Catherine Sama’s advice on applying for grants
(Adapted)

Before Beginning the Application Process

Don't wait till your sabbatical
• Apply for grants early. This will help you get tenure-book, exhibitions, publications, etc.
• Applying for grants is not something you can do at the last minute. Gather deadlines a year ahead...
• Apply for grants that fit your project and for which you really qualify. (This avoids wasting time and discouragement if you don't win.)

Application Process

• Start writing a draft months before the deadline.

• Get Support from Your Academic Community. Show a draft of your application to friend/colleague for feedback.
  - It helps you be more concise, organized, and clear
  - It serves as a check for jargon—esp. if person is outside your field.
• Secure letters of recommendation well in advance.
  - Choose recommenders carefully.
  - Can they comment specifically on your project and/or on the skills you have to accomplish it?
  - If it is an interdisciplinary project - have recommenders from diverse fields.
  - If s/he is familiar with workload at URI, they could emphasize how much you need the time away to accomplish the project.

Crafting a Winning Application

Give funding agencies what they are asking for, literally.

• Tailor each application based on the funding agencies specifications. This is not a one-size-fits-all affair.
• Don’t hesitate to contact the funding agency if you have questions (what category do you fit in, etc.).

• Be concrete and specific. What exactly will you produce, how will you do that, and in what timeframe (timeline)?

• The proposal should convince them as to why this project is important, why it is timely, and why you are the person who should do it.

• Make your application as easy to read as possible.
  - Not only in content but also font type and size.
  - Headings should be clearly visible.
  - Graphically pleasing if possible... illustrations?

• Most importantly, avoid jargon!

**After the Application is submitted**

• Be persistent... if you don’t win, apply again. And again. Get any feedback if it is offered by the funding agency.

• Negotiating with administration once you win a grant is important.

• Don’t forget to submit all requested reports, etc. to funding agency, and obviously to send copies of your work and acknowledgement of funding you receive.