The Grant Application Writer’s Workbook

Workbook Descriptions

National Institutes of Health Version
The January 2023 edition has been updated to comply with the updated FORMS-H general and program-specific instructions for NIH grant applications due on or after January 25, 2023. Some of the updates and information include: detailed guidance for applicants required to submit a Data Management and Sharing (DMS) Plan; direction for how to use the Center for Scientific Review’s Assisted Referral Tool to identify a qualified review panel for your application; updated R&R Budget and Modular Budget Form information for applicants submitting a DMS Plan; updated information on writing the Introduction to an Application section and Progress Report of the Research Strategy section for resubmitted and renewal applications; and a synopsis of a proposed framework for reorganizing the current five core-review criteria into three factors. All URLs and screenshots have also been updated.

National Science Foundation – Research.gov Version
The January 2023 edition has been updated to comply with the revised version of the Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) (NSF 23-1) effective for all proposals due or submitted on or after January 30, 2023. Some changes for this revised version are updates to: conducting a Funding Search on NSF’s new beta.nsf.gov website; kinds of submissions to include that NSF has started using Concept Outlines and the Program Suitability and Proposal Concept Tool (ProSPCT) for their submission; EAGER and RAPID proposal submissions; kinds of funding opportunities to reflect that NSF is piloting the use of the Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) solicitation; the NSF-approved and required formats for the Biographical Sketch; Current and Pending (Other) Support information; and more. All URLs, screenshots, and references to PAPPG sections have also been updated.

USDA/NIFA Version
The October 2021 edition was extensively updated with additional content on strategic presentation of background literature and supporting preliminary data; creation of compelling arguments for project significance and novelty; and biographical sketches. Additional samples, sentence starters, and other practical tools/resources are now included throughout the workbook, along with complete examples of the Overview, Rationale and Significance, and Project Summary parts from a funded AFRI proposal. Other features include modifications for proposals that do not involve traditional hypothesis-testing work, and additional consideration of integrated proposals and those with stakeholder engagement. All URLs and screenshots have also been updated, and this edition is congruent with the new NIFA Grants Application Guide, released October 5, 2021.

Successful Proposals to Any Agency (For proposals other than to the NIH, NSF, or USDA)
Grant applications to most agencies contain basically the same sections – only the specific names for the sections and the order in which they appear in the application are different. In addition, the principles and fundamentals of good proposal writing are the same for all agencies. Given these two facts, we have written a “generic” workbook that can be used to write a proposal to any granting agency. It walks the applicant through the preparation of each section and is meant to be complemented by the specific instructions of the agency that is being targeted. September 2016 edition.