Selecting a Grant

- Will obtaining the grant aid your studies/career?
- Do you have time to allot to requirements?
- Do you meet the criteria?
- Is it feasible to finish the application prior to the deadline?
- Is there a necessary output? Is that achievable?
General Tips

- Know the culture of the funder
- Follow the instructions
- Know the assessment criteria
- Treat the application like an argument and present it with confidence
- Use the appropriate disciplinary concepts and methods
Writing a Research Proposal
Purpose of A Proposal

• To show you have a worthwhile research project to undertake
• To demonstrate that YOU have the competence to complete it
• To discuss all relevant aspects of the research process
• To enable others to evaluate whether enough information exists to want to support the proposed study
  – As a supervisor (e.g. a thesis)
  – As a grant (e.g. internal, provincial, federal/Tri-Council)
  – As a funder (e.g. industry)

• It can provide a stepping stone to new opportunities
Background

• General Idea Selection
  – Turn to the literature that pertains to your area of interest
  – Ideas from courses attended and research discussed
  – Ideas from media – news, science magazines, etc.

• Once You Have a Topic
  – Glean from courses taken in writing, research methods
  – Develop a strategy for addressing all relevant components
  – Title – concise yet sufficiently descriptive
  – Abstract – e.g. 400 words summarizing the research project
  – Introduction
    • Background content, Rationale, Research Qs.
    • Frame the research problem!
    • Develop your hypotheses
Introduction

Study Title
• “From Annette Funicello to Justin Timberlake: The History of the Mickey Mouse Club”

Context
• Literature Review

Objective
• A goal, what you are aiming to achieve
Literature Review

• Literature Searching
  – Are your ideas novel?
  – Sources: academic literature, grey literature
  – Where are the research gaps? Be a critical thinker!
  – Show you can integrate and synthesize the existing literature
  – Nothing is perfect - illustrate some potential issues you may encounter and how you will deal with them (e.g. small N)

• Writing
  – 4 “Cs” in Diamonds, 3 “Cs” in Research Writing
    • Clear, Coherent, and Compelling (as Competitive)!
  – Macro over Micro-details
    • Don’t get caught up in the little details; keep a “big picture” view
  – Write and cite and cite and cite!
    • Plagiarism is a serious academic offense
  – Set some parameters!
    • e.g. Geographic: Canada-wide versus Winnipeg’s North End
“Research Q”(s)

• WHAT do you wish to accomplish?
• As with goals, is the question S.M.A.R.T.?
  – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound
  – Is it a feasible question (scope, time, budget)?
  – Beware of “scope creep”!

Research Q Example:
• Do socioeconomic factors (income, education, employment) play a role in non-fatal traffic injury incidence and severity?
Research Qs

WEAK Research Qs
- Rsrch Q: Will holding workshops reduce school violence?
- Rsrch Q: Can high school suspension rates be changed?
- Rsrch Q: Can identity be determined by carbon dating?

STRONG Research Qs
- Rsrch Q: Will one hour hands-on car seat training sessions reduce child motor vehicle injuries in Winnipeg?
Methodology

• HOW will you answer your research question?
• Methods must be well thought out and comprehensive
• Research Design
  – Qualitative or Quantitative or Mixed-Methods?
  – Cross-sectional or longitudinal surveys?
  – Primary or secondary data analysis?
    • If primary - Tool validation: pilot studies, validity statistics?
• Procedures: X \rightarrow Y \rightarrow Z, be logical and sequential
• Inclusion/exclusion vs. leave to “assume”
• Participants – communities, individuals, groups?
• Materials Used: Tools, instruments, equipment
• Key Question: Could someone ELSE carry out this entire project?
Anticipated Findings and their Significance

• A key factor in any research endeavour is the anticipated results

• How will this project contribute to science, knowledge, or innovation?

• Why will your proposal be chosen over others for funding?

• IMPACT.
KT, KD & KM

Knowledge Translation (KT)
- A dynamic process that involves synthesis, dissemination, exchange and ethical use of knowledge to improve the lives of Canadians
- Develop handouts, factsheets, doing presentations - at level of audience

Knowledge Dissemination (KD)
- Transferring knowledge within and across settings, with the expectation that the knowledge will be "used" such as for learning, or attitude/behaviour change
- Conduct workshops, create a website, transfer knowledge to end-users

Possible Outcomes
- Increased awareness;
- Greater capacity for informed decision making
- Further information exchange

Knowledge Mobilization (KMb)
- “The specific activities and tools that facilitate the multi-directional flow and exchange of research knowledge”
Proposed Budget and Timeline

Proposed Budget
- All-inclusive!
- Research how much all supplies, materials, R.A.s cost
- For personnel you must factor in benefits, vacation time
- “No padding” - Evaluators are aware of what things cost
- Can include student charges/hires, supplies, travel costs

Proposed Timeline
- Determine how much time must be allotted
- Batch the different tasks to complete overall
- Break them down further
- A Gantt Chart is a very good tool!
Reviewing a Research Proposal
Reviewing

• Meets criteria
• Within scope
• Rigor of endeavour
• Importance to career path/relevance
• Research background
  – High G.P.A.
  – Awards/Scholarships/Fellowships
  – Experience/Publications/Conferences
• Tools can be helpful
Closing Remarks

- DREAM...
- Innovate...
- Create...
- Disseminate...
- Think outside the mid-size box (topic scope)
- Cover all components
- Be meticulous (cross all “t”s, dot all “i”s)
  - Proof-read, errors, non-sensical sentences etc.
- Be passionate about YOUR research!
Questions
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