

TIPS FOR SUCCESS AND POINTERS FOR PROFESSIONAL INNOVATION GRANT APPLICATION

When writing a grant proposal, there are some general rules for success. It is not only a research methodology that shows your clear and well-reasoned approach to investigate a problem, but also think of it as a:

- **business plan**, that characterises a sound investment which will lead to a valuable and innovative research outcome; and a
- **project plan**, that can deliver a valuable product or service, on time, on budget and within resources.

Ways to increase your prospects of success include:

- Pay close attention and comply to all the guidelines and requirements;
- Present a well-reasoned research question;
- Establish credibility: present a reasonable and practical research design that should be articulated with the outcomes that you intend to collect - clearly explain your methodology and convincingly argue why it is the most effective approach;
- Efficient: explain how you intend to complete the study with the resources that you would receive from the grant;
- Influence: think what will most influence those who will assess your proposal;
- Build confidence: demonstrate track record, competence and connections; explain why you are best-placed to deliver;
- Differentiate: show how your proposal is novel, unique, necessary, and timely or has greater scope for a good outcome.



When preparing an application to grant for professional innovation you should give attention to the following points:

1. Title & summary

The title of the project is vital. Ideally, it should:

- be short, crisp and eye-catching;
- use clear, easy English;
- capture the essence of the problem; and
- indicate how your research may explore or solve it.

The summary (sometimes restricted to 100 words) is the first make-or-break test you'll face. It influences the reader favourably or unfavourably to the rest of your proposal: it highlights the significance of the issue or problem:

- indicate the improvement of pharmacy practice and the advancement of pharmaceutical science created together with the direct implication which will be made;
- indicate the research is original or unique in its field; and
- explain how it will address the problem.

These three aspects that need to be reflected in your title and summary:

- aims;
- significance and innovation; and
- outcomes.

Always revise the title and summary after completing the full application!

2. Aims

List your aims clearly. Explain:

- how your project advances knowledge in its field;
- the broad intent of the research;
- what you intend to do; and
- the expected outcome.



3. Significance

Explain the impact of your research on “pharmaceutical world”:

- explain the direct clinical application which will be established;
- explain how the research is original or innovative; and
- answer the questions “why are you doing it?” and “so what?”.

4. Outcomes

State what you expect the research to yield. This could be:

- a new technology;
- a new system or methodology; and
- an outcome of value to industry, or society (specify the value).

5. Questions that should be considered for each grading category

Significance and Relevance (25 Points)

- Have I/we demonstrated the **significance** - intellectual, technological, scientific and strategic - of the research proposal?
- Have I/we identified the **gap** between the problem and current practices/knowledge?
- Have I/we show how the **research plan links up with the clearly stated aims of the proposal?**
- Have I/we indicated how the project will **contribute to the profession?**
- Have I/we listed **potential research outcomes** (publications, conference papers, external grants, etc.)?
- Have I/we indicated **where can the potential result apply?** Community, regional or worldwide?
- Have I/we indicated the **direct clinical application** of the research proposal?



Creativity and Innovation (20 Points)

- Have I/we clearly explained **why** I/we want **to do the research**; and why I am the best-qualified person (or we are the best people) to do it?
- Have I accounted for where this particular research proposal **fits in with what is known**, and also **where it is going to take us**?
- Have I identified **the gap between the existing practice or technology** and how the proposed result will fill the gaps?
- If the study is **not innovative but is essential** to move the field forward, have I/we discussed this in the proposal?

Scientific Accuracy (20 Points)

- Have I/we develop a framework, a design that is well developed and reasoned? **Is this design appropriate to the aims** of the project?
- Have I/we clearly detailed **how the research project will be conducted**, using information presentation tools such as timelines or flowcharts?
- Have I/we **demonstrated and evaluated the methods** used to research the topic and to test the proposed probable results of the intervention.
- Have I identified the **probable method problems and proposed salvations** the problems or alternative approaches?

Clarity of Communication (15 Points)

- Do the methods **follow the existing guidelines** or the procedures follow the common standard?
- Have I/we provide nicely organized **supporting data or information** of the objective or issue?
- Have I/we **clarified the framework, design, methods, and analysis**?



Feasibility and Scale (20 Points)

- Assessment of the likelihood that the project is realistic, feasible, able to show results in one year with the level of funding being provided.
- Have I/we identified all the objectives to be achieved? **Is the number of objectives reasonable** based on available funding?
- Have I/we described the **scale of the project and the milestone by time?** Is the timeline realistic?
- Have I/we identified **how the grant is distributed** in different items? Are the costs reasonable?

6. Guidelines and timelines

When putting together an application for funding under any Grants Schemes, applicants need to read and consider carefully the application guidelines provided and address all criteria on which the application will be assessed. Take note of weightings, or point scores, given to different parts of the application. Give special attention to the parts with the highest score.

- Make sure that your research plan stacks up with the declared aim of the research – i.e. that you can deliver the promised outcome; and
- Explain how the research plan will work, using timelines and flowcharts. If possible, set deadlines.

7. Writing style

How well you write will influence the success of your project. A strong, clearly-written, well-reasoned proposal is more likely to be funded than one which is complex, contorted and jargon-riddled.

- start with a clear statement of the research project;
- use good, plain English and check your grammar;
- use crisp, vigorous language that gives your proposal a feeling of dynamism;
- keep sentences short: one idea to a sentence;
- use short paragraphs;



- avoid complex sentence structures that confuse or bore;
- design the proposal to be read by a fast, busy reader, who wants to grasp the main points easily;
- lay it out clearly: avoid huge slabs of text;
- impress the reader with clear thought and reasoning;
- avoid: adjectives, adverbs, acronyms and tautologies; and
- most importantly - test your proposal on an 'educated layperson', for example with your colleague – if it does not make sense to them, you will need to re-write it until it does!

8. If you get a knock back

Do not be discouraged. Even the best researchers are not successful every time. Read the reviewer's reports, then put them away and ponder the general criticisms for a few days.

- list each reviewer's points, most important first;
- talk to experienced colleagues about ways to improve your future prospects of success;
- ask for examples of successful proposals; and
- keep reviewer's comments to help you improve future proposals.

!!! GOOD LUCK !!!