

# IGA – Academic and Project Writing

## Seminar 9

### Homework Task from seminar 8:

*\* Think about your own point in the research process. Write a few paragraphs describing your experience with writing a research proposal.*

*\* Some of the things you may consider including: the process or steps of the proposal process, writing the proposal itself, some of the challenges that were / or you think could be involved in the process, what you have learnt from past proposal processes, any advice or tips you could share with your colleagues, etc.*

*\* Please be prepared to share this information in either a verbal form (if you want more speaking practice) or written form (if you want more feedback on your writing) next session.*

*\* 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).*

## The Research Proposal Process

### 1. The grant writing process

*\* Read the text below and consider the information.*

*\* The text contains some grammatical errors – find them and correct them as you read:*

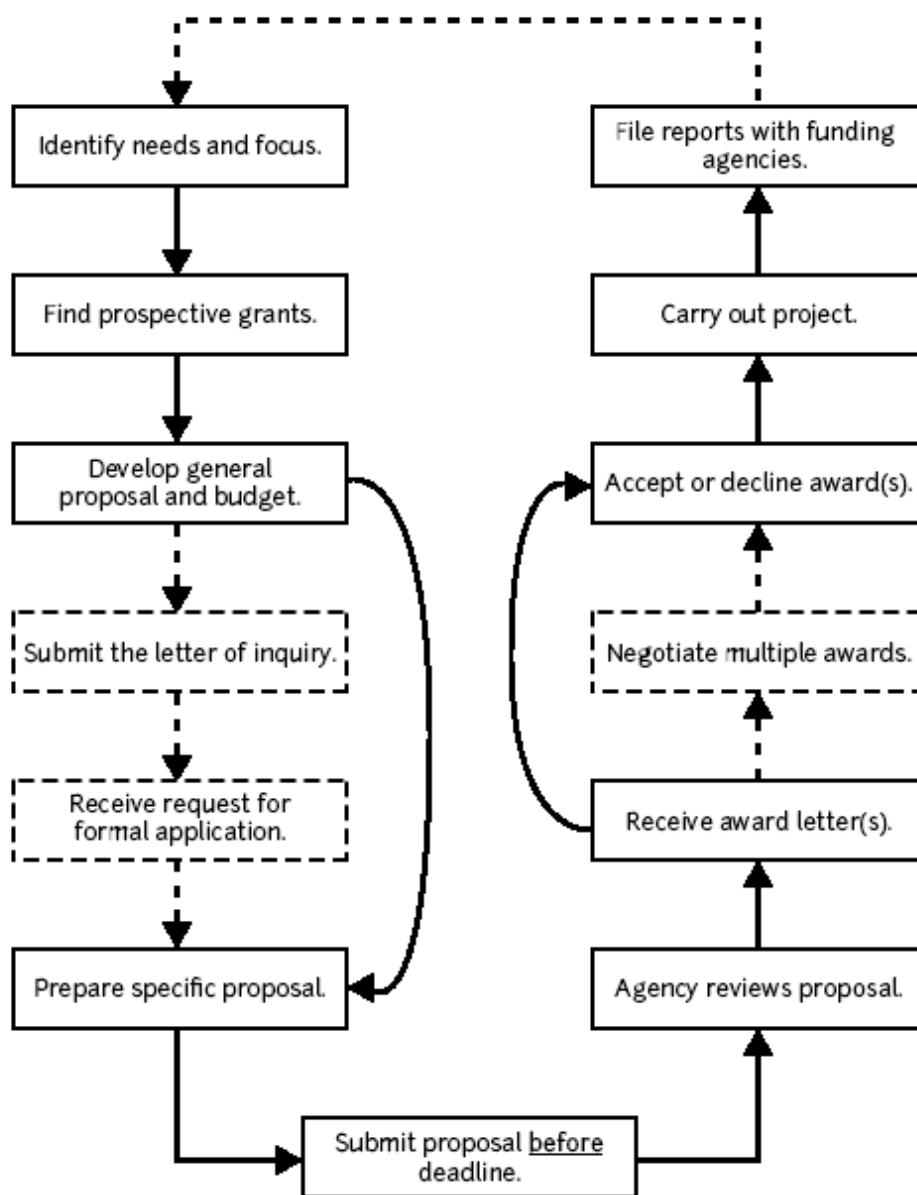
A grant proposal or application is document or set of documents that is submitted to an organization with the explicit intent of securing funding for a research project. Grant writing varies widely across the discipline, and research intended for epistemological purposes (philosophy or the arts) rests on very different assumptions than research intended for practical applications (medicine or social policy research). Nonetheless, here we provide a general introduction to grant writing process across the disciplines.

Before you begin writing your proposal, you need to know what kind of research you will be doing and why. You may have a topic or experiment on mind, but taking the time to define what your ultimate purpose is can be essential on convincing others to fund that project. Although some scholars in the humanities and arts may not have thought about their projects in terms of research design, hypotheses, research questions, or results, reviewers and funding agencies expect you to frame your project in these terms. You may also find that thinking about project in these terms reveals new aspects of it to you.

Writing successful grant application is long process that begins with an idea. Although many people think of grant writing as a linear process (from idea to proposal to award), it is a circular process. Many people start by defining their research question or questions. What knowledge or information will be gained as a direct result of your project? Why is undertaking your research important in a broader sens? You will need to explicitly communicate this purpose to the committee reviewing your application. This is easier when you know what you plan to achieve before you begin the writing process.

\* Discuss the diagram below, where you may find yourself in this process:

**Diagram 1. The Grant Writing Process**



- - - - - Dashed lines indicate possible additional steps.

Applicants must write grant proposals, submit them, receive notice of acceptance or rejection, and then revise their proposals. Unsuccessful grant applicants must revise and resubmit proposals during the next funding cycle. Successful grant applications and the resulting research lead to ideas for further research and new grant proposals.

Cultivating an ongoing, positive relationship with funding agencies may lead to additional grants down the road. Whereas, make sure you file progress reports and final reports in a timely and professional manner. Although a successful grant applicants may fear that funding agencies will reject future proposals because they've already received "enough" funding, the truth is that money follows money. Individuals or projects awarded grants in the past are more competitive and thus more likely to receive funding in future.

## **2. Some general tips to assist the grant proposal process**

- Begin early.
- Apply early and often.
- Don't forget to include a cover letter with your application.
- Answer all questions. (Pre-empt all unstated questions.)
- If rejected, revise your proposal and apply again.
- Give them what they want. Follow the application guidelines exactly.
- Be explicit and specific.
- Be realistic in designing project.
- Make explicit the connections between your research questions and objectives, your objectives and methods, your methods and results, and your results and dissemination plan.
- Follow the application guidelines exactly. (We have repeated this tip because it is very, very important.)

## **3. Before you start writing – consider your research needs**

Ask yourself the following questions of what you want to do and achieve (your needs):

*\* Discuss these questions with the group. Are they relevant for your own research?*

- Are you undertaking preliminary or pilot research in order to develop a full-blown research agenda?
- Are you seeking funding for dissertation research? Pre-dissertation research? Postdoctoral research? Archival research? Experimental research? Fieldwork?
- Are you seeking a stipend so that you can write a dissertation or book? Polish a manuscript?

- Do you want a fellowship in residence at an institution that will offer some programmatic support or other resources to enhance your project?
- Do you want funding for a large research project that will last for several years and involve multiple staff members?

#### 4. Before you start writing – consider your research focus

Furthermore, think about the following questions regarding your research/project (your focus):

*\* Think about and discuss the questions below and why they may be relevant when preparing a research proposal. Think about these questions in relation to your own research:*

- What is the topic? Why is this topic important?
- What are the research questions that you're trying to answer? What relevance do your research questions have?
- What are your hypotheses?
- What are your research methods?
- Why is your research/project important? What is its significance?
- Do you plan on using quantitative methods? Qualitative methods? Both?
- Will you be undertaking experimental research? Clinical research?

#### 5. Test your knowledge

*\* Having read and discussed the information above, answer the following questions true or false:*

1. A grant proposal or application is a document or set of documents that is submitted to an organization with the explicit intent of securing a degree. T/F
2. There is a universal grant writing process which needs to be studied and applied. T/F
3. When applying for a science grant - research design, hypotheses, research questions, or results – are important. When applying for a humanities and art grant, this is not required. T/F
4. Grant writing is a linear process, which starts with the idea and ends with the award. T/F
5. Once a grant application is unsuccessful, the applicant must start again from scratch. T/F

6. It is possible to receive several grants in the same research field as long as progress reporting is done timely and professionally. T/F

*\* Put the below process steps into the right order (1 – 10). Number 1 and number 10 are already in the right position.*

**1. Identify needs and focus**

*Prepare specific proposal*

*Submit proposal before deadline*

*Receive award letter*

*Find prospective grants*

*Accept or decline award(s)*

*Carry out project*

*Agency reviews proposal*

*Develop general proposal and budget*

**10. File reports with funding agencies**

*\* Connect the correct words and phrases to obtain some useful, general tips for grant writing:*

Apply  
Revise  
Be realistic  
Begin  
Answer  
Follow  
Don't forget  
Be  
Give them

What they want  
Early  
The application guidelines exactly  
Explicit and specific  
To include a cover letter with your application  
Early and often  
In designing the project  
Your proposal and apply again (if rejected)  
All questions

\* Complete the following multiple choice questions. Each question has one right answer:

- a. A good mind-set behind grants means
  - I can spend the money efficiently the way I want
  - I am in a partnership with the funding source
  - This is my entitlement for hard work
- b. The grant is awarded and this means:
  - Visions (funding agency and applicant) are aligned
  - Funds are received finally and work can continue
  - Planning of the work can start
- c. Supporting the funding source priorities means:
  - Being employed by them
  - Following their priorities and not taking advantage
  - Working night and day to complete the research project
- d. A grant application is:
  - A bureaucratic document which is to be signed and archived
  - A document to secure funding for research
  - A document to apply for research
- e. Planning before writing means:
  - The writing process is facilitated
  - Issues and is not recommended
  - Delay in the process as this is time-consuming
- f. Successful grant application means:
  - No future grants will be awarded because a grant was already received
  - The chance to receive future grants is higher
  - Funds will be received and can be spent immediately

### **Homework Tasks:**

1. Think about your own point in the research project. Write a few paragraphs outlining what your research topic is, why it is important / relevant and what type of grant you are applying for.

\* Highlight some of the important points about your research that you would like to emphasise to the review board in order to have your proposal accepted.

\* 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).

2. Five of the general tips for grant writing are correct ('C') and five are wrong ('W'). Find the wrong ones.

1. Be realistic in designing the project. (C/W)

2. Answer all questions. (C/W)
3. Be general (C/W)
4. Follow the application guidelines exactly. (C/W)
5. Don't forget to include the results with your application. (C/W)
6. When rejected, forget it and move on to something else. (C/W)
7. Apply early and often. (C/W)
8. Make explicit the connections (questions, objectives, methods, results, plan) (C/W)
9. Give them what you need. (C/W)
10. Begin one month before the application deadline latest. (C/W)