

Tips on preparing a research grant proposal

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Paucity of funding is a chief issue among researchers. Obtaining research grants through successful grant proposals is a frequently spoken topic in faculty development workshops and programs. Funding from a funding agency is essential for the successful and continuous conduct of research. Finding funding for research is a very difficult and competitive task. Proposals for research should be submitted to a funding agency and those proposals should be submitted as a persuasive and convincing proposal.

In other words, your proposal should convince the grant evaluation committee. Regardless of the research idea, poorly written grant proposals can be rejected due to poor writing style and structure. Because of the pressure to publish and competition to move forward academically, these days, obtaining a research grant is an uphill task. Normally, writing a research grant proposal is considered as a difficult task by early career scientist. Based on literature available, a set of approaches for seeking funding for research and writing a well-balanced research grant proposal are mentioned in this article.

Identify potential funding bodies

First, public funders need to be well-identified. Their objectives, mission and funded projects should be monitored first. Studying the web pages of each organisation can give you a basic idea about them. A thorough study of the priorities and mission of the funding agency can lead to the writing of a successful proposal. The proposal you make should be written in a way that even non-subject-specific reviewers can understand.

Project reviewers need to be convinced of the importance and viability of the project by giving chief components.

Data obtained from pilot or preliminary studies strengthen your research proposal. If the applicant has promising preliminary data showing prior research productivity, success and appropriateness, those should be mentioned in the proposal to convince the reviewers. The applicant should indicate complementary strengths of collaborators, consultants and mentors of the proposed study by indicating their capacity, methodological expertise and qualifications.

A clear description about host and collaborating institutions or universities with laboratory facilities and available instruments is essential in the proposal. Also, indicate that the proposed study can be completed with available facilities and instruments. A clear illustration about research plan, design, data analysis to show how the proposed work can be completed within the proposed time should be given. Ethical approvals subjected to obtain and regulatory compliance by the institution or universities should also be indicated with your proposal.

A good cover letter shows professionalism. Therefore, your grant proposal should contain a cover letter indicating why your study is ideal. Grant Proposal should be free of spelling, grammatical, and syntax errors. Limit the use of jargon and acronyms in their proposals. The summary or abstract is the first section of a research grant proposal. As in manuscripts, the abstract should be straightforward



and concise.

Mention proposed activities and their importance clearly, and concisely

The language used in grant proposals is very important. Straight forward and persuasive language should be used to convince reviewers of the grant proposal that your proposed investigation supports substantially to knowledge in the field. The applicant can define the importance of the proposed study by either emphasising shortages in current knowledge or sequel of a problem. You can also give data on the incidence of a problem. Your proposed innovation can be highlighted by indicating that the proposed grant application can provide a novel approach to a long-standing problem or why it gives an informative or educational perspective or conceptualization.

Get help from your colleagues to improve your proposal

Get the support from your senior colleagues and other scholars in your professional network to make your grant proposal strong. Experienced scholars have the taste of writing grant proposals. Senior scholars who have previously received or evaluated grants or who have topical expertise are the best choice in this regard. The applicant should let enough time during proposal writing process to be able to receive feedbacks from other experienced colleagues. The applicant can get feedbacks from senior peers regarding proposal clarity, writing pattern and study design, etc.

Study design should be feasible and logical

The grant application should mention aims and objects of the study clearly and concisely. Research grant proposals should emphasis on their research questions and the best study strategy for answering research questions. The research questions should lay drive the methods mentioned in the proposal. All mentioned objectives in the proposal should propose a course of action. Well planned or innovative methods to data analysis will

be praised by grant reviewers.

Always select a novel approach

Novel ideas or studies with substantial implications that will touch multiple people are more likely to be funded. The selected project should be a ground-breaking or innovative. Also, it should focus on an area of high, current scientific demand which addressing an ongoing challenges. Submission of a grant proposal with an already existing ideas is not advisable.

Comprehensive literature review is important

Prior to writing a proposal, exhaustive literature review is important. The proposed study should clearly mention how the proposed research fits or matches of fill gaps in the current knowledge or literature.

A transparent budget is required

Fiscally responsible and a transparent budget is required in a grant application. Costs required for all materials, chemicals and instruments should be clearly indicated. To handle easily, a proposal should not propose more work than the budget.

Seek interdisciplinary research collaborations

When preparing research grant proposal, faculty should try to build a research team with colleagues from multiple fields. A research team with colleagues from multiple fields is always strong.

Brainstorming different research ideas with colleagues from different disciplines is a good way to form a strong research team. Funders value strong research teams comprising colleagues from distinct areas. Involvement with such groups can help junior faculty members to improve their carrier as an initial approach.