

# Collaboration Aids Access to Research Grant, says Researcher

---

*Researchers are more likely to have access to research grant when they collaborate, a foremost researcher at Covenant University, Dr. Angela Eni, has advocated.*

Speaking at the 2017/2018 Executive Advance programme of the University, where she presented a paper titled, 'The Art of Award Winning Grant Writing', Dr. Eni said that the approximate amount of money globally available as grant annually was one billion US Dollars, with those who fund researches looking for people to access it.



Dr. Angela Eni, making her presentation on the topic "The Art of Award Winning Grant Writing"

---

The associate professor, who is the Team Leader, West African Virus Epidemiology (WAVE) for root and tuber crops, Covenant University Hub, added that collaboration fosters cross-fertilisation of ideas and methodologies.

Explaining how to source for grant, the process and procedure, Dr. Eni highlighted types of grant as research project, small research, exploratory development and conference; while there are varieties of funders namely, charities, research councils, United Nations agencies, academic societies and corporations.

A researcher, she said, should begin his quest for grant by writing an expression of interest or a letter of inquiry to the donor. "A researcher should sit down and plan, put together a team because an individual grant would get you little. An applicant contacts potential collaborators to get their commitment," she explained.

The major items in the researcher's proposal, according to Dr. Eni, include the executive summary which outlines the project and gives the first impression, build credibility for your organization; and reinforce connection between you and the funder. The researcher, she noted, needs statistics to buttress the points he is making, give the research a global outlook, and ensures the solution he is proffering would be applicable in other places.

She stated further that the researcher needs to look at the root causes of the problem he is solving, the effects, the analysis with relevant stakeholders, objectivity, identify key players to be part of the research, make a strong case, objectivity must be realizable, do not confuse objectivity with methods, while timeline is very important.

On project objectives, Dr. Eni said that donors want to make sure that their investment lingers longer and as such, a researcher must do project evaluation to know how well he is doing; plan how he disseminates his findings; project budget must reflect all activities outlined; and budgeting must have justification.

In the following panel discussion moderated by Dr. Obinna Nwinyi of the Department of Biological Sciences, the first discussant, Professor Louis Egwari, also of the same department, said that with investment a researcher would get direction and competence. While urging the University to provide the necessary funding as this would help to discover talents embedded in the University, he said that structures like the Centre for Research Innovation and Discovery will enhance the University's chance of winning grants.

Lead Speaker, Dr. Angela Eni, with the Panel of Discussants

---



On collaboration, the professor of medical microbiology said that the researcher must get it right, after which he can send proposals that can win grants from donors. He also emphasized on publishing in high impact journals like Scopus.

The second discussant, Professor Emeka Iweala, who spoke on how Fellowship and conference hosting can help the University, said that there was a perception that Covenant University is one of the most preferred, which means the University has reputation. He

asserted that two vital academic activities that can help to build the University's reputation are conference hosting and fellowships.

The benefits of fellowships, according to him, include helping to establish research collaboration; how to fund and grow a research team; and learning how to write proposals for grant. One benefit for hosting conferences, he said, is that it helps to build the University's brand and earn strong reputation for the institution.

Expanding on how teaching and mentoring postgraduates can help in realizing the University's vision of becoming one of the top 10 universities in the world by the year 2022, another discussant, Professor Samuel Wara, who is the Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies, said that the aggregation of manpower (human and laboratory resources) will help.

Professor Wara illustrated that the University must teach her students things that will enable them play a role in actualizing the Vision 10:2022. There would be supervisory and mentoring role to engage the students and a need for the University to review its content delivery and method, he added.