

CHECKLIST

FOR WRITING ABSTRACT APPLICATIONS

PROJECT TITLE

- Is my chosen title concise (clear and short)?
- Does the title summarise the research idea?
- Does every word aid understanding (serve a useful purpose)?
- Have I avoided abbreviations?

STUDY BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION

- Have I briefly summarised the current state of knowledge of the topic with relevant gaps, shortcomings or limitations?
- Have I described the rationale for conducting this study, for example by explaining how the generated knowledge will fill an existing gap?

CLINICAL RELEVANCE

- Does my research fulfil a translational approach?
- Have I stated how my findings may affect clinical practice?

RESEARCH QUESTION, HYPOTHESIS AND AIMS OF THE PROJECT

- Is my research question innovative?
- Is my overall hypothesis testable, i.e. can I generate data to support or disprove my hypothesis?
- Is the hypothesis linked to the primary outcome of the study?
- Are my aims specific (independent), measurable, relevant and achievable in the allowed time frame?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- Have I chosen sound and robust methods (design of experiments) to answer the specific aims and hypothesis?
- Are the study design, model and materials appropriate for evaluating the primary outcome of the study?
- If applicable, have I described the following: number of groups, test and control groups, sample sizes, outcome variables, study endpoints, randomisation, blinding and calibration?
- Have I described how the data will be analysed?
- In case of statistical analysis: have I formulated a null hypothesis that connects an independent with a dependent variable?

FACILITIES AND EXPERTISE

- Do I have the institutional support to execute the proposed research?
- Have I mentioned the team members needed to successfully conduct the study, plus their relevant expertise?
- Do I have access to the required equipment and the budget for it?
- Are collaborations in place to access remote equipment? Have I described them?

REFERENCES

- Do I only use the most important and up-to-date references?
- Do I keep references to a minimum?

CHECKLIST

FOR WRITING MAIN APPLICATIONS

The above checklist can be used in combination with this one, which places more emphasis on methodological details, project and budget plan.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- Have I described the rationale for using specific materials and methods?
- If applicable: have I adequately described the method of randomisation and blinding?
- If applicable: have I described how the data will be analysed statistically (sample size and power calculation, etc.)?
- Have I considered ethical viewpoints?

PROJECT PLAN

- Have I chosen an appropriate and realistic timeline, incl. milestones and work packages?
- Did I show alternative pathways for overcoming challenges/obstacles within the research plan?
- Did I show when and how collaborators are involved and the extent of their contribution?

BUDGET PLAN

- Is the budget realistic for this type of study?
- Are all required items for the study listed and budgeted for?
- In case of supporting funds, is it clear which parts of the proposed study are covered by which funding source?
- Did I provide supporting letters for materials if they are sponsored by industrial partners?
- Did I check the funder's budget guidelines and is my budget compliant with these guidelines?
- Am I familiar with the overhead regulations of my institution?
- Have I reviewed the final budget with my institution's finance officer?

CHECKLIST

FOR GENERAL PREPARATION OF A RESEARCH PROPOSAL

PREPARE

- Have I set a personal deadline in advance of the submission deadline?
- Have I collaborated with co-workers, mentors, finance or grant administration officers?

STRUCTURE

- Have I structured my proposal into paragraphs (ideas) that have a logical flow?
- Do these paragraphs contain an introduction, main idea and link to the next paragraph?

ILLUSTRATE

- Do I illustrate complex issues with images and/or graphs?
- Do I use image captions or graph legends that are easy to understand?

WRITE

- Do I write concisely, yet sufficiently?
- Do I write in short sentences that are easy to follow?
- Do I write for the non-expert?
- Do I use and repeat chosen terminology?
- Do I keep references to a minimum?

REWRITE

- Have I proofread my proposal, also from a reviewer's perspective?
- Have others (outside my core expertise) proofread for ease of understanding?
- Have I checked if my use of English is clear and correct?
- Have I checked that the formatting meets the funder's guidelines?

SUBMIT

- Have I investigated the funder's submission system prior to the day of submission?
- Do I exactly know what is required for a successful submission?
- Do I use the templates that are provided by the funding body?
- Have I reserved enough time to enter and upload all my information?