IGA – Academic and Project Writing

Seminar 11

Homework Task from seminar 10:

* Exercise 1: Put in the or a/an where necessary. If no word is necessary, leave the space empty.

HOW TO WRITE ___ GRANT APPLICATION – ___ STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

___ following strategies and procedures will help you produce ___ proposal that is not only ___ impressive professional document, but also ___ well-ordered plan for ___ valuable research.

Beginning your proposal on ___ sound foundation means finding out everything you possibly can about ___ agency offering ___ research grant. Their ideals, aims, activities, members and publications will all be important and should be considered in relation to ___ intended research project. ___ relatively clear idea of what that research will be is therefore also necessary.

After learning about ___ grantor, you will need to find ___ information about ___ specific grant you are hoping to receive. Any forms or templates that require ___ completion along with ___ instructions and guidelines for completing them will be vital, but investigating ___ projects currently supported by ___ grant may help as well.

* Exercise 2: Correct the errors in this summary

With the information about a grantor and a grant in mind, you will need to decide if your research project is the good fit for the available funding. Most adjudicating committees for research grants are not willing to deviate far from a stated aims of a grantor or a grant itself, so your research and the ways in which you present it must be appropriate.

If among instructions and guidelines for a grant application there are explicit the statements about purpose of the proposal, follow them as guiding principles for how to write grant proposal strong enough to garner support. If such statements are not offered, keep in mind that the grant proposals for research funding generally tell the readers what you are planning to do, why you are planning to do it and how you are planning to do it. Each of these will require the considerable explanation and detail.

Link to full article: [How To Write a Grant Application - Step-by-Step Guide - Journal-Publishing.com (journal-publishing.com)](journal-publishing.com)

* Exercise 3: Put in the or a/an where necessary. If no word is necessary, leave the space empty.

12 top tips for writing ___ grant application

Allow ___ plenty of time: Everything takes longer than you think it will. No matter how simple it may seem to pull together ___ project there are ___ lot of different steps, some more time-consuming than others, involved in submitting ___ proposal.

Choose your funder and scheme carefully, It's good to talk! Speak to ___ funders. Ask questions to get ___ insight into what they are interested in. Sign up for ___ information feeds, find out what kind of ___ research is in ___ funder's remit and read through ___ guidance and eligibility criteria carefully.

Exercise 4: Correct the errors in this summary

Get the advice at early stage and from range of sources: Create the collaborative network within your establishment and beyond. Speak with your grants office, mentors and colleagues who have served on the funding panels. Getting involved in grant writing at a early stage is good idea, if only as a observer. Find out how the senior colleagues get ideas together, assemble teams and put application together.

Plan, plan and plan some more: Plan your application and take your time, don't rush it. Go out and look for the inspiration to help pull together the idea that's worthy of being funded. The wider a range of ideas you can expose yourself to, a more interesting concepts you'll come up with.

Link to full article: [12 top tips for writing a grant application - News and features - Medical Research Council (ukri.org)](#)

Exercise 5: Put in the or a/an where necessary. If no word is necessary, leave the space empty.

How to Write ___ Successful Humanities Grant

Read ___ previously funded proposals or ___ abstracts for ___ agency to which you are submitting your grant. Often ___ complete sample applications of ___ previously funded proposals are offered. Knowing what ___ good grant looks like helps in crafting your own grant application.

Carefully read ___ application guidelines. They contain ___ valuable information, including how to assemble your grant, ___ review criteria, types of activities supported, and all ___ necessary details that need to be followed in order to be funded. Many grants are eliminated during ___ first phase of the review process simply because ___ guidelines were not followed.

Abstract and Bullet Points

1. Bullet points in proposal writing

Why do we use bullet points in proposal writing?

How do we use them effectively?

2. Tips for Writing Compelling Bullet Points

1. Keep them brief:

The more unnecessary words you trim leave out from your bullet points, the easier they are to understand. Concise writing is lean. And readers can zip through it with little effort. To sharpen your bullet points, follow the three writing tips below:

- Avoid linking verb phrases like, "Justin was writing about his cross-country trip." "Justin wrote about his cross-country trip," sounds more forceful. Linking verbs have a passive effect, which is why they aren't so strong and clear in their message.

- Change prepositional phrases like, "The decision of the executive team was final," to "The executive team's decision was final." Prepositional phrases make sentences longer and harder to follow.

- Reduce verb phrases like "The results are suggestive of the fact that on-page SEO still works." Use simple verb phrases like "The results suggest that on-page SEO still works." The latter sounds much smoother and clearer.

2. Start your bullet points with a verb:

To hook your audience and persuade them to keep reading, your bullet points' first word needs to immediately capture their attention. **Starting a bullet point with a verb**, which reveals the most information about your bullet point, can instantly draw your audience into the writing.

For example, which of the following bullet points immediately grabs your attention?

If we distribute blog content through Facebook Messenger, we can:

- leverage a distribution channel with high-engagement rates and rely less on email.

If we distribute blog content through Facebook Messenger:

- We can leverage a distribution channel with high engagement rates and rely less on email.

Even though there's only a slight difference between the two bullet points, the one that starts with a verb can engage an audience quicker and prompt them to read the rest of the bullet points.

3. Keep them consistent:

Keeping your bullet points consistent makes it easy for your readers to read quickly down the page and easily digest its information. To do this, stick to the same number of lines per bullet point, start each bullet point with the same type of speech, like a verb, and maintain the same grammatical form.

For instance, consider the two examples below. One keeps its bullet points consistent and the other one doesn't.

Researching within this new field will:

- Improve the relationship with another exclusive institution.

- Stimulate the interest of new students and researchers.

- Open the department to possible cooperation in new projects.

Researching within this new field will:

- Improve the relationship between our university and another exclusive institution.

- The interest of students and researchers will be stimulated.

- Improve departmental collaboration.

The second example has incongruent bullet points – they are different in style and grammatical form. It can distract or confuse the reader, increasing the likelihood that they may disengage from the writing.

4. Use bullet points in the right place:

Bullet points give your audience a refreshing break from blocks of text, but if you make your copy or report look like a shopping list, they'll want a break from your bullet points.

To effectively engage and persuade your audience with bullet points, use them in moderation -- highlight essential information and list items that would look jumbled if you wrote them in paragraph form.

Adapted from: LINK

3: Exercises – bullet points:

* Choose which bullet point version is better:

A1) Following the completion of the training program:
- We aim to finalise formulation of the test battery
- The remainder of the testing will be completed within 30 days
- The initial data analysis process will be commenced

A2) Following the completion of the training program we aim to:
- Finalise the formulation of the test battery
- Complete the remainder of the testing within 30 days
- Commence the initial data analysis process

B1) It is hoped that the important findings of this study will:
- Lead to the improved management of LBP by physiotherapists
- Educate clinicians regarding the importance of this treatment approach
- Assist in improving the communication between the different health disciplines working in the public health service.

B2) It is hoped that the important findings of this study will:
- Improve the management of LBP by physiotherapists
- Educate clinicians about this important treatment approach
- Improve communication between the various public health service disciplines.

Answer the below questions True or False

- The sentences introduced by a bullet point have more effect when extensive.   T/F
- It is always recommended to start a bullet point with a verb.   T/F
- Use bullet points as much as possible in your proposal.   T/F
- Consistency is not a recommended quality for bullet points.   T/F

Create a mixture of written text and bullet points to summarize the main points of this paragraph:

The proposal starts with a specific aims page, in which a brief background and rationale for the proposed studies is provided, followed by the hypothesis and aims of the proposal. The specific aims page is probably the most important section of the grant application, because all members of the study section will likely read this page, whereas the assigned reviewers will read the entire application. I suggest: to make the hypothesis statement bold so that its emphasis is highlighted, secondly to have 2 to 3 specific aims depending on the length of the grant activation. It is also important to avoid statements such as "To study…" or "To test…" in the aims, because they may indicate lack of focus or a well-defined hypothesis; instead, use statements such as "To determine…" or "To elucidate…", followed by the hypothesis statement. Finally, ensure that the aims are not dependent on each other; in other words, if Aim 1 does not work, will that nullify the goals of Aim 2 and Aim 3? If yes, then the application is not likely to succeed. The first section of the grant is Significance. The applicant should have an in-depth knowledge of the field to be able to write a comprehensive but succinct review of the literature. This section should also describe the gaps in the field, which will be a preview of the goals of the proposal. The significance of the proposal should be highlighted, because the reviewers will look for this as part of the 5 criteria they will use to grade a grant application. Finally, innovation should also be described under a different subheading. It is crucial to focus on 2 innovative aspects of the application: scientific novelty and methodological innovation. In other words, if new and novel techniques are used in the application, they should also be highlighted in this section. Additionally, potential clinical implications of the proposal should also be discussed in the Innovation section.

4. Abstracts

* What are abstracts and why do we write them?

* *Read the abstract below and identify its parts.*

* Identify words or groups of words in each sentence that help you to recognise those parts.

(1) The present study was conducted to determine the prevalence of *Listeria monocytogenes* in smoked fish in Sokoto, Nigeria. **(2)** A total of 115 different species of smoked fish from the various retail outlets and market places within the metropolis were analysed for the presence of *L. monocytogenes* using ISO culture method. **(3)** Out of the 115 samples analysed, 29 (25%) were positive for *L. monocytogenes*. **(4)** Other Listeria species isolated in this study were *L. grayi* 13 (11%), *L. innocua* 10 (9%) and *L. ivanovi* 15 (13%). **(5)** The remaining 48 (42%) of the sample were negative for Listeria species. **(6)** The study shows that *L. monocytogenes* and other *Listeria* species are common contaminant of smoked fish, and this may pose serious public health implications. (Salihu et al., 2008)

4.1. Edit the below abstract

* Suggest changes that will reduce the length of this abstract (146 words) to the requested maximum of 140 words:

Given the demand for interventions that may prevent the development of persistent musculoskeletal pain problems, this project will investigate the effects of a cognitive-behavioural program in a group of non-patients with neck or back pain symptoms. Two hundred and fifty people selected from a population study will be invited to participate. These people will have had experienced four or more episodes of relatively intense spinal pain during one year but will have not been out of work for more than 30 days during the given period. Participants will be randomly assigned to either a cognitive-behavioural group intervention or a treatment as usual comparison group. The experimental group will receive a standardized six-session program, provided by a trained therapist according to a manual. There will be a one-year observation. The follow-up analysis of 33 studied outcome variables is expected to show which group will produce better results.

4.2. Tips for writing a great abstract:

* Notice the articles in Italics as we read through the text:

Length: Make sure it's *the* correct length. If it's longer than *the* required word count, then it's highly likely to be rejected by the journal or the organisers of *the* conference. If it's too short then it's unlikely to show enough detail about *the* study – you will lose valuable marketing messages.

Content: Make sure your abstract is *a* reflection of your work and study. It should include *the* most important aspects and main findings of *the* research. Avoid including unnecessary information that provides *a* distraction to *the* more relevant information, and don't expand too much on *the* work of other authors.

Language and style: Make sure *the* language used in the abstract is clear, academic, formal and avoid using jargon or slang. This will ensure it's easier to follow for *the* reader, and it is pitched at *the* correct audience (other academic readers). Make sure *the* writing is clear and concise, using *a* proof-reader to check language can often help when English is not your first language.

Conclusion and Keywords: Finish with *a* strong, clear conclusion – it is *the* last thing that the reader will be left with when they finish reading. This should briefly summarise *the* importance of the research, and aim to leave *a* strong impression. In addition, pick *the* most important keywords for your study, so it can be easily found in searches. Include at least several keywords in order to help with this.

(Adapted from: https://blog.webshop.elsevier.com/tips-for-writing/bad-vs-good-abstract/)

4.3. Determine the parts of this abstract

* Work with a partner: read the following abstract and locate and note the different sections of it – IMRAD. Then discuss with the group.

1. A cross-sectional observational design study was conducted to determine lumbar repositioning error in 15 subjects who had chronic low back pain with a clinical diagnosis of lumbar segmental instability and 15 asymptomatic participants. 2. The aim of the study was to determine whether individuals with lumbar segmental instability have a decreased ability to reposition their lumbar spine into a neutral spinal position. 3. Proprioception of the lumbar spine has been investigated in individuals who have low back pain with variable results. 4. The testing procedure's lack of sensitivity and the non-homogeneity of groups may be responsible for the conflicting findings. 5. Repositioning accuracy of the lumbar spine was assessed using the 3Space Fastrak to determine error in15 participants with lumbar segmental instability and 15 asymptomatic subjects. 6. The participants were assisted into a neutral spinal sitting posture and then asked to reproduce this position independently over five trials separated by periods of relaxed full lumbar flexion. 7. Lumbosacral repositioning error was significantly greater in participants with lumbar segmental instability than in the asymptomatic group (t[28] = 2.48; P = 0.02. 8. There also was a significant difference between the groups at each individual sensor. 9. The results of this study indicate that individuals with a clinical diagnosis of lumbar segmental instability demonstrate

an inability to reposition the lumbar spine accurately into a neutral spinal posture while seated. <mark>10.</mark> This finding provides evidence of a deficiency in lumbar proprioceptive awareness among this population.

Introduction – sentence: Method – sentence:

Results – sentence: Discussion – sentence:

Homework Tasks:

1) Create bullet points to summarize the main points of the following paragraph:

A fellowship proposal is a tricky document to get right. Its goal is to convince readers—some from within your field, others from very different fields—that a project you have not yet written, based on research you have not yet done, is innovative and exciting and important in myriad ways. That's tough! If you are new to grant writing, or if you have had trouble winning grants, this tutorial aims to offer a bit of guidance. There are two things you need to keep in mind while writing a fellowship proposal. First, you need to determine your audience. Are the members of this fellowship's selection committee within your field? Outside of it? In either case, you'll want your project's driving question, key hypothesis, scholarly interventions, and broader implications to be crystal clear. But if the members of the selection committee are, say, anonymous archivists rather than historians you've already met at a specialized conference, then your fellowship proposal will be more effective if it emphasizes the broader significance and implications of your work more than the specifics. Pretend you're visiting your favourite high school teacher, and are trying to convince her or him that you made the right choice in going to grad school, because your dissertation is changing what we thought we knew about X—and that X matters to your high school teacher in her or his daily intellectual life because it also shapes the way we think about Y and Z broader things. The second thing to keep in mind is that the funding you are applying for exists for a reason. Find out what that reason is, and devote serious thought to how your project advances the goals of the funding institution. Also, articulate the specific reasons why you need this money. What will it allow you to do that you couldn't do otherwise? And why are you the best person to do this project? Do not trust the fellowship committee to make these connections on their own.

Bullet points:

2). Write an abstract for your research proposal (word limit 250 words).

* Upload the article onto MS Teams so we can review it next session with the class group (please save in the same format as previously.