RESEARCH FUNDING: SECURING SUPPORT FOR YOUR PROJECT THROUGH A FUNDING PROPOSAL

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### **Overview**



### What is Research?

#### Investigate new technologies





Test new ideas and hypotheses

**Solve Problems** 

Use of knowledge to create new

processes

### Who Might Fund Your Research?

- National Research Councils
  - eg, in UK: EPSRC, MRC, ...
- Charities/Trusts and Foundations
  - eg, Wellcome Trust, Alzheimer's Society, ...
- Local and National Government Agencies
- European Union (H2020)
- Industry

### What will a Funder Pay for?

- Fundamental Research
- Travel grants
- Equipment

. . . . . .

- PhD scholarships
- Fellowships (incoming and outgoing)
- Hosting of events
- Teaching replacement
- Preparation of proposals

## **Choosing Funders**

### Questions you might want to ask about funding organisations:

- Who are they?
  - > What are their strategies, policies, key areas of interest
- How much funding are they likely to provide?
  - Are there lower and upper limits?
- Over what time period will they fund?
  - ➢ 6 months, 2 years, 5 years?
- What are the reporting requirements?
- Why would they be interested in funding me or my institution?
- What/who have they supported in the past?
  - area of research or type of resource
- What research would they not support?
- What process has to be completed to get the funding?
  - effort v funding value
- Is the funding programme responsive or prescriptive?
  - freedom v constraints

### Are you Eligible for the Funding?



### **National Research Councils**

Often provide special funding programmes for early-career researchers

eg, in the UK:

AHRC – Arts and Humanities Research Council

BBSRC – Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council

**EPSRC** – Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council

ESRC – Economic and Social Research Council

MRC – Medical Research Council

NERC – Natural Environment Research Council

STFC – Science and Technology Facilities Council

## First Grant Scheme (EPSRC)

- This First Grant scheme is a mechanism that provides support for new academics at the start of their careers
  - to help new academics apply for research funding within the first three years of their career
- Funding is limited to a maximum of £125,000
  - (calculated at 100% full economic costs with EPSRC contributing at 80% fEC)
  - with a maximum duration of two years.
  - This is a "responsive mode" programme: there are no specific calls nor closing dates

<sup>•</sup> http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/howtoapply/routes/newac/firstgrant/

### **Ethical Funders**

# Your institution may have Guidelines on Acceptable External Sources of Funding for Research

 Not all sources of funding may be compatible with the ethos of independent research, and the acceptance of funding from certain sources might harm or undermine the institution's reputation and/or freedom to undertake research

### Some general principles:

- An institution will usually accept funds from any legal and reputable source where there is no conflict with other institutional policies
- Careful consideration should be given to ethical issues and potential conflicts of interest before funding is accepted

## Particular Care is Required if ...

- the original source of the funding is unclear, unknown and/or cannot be identified
- the potential funder wishes unduly to restrict publication and/or exploitation of the findings of the research or wishes to exert inappropriate influence over the findings and their dissemination
- a member of staff or student has a material interest in or connection with a potential funder that might suggest that objectivity is compromised
- accepting funds from one source might affect the institution's ability to apply for funds from other sources
- the interests, aims, practices and priorities of the potential funder are contrary to or in conflict with the institution's interests, aims, practices and priorities
- acceptance of the funds is likely to result in negative publicity or harm to the reputation of the institution
- the research has the potential to harm the public or participants

## Help from within your Institution

This is an internal website for research staff and students; external content for Research and Innovation is at ulster.ac.uk/research-innovation



Research and Innovation

AAAA

Research Governance and Ethics

Research Grants and Contracts

Research Policy

Research Student Administration

### **Research & Innovation Office**

- Help find funding Opportunities
- Provide guidance and advice
- Help with costings
- Manage the internal approval process
- Make the submission via online submission portal

The Research Grants and Contracts Section of the Research Office is responsible for managing pre and post award activity related to external funding. We can assist with sourcing research funding, developing research proposals, and providing advice on contractual matters. In addition, the Research Claims Section of Research Grants and Contracts can advise on all areas relating to completion of claims for funding.

For further information please select one of the following links:

#### About Us

- Funding Opportunities
- Research Challenge Fund
  INI Competence centre Eligible costs
- Applications and Contracts Management Procedures
- Research Grant Management Procedures
- SEUPB Funded Projects
- Peace III Procurement Guidelines
- NIH Financial Conflict of Interest Policy
- NIH Financial Conflict of Interest Form
- Invest NI Funded Proof of Concept Projects
  - Invest NI Procurement Guidelines
  - Invest NI Proof of Concept Projects Publicity Guidelines 2007-2013
  - Link for ERDF Logo for projects 2007-2013
  - Invest NI Proof of Concept Projects Publicity Guidelines from July 2015
- Recruiting Contract Research Staff Guidance Notes for Principal Investigators
- VAT ON Research
- Internal Forms
- Electronic Submission
- Marie Curie Secondment Procedures
- Research Grants & Contracts Staff

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### **Institutional Guidance**

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#### Research Governance and Ethics

Research Grants and Contracts

Research Policy

Research Student Administration Research Grants and Contracts can assist in identifying funding sources for your research. Below are a number of links to funding opportunities and sponsors. If you are unable to find a sponsor for your research, please contact us for assistance. NB: Before submitting any application for external research funding, please consult the <u>Research Grants and Contracts staff</u> within your area.

Research Professional.com - External database of funding opportunities



Opportunities by Faculty Links to relevant funding bodies
 Opportunities for New Researchers - Links to relevant funding bodies

A number of projects within the University are funded by ERDF. The link to the DETI ERDF website is http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-euro-prog-index.htm

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Ulster University

Research and Innovation

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Research Governance and Ethics

Research Grants and Contracts

Research Policy

Research Student Administration Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council <u>www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding</u>
 British Ecological Society <u>www.britishecologicalsociety.org</u>
 EMBO – European Molecular Biology Organisation <u>www.embo.org</u>
 Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council <u>www.epsrc.ac.uk</u>
 Natural Environment Research Council <u>www.nerc.ac.uk</u>

A number of research funders have schemes specifically aimed at new researchers, and details of these and other calls for proposals, including eligibility criteria, can be found on the following websites:

- 6. Medical Research Council www.mrc.ac.uk
- 7. Economic and Social Research Council www.esrc.ac.uk
- 8. The Leverhulme Trust www.leverhulme.ac.uk
- 9. The Nuffield Foundation www.nuffieldfoundation.org
- 10. The Wellcome Trust www.wellcome.ac.uk

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### **External Broker Sites**

This is an internal website for research staff and students; external content for Research and Innovation is at ulster.ac.uk/research-innovation



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### \* Research Professional

Funding

Our Institution Help

Mv Profile

Articles O Opportunities Search

Go

#### Opportunities Advanced Search Prof Bryan Scotney Search How to set up email alerts Tips to fine tune your searches and alerts

#### News

Vews



#### Politics

British scientists decry 'dreadful' referendum result

Researchers from across the UK awoke to a funding future that looks much less certain following the country's referendum vote in favour of leaving the European Union.

#### Politics

#### Higher education bill faces uncertain future

David Cameron's decision to resign as prime minister by October has thrown into confusion the passage through parliament of the higher education and research bill.

#### Views of Europe In sorrow and anger

Brexit has been emotionally shattering, says William Cullerne Bown. But today there is a fierceness that those of us, like me, who are happy to call themselves Europeans, should hold onto.

#### Views of the UK

Six things to think about on a morning in shock

Stand up for your colleagues, engage with a divided country, and don't sulk, says Luke Georahiou.

Edition UK edition  $\sim$ 

#### Expressions of Interest

Researchers from your institution who have expressed an interest in applying for a funding opportunity.

Innovation in education and training award Chartered Institute of Building, GB Martina Murphy<sup>⊵</sup> 22 Oct 15

Sir Ian Dixon scholarship Chartered Institute of Building, GB Martina Murphy 22 Oct 15

International academic fellowships Leverhulme Trust, GB Jonathan Leakev 27 Jul 15

Lush prize Lush, GB Anne-Marie Wright<sup>I</sup> 01 Jul 15

Medical or dental postgraduate scholarship National Health and Medical Research Council, AU Luke George⊠ 23 Jun 15

Public engagement large awards scheme Science and Technology Facilities Council GB Dr James Uhomoibhi 10 Jun 15

#### Our Institution - Ulster University



Welcome to Ulster University's start page on Research Professional. Key advantages of the site include: An intuitive interface to make browsing for funding as simple as

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Ne	ws Funding	g Our Institution	Help	Articles O 0	opportunities Search
Fu	unding				Advanced Opportunities Se
Advanced Search Save 2				Save Actions	Saved Searches RAE alert
	-	-	Closing date Award amount	Nore options 🔽	Saved Bookmarks
	text Contains	healthcare te	echnologies) 9 Match all criteria O Match any criteri	× X	My bookmarks
			Results per page 50 V	Previous 1 Next	ESOF EuroScience Open Forum Manchester 23-27 July 2016
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	27 Jun 16	John David Williams International Society of		Not specified	Attend ESOF from En
	July 16				Sign up now >>>
	01 Jul 16	Innovations in health IEEE, US	care technology medal	Not specified	
	07 Jul 16	Peer reviewed medica award US Department of Defe	al research programme: discovery ense, US	\$200,000	Interested? To find out more vis
	11 Jul 16	Researcher links wor technologies for agei British Council, GB and		Not specified	health.org.uk/is
	28 Jul 16		arch Initiative Healthcare competiti ndence for children with long-term including NIHR, GB	ion £1,100,000	
	August 16				C The

### **External Broker Sites**

### eg, Research Professional

- A database of funding opportunities providing up-to-date information on current national and international, government and private funding sources, including fellowships, research grants, publication support, etc.
  - Covering UK, Europe, USA & rest of the world

### **Provides links to:**

- Funding opportunities & sponsors' databases
- Personal Funding Alerts for individual needs
- Access to Research Fortnight online

Access by personal or institutional login:

http://www.researchprofessional.com/login.html

### **Essential Preparation**

Before you start, ask yourself 5 key questions:

- 1. What problem are you trying to solve? (Why bother?)
- 2. Is it a priority for the funding agency and the particular funding call?
- 3. Is the solution already available? (Product, service, technology transfer)
- 4. Why now? (What would happen if this research was not completed now?)
- 5. Why you? (Do you have the best experience/expertise/team to conduct this research?)

Some of these questions may be very hard to answer (honestly)!

But don't give up!!!

## **Preparation: The Basic Elements**

### Most proposals have four main aspects:

- Scientific Excellence
- Impact
- Management and Implementation
- Financial Administration

### How to Build a Proposal - Early Steps:

- Start by writing a one page proposal
  - think of this as a lobby document
- Work this up into a four-page proposal addressing
  - Excellence
  - Impact
  - Implementation
- Include an abstract, <u>using a journalistic style</u>

## **Some Key Considerations**

- The importance of the non-technical summary
- Distinguishing between academic and non-academic beneficiaries
- Describing the Impact
  - and identifying the Pathways through which Impact will be achieved
- Effective use of the space available on the application form

### **Key Requirements**

Identify the international, national and local context in which

research in the relevant area is conducted

Be aware of research at the forefront of the discipline

Decide on the most appropriate external funder to support research

on your particular topic

Appreciate the differing requirements of a range of funding models

### **Key Requirements**

Develop an application that is consistent with the funder's criteria

Justify in detail the budget sought to support the proposed research

Evaluate the likely expertise of external reviewers based on funder

guidance and tailor an application to the appropriate level

Engage constructively with reviewer criticism and construct well

reasoned rebuttals

### **Proposal Elements**

**Typically a proposal includes the following elements** (each funding body specifies it's own particular elements and format)

- A Case for Support
  - including a track record
  - and a description of the proposed research and its context
- Pathways to Impact
- Justification of the resources requested
- A Work plan
- CVs for named researcher(s)
  - and for visiting researchers and researcher co-investigators (where applicable)

## **Additional Proposal Elements**

### Additional materials may also be required:

- Statements of support from any project partners (where applicable)
- Quotations for purchase of equipment
  - (usually major items only)
- A host organisation statement
  - Indicating how the institution will additionally support the researcher while they are conducting the proposed research

### **Research Concept and Objectives**

- Specify the concept/hypothesis of the proposal
- Explain why the proposed project is of sufficient timeliness and novelty to warrant consideration for funding
- Specify the aim and the measurable objectives against which the outcomes of the work can be assessed
- A proposal has in general one Aim
  - as each objective is achieved it helps move closer to achieving the overall aim of the project

http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance/preparing/Pages/writing.aspx#desc

## The Case for Support

Funding basics

Funding guide

proposal

reviewers

Equipment

projects

Preparing a proposal

applicants and

Multiple proposal

How to prepare a

Impact - guidance for

~

Eligibility

C www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance/preparing/Pages/writing.aspx#desc **EPSRC** Skip Navigation Accessibility Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council Change text size: HOME FUNDING RESEARCH INNOVATION SKILLS NEWS, EVENTS AND PUBL Home > Funding > Culturnee > Preparing a proposal > How to prepare a-FUNDING HOW TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL Guidance

> To apply for funding you need to fill in an application form and prepare some accompanying documentation.

#### CASE FOR SUPPORT:

- Track record (up to two sides of A4)
- Description of proposed research and its context (up to six sides of A4)

#### OTHER ATTACHMENTS:

- Pathways to impact document (up to two sides of A4)
- Work plan (up to one side of A4)
- Justification of the resources requested (up to two sides of A4)
- CVs (up to two sides of A4 each) for named researchers, visiting researchers and researcher coinvestigators - where applicable
- Statements of support from any project partners (no page limit) where applicable
- Letters of Support (no page limit) in exceptional circumstances
- Quotes for equipment (no page limit) where applicable

Media Enquiries

Accept

Α Α

## **The Case for Support**

C www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance/preparing/Pages/writing.aspx#desc **EPSRC** Skip Navigation Accessibility Media Enquiries Accept Engineering and Physical Sciences Α Α Research Council Change text size: HOME FUNDING RESEARCH INNOVATION SKILLS NEWS, EVENTS AND PUBL Home > Funding > Guidance > Preparing a proposal > How to prepare a proposal FUNDING HOW TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL Guidance ~ To apply for funding you need to fill in an application form and prepare some accompanying Funding basics documentation. Eligibility CASE FOR SUPPORT: Funding guide Track record (up to two sides of A4) Description of proposed research and its context (up to six sides of A4) Preparing a proposal OTHER ATTACHMENTS: How to prepare a proposal Pathways to impact document (up to two sides of A4) Impact - guidance for Work plan (up to one side of A4) applicants and Justification of the resources requested (up to two sides of A4) reviewers CVs (up to two sides of A4 each) for named researchers, visiting researchers and researcher co-Equipment investigators - where applicable Statements of support from any project partners (no page limit) - where applicable Multiple proposal Letters of Support (no page limit) – in exceptional circumstances 28 projects Quotes for equipment (no page limit) - where applicable

## **Case for Support**

This is your opportunity to convince a panel of reviewers why they should fund your work

- There is no general 'formula' to preparing the Case for Support
- So, your proposal may be motivated either by a specific deadline or at a natural point in time in your research

### **Purpose:**

- Be clear what it is that you want to propose
  - and how you will actually undertake the work
  - discuss this with any collaborators prior to writing
- Be clear about how your proposed work would provide a (scientific) advance
- Stay focused on the funder's specification
  - and be aware of the main assessment criteria

## **Commitment!**

### Stay motivated!

### – persevere





 and dedicate a sufficient amount of time to complete the proposal

## So What, Typically, is a Case for Support?

### Typically, a Case for Support would include:

- Track record
- Description of proposed research
- Other supporting documentation
  - may include:
    - Pathways to impact
    - Work
    - Justification of the resources requested

All elements <u>will be assessed</u> and should be given sufficient and timely amounts of attention

http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance/preparing/Pages/writing.aspx#dese<sup>1</sup>

## **Guidelines for the Case for Support**

- Your proposal should fit within the funder's mission and objectives
- Be clear, concise and not cluttered with technical jargon
- Describe your objectives clearly and succinctly
- Provide a convincing case for the originality of your proposal
- Make clear what is exciting about the research
  - It is likely that others will be carrying out similar/related work
  - Your proposal will not be rejected just because of that, but ...
    - you must describe the novelty of your approach
  - and the likelihood of success when compared with others

http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance/preparing/Pages/writing.aspx#desc32

### **Components of the Case for Support**

- Track Record
- Background
- Research Hypothesis and Objectives
- Programme and Methodology
- Pathways to Impact

### **Track Record**

This section gives you the opportunity to demonstrate that you/your team have:

- the appropriate mix of skills
- expertise
- and experience
- to carry out the research
- This is particularly important for multi-disciplinary proposals
  - where you may need to demonstrate complementarity of skills

### **Track Record**

- Highlight the achievements and results in your work that support the proposal
  - focus on the related elements of your previous work
- Highlight previous relevant work for which you have been funded by both the funding body and others
- Provide details of relevant collaborative networks
  - highlight industry, academia and end-users
- Outline the resources and skills within your department that can support the proposal

http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance/preparing/Pages/writing.aspx#desc

### Background

- Introduce the problem and place it within the context of Academic and Industrial Research
- Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of past and current work in the subject area nationally and internationally
- Be sure to provide details of state-of-the-art both nationally and internationally
- Ensure references are <u>complete</u>, <u>up to</u> date, and from <u>reputable</u> <u>sources</u>
- Ensure similar projects and their <u>results</u> are included particularly from the same funding body
### Background

#### Keep focus on the purpose of this Section:

• What is the problem being addressed?

- Have an appreciation for the funder's view on the issue

- How have others addressed the issue previously/currently?
- What are the shortcomings?
  - (from the perspective of the results generated to date)
- What are the opportunities to advance the state-of-the-art?

## National (or International) Importance

Describe the extent to which, over the long term, for example 10-20 years, the research proposed:

- contributes to, or helps maintain, the health of other research disciplines
- contributes to addressing key societal challenges
- contributes to current or future economic success
- and/or enables future development of key emerging industry(s)
- meets national/international strategic needs
  - by establishing or maintaining a world-leading research activity
- fits with and complements other research already funded in the area or related areas

http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance/preparing/Pages/writing.aspx#desc

## **Academic Impact**

- Describe how the research will benefit other researchers
  - in the field
  - and in related disciplines
  - both within the funder's geographical domain and elsewhere
    - What will be undertaken to ensure that they can benefit?
- Explain any collaboration with other researchers and their role in the project
  - for any Visiting Researcher:
    - explain why they are the most appropriate person
    - and what they will contribute to the project

http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance/preparing/Pages/writing.aspx#desc

## Be 'SMART' !



#### • S – specific



#### • M – measurable

#### • A – attainable

# X

#### • R - relevant

#### • T - timebound



## **Programme of Work**

- Give details of, and justify, the methodology to be adopted
- Detail the Programme of Work
  - What will be undertaken?
    - define this component explicitly
  - Who will undertake the work?
  - What are the deliverables?
  - What are the milestones?
  - When will the programme be completed?
- The level of detail provided should be sufficient to indicate the programme of work for each member of the research team
- Explain how the project will be managed

## Where to submit to?

- 'Round peg, square hole'
- It can be difficult to decide where to submit to
  - the issue can be viewed from two perspectives:
    - timeliness of Call for Proposals
    - suitability of submission to targeted calls

Be aware of who are relevant funding bodies for your work

and check regularly for calls that are opening

## **Resources and Project Budget**

#### Time

• eg, why 24 months?

#### People

• eg, why 1 Research Associate, and 1 PhD studentship?

#### Equipment

- eg, why a new computing cluster and specific software?
  - Should this already be provided by your institution?

#### Constraints

- calculate the budget genuinely in line with the project's needs
- ensure that the budget fits within the funding scheme

## **Costing a Research Proposal**

#### Some Considerations:

- What assistance can be provided by your Institutional Research Office?
- Full economic costs (FEC) and non-FEC costing models
- Directly allocated v directly incurred costs
- Eligible costs
- Estimating investigator time
  - ensuring that an application is financially viable
- Exceptions
  - particularly capital expenditure
- Common pitfalls be realistic

RA = 40K euro Your time = 10K euro Funding level =70%

## Submission of a Proposal is often via the Funder's Online Portal

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Instruction oneering research nd skills	Automatic logout in 1:5	
Document Menu <u>(Hide)</u>	Home: Documents: Document List: Not Submitted	
Instructions	Document Actions Cancel Prev Save Next	
Project Details		
Disciplines 🕴 🔞	Scheme: Standard	
Investigators	Project Title: Investigation of new methods for interacting with mobile voice applications	
Principal Investigator		
Co-Investigator		
Researcher Co-		
Investigator	Instructions	
Joint Proposals		
Objectives 🕴	Please use the Document Menu (sidebar) on the left to navigate through the document. (Alternatively, use either	
Summary 🕴	the Prev or Next button at the top of the page).	
Academic Beneficiaries 🝪 🛛		
Research Councils MOD 🚮 🤕 JRGS	Document Menu (Sidebar):	
Impact Summary 🛛 🔞 🛛	The 😂 icon indicates that either the section has not been completed or fails validation. Hover over the red	
Resource summary	button for further information.	
Other Support	The icon indicates that the section has been successfully completed and passes validation.	
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Related Proposals	The icon indicates that a section has not been completed - but it may not be applicable so will not fail	
Related Proposals	validation.	

## **Typical Evaluation Process**



## **Typical Evaluation Criteria: Excellence**

- Clarity and pertinence of the objectives
- Soundness of the concept
  - including trans-disciplinary considerations, where relevant
- Extent that the proposed work
  - is ambitious
  - has innovation potential
  - is beyond the state-of-the-art
    - e.g. ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches
- Credibility of the proposed approach

## **Typical Evaluation Criteria:** Impact

- A good match with the expected impacts described in the funding programme
- Enhancing innovation capacity and integration of new knowledge
- Strengthening the competitiveness and growth of companies
  - by developing innovations meeting the needs of any specified markets (eg, national, European, global)
- Environmental and socially important impacts (as specified in the funding call)
- Effectiveness of the measures proposed to exploit and disseminate the project results (Pathway to Impact)
  - including management of IPR
  - promotion and communication of the project
  - management of the research data, where relevant

## **Typical Evaluation Criteria:** Implementation

- Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan
  - including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
- Complementarity of the participants within the team
  - (where relevant)
- Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures
  - including risk and innovation management

## How will an Evaluator Assess your Proposal?

- If your proposal Is only marginally relevant in terms of its scientific, technological or innovation content relating to the call or topic addressed:
  - This will be reflected in a low score for the Excellence criterion
- If your proposal does not contribute significantly to the expected impacts as specified in the call or topic
  - This will be reflected in a low score for the Impact criterion
- If cross-cutting issues are mentioned explicitly in the call or topic, and not properly addressed (or their non-relevance justified):
  - This will be reflected in a low score for the relevant criterion
  - However, also addressing further cross-cutting issues which are not mentioned explicitly in the call or topic can also be evaluated positively

## What Does an Evaluator Want to See?

#### An evaluator expects:

Credibility	The idea is convincing and achievable
Communication	A clear description of what will be done
Concrete	Very specific (not general concepts) Who will do what, when and how?
Consistency	High quality documentation (proof-read)