

## TIPS FOR GRANTWRITING

CONTACT YOUR SPONSORED RESEARCH OFFICE AND TELL THEM WHAT YOU WANT TO SEEK FUNDING FOR. ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROCESS.

Writing proposals can be a time consuming and frustrating experience. Deadlines have a tendency to fall at a time when schedules are hectic. However, if a little time is taken to carefully plan grant seeking efforts in advance, the task can be tolerable and rewarding.

When planning a proposal, define the most pressing problems to be addressed by the proposal. Successful grants present a clear picture of why a program is necessary, what

- x Don't ask for more than you need.
- x When dealing with any funder, but especially federal agencies, remember to read the instructions before applying for support. It sounds simple, but federal competitions live by two rules: 1) The agency is always right, and 2) When in doubt, refer to rule 1.
- x If your proposal doesn't get funded, try to find out why, use that information to strengthen the proposal, and apply again.

**Proposals fail because:**

- x The research is not well thought out, has obvious flaws in the logic, doesn't demonstrate need or importance.
- x The research subject falls outside of explicit program guidelines.
- x The proposal failed to persuade the funder of three factors: 1) what you want to do; 2) why you are qualified to carry out your research design; 3) why the topic is



- x Write only enough to clearly communicate your message but don't omit important details. On the other hand, don't overwhelm the reader with unnecessary detail. Reread your proposal several times to make sure that you have included only what is necessary but that it is **inclusive**.
  
- x The first and last paragraphs of your narrative are perhaps the most important. The first paragraph should make clear the problem you are addressing, tell why it is important to examine it and give a brief statement (no more than two to three sentences) of the project. This is the first impression the reader will have and it must convince him/her that he/she wants to know more. The last paragraph should provide a brief summary of the project and its importance. This paragraph is the last impression the reader will have of the proposal and is the culmination of your argument. It should be comprehensive and leave the reader with a belief in the value of the project and your ability to complete it.