

General Guidelines for Writing a Funding Proposal

Faculty members may use and follow the research proposal format OR guidelines of the funding agency. However, most of the applications normally include the following components:

1. Title Page

The title should be as concise and informative as possible, stating the essence of the research.

2. Executive Summary

The summary should explain the context of the research, the objectives, the significance of the proposed research, its potential outcomes, applications and benefits, the techniques and methods to be used, its anticipated accomplishments, and its time duration.

3. Introduction and Statement of the Problem/Project

This is an overview which should briefly describe background information on the proposed research such as why the research is conducted, what the main needs are, and what the benefits are to the community, country.

4. Literature Review and Analysis of Related Work

This should include a review of the literature, and indicate how the proposed research relates to it. It should show how the past activities of the PI and his/her team of Co-PIs relate to the research. Critically analyze the relevant and recent literature with a point of view of defining what has been done and what is needed, establishing the need for this project, defining the problem, and establishing the significance and potential contributions of this project.

5. Objectives

The objectives of the proposed research should be clearly described. For a better understanding, the objectives should be classified to identify those that are related to basic and applied research whenever applicable. The objectives should be listed in order of priority.

6. Methodology

a. Description of the Proposed Research

The technical approach should be described clearly and in sufficient detail so that the reviewers will have a firm basis for judgment as to the merit of the proposal. Specifically, what is to be accomplished and how it will be done. It is essential to clearly indicate whether the work is theoretical, experimental, or both; pure, applied and whether the necessary facilities are in-house, etc. It is advisable to identify any unique features of the investigating team, or of its geographic location that would have a positive bearing on the potential for success of the proposed research.

b. Experimental Design and Procedure

This section can be written as a narrative detailing the major pieces of capital equipment and laboratory space requirements, giving justification where purchase is required, or mentoring their availability in-house. Alternatively, the items can be presented in a list with their justification. These items would also appear as line items in the budget. Furthermore, detailed information on the experimental design and procedure should be provided, if applicable.

7. Significance of Proposed Research

a. Project Outcomes: Provide specific, measurable outcomes. Particularly, clarify whether the results are likely to lead to patents or commercial outcomes and products.

b. Beneficiaries and How They Would Benefit: Here list those who are likely to directly or indirectly benefit from the results of the project. Also, explain how the results from the project will be disseminated.

c. Prospects for a Commercial Product: Describe any prospective opportunities to commercialize the findings of the proposed project.

d. Patents: Mention the patenting probability, if any.

8. Project Schedule

In this section, the scheduling of tasks, or milestones, should be discussed. It is understood that some research is highly speculative, and hence difficult to schedule. On the other hand, there should be clear milestones and a reasonable probability of success. The research phases should be broken down and described briefly with the expected outcomes. This section may also include charts for illustrating the schedule for the accomplishment of the tasks, and/or the scheduling of personnel assignments. Sample work plan time table.

9. List of References

List of references cited in the proposal.

10. Project Budget

The budget may include the research expenses such as equipment, travel expenses, computer and its accessories, software, electronic components, consumables, chemicals, stationary etc. Requests for equipment should include a justification and statement of support from host institution. The applicant should clearly show that such equipment is essential to the project. Provide an overall budget, and few items require full details as follows:

a. Labor: Include details of the payroll costs, technical and support staff (full or part-time) who will work on the project.

b. Travel: Provide details of funds required for travel by investigators and staff working on the project. Particularly, justify the need for travel and whether it is required by the nature of the work.

c. Consumables: Provide brief description of consumables and current prices. The need for consumables should be justified in terms of requirement for the research proposed.

d. Equipment: List all equipment that are needed for the project.

e. Services/Facilities: List available facilities that are needed in the project.

f. Other Items: Describe and justify the need for other budget items in the allocated spaces.

11. Partner Organizations

Provide the details of project partners and list their cash and non-cash (in-kind) contributions. Partners should confirm their support of the project in its various forms, confirm their contributions and indicate the benefits they are gaining in return.

12. Nominated Referees

The applicant should provide a list of names of renowned referees in the field along with their email address, telephone/fax number etc. the funding agency reserves the right to use or not use any of the referees for evaluating the project.

13. Certification

The signatures of the principal investigator and co-investigators, the signature of the person in charge of authorizing involvement of the host organization, and the signatures of persons in charge of authorizing partnership in partner organizations should be provided in this certification section.