GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

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HELP!..........................WHERE DO I START?

For any funding scheme you will need to ‘fit’ your proposal with the mission and objectives of the funding agency.

• Find out what the funding scheme aims to achieve. In the case of the UWA GRST scheme it is:

**to support research, travel and professional development**

and

**to develop skills in writing research grant applications**

• You must keep these aims in mind throughout the grant writing process.
WERE DO I START?

• Read the instructions to applicants/guidelines carefully.

• What is fundable? Decide what you are going to apply for....professional development, conference travel, equipment.....
HOW SHOULD I PREPARE?

• Read colleagues’ successful grant applications

• Before you write your application and while you are writing it, put yourself in the position of the reviewers....
UWA GRST SCHEME

- **Summary** – outlining the purpose for which the funds will be used
- **Budget and budget justification**
- **Research track record**
- **Aims and expected outcomes**
- **Alternative funding sources**
- **List of previous funding received during candidature**
- **Certification and letters of support**
TITLE (20 words)

• The title and summary set the first impression.
TITLE – KEEP IT SIMPLE!!

• “To examine the proposition that acute excessive alcohol consumption is causally related to a demonstration of consequential long-term impairment of an individual’s cognitive abilities over extended periods”.
TITLE

• “To determine whether binge drinking leads to permanent brain damage”.
SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT/ACTIVITY

• Why is the summary so important? The review committee members often study the application weeks before the meetings. They then quickly review all the summaries just before the meetings in order to recall the essentials.

• A good summary/abstract captures and illustrates the entire research picture (or in this case research activity) without leaving the reader puzzled or confused.

• Start with a strong sentence which explains the importance of the activities.

• Assume that you are writing for a reviewer in a somewhat related field, rather than for an expert in your area.

• Avoid abbreviations, acronyms and jargon.
BUDGET

• Make the budget realistic

• A well constructed budget should include all the costs of your project/activity. A well justified budget should increase your chances of having these costs funded.

• Group items together under the headings provided
TRACK RECORD

• Relative to opportunity

• List all papers according to the categories provided – i.e. books, journal articles, book chapters, conference papers.

• How do these relate to the thesis?

• Include Journal Impact Factor (IF) and Citations
JOURNAL IMPACT FACTOR

• Journal Impact Factor (IF) – The IF approximates the average number of times published papers are cited in the two years following publication. For example:
  – Nature = 30.98
  – Science = 29.78

• Impact Factors vary from discipline to discipline.
FINDING IMPACT FACTOR (IF)

- Go to the UWA library access to ISI web of science:
- Once you are into the site, Click on the "additional resources" tab along the top and then on "Journal Citation Reports".
- Select either JCR Science or JCR Social Sciences, then under “select an option” on the right hand side of box, select “search for a specific journal”. Then click “submit”.
- Type in or paste part or all of journal title and click on “search”.
- Journal Summary List provides a range of data including 5 year Impact Factor.
- NB the actual website for a journal usually provides current Impact Factor on its home page.
CITATIONS

• A citation occurs when someone cites your work
• Self-citation
• You can find your citations on ISI Web of Knowledge or on Google Scholar

• Thanks for Debbie Thackray, FECM RDO, for providing step by step guide to finding IF and Citations
FINDING NUMBER OF CITATIONS

Go to the UWA library access to ISI web of science:

• Once you are into the site, the default page is “All Databases”. Note that there are other resources in ISI Web of Knowledge accessed through the other tabs along the top window.

• Enter author name as precisely as you can (including initials). NB if you don’t always use all initials then put first initial followed by *). Enter other information in the other two windows to help narrow down the search, such as address, journal, topic etc. Limit the number of years if wanted. Then click “search”.

• If the result includes papers not by you, then you can refine the search using the options in the left hand margin. There are many combinations available so take time to try these out.

• It is a good idea to register yourself in “My Researcher ID” so that a specific ID is assigned to you which makes it easier for you and others to search for your publications – especially if you have a relatively common name: go to “Additional Resources” and click on “Researcher ID.com”.

TRACK RECORD: AUTHOR ORDER

• First author is generally the primary author

• Some disciplines do alphabetical order (for example some areas of theoretical physics), but not common

• First author gets et al. citation

• In some sciences senior author is last

• Don’t hesitate to explain these conventions to the assessor……
TRACK RECORD

• Apply for prizes and awards
• Apply for grants
• Go to conferences, especially international ones while you can
PUBLISH, PUBLISH AND PUBLISH!!!
PUBLISH, PUBLISH, PUBLISH......

• Write up and submit your recent work – your ‘track record’, as judged by publications, is an important criterion in the assessment of grant applications.

• Publish in high impact journals – quality is more important than quantity. Publish in the best journal that your work deserves.

• Your publications bring money into UWA – please make sure we know about them.
AIMS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

UWA GRST – How will the activities for which the funding is being sought add value to the research training of the applicant?

• **How will your request for funding** to present a paper at a conference, or to work in an overseas lab, or to an archive to collect data, **contribute towards your training as a researcher?** What will you, as a researcher, gain from that experience?

• How will your request for access to or purchase of a specific piece of equipment contribute towards your PhD? **How will this improve the quality of your PhD thesis?** Why wasn’t this budgeted for in your original research proposal?
GRANT WRITING SKILLS

“The difference between success and failure often results, not just from the quality of the science, but from the quality of the grant application”.

“The art of "grantsmanship" will not turn mediocre science into a fundable grant proposal. But poor "grantsmanship" will, and often does, turn very good science into an unfundable grant proposal.”

(Jacob Kraicer, Professor of Physiology, University of Toronto)
GENERIC
GRANT WRITING TIPS......

• Presentation - avoid wads of text as it puts the reader off.

• Communicate a sense of commitment and enthusiasm to your assessors.

• No-one gets it right the first time - write and rewrite!!!

• Read the application aloud to yourself. This way long worded text and unclear explanations will quickly become evident
GRANT WRITING TIPS
BEFORE YOU SUBMIT....

• Make sure that your application is free from mechanical errors. Sloppy application = sloppy researcher!!

• Get someone to read your draft application – ask them to be critical and be open to their suggestions, don’t get offended.

• **Highlight** fix-ups for later so that they are not left in the final version!!!
Before you submit – is your application eligible?

See one page summary of common reasons for ineligibility

• Check word count
• Is your application complete? Do you have all the required documentation, letters of support etc?
• Have you made the right number of copies?
• Have you exceeded the word limit?
• Have you provided your BU number?
• Do you have all the relevant signatures? What if your HoS is overseas?
• Have you provided evidence that you have reached the required milestones ie have you included evidence of Confirmation of Candidature or Research Proposal approval in the application?
• Do you have the required documentation to back up your budget requests?

If in doubt, contact GEOs for advice
IF YOU AREN’T SUCCESSFUL, DON’T GIVE UP!
IF YOU AREN’T SUCCESSFUL…..

• Rejection isn’t the end of the world – don’t take it personally.

• Learn from the experience – why was it unsuccessful?

• Be persistent and resilient! Apply again next year.
YOUR RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- Dr Judy Berman (Associate Director)
- Dr Debbie Thackray (Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Mathematics)
- Mr Tim Pitman (Central RDO)
- Dr Vince Wallace (Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences)
- Dr Michael Clarke (Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences)
- Ms Melina Wood (Faculty of Business)
- Dr Liz Barbour (Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences)
- Dr Tess Williams (Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and Faculty of Law)
- Dr Agi Gedeon – (WUN Coordinator)
- Dr Amelia Scaffidi – Postdoctoral Coordinator
- Ms Rochelle Fleming – (Central RDO, Major Projects)

Diverse experience across: Disciplines / University / Research Institutes / Private Industry / Government agencies/ etc.