

Grant Proposal Writing Tips

Research is essential to understanding disease and improving healthcare. Writing a grant proposal forces you to both define and refine your research so that reviewers can fully understand what you are trying to accomplish. That is not always easy to do so here are some tips:

- *Give your project a catchy name!* First impressions and a memorable name are important-but make sure it describes the project (e.g. Clues to the Blues: Investigating Depression in Seniors).
- *Good writing should be easy to read and understand.* Ideas should follow each other naturally and build on each other (e.g. “extraneous language creates complicated comprehension” is better written as “extra words are hard to understand”).
- *Avoid jargon.* You may understand acronyms and abbreviations but the reviewers may not. Make sure you explain the terms you use.
- *Follow the grant application guidelines.* Do not exceed the number of pages allowed or change the font or spacing or any other rules you have been given. Ignoring the rules may mean that your application will not be considered.
- *Show that you know your stuff.* If there has been other research done in the area you are considering, mention it and how your research will contribute to the knowledge in this area.
- *Don't get too ambitious.* Make sure that your enthusiasm does not outweigh your ability to actually complete your project. If a proposal looks like too much work for the allotted timeframe or the budget is not realistic, it may not get funded.
- *Allow extra time to reread and revise.* Let your proposal sit for a few days and then reread it. You will have a fresh perspective and may grammar or spelling errors you missed.
- *Avoid abbreviations.* Use the full word rather than an abbreviation (e.g. mathematics not math; laboratory not lab) so the reader understands exactly what you mean.
- *Ensure understanding.* You have expertise in the area you are researching but other readers may not. Ask someone outside of your area to read it and ask if they understand what you are proposing.
- *Ask for help.* Don't be afraid to ask for help or ask questions.