Scientific Editing and Research Communication Core (SERCC)

Let us help make your message clear, concise, and compelling!

Christine M Blaumueller, PhD | Jennifer Y Barr, PhD | Heather A Widmayer, MS, MBA

EDITORS

Scientific Editor & Writing Consultant

Christine M Blaumueller, PhD
- Laboratory researcher for 14 years
- Journal editor for 6 years, EMBR reports
- Focused on Scientific Editors to use for UI Department of Anatomy & Cell Biology in 2006
- Expanded to service CCOM core facility in 2017

Jennifer Y Barr, PhD
- Laboratory researcher for 11 years
- PhD from UI Department of Anatomy & Cell Biology
- Scientific Editing Intern 2015–2017
- Full-time editor since 2017
- Experience/training in NIH, DoD, and NSF grants

Heather Widmayer, MS, MBA
- Laboratory researcher for 7 years
- Teaching (laboratory courses, information design)
- Grant writing
- Technical Writing and Software Development
- Marketing and communications

ACTIVITIES

- Provide input on drafts of writing projects
- Provide consultation on writing strategy
- Teach scientific writing
  - Courses/Course lectures
  - Seminars/Webinars
  - Workshops
- Brainstorm with authors on projects
- Collect and generate resources
- Discuss best practices with other research development professionals

SUBSTANTIVE EDITING

Within time constraints and limits set by our authors, we do everything possible to ensure that the submitted documents meet expectations regarding:

Use and Content
- Are requirements (funding agency/journal) met?

Organization and Design
- Do layout and formatting facilitate understanding?
- Are readers presented with the information they need when they need it?

Style
- Does the language convey the science clearly?
- Are the scientific arguments strong?
- Is the significance of the work clear?

A FEW EXAMPLES OF OUR RESOURCES

- COVID-19 Related
- Grant Writing
- Paper Writing
- Scientific Writing – General
- Local Biostatistics Consultants
- External Courses in Science Communication

Template Examples:
- Specific Aims Page
- Research Strategy
- Biosketch
- Training Plan

SAMPLE OUTPUT

NIH Specific Aims Page

ADDITIONAL SAMPLE COMMENTS

- In this version, the long-term goal leads nicely into the goal of this particular proposal, i.e. this is the next step toward the long-term goal.
- Isn’t the point here that they will be the first to show how it does this, and how relevant this is in human cells? I’d be very specific here.
- You might also want to: 1) weave “broad impact” into the last sentence given the likelihood that … and, 2) (especially since this is an R21) mention here that the proposed studies are necessary to prepare for a larger grant analyzing the need for x (as requested by one of the reviewers).

- This seems to argue against innovation. Explain where the differences lie—e.g., is it other diseases, or other forms of this one, that are targeted?

TESTIMONIALS

Thank you very much for your help strengthening my proposal. As a junior faculty member with limited grant-writing experience, and nothing of the scope for an R01 submission, the service was incredibly helpful. The feedback was thorough and useful, and I’m certainly going to be contacting you for help with future proposals. – Assistant Professor

Fantastic edits and comments! … You were able to succinctly say what 4-5 others tried to say about the grant but couldn’t get me to understand. – Associate Professor

Thank you for taking the time to craft a template specifically for Urology Residents to use in creating a proposal for their 3rd year research project, and for presenting a talk on “Grant-writing Basics.” Your guidance will enrich their research training experience. – Director, Urology Research-Year Residents

The graduate students supported by our program receive outstanding instruction on scientific writing – including thoughtful and detailed feedback on their individual writing projects – from the editors of your core. You are extremely knowledgeable about formats and requirements for various NIH funding mechanisms, and the tools you have developed greatly facilitate the process for students writing their first grant applications. – MSTP Co-Director

CONTACT US

Visit our website: https://medicine.uiowa.edu/sercc/
Questions: COM-ScientificEditing@uiowa.edu

If you use our Schedule an Editing Project form, we will contact you about a timeline within one business day.

PRICING

Within the CCOM: $55/hr
UI colleges other than the CCOM: $75/hr
Outside UI: $95/hr

Fully subsidized usage:
- Department of Anatomy & Cell Biology
- Department of Neurology
- Department of Molecular Physiology & Biophysics
- Iowa Neuroscience Institute
- Pappajohn Biomedical Institute
- Wellstone Muscular Dystrophy Cooperative Research Center