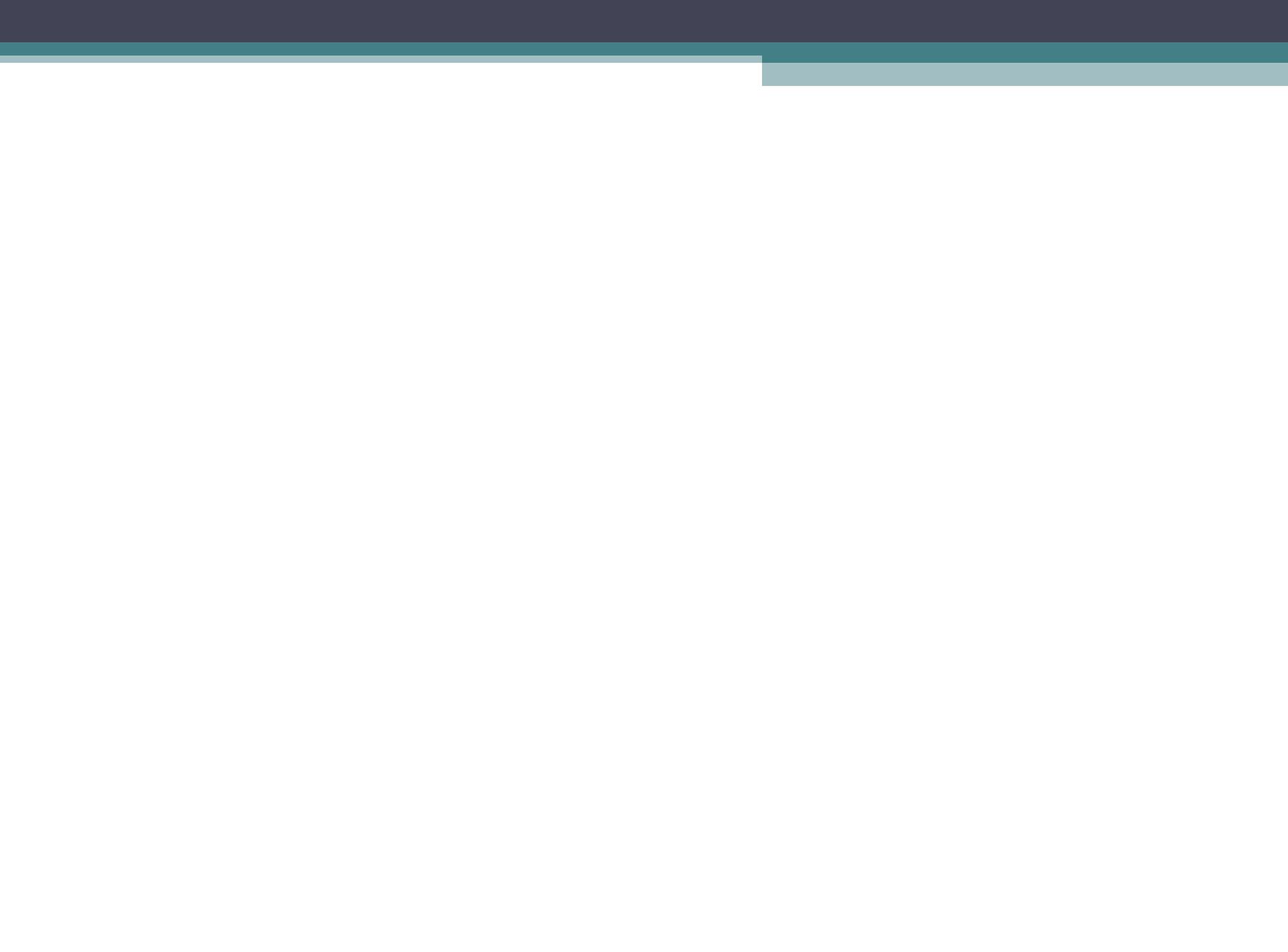


# Grant Proposal Development

Part II

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# Steps to Structure a Grant

- Problem/Need/Situation Description
  - Write up an essential paragraph
- Process activities
  - Gather materials, Understand the process of submission, Engage with possible sub-awardees
- Scientific activities
  - Background research, Preliminary studies, Contact mentors, Study design
- Ask for peer critique

# Letters of Intent (LOI)

- What do you need to convey in 2-3 pages?
  - Mission
  - Need
  - Goals and Objectives
  - Competence
  - Cost
- Introduction paragraph is most important
  - Capture the essence of who you are, what your institution does, what is your project about, how much money you need for the project

# LOI introduction: Example

- On behalf of the Azusa Pacific University, School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences, we are respectfully asking for your consideration of a \$80,000 gift over 2 years to fund research fellowships and educational opportunity for 4 master social work students in a Christian academic setting.



## **EXERCISE TIME**

Exercise  
Letter of Intent  
Introduction

# LOI Project Description

- Questions to answer:
  - What is the project? What is the purpose?
  - How will you approach it? What are the methods
  - When will it be done? Where will the project happen?
  - Who will benefit? What is the target audience?
  - What's distinctive? Is this a pilot? Will it generate a model?
  - Do you have the capacity and expertise?

# Letters of Intent: Essentials to Success

- Maximally convey your enthusiasm
- Write with maximal clarity and compelling logic
- Anticipate problems and provide alternatives
- Goals and objectives should be measurable
- Refer to evaluation methods
- Tell reviewers what to expect for their investment
- Make it “reviewer friendly” and give hope

# Grant Abstract

- Abstracts are extremely important!
  - All reviewers read your abstract
  - Abstracts are used to decide where to assign the application
  - Abstracts show the importance and relevance of your research



# Abstract: Example 1

Global warming is perceived as one of the most pressing concerns of our time.

However, we lack an effective model to predict precisely by how much the temperature will rise as a consequence of the increased levels of CO<sub>2</sub> and other factors. The width of this range is due to several uncertainties in different elements of the climate models, including the variability in the Sun's rate of energy output.

To gain greater insight into the relationship between solar energy output and global temperature, we propose to launch the internationally led ABC satellite in April 2012. Our aim is to collect for 2 years data on the solar diameter and shape, oscillations, and photospheric temperature variation.

We will assess these data to model solar variability.

Our findings will dramatically advance our understanding of solar activity and its climate effects.

Background

Problem

Objective

Strategy

Significance

# Abstract: Example 2

X is a major human pathogen, which infects over 100 million people per year, leading to high morbidity and mortality. Current therapies for X are expensive, poorly tolerated, and only partially effective in controlling the pathogens and in limiting disease.

Recently, we and other succeeded in establishing a system to grow X in cell culture. These systems will allow us to completely dissect the life cycle of X. Our initial characterization of cell culture-produced X indicates unusual physical properties. Understanding of X's life cycle will aid in the development of improved pharmaceuticals.

Problem  
statement is  
missing

Objective is  
missing

# Academic writing vs. Grant writing

## Academic writing

- Researcher-centered
- Past oriented
- Expository
- Impersonal
- Individualistic
- Few length constraints
- Specialized terminology

## WORLD OF IDEAS

## Grant writing

- Sponsored-centered
- Future oriented
- Persuasive
- Personal
- Team-oriented
- Strict length constraints
- Accessible language

## WORLD OF ACTION

# Passive vs. Active

- It has been demonstrated by research that...
- The program is being implemented by our department...
- Following administration of third phase, measurements will be taken...
- Research shows clearly that...
- Our department launched the program this year....
- After phase 3, we will measure...

# Pitfalls

- Success = Good Ideas – Pitfalls

- 



# Pitfall 1: Poor fit

- How to avoid:  
**VERIFY THE MATCH**
  - Read the program goals carefully
  - Study the eligibility requirements
  - Contact the program officer before starting

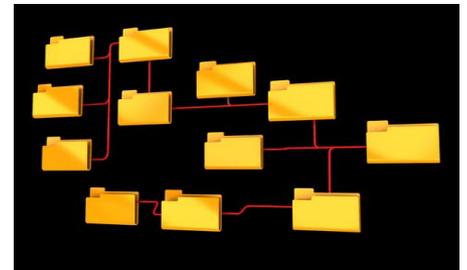


# Pitfall 2: Poor organization

- How to avoid:

## STRUCTURE THE PROPOSAL WELL

- Follow the format provided by sponsor, or
- Build a format in distinct sections
  - Problem statement
  - Goals and objectives
  - Research design (workplan)
  - Expected outcomes and evaluation
  - Budget
  - PI & research team qualifications



# Pitfall 3: Weak argument

- How to avoid:  
**PROVE IMPORTANCE**
  - Set stage: State the purpose and case upfront
  - Build compelling argument
  - Create a vision
  - Cite authoritative source(s)
  - Don't use academic journal style



# Pitfall 4: Using jargon

- How to avoid: **ASSUME UNINFORMED BUT INTELLIGENT READER**
  - Use clear, accessible language
  - Direct statements
  - Active voice
  - Avoid jargon and acronyms



# Pitfall 5: Unclear goals/objectives

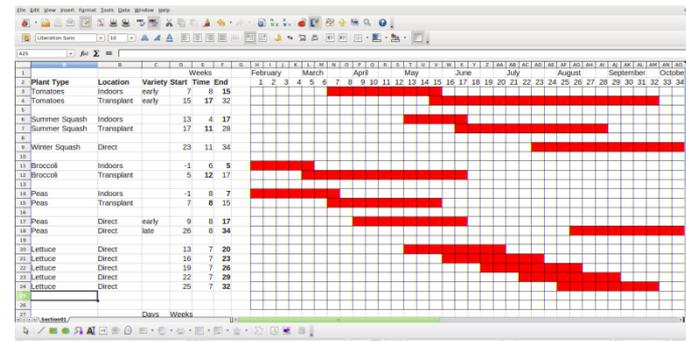
- How to avoid:

## FORMULATE MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

- Goal: general statement
- Objectives: specific measurable
- Logic of the goal should follow the logic of the objectives
- Compare objectives:

# Pitfall 6: Unclear project plan

- How to avoid:  
**ILLUSTRATE**
  - Use visual aids to describe the overall project
  - Insert charts when you want a point to be accessible at a glance
  - Project timeline: use Gantt or flow charts



# Pitfall 7: Deviating from guidelines

- How to avoid:

## FOLLOW INSTRUCTION EXACTLY

- Common problems:

- Late submission
- Narrative too long
- Fonts, margins, spacing too small
- Signatures, certifications missing
- Budget narrative missing
- Insufficient number of copies
- Inappropriate binding



# Pitfall 8: Ignoring review criteria

- How to avoid:

## **PAY ATTENTION TO ALL REVIEW CRITERIA**

- Read evaluation criteria
- Reference them in the narrative
- Touch all points not just the ones you are comfortable with



# Pitfall 9: Weak abstract

- How to avoid:  
POLISH ABSTRACT
- Again, abstracts are extremely important! Touch on all of the following:
  - Background
  - Problem
  - Objective
  - Strategy
  - Significance



# Pitfall 10: No writing feedback

- How to avoid:  
**PRESUBMISSION REVIEW**
  - Ask colleagues to critique proposal content
  - Thoroughly assess and include feedback
  - Allow time to rewrite



# Pitfall 11: Document errors

- How to avoid:

## USE PROOFREADERS

- Find a perfectionist with no stake
- Proofreaders read form not content
- Be willing to include all corrections
- Root out inconsistencies in format, typos, misspellings, grammar



# Pitfall 12: Insufficient editing

- How to avoid:  
**WRITE & REWRITE**
  - Polish the proposal
  - Let it rest for a while
  - Rewrite
  - Allow more time

## WELL-KNOWN EDITING SYMBOLS

	= DELETE
	= INSERT
	= CLOSE SPACE
	= START NEW PARAGRAPH
	= UPPER CASE
	= ADD SPACE
	= TRANSPOSE LETTERS
	= CHECK SPELLING

# What makes a difference?

- Shorter sentences
- Key phrases underlined
- Style and format is relevant
- Graphs, tables and drawings
- Drawing of the grant plan
- Writing is more energetic, direct, concise
- Subject is easy to understand
- Intriguing and exciting ideas

# Tips for success: Grant related

- Structure your writing
- Highlight the significance
- Sell your ideas
- Use active verbs
- Be concise
- Preliminary data
- Write with a readers perspective
- Reviewers are human
- Stand out from the pack
- Focus on the basics



# Tips for success: Professional

- Fit research into your job
- Find a mentor(s)
- Read successful grants
- Attend workshops
- Find collaborators
- Get on a review panel
- Get funding alerts
- Submit, revise and resubmit
- Treat it like a game



# Some resources

- Why academics have a hard time writing good grant proposals

(Robert Porter, Journal of Research Administration)

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ902223.pdf>

- What do grant reviewers really want anyway?

(Robert Porter, Journal of Research Administration)

[http://www.darma.dk.static01.tigermedia.eu/upload/INORMS\\_files/T6\\_Porter\\_What\\_Do\\_Grant\\_Reviewers\\_Want.pdf](http://www.darma.dk.static01.tigermedia.eu/upload/INORMS_files/T6_Porter_What_Do_Grant_Reviewers_Want.pdf)

[www.apu.edu/researchandgrants](http://www.apu.edu/researchandgrants)

