

Top 20 Tips for Successful Grant Application

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Academic research is an exciting and interesting career. However, it can be expensive, especially for researchers because laboratories often depend on high-priced equipment and consumables. For this purpose, you will have to apply for funding through a research grant. Academic research is also highly competitive—grant reviewers cannot fund all the proposals they receive. Therefore, it is critical that your grant proposal sells your idea in an exciting way.

Important Grant Application Tips

1. First, you need to **find a funding announcement**. There are [several opportunities](#): government funding agencies in your field; corporate vendors; or

various trusts/foundations that fund research. Furthermore, you could ask your colleagues and mentors for advice on whom to approach or send a press release to for securing financial assistance.

2. **Check eligibility:** Apply for [grants that you are eligible for](#) or you will waste your time.
3. Plan your application carefully and **read the instructions**. In addition, ensure you complete all the required forms and submit all the necessary documents. Funding organizations generally create (and share) their own templates for grant applications.
4. Aim your [grant proposal](#) at the **target audience**. Make it easy to understand to the journal reviewers as well. Use logical headings, figures, and bullet lists.
5. Write your **research design**. This is the easiest section and will help you get started. Make sure your [methods address your aims](#). Account for unforeseen variables and potential problems and present alternative strategies to manage these.
6. Write a concise [abstract](#) of the specific aims, research design, methodology, and significance of your research.
7. Briefly describe the significance of the research, the research question, and how your grant proposal will address the question in the **introduction**.
8. Give background information in your [literature review](#). Use a storytelling approach to give the current state of the field, gaps in knowledge, and your research question. Support your story with results of similar projects. Provide some preliminary results.
9. Tell your reviewers the **importance** of your project and how it will contribute to the field.
10. Detail how you, your mentors, and collaborators have the **expertise** to complete the project successfully. Support this with letters from collaborators.
11. Highlight any **novel approaches** your project will adopt to solve the problem.
12. Show that you have the **necessary equipment and support** to successfully complete the project. Detail any start-up funds you may have received.
13. Give a proper **budget** of the expenses for your project.
14. Give a realistic **timeline** of your project to show reviewers that your goals are attainable within the required time.
15. If necessary, give details of any **ethics requirements** (e.g., how you will deal with **biohazardous materials**.)

16. Outline how this project will contribute to your **career development goals**.
17. If relevant, show **end-user involvement**. Give evidence that end users also have had real opportunities to have their views heard (if applicable).
18. Explain any **career disruptions** in detail. For example, if you took time off to raise children, state when in your career this occurred and how much time you took off.
19. **Market yourself and your science**: Give specific details about your [research paper](#) including the journal impact factor, your contribution, and any evidence of how your paper contributed to the field. Also, give details of leadership roles, teaching experience, and community engagement to show your team contribution.
20. If you **changed fields** during your research career, show how this has contributed to your experience and abilities to complete this project.

Depending on the funding organization and field of research, research grants have different requirements. Did you find these tips useful? Were there any other tips that helped you with your grant application? Share your thoughts with us in the comments section below!

References

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/write-your-application.htm>

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