Proposal Revision

- Don’t give up!
- Read the reviews carefully or ask the sponsor for clarification.
- Answer all pertinent questions or criticisms and correct errors and omissions.
- If one component of your proposal is clearly undesirable, remove it and improve on other aspects.
- If reviewers criticize your budget or resources, consider revising them to eliminate excess costs.
- Get advice from colleagues and mentors in your own field, in related and unrelated fields, and from administrators at your own institution and the granting agency.

And remember, OSP is here to assist with all parts of proposal preparation. Just give us a call!

The Office of Sponsored Programs
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Helpful Web Resources

- Community of Science www.cos.com
- Federal Grants www.grants.gov
- National Science Foundation www.nsf.gov
- National Institute of Health www.nih.gov
- Grants Alert www.grantsalert.com

The University of Tampa
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Developing Your Idea

- Keep in mind that sponsors fund activities, not ideas. No matter how good your idea is, if you aren’t able to translate that into a specific set of activities it will not get funded.
- Be objective when analyzing your idea’s merit – is it innovative? Will others support this idea?
- Look at what has been previously funded by the organization and see how well your idea fits into their mission.
- Know and be able to articulate why your idea is important to others outside of academia.
- Always try to attend Request-For-Proposal workshops to introduce yourself to staff and orient yourself more closely with the program.
- Don’t be afraid to talk to program officers and grant givers. It’s always a good idea to call the person in charge of a grant program, introduce yourself and discuss your project idea and why you want to see it funded.

Writing Your Proposal – Some Practical Guidelines

- Start early.
- Read the guidelines carefully. Not including all required information or not following the designated format will be noted by reviewers and program officers.
- Keep the narrative “reader friendly”. Don’t exceed maximum page limits, avoid jargon and unnecessary abbreviations and be liberal with headings to break up text.
- A winning proposal is always specific and to the point. Every aspect of the project— from getting started to budget development to long-term goals—must be addressed in the proposal to lend credibility to a project.

Proposal Rejection— What Happened?

Keep calm— It is not uncommon for proposals to be revised and resubmitted before they are accepted. Here are some common reasons proposals are declined according to reviewers.

- Absence of innovative ideas and/or hypotheses.
- Errors in presentation and expression, sloppily written, or lacking sufficient detail.
- Unrealistically ambitious, too procedurally focused or not specific enough on objective achievement.
- Unjustified budget or no plans for sustainability once the grant funding is completed.
- Proposal incomplete or incorrect (e.g., lack of information on current and pending support, no letters of support from named collaborators, etc.).
- In the wrong program or not directed toward the mission of the granting agency.