



U.S.-Israel Science & Technology Foundation

Tips on How to Write a Proposal

In addition to the title page and budget forms, the USISTF only provides a general outline of the items to include in a proposal. Here are some tips to help you prepare a better proposal.

Before you begin preparation of your proposal, carefully read the "Request for Proposals" (RFP) and "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQs) to clearly understand the issues to be addressed and the information you are required to submit.

All proposals must include certain basic information. These basics include:

Why are you doing this project?

What will you be doing?

How will you be doing it?

Who will be doing it?

Where will it be done?

How long will it take?

How much will it cost?

The following generic proposal template is provided for guidance only. The USISTF does not require a specific format. Follow this format in organizing your thoughts for preparing your proposal.

Executive Summary: Some people consider this the most important part of the proposal because it is the reviewer's first impression. Even though it appears first, write it last because it is a summary of the proposal. The executive summary is a concise description of the project covering objectives, need, methodology, and dissemination plans. It should identify the expected outcomes of the project. An executive summary should be less than 750 words and fit on one page.

Need: Well-documented description of the problem to be addressed and why it is important. Use support information, statistics and/or succinct statements to make your point. This section should describe the significance, timeliness, and importance of the project. Make a compelling case for it. Why should the sponsor give you funding?

Objectives: Indicate the expected outcomes of the project, preferably in measurable terms. This shows what you will do, for whom, by how much, and by when. When the project is completed, you will be able to evaluate it and determine whether the project succeeded or not in achieving its objectives. Identify short-term and long-term objectives.

Methods: The critical part of the proposal and is the longest part and worth the most points. It is a plan of action for how the objectives will be achieved. This section usually starts with a description of the overall approach, its relevance, effectiveness, and innovativeness. Then it gives details on methodology, the population being addressed, and how anticipated problems will be managed.

Evaluation: Describes the means by which the grantee and funding agency will know if the project has accomplished its objectives. It may also describe plans for collecting additional information to improve the project. What is the purpose of the evaluation, what data will be collected, how will it be analyzed, and how will the results be reported?

Plans for disseminating products and findings to the sponsor and to the community at large can also be described in this section. How will the results of this program be disseminated?

Qualifications: This section outlines the ability of the grantee to successfully complete the project. Show prior related experience, describe facilities, and equipment available. Importantly, list key personnel who will work on the project and include their resumes. Also mention any consultants who will work on the project, and give evidence (a letter, e-mail) that they have agreed to participate.

Timetable: Describe how long (days, months) specific tasks or components of the project will take. If possible, include a milestone chart in this section.

Budget: Show the annual and overall cost of the project. A detailed budget should be divided into categories such as salaries, fringe benefits, travel, supplies, equipment, etc. Indirect costs should also be shown. Sub-categories should provide a line item detailed breakdown of the funds requested. This should be accompanied with a budget narrative to clarify and justify the figures. If matching funds are to be provided by the grantee, identify the amount and budget category. The USISTF requires use of a specific budget form.

Image Counts: The appearance of your proposal does make an impression on the reviewer. The narrative description should not exceed 10 typed, Letter-Size (8.5" x 11"), single-spaced pages, 12-point font. The proposal should be neat and readable, and it is recommended to complete it at least a day or two before the deadline.