Resubmitting Your Proposal: Tips for Success
Suzanne Hansford-Bowles
MU Extension

Judy Healy-Mendez
MO Prevention Science Institute
Why Do Grant Proposals Fail?

**Number 1 Reason:**
The agency or foundation does not have enough money.

- There are more good ideas than there are funds
  - **NO** does not mean GIVE UP!
# National Science Foundation Success Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Year</th>
<th>Number Submitted</th>
<th>Number Awarded</th>
<th>Success Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY2019</td>
<td>42,100</td>
<td>8,402</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY2010</td>
<td>55,562</td>
<td>13,015</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY2000</td>
<td>29,407</td>
<td>9,762</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## National Institutes of Health

### Success Rates for R01 & Equivalent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Success Rate</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NIH – **Success rates** of R01 Resubmissions in 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of applications</th>
<th>Number of awards</th>
<th>Success rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st submission</td>
<td>25,707</td>
<td>4,302</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd submission</td>
<td>9,378</td>
<td>3,064</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
US Department of Agriculture

- Over the past five years (Figure 1), AFRI has received a gradual upward trend in funding
- Approximately a 32 percent increase in funding from 2012 ($264,470,000) to 2016 ($350,000,000)
- USDA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative – 20% success rate in 2016
University of Missouri

Resubmissions are a major part of our research awards. Across all agencies and C/S/D:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of resubs submitted</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of resubs awarded</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>$22M</td>
<td>$24M</td>
<td>$18M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success rate</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**At NIH, MU resubmission success rates 26 to 40 percent**
Note on private funders

- Not committed to transparency
- Often, no feedback or scoring provided
- Grant opportunities vary more year to year
- May have limits on resubmissions (e.g., wait a year or a cycle)
It Takes More Than One Time!

• Grant applications are a REPEAT process.
• Resubmitting is the norm. Our #1 TIP is to resubmit your proposal!
• Proposals are triaged – if guidelines not met, not reviewed.
• Great research ideas are not enough. Check details and address grantsmanship on resubmissions
Questions?
Common Problems with Proposals...

- Lack of new or original ideas
- Shaky reasoning in research approach
- Superficial or unfocused research plan
- Not enough detail to explain the project
- Lack of knowledge of published relevant work
- Lack of experience
- No discussion of future funding/future of project
Steps to Resubmission

• Read and re-read the reviews.
• Discuss proposal review with your research team.
• Make an appointment to call and talk to Program Officer.
• Talk to the Program Officer – have RDN member, other team members on call to listen and to help take notes.
• Follow guidelines on resubmission – often need to address reviewer comments.
• Work with your RDN member, grant staff, and OSPA.
• Have several internal and external reviewers BEFORE resubmit.
Key Tips to Reshape Application

• **Problem:** Proposal is too ambitious; scope of work is too large to complete.

• **Solution:** Simplify the project. You may need to ask for funding for only one piece. Then pursue funding for the next piece. Develop a strong timeline of the overall project and indicate the key components.
Key Tips to Reshape Application

• **Problem:** Principal Investigator lacks experience.

• **Solution:** Add collaborators with experience as Co-PIs or to an Advisory Board. Add wording to show that experienced collaborators will mentor you throughout project.
Key Tips to Reshape Application

• **Problem:** Use of funds does not appear to be appropriate.

• **Solution:** A good budget is essential to receiving an award. Budgets need to be reasonable, consistent with allowable categories, be allocable (easy to assign/charge), and consistent with University policy. Work with your grants person. Write a strong *budget justification* that tells the story of the numbers in enough detail that reviewers understand.
Key Tips to Reshape Application

• **Problem:** Reviewers critique methodology and are skeptical of the success of project.

• **Solution:** Usually this means there is not enough detail. Get reviewers to help flesh out the details. Add *who, what, when, where, and how* to narrative.
When NOT to Resubmit

Clear

• Reviewers or Program Officer tell you NOT to resubmit
• You have reached the limit of resubmission opportunities

Not as clear

• Application does not fit the call – or a revised call
• Idea has already been funded by funder (see past awards)
• Methods are not suitable for testing your hypothesis
• Data is not strong or not compelling
Questions?
Thank You
Resources

- https://www.chronicle.com/article/10-Tips-for-Successful-Grant/242535
- https://www.nordp.org/assets/resources-docs/porter-academicshardtime.pdf