

SOME TIPS FOR WRITING GRANT PROPOSALS

- Target the best/most appropriate agency or funding source for your proposal.
- Chose the right program(s) for submission –use Guide to Programs, NSF Homepage (www.nsf.gov)
- Confirm your choice (talk to a Program Officer)
- Do your homework – read abstracts of current awards by program and check general award size
- A proposal should request funding for a research PROJECT – not for a research program
- Credibility is important for both the financial budget and the time budget
- Follow the “rules” – i.e. read and comply with Grant Proposal Guide or specific Program Announcement/Solicitation
- Write with your reviewers in mind
 - Capture interest early – write a good Project Summary and do it first
 - Use lucid, concise style
 - Make effective use of organization, formatting, illustration
 - Tell the whole story – a proposal should be a self contained document
 - Don't assume reader has specific background knowledge of subject
 - Use the “neglected” parts of a proposal well: 1) Budget Justification/Explanation 2) Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources (Section H)
- If at first you don't succeed, persevere.
 - Read your reviews carefully (i.e. with an open mind - and that's hard!)
 - Check with the Program Officer for clarification, if needed
 - Use the constructive criticisms to revise and resubmit (if advisable)
 - View a decline recommendation as part of a dialogue with the scientific community to enhance your research project
- In other words, learn to play the system and play it well!
- Remember that *“A good proposal is a good idea, well expressed, with a clear indication of methods for pursuing the idea, evaluating the findings, and making them known to all who need to know.”*

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