

Grant Chat – RUI and Broader Impact Statements
Wednesday, December 13, 2007
Report

Present: Marcia Harrison, Charles Somerville, Michael Castellani, Maria Babiuc, Judy Fan, Brian Antonsen, Simon Collier, Suzanne Strait, Robin O’Keefe, Casey Holliday, Jeff Kovatch, Sarah Kelly, Ashley Stewart, Piyali Dasgupta, Beverly Delidow, Philippe Georgel, Charles Hossler, Karen Mitchell, Bill Niemann, Vincent Sollars, John Wilkinson, David Neff, Peter Saveliev, Liz Murray, Menashi Cohenford, Chris Schlenker, Amy Deborde, Ron Schelling, Aladdin Al-Haddad, Bin Wang, Wendy Trzyna, and Heidi Williams

The kickoff “Grant Chat” was a success. A total of 32 people attended, with 9 female faculty and 2 female students, representing 10 departments and 3 colleges. This chat focused on RUI and broadening impact statements.

Statements from the discussion:

- Include RUI acronym on the title page, this can be an advantage.
- Reviewers get a separate scoring sheet outlining the specifications of RUI proposals.
- Letters of support are no longer accepted for many NSF programs. NSF primarily accepts letters of collaboration. PIs should check with NSF Program Directors about what is and is not acceptable in terms of letters.
- Broader Impact statements are now taken very seriously. They must sound real. An actual plan, with a specific outline, should be submitted. K-12 outreach is a huge movement at NSF and K-12 Outreach may be a required component of every proposal in the future.
- Limitations on faculty productivity need to be included in RUI statements (i.e., high demand students, class load, university service commitments, etc.).
- Proposals should be clearly written, well-organized and concise so that they can be read quickly. Do not expect reviewers to dig through large blocks of text to extract information.
- Suggested approaches: make subheadings into summary statements of each major section of the proposal, use text boxes to pull out important statements, and provide flow charts, tables, and well-illustrated pictures – reviewers love these things.
- Page 1 is critically important- lay out the entire project here-might be the only part everyone on the panel reads.
- RUI statements can include discussion of GAs, especially if an explanation is attached showing that they can be considered role models for undergraduates. In fact, impact can be (and should be) at many levels (i.e., K-12 outreach, faculty, university, state-wide, and society).
- Consider partnering with MU and NSF-supported broadening participation programs when developing your plans for outreach, integration of teaching and research, and efforts to broaden participation. CATL can help with innovative teaching methods to integrate teaching and research. The MU TRIO programs are federally-funded initiatives to help support low-income and first generation college students. Currently funded NSF programs on campus include MU-ADVANCE (increased participation of women in STEM disciplines in academia), LSAMP (increased participation of minority students majoring in STEM disciplines), and COMETS (outreach to low-income, underrepresented and minority students in an informal science education program).
- A mock study section was suggested for people to get a better understanding of the grant proposal review process.

Examples of RUI and broader impact statements, from both successful and unsuccessful grant proposals, are available upon request.

The next grant chat is scheduled for January 12, 2008 at 2:00 pm and will discuss Small Grant opportunities.

A questionnaire was distributed among the participants in order to gauge interest in future Grant Chat topics. Below are the results organized from the most votes to the least (number in front of each statement reflects the number of votes received).

Proposed future topics to aid in grant writing:

- 12 - Effective outreach programs and integration of teaching in research statements
- 11 - Identifying appropriate grants to apply for.
- 10 - Effective broader impact statements.
- 9 - Project evaluation: coordinating objectives, progress indicators, and benchmarks; preparing outcome tables and logic models
- 8 - Preparing 2-page biosketches.
- 8 - Effective presentation of research timelines.
- 7 - Determining if your proposal addresses all reviewers' criteria.
- 6 - Drafting the budget.
- 5 - Effective research design (developing specific aims, defining objectives, testing hypotheses)
- 5 - Writing your proposal in more general area terms, not-so-research specific.
- 5 - Organizing your grant proposal.
- 3 - Effective use of images, figures, and tables.

Additional suggested topics for future grant chats:

- Local and regional grant opportunities
- Draft workshop
- Mock study panel (2 requests)
- % effort at Marshall – how do you determine this?
- Supplemental grant pathways
- Explanation of review process
- How to build collaborative bases – community public/health research efforts
- Funding for new researchers
- A course on grant writing for faculty
- K-12 Outreach presentation, given by Tina Cartwright.