

# Developing an Office of Research Administration in a new Institution

*Grants Management experience at  
the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI)*

*Functions, Processes and Resources*



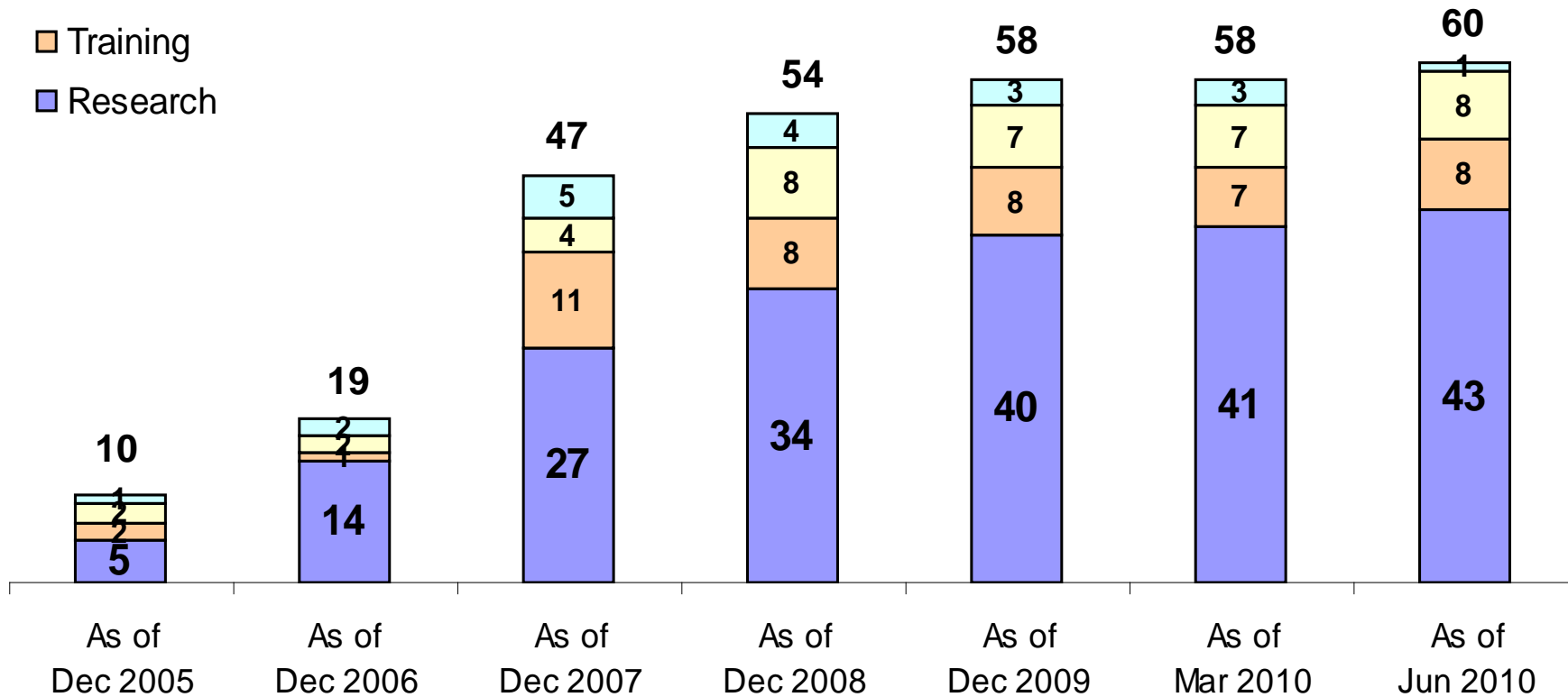
# Infectious Diseases Institute, College of Health Sciences, Makerere University

- IDI began in 2002; focus on building capacity of health systems related to HIV
- Now 5 programmes :
  - Prevention, care and treatment
  - Training
  - Research
  - Lab services
  - Outreach
- Over 800 staff (7 grants staff); \$17m annual budget
- Research focal areas :
  - opportunistic infections particularly Tuberculosis, Cryptococcus, Kaposi's sarcoma and other malignancies
  - ART-associated complications
  - HIV prevention (especially in discordant couples and young adults)
  - sexual and reproductive health
  - clinical pharmacology



## Projects in progress at IDI

- Cross-cutting
- Prevention and Care
- Training
- Research



## Some typical organisational characteristics of a new institution

### **Mission**

- Program activities not systematically developed in relation to the mission; "chasing the money"

### **Compliance**

- The organisation and/or functional research department (where applicable) may not be in full compliance with registration requirements

### **Administrative procedures**

- Non-existence, or limited documentation, of administrative procedures

### **Financial procedures**

- Limited awareness of institutional cost recovery mechanisms for sustainability

### **Information and Communication Technology**

- Limited use of ICT for structured storage and access to organisational information; too many stand-alone units used for ad hoc tasks

## Essential functions of grants management : Pre-award

- Scanning environment for funding opportunities
- Facilitating linkage of concepts and funding opportunities ... circulating requests for proposals and generating discussion on bidding prospects
- Coordinating and documenting corporate approval for proposals ... checking eligibility to bid, strategic fit, and contribution to sustaining the institution
- Identifying, and linking with, suitable partners where a consortium seems appropriate

## Criteria for choosing grant opportunities to pursue

1	Would the proposed activity be consistent with, and supportive to, the IDI Strategic Plan ? Synergy with other IDI activities ?
2	Does the deadline allow enough time to produce a high quality submission ?
3	Estimated contribution to IDI core costs : overhead ? cost recovery ?
4	Chance of success ?
5	If bid successful, would strain on all types of IDI capacity be acceptable ? <i>For example : office space; clinic space; clinic staff; data entry staff; pharmacy staff.</i>
6	Would IDI be the prime contractor and in a position of leadership of the project ?
7	Opportunity cost : Who would be doing most of the proposal writing ? IDI effort to respond ?
8	Likelihood of at least one publication resulting ?
9	Will this application strengthen or weaken strategic partnerships ?
10	Would project enhance IDI's reputation ?

## Essential functions of grants management : Pre-award

- Administrative support for development of proposal content :
  - budgeting and cost recovery (both direct and indirect costs, fees etc..)
  - checking adequacy of staffing and infrastructure ... and overall ability to deliver project targets
- Managing the proposal development process :
  - clarity of roles; consortium partner input
  - internal deadlines for stages in proposal development
  - completeness and overall quality of content, and presentation of proposal
- Managing submission ... postal; email; online
- Monitoring funder review and award progress
- Creating and managing standard corporate proposal information for re-use

## Essential functions of grants management : Post-award

- Contract negotiation ... with funders and partners
- Project start up : supporting financial arrangements eg initiating account creation, petty cash imprest arrangements, staffing
- Administrative oversight of active projects : approving major charges to project budgets, and budget control
- Ensuring financial and programmatic compliance with grant and contract terms for each grant/funder
- Managing staff effort charges to projects (timesheets)
- Managing customisation, completeness, quality, timeliness and consistency of financial and programmatic reports to individual funders
- Managing project closure, extensions and/or carry-overs



## Essential environmental factors for grants management

- Clearly defined role within the institution's structure ... separate from, but closely linked with, and mutually supportive of, the finance department
- Clearly defined interfaces with major complementary functions including : Finance, Research/ethics, individual project management, and core departments
- Close linkage with Monitoring and Evaluation function ... to facilitate project design, proposal writing, project execution and reporting

## Grants management team

- Essential skill sets :
  - Basic and/or higher level accounting and financial concepts
  - Strong analytical skills ... plus good written and spoken communications skills
  - High level manipulation of text, numerical data, graphics and presentations

Plus good general understanding of institution's business methods and priorities ... to facilitate cost recovery, negotiation with external parties, and contracting
- Additional grants staff training :
  - grants acquisition and management
  - major funder-specific financial and programmatic guidelines
  - project planning & management
  - research and non-research compliance
- Placement and/or staff exchanges with experienced grants offices

## Tools and infrastructure for grants management

### Tools

- Grants and Contracts Policies and Procedures Manual ... cross-referenced with other manuals such as Finance, Procurement, HR
- Succinct notes on start up steps in project
- Quarterly review of status of all IDI grants (Grants Register)
- Brief Project Summary Forms with key information

### Essential equipment

- High quality scanner ... for electronic documentation and filing
- High quality internet connection ... especially for online proposal submissions
- Reliable central server ... to host comprehensive database and filing system

### Adequate office space

## A few of the lessons learned ...

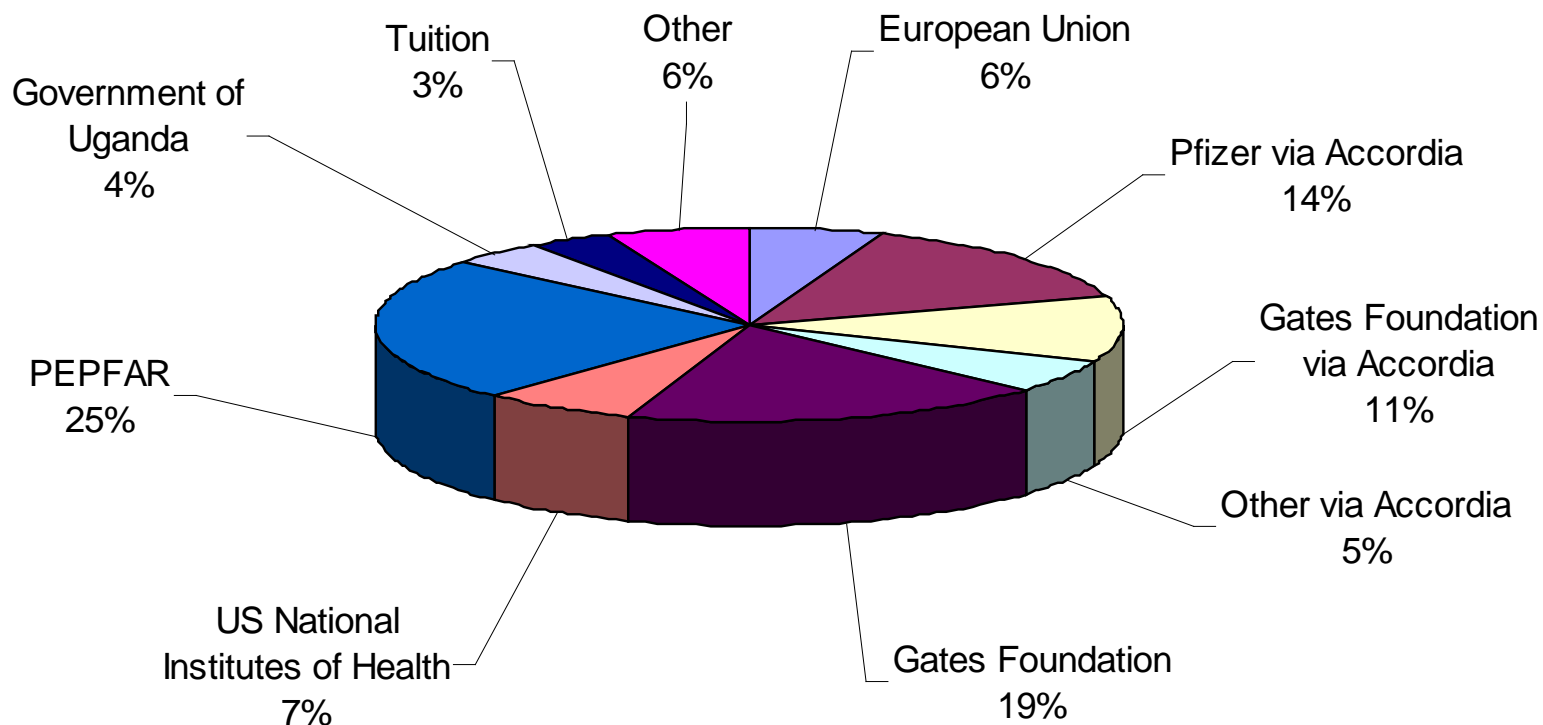
- Strategic focus vital ... look to intersect with funders' strategies and complement (or supplement) strategies of potential project partners
- Cultivate strategic national and international partnerships
- Negotiate to maximise overheads and cost recovery ... get (and defend) audited indirect rate ... build overheads into direct costs (as allowable)
- Negotiate for efficiency ... for example : reporting requirements, financial arrangements (cash flow, bank accounts)
- Try to get priming experience
- Build funder confidence through demonstrably strong internal / external audit and systems
- Broaden funding base to reduce dependency on particular source ... IDI : EU, NIH, Gates, Irish Aid, Belgian Govt, Gilead, and others
- Fund a grants management office from projects ... 72% of IDI grants and M&E staff costs covered last year



Thank you



## Sources of IDI income in year to end of June 2010



***About 20 funding agencies contributed to IDI revenue through both direct grants/contracts and sub-grants/sub-contracts with intermediary organisations in the fiscal year ended June 2010.***

**Success rate with proposals : July 2009 to June 2010**  
*as at 30 Sep 2010*

	Number of proposals submitted	Successful	Not yet awarded	% success Number of proposals	Value of successful proposals (year 1)	% of total in \$ terms
Up to \$200,000	25	13	4	52%	\$1.20m	18%
\$200,000 to \$500,000	12	9	2	75%	\$2.25m	34%
Over \$500,000	7	1	1	14%	\$3.24m	48%
Value uncertain	8	1	4	12%	--	--
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>\$6.69m</b>	<b>100%</b>