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How to obtain top grants

My very own personal reflections

Jenny Mjösberg, professor

Center for Infectious Medicine (CIM), Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden
Clinical Lung and Allergy Research Unit, Karolinska University Hospital, Stockholm, Sweden

Targeting your application to the right funding agency



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- KI grants office and/or the Swedish Research Council for ERC bootcamps, interview training etc. Use the support!
- Get advice from senior colleagues



Before writing – realizing the importance of grant writing and planning



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- Prioritize, grant writing is not a side activity, you are the bread provider, it's your job
- It is also a creative process where you can involve the group, challenge your ideas by discussing them with others



Before writing – what is your big question?

- What is THE BIG QUESTION that you are optimally positioned to address? I.e. what do you have that is unique (method, material etc) to address this question? Or from another angle?
 - Talk to colleagues, go to conferences, go to places/contexts that inspire you



Before writing – What you are judged on



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- You: make sure to profile yourself. Who are you? Your biggest discovery? What are you associated with? What makes you unique?
- Independence: In early stages or close to your PhD or postdoc mentor - Describe it clearly even if it is not asked for



Before writing – What you are judged on



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- Collaboration: Are you anchored in a network locally, nationally, internationally?
- The project: An important problem with a unique solution
- Feasibility: You have everything in place



The actual writing of the proposal



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- Start with aims and hypotheses - non-open ended and don't describe what you are going to do
- Structure the work to be done into aims and work packages - keep logic and simple, referring to your aims and hypotheses
- Write the state of the art - highlight what is known but also knowledge gaps that aligns with your aims



The actual writing of the proposal



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- Work packages, describe principles first, and then details, highlighting feasibility. Refer to your own experience/papers/preliminary data
- Significance and make sure it links with your described knowledge gaps and aims
- Write the summary – spend a lot of time on this one!



Getting feedback on your application

- Finish the application a couple of weeks before the deadline
- Let colleagues read and give feedback
- Professional grant writing companies/consultants – mixed experience

