Writing Successful Research Proposals
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Duke Sponsored Summer Fellowships

• Deans' Summer Research Fellowships
• Benenson Awards in the Arts
• Research In Practice Program
• Duke Global Health Institute Grants & Trainingships
• Service Opportunities in Leadership (Hart Leadership Program)
• Duke Career Center Internships
• Duke Center for International Studies Grants
• Public Policy Summer Research Grants
• Center for Documentary Studies John Hope Franklin Awards
• Anne Firor Scott Award in Women's History
• Asian & Pacific Studies Institute Grants
• Mellon Awards for Research in Latin America and the Caribbean
• Center for European Studies Undergraduate Summer Research Grants
• Davies Fellowships in Economics
• History New Majors Research Program
• Women's Studies Travel Awards
• Duke Center for Human Rights Grants
• Classical Studies Travel Grants
• Duke Sigma Xi Grants-in-Aid of Research
• Summer Neuroscience Program of Research

undergraduateresearch.duke.edu/opportunities
What are reviewers looking for?

In 4 minutes:

Make a list of the top four big questions/criteria reviewers will use to judge your proposal.

Answer #1

Who is Your Faculty Mentor?
Who is Your Faculty Mentor?

All Duke-sponsored grants require a Duke faculty mentor

- **Expertise**: knowledge of the literature & methods
- **Guidance**: feedback on your proposal & project
- **Resources**: connections, equipment, $$
- **Credentials**: permits, IRB certification
- **Ongoing mentoring**: honors thesis, publication

*Your mentor should sign on to your project, not just sign off*

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How to write a first-rate proposal

1. Get a mentor.
2. Make a checklist of things to figure out, things to do, and things to include. (Keep a close eye on the grant guidelines!)
3. Write a first draft well before the deadline.
4. Get as much good feedback as possible.
5. Attend workshop #2 (Feb 25/27).
6. Revise!
7. Proofread and edit like crazy!
Answer #2

Is it worth doing?

What is the overall goal of this research?

What are the "big questions" in your discipline that you expect to address?

How does your proposed research relate to the work of others in this field? Are you contributing something novel?

Why is it important? What are your expected outcomes?
Exercise 1

Is it worth doing?
Selling the project

Answer #3

Is it doable?
Is it doable?
Evidence that this can really happen

Methods – Short-term, Specific Aims

• Driven by your big question & hypothesis
  avoid fishing expeditions!

• What exactly will you do?
  where, who, how, when

• Why use those methods?
  eg., survey vs. ethnography vs. documentary

Is it doable?
Evidence that this can really happen

Resources

• Logistics: equipment & materials, housing, transport, food & medical support

• Partners: Local officials, NGOs, collaborators

• Permissions: IRB (Institutional Review Board), travel permits, archives, collection

• Time: travel time, acclimation, downtime
Is it doable?
Evidence that this can really happen

Make a Budget

- Detailed: exactly what you need
- Real costs: document, reasonable estimates
- Allowed expenses: eg, no personal items
- Justification: connect to your proposal
- Complete: all expenses, even if not funded
- Other Income: list all sources, co-funding is ok!

Presenting a Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Total: $3,180</th>
<th>Location: Africa</th>
<th>Dates: 1/10/12 - 1/14/12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- **Travel:**
  - $1,500 airline
  - $500 in-country travel

- **Food:**
  - $100

- **Lodging:**
  - $500 room and board (2 months)

- **Supplies & Equipment:**
  - Photo vaccinations and anti-malarial treatment ($250)
  - Lab supplies, gloves,Hazmat suit, etc.
  - Portable microfridge, emergency medical kit

- **Additional Funding sources requested:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Total: $5,480</th>
<th>Location: Africa</th>
<th>Dates: 6/03/13 - 6/07/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- **Travel:**
  - Flight from Grand Forks, ND (GFL Airport) to Accra (KIA Airport) $1,170
  - In-country travel: $150

- **Food:**
  - One meal per day out served by host family
  - $20 per day for 10 days $200

- **Lodging:**
  - Dormitory Fee (includes 2 daily meals)
  - $275 per for 48 days $1,320

- **Supplies & Equipment:**
  - Visa ($30)
  - Health and identification (anti-malarial) $150
  - Cinnamon malachite $50
  - Internship fee $80
  - Additional supplies ($400)

- **Additional funding requests:**
  - Duke Civic Engagement Summer: $500
  - Duke Global Health Institute: $1,000
Answer #4

Can you pull it off?

Evidence of intellectual skills

- Relevant coursework
- Relevant work/field/lab experience
- Depth of thought evident in proposal
Can you pull it off?

Evidence of Social skills

Language skills
Prior relevant experience in this (or similar) context
Savvy identification and consideration of social issues in proposal
  • Potential cultural challenges
  • Potential language challenges
  • Potential travel challenges (*ITOC approval*)

Can you pull it off?

Evidence of care and attention to detail

The proposal!
  • Did you provide all information requested?
  • Does the budget indicate that you have done your homework?
  • Is the proposal thoroughly proofread and edited?
Session 2

Revising your proposal to make it successful

Wed, February 25th, 11-12:30 pm
Fri, February 27th, 12-1:30 pm
The Edge (Bostock Library)