The Dos and Don'ts of Writing Grant Applications

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The Timeline

- October--GRF submission deadlines

- November--Assign first and second readers

- December--Assign reviewers

- January to April--Review, initial assessment

- June--RGC meeting for past grant assessments, decision on current grants, ...

Before Writing

- Do consider your time-table... Start early!

- Don't stray away too far from your track record

- Do build up your network... Consider partnerships?

- Don't shy away from administrative duties

- Don't guess--Ask!

During Writing

- Do be concrete, practical, and feasible

- Don't be vague and overly speculative

- Do make sure application compliance-- following the guidelines

  - Format, page length, approvals, CV, ...

- Don't leave blank spaces in the application-- use all available spaces

The Application

- Do be clear and concise in the aims, objectives, outcomes, ...

- Do answer

  - What is the significance and relevance?

  - Where is the innovation and benefit?

- Do address all possible weaknesses

- Do be able to validate your work

- Don't be shy in referencing your own work

The Application

- Do consider your audience

  - May or may not be experts in your field

- Don't excessively use jargons and unexplained acronyms

- Don't underestimate the importance of aesthetics--graphs, tables, figures, format, style, fonts, size, ...

The Application

- Don't add excess materials not related to the application

- Don't squeeze too much information

- Do PROOFREAD your application

- Do add ALL entries for reviewers

The Budget

- Don't put down general computing support

- Do include specialized equipment

- Do justify items reasonably

- Do maximize the budget... don't over-blown or under-cut

After Writing

- Do keep your portfolio updated…

  - Update your grant, CV, awards, website, …

- Do consider other opportunities

  - NSFC/RGC, Germany/HK, Croucher, …

- Do accept grant review requests

- Do make suggestions/feedback to RGC

- Don't give up and keep trying…

Reasons For Failure

- Objectives are too broad and unrealistic

- Methodology is not structured or systematic

- Lack of original ideas, motivation, justification, validation, ...

- Not following guidelines

- Not declaring multiple submissions

- Poor track record

Assessment

- Make sure to submit annual reports

- Make sure to acknowledge the grant

- Make sure to produce relevant publications

Praecedo in Excellentia!