



Approaching the Finish Line

Abstract



- The most important part
- The reader determines their interest in the project from the abstract.
 - Be concise
 - Be clear
 - Focus on the most important themes
- Include required parts
 - NSF requires Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts

This may be the only section that is carefully read.



- Write the abstract last
- Be sure it is accurate (after revisions)
- Let someone else read it
- Refer to the guidelines for length and content
- Put it where it belongs

Appendices



- Information that supports the project proposal, but its inclusion breaks continuity or adds clutter
- Include in Table of Contents
- Number the appendices (A-1)

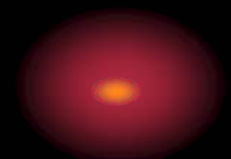
Include as Appendices

- Letters of endorsement and commitment
 - Plan in advance for letters and signatures
 - Draft letters yourself
- Previously tested or developed materials
- Complex methods, analyses or statistics
- Questionnaires, surveys, entire evaluation plan
- Lists, programs, maps
- Vitae



Polish that Proposal

- Review the guidelines for format
- Use 11-12 point font
- Keep it simple, neat and clean
- Don't use more than two type faces
- Use bold, underline, italics and color in a meaningful and consistent way



Appearance Counts



- Be consistent with format of headings
- Review all headings for logical flow
- Headings should be informative – establish expectations of content
- Match to evaluation criteria and table of contents
- Review tables/figures for format, captions and numbering

Forms, forms, and more forms



- Institutional compliances
- Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects
- Animal Care and Use Approval
- Biological, Chemical and Radiation Hazards
- Recombinant DNA Research
- Blood-Borne Pathogen or HIV Research

Finishing the Proposal



- Proofread, don't count on spell check
- Get an internal review and revise
- Inform your department chair and dean
- Allow enough time for institutional approval signatures and letters
 - (if you need letters from the President or Provost see the Office of Research early)

Copying and Mailing

- Read the guidelines, follow the guidelines
- Submit the required copies
- Bind or don't bind as they ask
- Postmark date, receipt date or electronic submission
- Check the address – mail vs delivery
- Does it also go to a state clearinghouse or office?



Let the waiting begin...



- The review process can take about 9 months for federal programs and up to 1.5 years for foundations
- Often you will be contacted with questions requiring a fast turnaround
- If you are requested to reduce the budget, reduce the project plan accordingly

What if you are not funded?



- Thank the agency for the review, request reviewer's comments, request a list of funded projects, request a funded proposal
- Volunteer to become a reviewer
- Revise according to the reviewer's comments and RESUBMIT
- Average funding:
 - NIH – 50% of all proposals are funded
 - NSF – 36% funded on first submission, 27% on second submission (over 60% chance w/ resubmission)

Final thoughts:



- The pursuit of grant money is a game; you win a few and lose a few. Don't be a quitter.
- Better players win more than they lose. You become a better player by improving your skills through practice.
- You never receive funding you don't ask for.
 - Set deadlines for yourself
 - Finish the proposal you have started and submit it

Thank you

- I wish you success – and expect that many of you will be successful
- My contact information:
 - Dr. Claudia Douglass
Department of Biology
Central Michigan University
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859
989-774-3190
dougl1cb@cmich.edu

