Proposal Writing

# 1: The title
- Choose a title that conveys information about your project.
- Avoid acronyms that have negative connotations.
- Make it Brief

# 2: The abstract OR Executive Summary
- This is the first (and could be the only) part of the proposal that a busy reviewer will see.
- The abstract should be a map of the rest of the proposal.
- Write the abstract last to make sure it reflects the final version of the proposal.

# 3: Problem statement
- Provide a clear objective statement of the problem.
- Describe the factors that have contributed to the problem.
- Describe what has and has not worked in the past.
- Indicate what needs to be done (by you) now.

# 4: The rationale
Never assume the proposal reviewer knows what you know.

Convince the reviewer that the problem is IMPORTANT!

Persuasive rationales
- Describe how the project will...
- Resolve theoretical questions
- Develop better theoretical models
- Influence public policy
- Improve teaching/learning
- Improve the way people do their jobs in a particular field
- Improve the way people live
#5: Literature review
Display your awareness of the problem or need as well as the contributions that have been made by others—some of whom may be reviewers of your proposal!

Show you understand the problem!
- Use the Funding Agencies "Terms" and "Vocabulary" to Describe the Problem.
- Provide the most recent data and/or information about the problem.
- Describe the gaps and contradictions that currently exist.

Show you know the solution!
- Describe a solution to improve the situation.
- Back up your solution with data if possible.
- Quote or cite well known authorities on the topic.

# 6: Project design
Goals, Objectives and Activities Should Always Relate to One Another

Program elements
Goals:
Broad Statements of Intent
Objectives:
Measurable Outcome Statements
Activities:
Implementation Steps

Well written objectives
- State Who is Responsible
- State What is to be Accomplished
- State When the Objective should be Accomplished
- State a Criterion for Success
Well written activities

- Focus on How the objective is to be accomplished.
- Use "Action" words, e.g., recruit, analyze, evaluate, disseminate

Research methods

- State your research questions clearly
- Choose an appropriate research design
- Detail all procedures
- Control for validity and reliability
- Describe limitations
- Answer reviewers' questions before they are asked!

# 8: Key personnel

Describe the people that will help to make decisions in how the project is carried out.

Provide a description of their background, training, and expertise.

Highlight everyone's accomplishments—this is not the time to be modest!

# 9: Facilities & resources

Describe where the project will be conducted.

Describe any special equipment or resources you will have access to.

Describe any special capabilities or experiences possessed by your agency to carry out the project.

# 10: Budget

Ask for the funds that you need to be successful, but do not reduce your budget.

Be aware that proposal reviewers know how much things cost!

If you ask for too little money to do the work you propose, you will appear naive and inexperienced.

# 11: Time lines

Sponsored project activities can take longer than anticipated.

Do not propose to do too much in any given project period.

Develop a time line for the reviewer.
#12: Evaluation
- Describe how you will find out if your project is working.
- Describe how you will know if you have succeeded when the project is over.
- Describe how you will adjust your procedures and timelines to deal with real life events.
- Tell the proposal reviewers who will conduct the evaluation and review the information collected.

#13: Dissemination
- Inform the proposal reviewers of the dissemination strategies that you will use and the audiences that will receive information on your findings.
- Information about your project can be disseminated via articles in peer reviewed journals and presentations at professional conferences.

#14: Continuation funding
- Sponsored Projects are of limited duration, e.g., 3-9 months OR 1-3 years
- Plan your next project before the current project ends!

#15: Follow through
- Keep in touch: send copies of all publications and media coverage related to your project.
- Network with others: Look for ways to collaborate on future projects.

Questions? Please contact m_rosli@upm.edu.my

What is a project proposal?
The Project Proposal is usually the first document outlining what change is proposed. It is the document that converts an idea or concept paper into the details of a potential project, including the outcomes, outputs, major risks, costs, stakeholders and an estimate of the resourcing and time required.
What is a proposal?
Document outlining a proposed public relations (PR) or corporate communication (CC) campaign to an existing or potential client.

The Project Proposal expands the initial concepts in order to:
1. provide broad details of the objectives, scope, resources, budget, milestones, risks, stakeholders and related projects of the initiative;
2. define the guidelines/standards to be applied throughout the initiative; and
3. gain authorization to proceed to the next step of the initiative.

Why would you develop a Project Proposal?
A Project Proposal is developed to provide senior management with:
1. a broad overview of a proposed initiative, including how you intend to manage and deliver the results from the initiative; and
2. a mechanism to facilitate formalized agreement to continue to a clearly set out ‘next step’.

By documenting each initiative, it provides a framework:
1. that allows an informed decision to be made whether to continue to the next step in the initiative;
2. to readily enable recognition that further information or details relating to the initiative are required before an informed decision can be made; and
3. to provide an informed comparison between a number of proposed initiatives.

When would you develop a Project Proposal?
Approval to proceed to develop a Project Proposal is usually obtained as a result of making an initial proposal (verbal or written) to senior management, or directly as a result of a request from senior management.

What you need before you start:
1. Knowledge and understanding of the proposed initiative/s.
2. Knowledge of the targeted organization.

Proposal Elements
1. Cover Letter or Memo
2. Title Page or Cover
3. Reference to Authorization
4. Table of Contents
5. List of Illustrations
6. Proposal Summary
7. Purpose
8. Problem or Need
9. Background
10. Benefits of the Proposal
11. Description of the Solution
12. Evaluation Plan
13. Qualifications of Personnel
14. Time Schedule
15. Cost
16. Glossary
17. Appendixes
18. Reference List