SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WRITING A SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATION
Education and Graduate Students Committee
American Society of Mammalogists
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INTRODUCTION

There are numerous factors to consider when writing a grant to support your research. The first question to ask yourself is what granting agencies are appropriate for your particular field of study. A good starting point is the ASM link to funding sources (link to go here). Once you have picked an organization(s), request an application for the grant and adhere to all requirements and deadlines for submission.

Below are links to sites on the internet that provide information and, in some cases, hands-on assistance for writing grant applications.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREPARING A SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATION

A. Hints for Writing Successful NIH grants http://chroma.med.miami.edu/research/Ellens_how_to.html
- Prof. Ellen Barrett, Department of Physiology and Biophysics, University of Miami School of Medicine, October, 1995

B. Basic Elements of Grant Writing http://www.cpb.org/grants/grantwriting.html
- The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which "…evaluates hundreds of proposals each year for a variety of funding purposes. This publication is an easy guide to the basic elements of grant writing and is offered to assist applicants to CPB and to other funding sources. It offers guideposts to help you through each stage of the process."

C. A Proposal Writer's Guide http://www.research.umich.edu/proposals/pwg/pwgcontents.html
- Don Thackrey, Univ. of Michigan, Office of Research. "This guide is intended for faculty and staff members with little or no experience in writing proposals for sponsored activities."

D. The Art of Grantsmanship
http://www.utoronto.ca/cip/sa_ArtGt.pdf
- Dr. Jacob Kraicer, Professor, Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto
- "The objective of these guidelines is to assist both new and veteran investigators to optimize their chances of successfully competing in a peer-reviewed grant application competition."

E. NSF Guide for Proposal Writing http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1998/nsf9891/nsf9891.htm
- Prepared by the Directorate for Education and Human Resources, Division of Undergraduate Education
- "Staff members give workshops on proposal writing, answer questions by phone and e-mail, and talk to potential awardees at professional meetings and at NSF. [This] is the essence of the advice often given to inquirers. These suggestions for improving proposals were collected from a variety of sources, including NSF Program Directors, panel reviewers, and successful grantees."

F. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance http://www.cfda.gov/public/cat_writing.htm
- A generalized summary of how to develop and write a successful federal grant proposal.

G. Columbia Univ., Health Sciences Division http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/research/writing.htm
- A series of links to funding agency websites that deal with grant applications and resources to improve your application.

TUTORIALS OR SHORT COURSES ON WRITING GRANT PROPOSALS

A. Tutorials
EPA Grant-Writing Tutorial http://www.epa.gov/seahome/grants.html
- can be downloaded as a self-extracting zipfile to your computer's hard drive

National Institutes of Health http://www.niaid.nih.gov/ncn/grants/default.htm
- "These "All About Grants" tutorials help biomedical investigators, especially new ones, plan, write, and apply for the basic NIH research project grant, the R01. Our advice comes from the experience of NIAID staff, including former NIH grantees…"
- Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About NIH Grants http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/giofaq.htm
- Tips for New NIH Grant Applicants http://www.nigms.nih.gov/funding/tips.html

B. Short Courses
The Foundation Center's Short Course http://fdncenter.org/learn/shortcourse/prop1.html
- "The Foundation Center is an independent nonprofit information clearinghouse established in 1956...to foster public understanding of the foundation field by collecting, organizing, analyzing, and disseminating information on foundations, corporate giving, and related subjects."

OTHER RESOURCES

A. The Foundation Center http://fdncenter.org
- A private entity whose mission is to "...support and improve institutional philanthropy by promoting public understanding of the field and helping grant seekers succeed."

B. Deborah Kluge http://www.proposalwriter.com/grants.html#Grantwriting
- Independent consultant and grant writer whose 'grant resources' website includes links to many useful resources related to grants and grant writing.

C. The Grantsmanship Center http://www.tgci.com/
- A private entity offering a training program that covers "…all aspects of researching grants, writing grant proposals and negotiating with funding sources.

D. McGill University Electronic Reference Shelf http://www.library.mcgill.ca/refshelf/writ.htm
- a series of writing tools including references on grant and proposal writing

SOME GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

A. Corporation for Public Broadcasting http://www.cpb.org/grants/grantwriting.html
- The proposal must be neat, complete, and on time, with the requested number of copies and original authorized signatures.
- Follow-up: contact the funding source about the status, evaluation, and outcome of your proposal. It is important to request feedback about a proposal's strengths and weaknesses, although this information is sometimes unavailable

B. University of Michigan, Office of Research
http://www.research.umich.edu/proposals/proposals.html
Writing a proposal…is a problem of persuasion. [A]ssume that your reader is a busy, impatient, skeptical person who has no reason to give your proposal special consideration and who is faced with many more requests than he can grant, or even read thoroughly. Such a reader wants to find out quickly and easily the answers to these questions:
- What do you want to do, how much will it cost, and how much time will it take?
- How does the proposed project relate to the sponsor's interests?
- What difference will the project make to: your university, your students, your discipline, the state, the nation, the world, or whatever the appropriate categories are?
- What has already been done in the area of your project?
- How do you plan to do it?
- How will the results be evaluated?
- Why should you, rather than someone else, do this project?