

Grant Prep Boot Camp

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Alumni Summit**

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Columbia University
MAILMAN SCHOOL
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Research Resources (R2) Office

Grant Prep Battleplan

- Initiate 6-8 weeks prior to deadline
- At this point, you should have:
 - An RFA/PA in mind
 - Your science outlined
 - Collaborators under consideration

Three Phases:

- Planning → Preparing → Submitting



Battleplan: Phase 1

Planning

1. Explore funding opportunities
2. Brainstorm with collaborators on the RFA/PA
3. Meet with your grants management staff

Planning: Finding Funding

Grant Funding

- Key word search on www.grants.gov
- Sign up for email notifications
 - www.grants.gov
- Foundation Funding
 - Visit <http://foundationcenter.org/>



Planning: Review Funding Opportunity

- Read RFA closely, paying careful attention to details
- Make sure you have the most recent announcement and forms
- If this is a limited competition opportunity (only one application accepted per institution), contact your grants management office
- Don't forget to register with eRA commons:
<https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/>



Planning: Review Funding Opportunity

- Remember that **major changes** have been made to NIH applications due on or after January 25, 2010. (Please see **Handout #1** for updated NIH information)
- Visit NIH RePORTER website (<http://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm>), to see information about funded NIH grants (including abstracts)
- Look over grant application guidelines– (i.e. page length, and required components) (Please see **Handout #2** for R01, R21, R03 Cheat Sheets)



Planning: Identify Funding Opportunity

Most Common Types of Research Grants

- **R01 Research Project Grant Program**
 - Up to 5 years, up to \$500,000 direct costs (higher only with waiver)
 - Renewable
 - Receiving an R01 ends your New/Early Stage Investigator status



Planning: Identify Funding Opportunity

- **R03 Small Grant Program**
 - Up to 2 years, up to \$50,000 direct costs
 - Not renewable
 - Receiving an R03 does not end your New/Early Stage Investigator status

- **R21: Exploratory/Development Research Grant**
 - Up to 2 years, \$275,000 direct costs (over both years)
 - Not renewable
 - Receiving an R21 does not end your New/Early Stage Investigator status



Planning:

Brainstorming with Collaborators

1. Prepare your grant submission planning form
(Please see **Handout #3**)
2. Establish your research question
3. Sketch out project idea. Bounce ideas off colleagues, mentors, etc.
4. List your Specific Aims
5. Call the Project Officer to discuss



Planning:

Meet with Grants Management Office

- Contact your department about your plans to submit – check with them about the assistance you can expect
- Clearly establish what you will be responsible for and what your grants management office will take care of (i.e., who will upload text and other grant components)
- If there is a subcontract, coordinate with department (start early!)



Planning:

Meet with Grants Management Office

- Establish your own timeline for grant submission and confirm grants office deadline
- Start your computer and hard files (See **Handout #4** for File Labels)
- Review the **Presubmission Checklist** (See **Handout #5**) to begin Phase 2

Battleplan: Phase 2

Preparing

1. Draft your specific aims
2. Prepare draft budget
3. Solicit letters of support
4. Prepare text
5. Finalize front end
6. Finalize all text, appendices, back end

Preparing: **Specific Aims**

- Consider the aims the most critical part of your grant
 - It is not unusual to prepare a dozen or more drafts
- Review examples (Please see Samples **Handout #6**)
- Ask collaborators, mentors, and colleagues to review your Specific Aims
- Determine the “**impact**” of your proposed research also at this point

Preparing: Draft Budget

- Determine if your project requires a modular or detailed budget
- Make sure to use accurate salaries, fringe rate, and indirect costs for the fiscal year(s) of the proposed project
- Double check your excel spreadsheets
- Submit/ review with your business office

Preparing: **Letters of Support**

- Ask collaborators, advisory board, consultants, and stakeholders for letters far in advance
- Be polite and professional in your contact
- Offer to prepare a draft letter
- Follow up after making the initial request, especially if you do not know letter writers well
- If you have many letters to keep track of, use a spreadsheet

Preparing: Grant Text

- Use your Specific Aims to guide your text writing.
- For NIH grants, look over specific Institute's priorities and keep these in mind while writing your grant
- Start early! A well-developed and well-written grant will require many revisions
- Always label and date each version
- Back up and save everything!
- Circulate text drafts to collaborators for editing
- We recommend using EndNote for reference management

Preparing: Finalize Front End

- “Front End” includes: personnel sections (biosektch, personnel information required on Adobe forms, information about your project site, resources, project narrative, project summary etc.)
- Download and familiarize yourself with Adobe Forms if you think that this will help you understand all front end elements (i.e., front end questions, personnel sections, human subjects sections)
- Make sure that you have clearly established with your grants management office who is responsible for which elements
- All elements must be uploaded in PDF form
- Use the SF424(R&R) guide if you need guidance



Preparing:

Finalize all text, appendices, back end

- Make sure to include any additional elements that you reference in your text (figures, tables, appendices)
- Make sure your human subjects protection, inclusion of women and minorities, targeted enrollment, and other attachments are up-to-date and free of errors
- You may NOT use the appendix to get around page limits (shortened for NIH grants due after January 25, 2010)
- Use your checklist to make sure you have not left anything out



Battleplan: Phase 3

Submitting

1. Hand off to your department administrator (DA) or grants management office

Submitting: Hand off to DA/Grants Office

- They “push the button” to electronically submit grants to grants.gov
- For paper submissions, they must approve and sign all documents. Be clear about who is responsible for sending out
- You may receive errors and warnings from grants.gov, so check your email and be available in the days following submission
- Your response to errors is time sensitive

R² Contact Information



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R² Website

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