Read the guidelines
Tips for SSHRC Grant Applications

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Working with your Grantscrafter

• Some Faculties have Grantscrafters available to assist you
• Not a guarantee that you will get the grant!
• Application material, ideas and discussion will remain confidential
• Positive criticism
• Technicalities not addressed
Evaluation Criteria

• These are what you write to
• Main headings are Challenge, Feasibility, Capability
• Subheadings are given with the criteria
• Headings/subheadings are what the committee uses to evaluate your proposal
• Web-based instructions are to be followed inside the evaluation criteria
Main Heading
1. Challenge

1.1 Originality
1.2 Literature Review
1.3 Theoretical approach/framework
1.4 Methods
1.5 Training
1.6 Impact
1.7 Viability*

* Partnership/Partnership Development Grant
Main Heading

2. Feasibility

2.1 Attainment of the research objectives
2.2 Partnership and Governance*
2.3 Budget
2.4 Other planned resources
2.5 Knowledge mobilization
2.6 Strategies and timelines for activities

* Partnership/Partnership Development Grant
Main Heading
3. Capability

3.1 Experience
3.2 Contributions
3.3 Contributions to the development of talent
3.4 Experience in formal partnerships*
3.5 Future contributions

* Partnership/Partnership Development Grant
Template

• ORS has a template for each competition (available grants@uvic.ca)
• Use this to guide your writing
• Web-based instructions provide further guidance for what is needed
Proposal Layout inside the template

• Don’t squeeze so many words onto a page that the whole thing becomes a nightmare to read.

• A well-laid out proposal says to a committee “this person knows what they are talking about and they have taken as much care with their proposal as we are now doing.”
Committees are non-specialists

• Assessors may have the kind of specialized knowledge you need, but a committee will not
• Provide a rapid introduction for intelligent non-specialists
• Provide appropriate references
Logical and Connected Proposal

• Present research plans coherently, as a set of problems
• In a logical and connected order
• Point to where future research would go
• **Always** state the central problem of your work and why it is important
Critiques

• If you are critiquing existing models or approaches in the literature,
  – Do so lucidly, without partisanship, and
  – Demonstrate clearly why your approach is better.

• Be precise
New Research Direction
Insight Development

• If you are departing from your earlier work, make it clear that you have done your homework in your new area
• Literature surveys are essential
Practicality, Training, Publication

• Show practical applications of your work where appropriate
  – Training opportunities for your students
  – How these will be provided, institutional and other support

• Be precise about dissemination and communication
  – Names of likely journals, conferences, publishers
  – Probable publication sequence over the period of the grant and beyond
Team Research
Insight and Partnership grants

• In some cases, the existence of a team (interdisciplinary or otherwise) will be helpful
• Show
  – How you will put it together
  – The contributions of each part
  – How it will help in training students, or how it will help a new scholar (or one who is starting up again) to integrate into the research world
Track Record

• Be clear about what’s a book, a chapter, a report, a talk, and “other scholarly production” (e.g., videos). Add appropriate ‘grey’ literature
• Do not fudge contributions – co-authored means specifying how much was your contribution; forthcoming means accepted for publication, etc.
• Quality counts more than quantity
• Explain your restrictions if publications are limited
Special Circumstances

• Explain teaching loads, class sizes, administrative obligations, serious illness, and other relevant matters crisply and matter-of-factly

• Don’t apologize or editorialize – make a succinct case
Budget

• Do not inflate or underestimate
• Use quotations from UVic and (e.g.) Expedia to justify costs
• Don’t expect to get money for “fishing trips”
• Keep equipment budgets to a minimum
• Justify travel money for student or RA
• Secure other financial support if you can
• Provide information about where else you are looking for support (or why not)
Adjudication Committees

• Most of these committees are interdisciplinary; some have non-academics on them. They are your audience, so find out what you can.

• Committees get tired and impatient with complex obscure language, typos, poorly laid-out or explained budgets, and incomplete information.
Provide Information Clearly

• Committees are not only not infallible and tired, they are also starting with imperfect information about you and your institution

• Give them the information you know is essential to your case, straightforwardly and without editorializing
My Favourite Tip

• Ask a friend who is not overly familiar with your research to read your proposal some day/evening when he/she is tired and see if it makes sense
• Then ask your friend to tell you which bits are confusing, or that had to be read twice
• Then sit down again and work on getting rid of the jargon, or the long sentences, or …
Final Observations

• Grant competitions are still going to be, on occasion, unfair
• After one rejection, do not despair, sulk, or get angry…or at least, not for long
• There will be comments that come with the decision
• Take the advise that makes sense to you; ponder the rest, and then accept or reject it
QUESTIONS?