



Grants and Review

- Tremendous variation in criteria from different funding agencies
 - e.g. Marie Curie research networks – Training
 - Research councils – Solid Science, cutting edge
 - Charities – great variation – risky science, a particular disease, a particular world view.
- Tremendous variation in reviewers
 - Experience
 - Attitude and approach
 - Pet hates/likes



Grantsmanship (yuk)

- Propose only novel, worthwhile work that deserves funding.
Good Science?
- Be sure the project aligns with the purpose and goals of the funding source.
Fundable?
- Tailor the proposal to the requirements of the funding source.
Well proposed?
- Be stimulating and engaging - compel the reviewers to see the proposal as deserving funding.
Compelling?



Grantsmanship

Be sure not to waste time writing grants that are weak, outside of the remit of the agency to which you are applying, or which are unlikely to find support among referees and the panel.

If you do write a proposal then do it well; the competition will!

Know as much as you can about what they look for



Review: Is it good science?

High standard – cutting edge?

Independent contribution or “me too”

Pass the “well so what” test? Important?

Good environment/lab?

Depending on the agency is it risky?



Review: Fundable?

- Care in reviewing the criteria, interests and scope of the funding body before you apply.

The referees will have a check list of criteria – find it and make it easy for them to tick the excellent box under each!

Speak to others before you apply

Find out what the funding body want to fund and to what level; talk to others who have applied, irrespective of outcome, ask if you can see their failed or successful proposal and feedback. Learn from these. Speak to possible referees if you are asked to recommend.



Review: Well proposed?

- Quality of writing of the case – well ordered; well researched; evidence of competence; logical and well designed; hypothesis driven if appropriate; main points shine through; well planned; engaging; convincing both in terms of quality and ability of the proposer.
- To the point
- No stupid errors of design or conception
- Resources requested match tasks and funding remit
- Properly (beautifully) formatted according to the relevant requirements

Review: Compelling?

High quality?

Do-able?

Obvious wide application?

Generalisable advance?

Current priority for the funding body?

Highly likely to change a current view?

Topical?

Important and of wide interest?



Grants and Review

There is no grantsmanship that will turn a bad idea into a good one, but there are many ways to disguise a good idea

Good ideas and good proposals come out of active research not armchairs. Be engaged with cutting edge research and keep drafting.

Don't get too personal; rejection does not mean you are rejected. It is more common than success and so you should treat grant writing as background to active research.