The art of writing grants

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Use grant writing to:

- Organize data and come up with ideas for future investigation
- Communicate the science and brainstorm with lab members
- Actively engage lab members in the process (great training!!)
- Get feedback
Successful Grant Proposal Tips

- Clear hypothesis
- Clear Goals
- Specific and feasible deliverables
- Impact/significance
- Innovation (beyond-the-state-of-the-art)
More tips (non scientific ones...)

• Read the call very carefully !!!!
• Make sure your application is directed to the right call and thematic area...
• Put yourself in the position of the reviewer...
• Do not get carried away trying to explain how you got to this point....
• Devise a story and present it as it makes sense, not necessarily in a linear, historic fashion....
Introduction

The introduction is a succinct outline of the project, including time-frame and goals.

• Ideally, this is the hook that engages your readers.
• You need to clearly explain here the aims of your study and in a short phrase say WHY it is important....
Background/Context

Provide some context for the project and the work that led the field to this point....

• This is your chance to demonstrate how your project ties in with the research in the general domain
• References are important here as they demonstrate your knowledge of the field
• It should be clear what are the open questions in the field that your proposal aims to elucidate
• In other words, what is the added value or as the jargon goes... beyond the state-of-the-art...
Problem /AIMS

Identify the problem the project will address and resolve. Include the time-line of the project and any other pertinent details.
Methodology

• Present the scope of the project as the solution to the problem.
• If possible, anticipate any objections, and address these issues in your overall plan
• Feasibility issues: take care to design your project so that its output can be realistic and not too ambitious
• Here you should be clear about the methodological approach, the sample, statistics, etc
• You should mention the particular equipment to be used, if pertinent
• You should explain that your institution has the necessary means (equipment, administration, etc) to help you carry the project
Work Packages: objectives, description of work, tasks, deliverables, milestones. Should be succinct and no more than 1 page per WP

Deliverables: report, data, publications, conference presentations
Public or restricted...indicate time to be delivered....

Milestones: A milestone is a specific point within a project's life cycle used to measure the progress toward the ultimate goal. Milestones are used as signal posts for a project's start or end date, external reviews or input, budget checks, submission of a major deliverable, etc.

SWOT analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats or otherwise
Risk assessment (high, medium, low risk and measures to be taken)
Benefits: efficiency, teamwork, tracking, versatility, visualization

Limitations: lack of dependencies, quantity of work
Presentation of the research team

Explain the expertise of the group
Explain how/why each member is assigned to a particular task

Budget

Need to justify your needs and be realistic!
A Winning Tone

• The tone of your project proposal is a crucial element of the document.
• You want your readers to be able to relate to your message and get on board, so engagement will be the key.
• Above all, you want to establish yourself as an expert with the experience necessary to launch and see the project through to fruition.
• Be careful not to come across as condescending though, especially for other people’s work....
• Your proposal should be able to answer your evaluator’s question of why this work is important and necessary....
There are definitely **a few things to avoid** when writing your proposal:

- Writing a project proposal can be a competitive endeavor.
- Make sure your proposal hits the target by avoiding a few common pitfalls.
  - Never submit a generic proposal without specific details
  - Keep your proposal **succinct** and as brief as possible.
    - Provide the required details directly without excess fluff.
  - Proofread your proposal carefully to make sure it’s free of typos and errors.
    - Even small errors give the reader/evaluator the impression of carelessness...
What in my view made this proposal successful

- Significant question, preliminary data, step forward
- State-of-the-art approach
- Clarity in objectives and value added
- Good research team with proven competence and related publications
- Choice of institutions
SAME PRINCIPLES OF GRANT WRITING APPLY TO FELLOWSHIPS

ONASSIS
BODOSAKI
Πολλά κληροδοτήματα (ανά περιοχή καταγωγής συνήθως...)

Πολλές ευκαιρίες για ανταλλαγές Erasmus+
FENS (NENS), IBRO

Εμπειρίκιον Ιδρυμα http://www.empirikion.gr/
Basic research – all scientific domains

National: ΕΛΙΔΕΚ
- Marie Curie Actions (Individual fellowships, Training Networks, very competitive <10% success rate)
- European Research Council grants (very competitive, self-selection, ~15% success rate)
- Human Frontier Science Program Grants (super competitive, ~3% success rate)

 foundation Santé
- National Institutes of Health (NIH) – very competitive <10% success rate
- EMBO Young Investigator Program

Applied research – more funding opportunities

National: Ερευνώ-Καινοτομώ, Εμβληματικές δράσεις,
- European Innovation Council (very competitive, < 10% success rate)
- The majority of European Commission calls welcome applied research and industrial partners
- Major companies also offer funding for specific subjects
- Disease oriented private foundations (e.g. National Soc for MS, UK MS, ARSEP, ELA, Simon’s Foundation, Michael J. Fox Foundation, Alzheimer’s Foundation etc.)
Postdoctoral fellowships
• IKY
• Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation
• AXA Post-doctoral Fellowships
• Fondation Sante
• EMBO Long-Term Fellowships
• FEBS Long-Term Fellowship (possibilities for summer fellowship, follow up research fund and Long-Term and Return-to-Europe Fellowships)
• FENS (NENS) 3 month stays within Europe

Postdoctoral fellowships
• HFSP Long-Term Fellowships
• MARIE SKLODOWSKA-CURIE Actions
• Welcome Trust Sir Henry Welcome Postdoctoral Fellowship (for early post-docs based in the UK)
• Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships for Canadian Citizens
• Canon Foundation –Research Fellowships (Japan and European exchange)
• Fondation de la recherché medicale
• Fondation Fyssen (postdoctoral fellowship for 2 years, postdoc to be carried in France)
• German Research Foundation (DFG) –Research Fellowships
• SNF (early and advanced postdoc mobility – for people that had their PhD in Switzerland and want to go abroad)
• Royal Society Newton Fellowship (for non-UK early-stage scientists who wish to conduct research in the UK)
• FULLBRIGHT (for researchers, faculty members, possibly senior postdocs...)

Από Γιώτα Ποιράζη
Research Grants

- Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation (ADDF): Translational and Clinical Research on Alzheimer's Disease
- Alzheimer's Research UK (UK only)
- Alzheimer's Society UK (UK only)
- BBSRC Bioscience for the future (UK only)
- Fondation Jérôme Lejeune (Genetic neurodevelopmental disorders)
- Fontation Sante
- Horizon Europe (the main funding instrument of the European Commission, multiple types of grants)
- Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation
- Human Frontier Science Program
- Huntington's Disease Society of America (HDSA): Human Biology Project
- March of dimes (work on development)
- MRC Medical Research Council (UK only)
- Brain and Behavior Research Foundation
- Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO), (Netherlands only)

- NIH international program
- Norwegian Research Council (RCN), (Norway only)
- NY Stem Cell Foundation
- Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
- Parkinson's U.K.
- Research Foundation Flanders FWO, (Belgium only)
- Royal Society Research Grant (For scientists in the UK who are at an early stage of their career and want to purchase specialised equipment and consumables)
- Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK), (Turkey only)
- SFARI Simon Foundation Autism Research Initiative (both pilot and research award)
- US Army: US Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences BAA for Basic Research
- Wellcome trust (UK and oversea applicants)
- Wings for life (spinal cord injury)
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If possible, find previously successful proposals for the call of interest (from colleagues, local grant’s office) and study them carefully.

Attend online webinars with information about your call of interest (EC / PRAXI / National Contact points organize these regularly)

Experience the reviewer’s side: evaluate other proposals yourself (those of colleagues, national / EU agencies – register on expert databases)
THANK YOU!