



Assessing Your NIH Grant Application

There are 2 main areas that NIH use to assess your Research Proposal –

- the project idea
- your ability to execute the project to a high standard

They get information about these 2 areas from your application, so the 3rd area of assessment is –

- the quality and persuasiveness of your application

Below are some of the questions that the reviewer will ask of your Research Proposal and Application. Use them to assess your Proposal and Application before submission.

The Project Idea

- Is the project eligible for the grant?
- Is there a strong scientific premise for the project?
- Does the researcher have adequate preliminary data?
- Is the idea original?
- Does the project avoid large overlap with other work?
- Are the specific aims clear?
- Does the project advance understanding of biological systems, improve the control of disease and enhance health?
- Do the aims drive the field forward?
- Will the project have significant impact?
- Does the project involve collaboration?
- Are the aims and ideas realistic?

Project Execution

- Is the scientific rigor of the approach clear?
- Is there a clear understanding of the resources needed?
- Have potential problems been identified and addressed?
- Is it clear how risky aspects will be managed?
- Is the chosen strategy, methodology and analyses appropriate to accomplish the aims?
- Is the approach robust and unbiased?
- Are there adequate plans to address relevant biological variables?
- Where needed, is it clear how authentication of key biological and/or chemical resources will take place?
- Are there letters of commitment for resources and collaborations?
- Is the experience and expertise of the PI and key personnel suited to the project?
- Is the budget accurately justified?

Application

- Is there sufficient background information?
- Is the passion and commitment from the PI evident?
- Is it organized and logical?
- Is it easy to find the necessary information?
- Is the writing easy to read and follow?
- Is the writing specific and informative, avoiding redundancies?
- Is the writing appropriate – in the active voice, professional, without jargon and without excessive language?
- Does it use the correct font, font size and spacing?
- Is the paper size Letter, not A4?
- Are the forms used the most up to date versions?
- Have grammar and spelling errors been removed?

For more detailed information on how your Research Proposal will be assessed, take a look at the NIH Peer Review here - http://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer_review_process.htm#Criteria

The areas of Project Idea and Project Execution are the full responsibility of the PI. The area of the Application is the joint responsibility of the PI and the ORS.

If you have any questions about this guide or would like to suggest other topics for our Learning Center please email mahidol.tropmed@gmail.com.

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