



# Best Laid Plans

practical strategies for  
managing grant-funded projects

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#ARSC2015

# Marr Sound Archives - 2008-2012

## Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Scholarly Communications

- Private funding: ~\$502,000
- 3 years
- 1 librarian, 1.5 FTE staff, 1 FTE student
- Cataloging: ~9,500 discs
- Digital transfer: none

## NEH Humanities Collections & Reference Resources

- Public funding: ~\$127,000
- 18 months
- 1 librarian, 1.5 FTE student
- Cataloging: ~1,800 discs
- Digital transfer: all discs (cost-share)

Donated collections of  
electrical transcription discs - pressings and instantaneous-cut

“The best laid schemes o' mice an' men / Gang aft agley”

“To a Mouse” *On Turning up in Her Nest with the Plough, November, 1785* by Robert Burns

*commonly paraphrased in English as:*

“The best-laid plans of mice and men / Often go awry”

# Marr Sound Archives - 2008-2012

## Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Scholarly Communications

- Private funding: ~\$502,000
- ~~3 years~~ 3.2 years
- 1 librarian, ~~1.5~~ 3 FTE staff, 1.25 FTE student
- Cataloging: ~9,500 discs
- Digital transfer: ~~none~~ ~800 lacquer discs

## NEH Humanities Collections & Reference Resources

- Public funding: ~\$127,000
- 18 months
- 1 librarian, 1.5 FTE student
- Cataloging: ~~~1,800~~ 3,000 discs
- Digital transfer: all discs (cost-share)

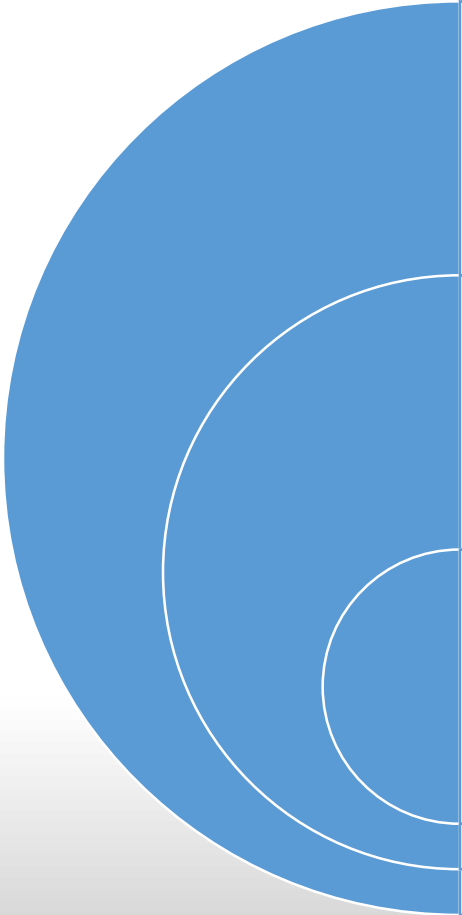
Donated collections of  
electrical transcription discs - pressings and instantaneous-cut

# Stakeholders

- Content producers
- Collection donors
- Funding agency
- Project partners
- Project management team
- Project staff
- Institutional staff
- Consumers



# Grant-Funded Projects: What's Different?



<b>Constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scope</li><li>• Goals and Objectives</li><li>• Deadline</li></ul>
<b>Securities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Separate Funds</li><li>• Dedicated Staffing</li></ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Formal Reporting</li><li>• Marketing Plan</li></ul>

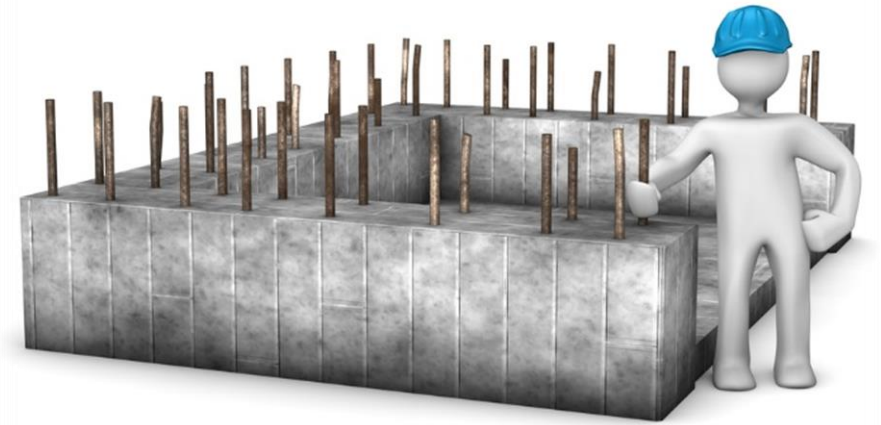
# Mentally Prepare Yourself



- The grant funder believes in you.
- You are not alone.
- Expect some challenges.
- Learn from your mistakes.
- Forgive yourself.

# Lay the Groundwork

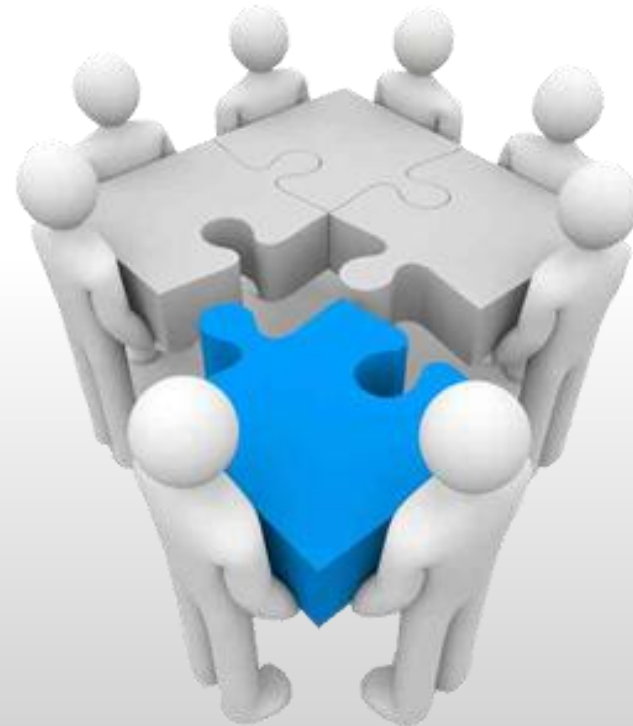
- Orientation to institution
- Get familiar with project
- Prepare work space
  - physical space: reflective of workflow
  - online space: project communication
- Hiring and training
  - invest time in staff training
  - identify knowledge gaps
  - take note of individual strengths, skills, and expertise





# Build the A-Team

- Team-oriented approach
- Goals-focused
- Open communication
- Shared success
- Build trust
- Celebrate milestones



# Create a Culture of Engagement

- Identify and understand roles
- Balanced involvement in activities
- Communication and transparency
- Shared success



# Monitor the Project



- Set benchmarks
- Ongoing evaluation
- Balance project priorities
- Explore creative solutions

# Facing Challenges: Focus on WHY and WHO

- 1) Is it within the SCOPE of the project?
- 2) WHY should we address this?
- 3) WHO will be impacted?



# Facing Challenges: Focus on HOW

- Can we do this within the timeline?
- Do we have the tools we need? If not, can we get them?
- Can the institution contribute to the solution (cost-share)?

**Talk to your grant program officer.**



# Issue: Slow start

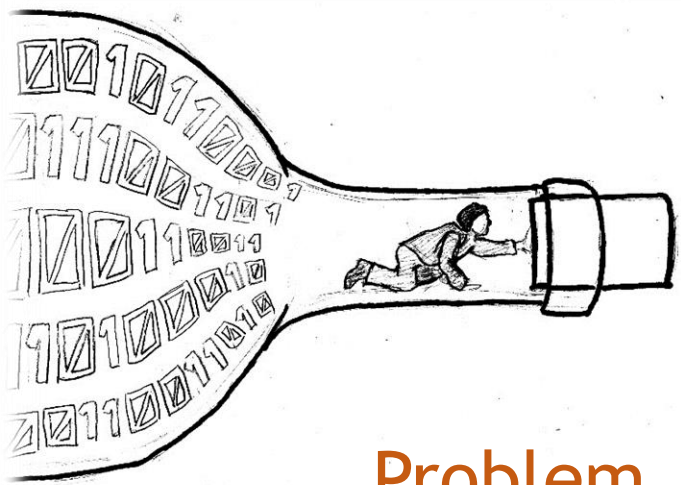
## Problem

- Too much money
- Less time to complete project

## Solution

- Double FTE staff from 1.5 to 3
- Increase student staff by 0.25FTE
- More money for librarian to promote project





# Issue: Bottlenecking

## Problem

- Twice the work coming my way
- Away from my desk to network and promote project

## Solution

- Increased responsibility for career-track staff

# Issue: Palmitic Acid

**Problem:** Palmitic acid on ~800 lacquer discs



## Solution

- Advice & approval by program officer
- Purchase of additional Monks machine
- Project students cleaned discs
- Cost-share the digitization
- Use digital copy to catalog



# Issue: Deadline

## Problem

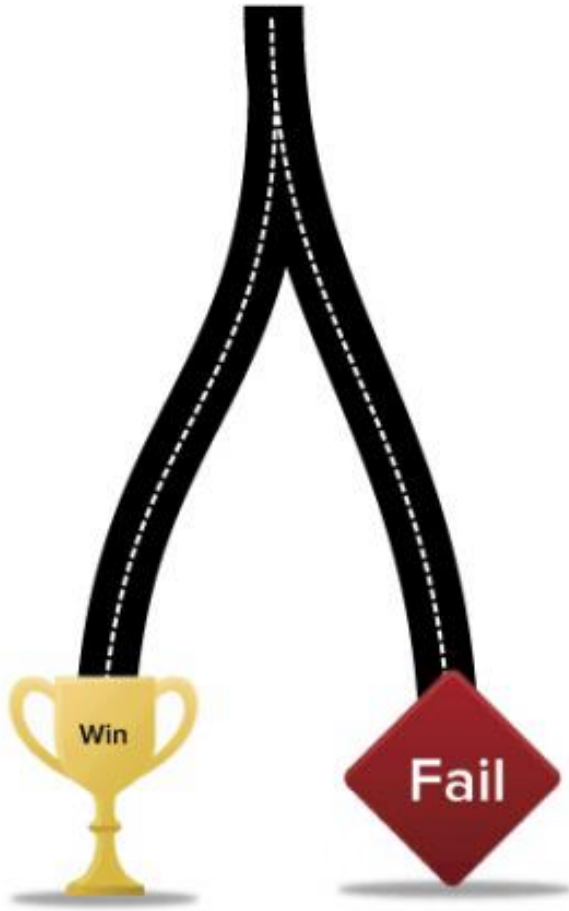
- Failure to meet deadline

## Solution

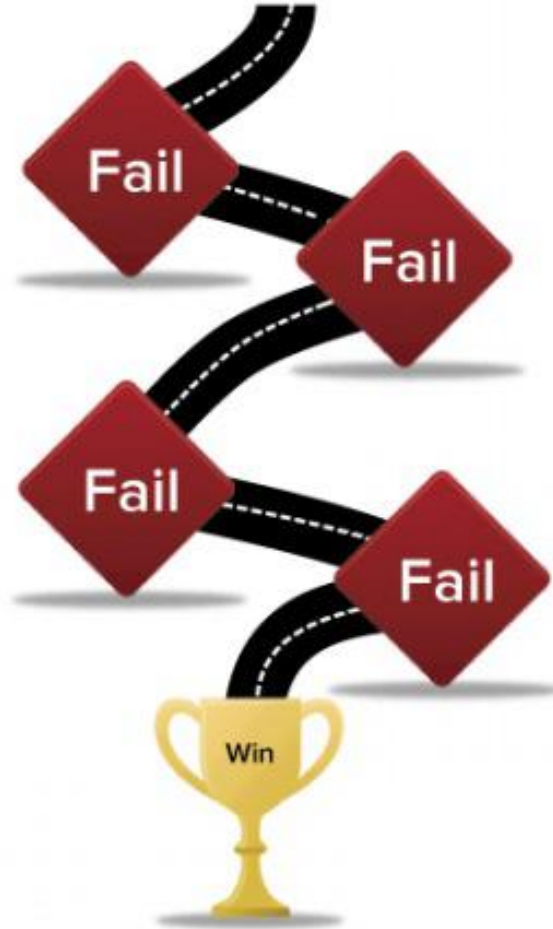
- Written request to program officer asking for a 2-month extension



What ordinary people think



What successful people know



What did we learn?

#thanks  
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