Suggestions for crafting a funding proposal
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1. Search broadly for funding sources
2. Determine your eligibility and project ‘fit’
   a. National status
   b. Degree pursued
   c. Discipline/area of study
   d. Geographical area
   e. Topic
3. Consider the audience
   a. Read and interpret the call for proposals
   b. Is it interdisciplinary?
   c. Is any single discipline predominant?
   d. What do they value? What are they authorized to fund?
   e. Remember that grant reviewers are usually dealing with challenges of work overload and unfamiliarity with the discipline and/or literature you address.
4. Think carefully about the genre
   a. What if any format or structure is required?
   b. Read successful proposals, especially if you can find some for the grant to which you are applying (Tonya Homan is amassing a database in the IED/CIE program office, 374 Dodge Hall)
   c. Tailor your application to each grant, individually
   d. Avoid jargon! Be explicit with yourself and your readers
5. Use a good title that communicates your problem/thesis/approach
6. Answer CLEARLY AND EXPLICITLY three basic questions
   a. What are we going to learn as the result of the proposed project that we do not know now? (content)
   b. Why is it worth knowing? (innovation, contribution)
   c. How will we know that the conclusions are warranted? (methods)
7. Write the strongest possible introduction--a clearly posed question or puzzle; a statement of your thesis, hypothesis, or interpretation; perhaps a brief reference to a current event or epigraph; etc
8. Body: in a precise, succinct way, you want to
   a. Explain clearly what you will investigate
   b. Emphasize ideas and concepts
   c. Establish the context for your research, and the debates or areas to which it will contribute.

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1 This document is based on several sources, and contains the occasional direct quote from them:
Levine, S. Joseph. GUIDE FOR WRITING A FUNDING PROPOSAL http://www.learnerassociates.net/proposal/
And material from http://www.student-manual.com/study/applications.htm
i. Help the reader understand where the problem intersects the main theoretical and topical debates in your field(s).

ii. Include an up-to-date, comprehensive bibliography; don’t waste time on insignificant items, but on pieces that have shaped the field and your thinking. Annual reviews of the field are good sources.

iii. When possible, review and include literature from the area of the world in which you intend to work.

iv. Though tricky, it is sometimes useful to demonstrate your awareness of alternative viewpoints in a fair way.

d. Describe the contribution you will make to the field
   i. the significance of the research should be argued, not simply asserted
   ii. discuss its timeliness, innovation, current importance, policy contribution, etc.
   iii. consider the contribution the research might make to the place in which it is conducted.

9. Methods-- A methodology is not just a list of research tasks but an argument as to why these tasks are the best approach to the problem. Methodologies emerge from worldviews and theoretical considerations.
   a. Specify the research operations you will undertake (how, when, where)
   b. Tell specifically how you will spend your time: if possible, include a table
   c. Include a data analysis plan
   d. Include your preparation to carry out the methods: language skills, previous research experience, statistical training, etc.

10. Conclusion:
    a. Describe final products
    b. Allude to original theme

11. Go through the writing process
    a. Start drafting your proposal early!
    b. Work with an interdisciplinary group of peers to read and critique your application. Re-write based on the feedback you receive
    c. Send your proposal draft to readers who resemble your audience
    d. Re-write based on the feedback you receive
    e. Get your proposal to the people who will write recommendation letters 3 weeks in advance, and ask them for feedback. Provide your letter writers with specific information about when the letter is due, to whom, at what address.
    f. Re-write based on the feedback you receive