

Grant Proposal Development

William S. Messer, Jr.
Professor and Chair of
Pharmacology
The University of Toledo



Overview

- Finding funding opportunities
- Developing grant proposals
- The submission process
- The review process
- The resubmission process
- I'm funded, now what?



Useful Resources

- NIH Grants page
 - <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/oer.htm>
 - Grants Process & Award Data
 - Grant Application Basics
 - Grants Process Overview
 - Types of Grant Programs
 - How to Apply
 - Peer Review Process
 - Award Management
 - NIH Financial Operations (w/Funding Strategies)
 - Award Information & Data



Finding Funding Opportunities

- Community of Scientists (COS)
- Mailing lists
 - Weekly Issue of the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts
 - <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/index.html>
- Grants.gov
 - Program announcements
 - Identify contact person



Developing Grant Proposals

- Major considerations:
 - Which agency?
 - Which study section?
 - What are the key issues for the agency?
 - Align your research with strategic initiatives of the agency
 - Who will review the grant proposal?
 - Identify potential study sections, reviewers
 - Solicit external reviews before submitting the proposal

Developing Grant Proposals

- Proposal preparation
 - Allow for adequate time to complete the proposal
 - Messer's law: You have to plan ahead to wait until the last minute
 - Follow directions
 - Read the rules!
 - Prepare a budget that is adequate for the work to be done
 - Provide justification
 - Consider including collaborators with essential expertise
 - Save files for updating and later use
 - Biographical sketch, Resources, Equipment, etc.



Developing Grant Proposals

- Abstract
 - Write the abstract for a lay audience
 - “Letter to grandma”
- Specific aims
 - Focus
 - Be realistic
- Background and Significance
 - Focus
 - Don’t fill up all available space
 - Show some consideration for the reviewer!



Developing Grant Proposals

- Preliminary results
 - Always useful, but may not be necessary
 - If included, it will be scrutinized
- Experimental design and methods
 - Critical piece
 - Provide overview, state broad hypotheses and goals
 - Address or relate to specific aims
 - Identify weaknesses
 - Outline alternative approaches, interpretations
 - Identify studies that go beyond the scope of present investigation
 - Outline implications of work



Submissions

- Follow directions
 - Read the rules!
- Work with Office of Research personnel
 - Cultivate relationships
 - Give adequate amount of time to deal with problems
- Cover letter
 - Can help push the proposal to the right agency or study section



Reviews

- Peer review
 - Participate in process
 - Volunteer to serve on study sections
 - Become known as a fair reviewer who is passionate about good science
 - Understand the process
 - Reviewers have limited time to review proposals
 - Distinguish between several potentially meritorious grant applications
 - Scoring system
 - Scored vs. not scored
 - Discussed vs. not discussed



Resubmission

- **Introduction**
 - Write introduction first
 - Be respectful
 - Briefly highlight recognized strengths
 - Carefully address criticisms, weaknesses
- **Revisions**
 - Follow through on each point in introduction
 - Identify changes (e.g., underline, italicize)
- **Strategy**
 - Make it easy for reviewers to give you a better score
 - Avoid moving targets

Already Funded?

- Prepare for grant renewal
 - Progress report
 - Publish!
 - Show progress on specific aims
 - New ideas
 - Cultivate relationships with agency personnel
 - Often available at scientific meetings
 - They can be your advocates

Other Opportunities

- Research funding
 - May be just the start
- Technology development
 - Spin-off companies
 - SBIR/STTR grant opportunities
- Additional resources
 - NIH Roadmap initiative
 - Can provide access to resources through federal funding
 - Examples
 - NIH-RAID Rapid Access to Interventional Development
 - NIH-TURNS Treatment Units for Research on Neurocognition and Schizophrenia



Questions

- For copy of presentation email:
 - William.Messer@utoledo.edu