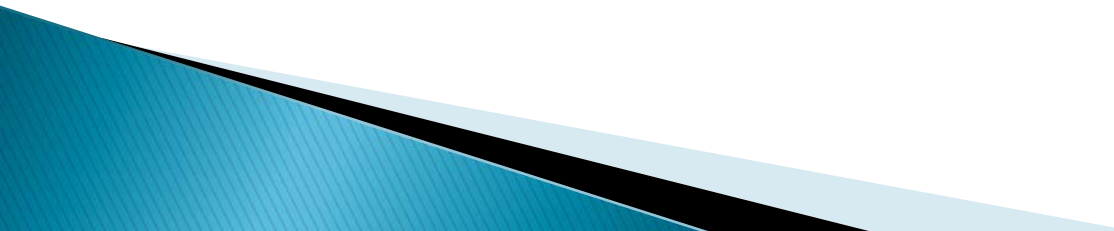
## ▶ Pros

- Allows the researcher to continue to use the same individuals on the team and expand their expertise
- Permits sufficient research activity to get a paper pushed
- Gives you a cushion

## ▶ Cons

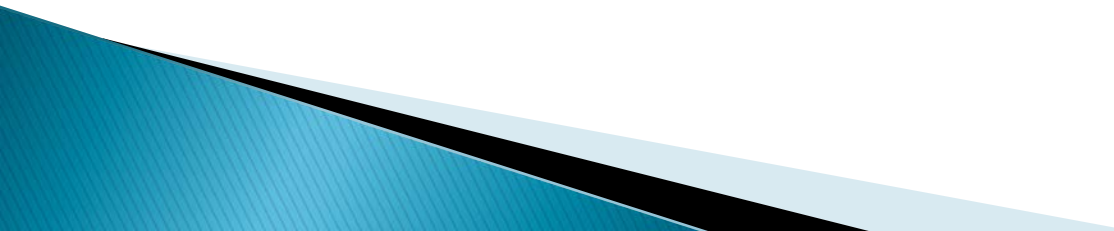
- Requires the researcher to become much more aware of the differing regulations required by the multi sources of funding
  - Larger effect on the team when unsuccessful
  - More application effort – even this out with larger requests
- 

# Build a Roadmap

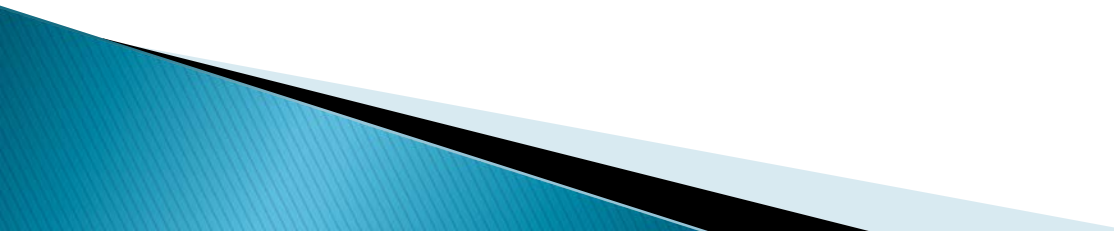
- ▶ Start from the beginning using your research plan and your research track record to guide you. What gaps need to be filled in
  - ▶ A useful tool is a milestone listing
  - ▶ Remember always that program funding is long term and where you can be assessed mid stream on your progress
  - ▶ Be prepared to adapt to environmental changes as you go
- 



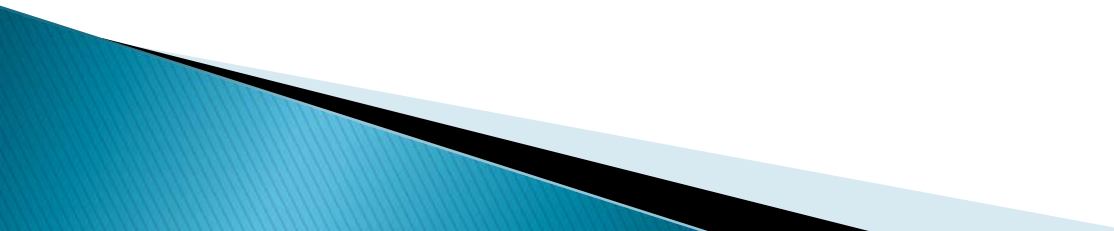
# Two “must haves”

- ▶ A research profile that demonstrates impact on your discipline
  - ▶ A good training environment
- 
- If your track record does not demonstrate these two things then work at building these up first
- 

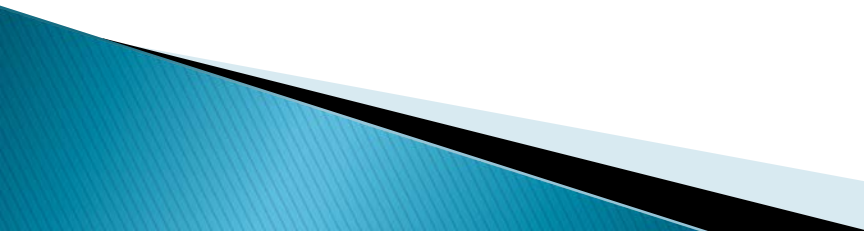
# The basis for every successful proposal narrative –enlarge on these for a program

- ▶ Who says?
  - ▶ So what?
  - ▶ How?
- 

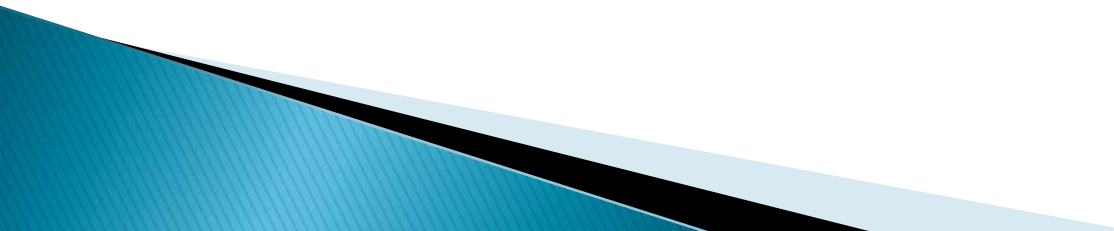
# What do you need?

- ▶ Equipment?
  - ▶ Facilities?
  - ▶ What training opportunities are there?
  - ▶ What students are available? At what level?
  - ▶ Collaborators?
- 

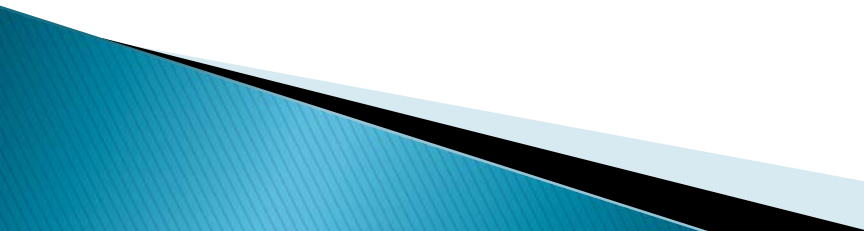
# Incremental Growth

- ▶ Adding on projects to your portfolio one by one can result in a program
  - ▶ Agencies are very concerned with risk
  - ▶ The last thing they want is to have to report on having funded a project that failed (for whatever reason)
  - ▶ You have to demonstrate there is a great likelihood of success (from past success)
  - ▶ You also have to differentiate between the program and the project in your submission and know when not to mention the program
- 

# Win big and avoid a spectacular mess

- ▶ Remember your portfolio includes teaching , outreach and research. Don't take on too much if you have other commitments you must honour.
  - ▶ Communication can be key for ensuring success. If things are going off track let your administration know well before the problem can't be fixed and you are left with a tarnished reputation.
- 

# Necessary Preparation

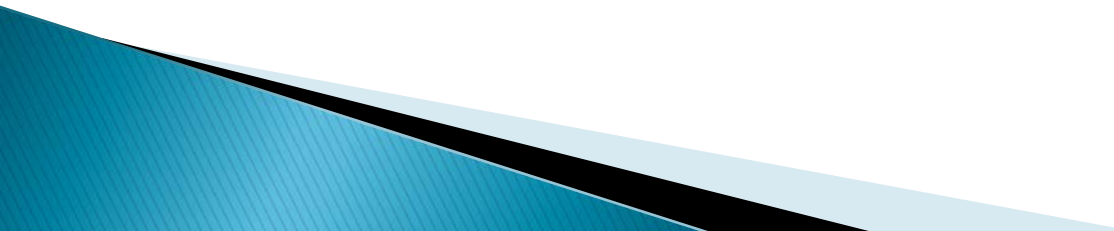
- ▶ Do some strategic planning on your own
  - ▶ Have a rough sketch of what you want to accomplish in 5 – 10 years
  - ▶ Decide what kinds of funding you are going to go after and for what activities
  - ▶ Take a hard look at the current team's research profiles
  - ▶ Understand what processes your institution has and what roadblocks can cause you to lose time
  - ▶ Are there any qualifications that need to be met?
  - ▶ Any additional experience you need?
- 

# You'll have a mix of activities

- ▶ Some service activities
- ▶ Some short term research projects
- ▶ Some longer term
- ▶ All with different reporting and rules

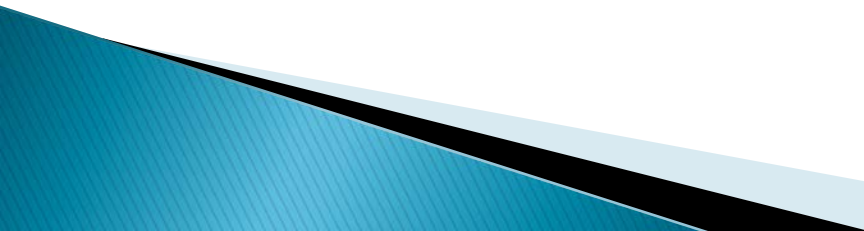


# Program Establishment

- ▶ Just as you needed pilot data for a project grant or proof that you are well aware of the pertinent literature, you need some demonstration that you are capable of managing larger amounts of funding
  - ▶ You may want to consider asking to be a co applicant on a multi-institutional award and plan to shadow the PI
- 



# Think big—and then scale back

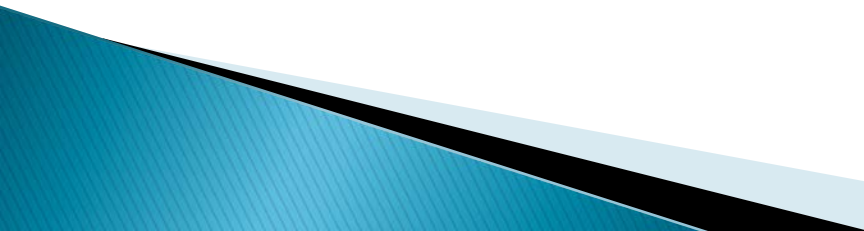
- ▶ apply probabilities to the activity or cost
    - Is a postdoc likely?
    - Does the work require the requested level of support?
    - Justify, Justify, Justify
    - Aim for flexibility, understanding that all sources may not be able to grant this
- 

# Balance your workload

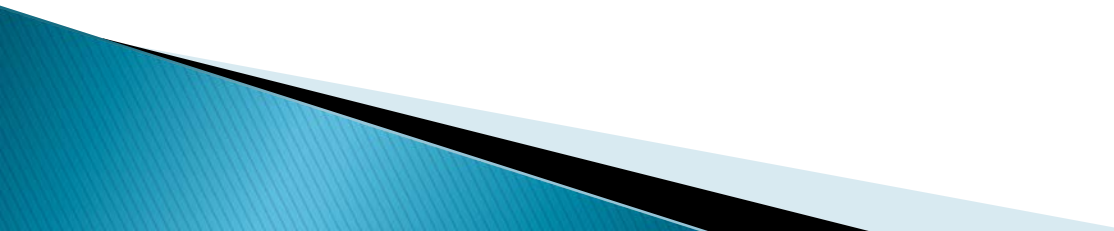
- ▶ You can't spend too much time applying for funding ---you actually have to do some research



# Check with others

- ▶ Agency program officers
    - Either you go to them or ask them to come to you
  - ▶ Previously successful researchers at other institutions
    - Lessons learned? What was essential? What caused grief
  - ▶ Learn from Committee members
  - ▶ Partner relationships become more and more important. What indicators do you have that the relationship is not too recent?
- 

# Allow others to troubleshoot before you take a misstep

- ▶ consider how you affect the work of others, while getting the support you need
  - ▶ RGS can be your champion if you keep them in the loop
- 

# Relationship building

- With Sponsors
- With collaborators
- With the various administrative departments

It's ongoing



# You may have a future in juggling!


Understand that you cannot expect consistency from different sponsors

- Term dates
- Eligible expenditures
- Reporting
- Ongoing responsibilities

It's important as your program grows to develop strong Project Management skills



# Support for research

- ▶ Establish a strategic preparedness for the “new funding” styles (multi-institutional, multi-discipline; large initiatives) . AUCC, Industry Canada, PM speeches
  - ▶ Understand policies, procedures and their impact
  - ▶ Build a “best practices” library
  - ▶ Develop typical discipline specific research profiles
  - ▶ Develop mentoring processes and proposal review
  - ▶ Encourage attendance at proposal development workshops
- 

# Discussion ideas

- *How would you describe the 'research' culture in your unit?*
  - *How do you assess a researcher's competitiveness, and thus the readiness for a given opportunity?*
  - *How do you define success at the faculty level, department, individual?*
  - *How do you support investigators to get (research/creative work) started?*
- 