STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL RESUBMISSIONS

RESEARCH AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FACULTY SUCCESS SEMINAR SERIES

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Executive Proposal Development Specialist
Office of Research and Faculty Development

Please keep your microphone muted until the Q&A session

Please note that this session is being recorded
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT (RFD)

Mission: To provide the resources and services to University of Idaho faculty that enhance their success and productivity in their field of scholarly efforts, with the ultimate goal of growing the U of I’s research enterprise

- Alignment with U of I strategic plan
- Across all disciplines
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WHAT DOES RFD DO?

- Faculty Development
- Proposal Development
- Leadership Development

Successful, funded research leaders
PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Level 0
• Brainstorming
• Strategic planning for submissions

Level 1
• Search for funding opportunities
• Training to use Pivot

Level 2
• Preparing to contact Program Officers
• Assessing “fit” of a proposed idea

Level 3
• Strategize for a resubmission
• Analyze reviews, develop responses

Level 4/5
• Ensuring proposal documents are clear, concise, cohesive, and responsive to the solicitation

Level 6
• Support for large, complex proposals
• Center grants, infrastructure, etc.

All services are optional and are granted on a first come, first served basis

REQUEST RFD SERVICES
# Faculty Development Offerings

**FACULTY SUCCESS SEMINARS**

- Program Officers and U of I experts
- Recordings and presentations available [here](#)

## FALL 2021

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**ZOOM ID**

uidaho.zoom.us/j/81586190096

**Office of Research and Faculty Development**

Email: ored-rfdteam@uidaho.edu
Website: uidaho.edu/orfd
Proposal Development Academy: *What You Need to Know Before You Write*

- Enhancing *grant readiness* of early-career faculty members

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- 9-week cohort program in Spring semesters
- Dean nomination to participate
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ORED)

ORA: Office of Research Assurances
OSP: Office of Sponsored Programs
OTT: Office of Technology Transfer
OBJECTIVES

IN THIS SESSION, WE WILL DISCUSS:

- Proposal rejection and resubmission realities
- Some common reasons proposals fail
- Things you can do strengthen resubmissions
- RFD resubmission resources, services, and support
- Discussion and Q&A
Most proposals are rejected

- ~75-90% of proposals are declined
- Avg # of proposals per applicant before funding = 3.6

Rejection is a normal part of the grantseeking process

Very few applications are funded on the first submission

NSF fund rate for PIs FY17-FY19

| Avg. # research proposals submitted to obtain an award | 2.3 |

1. AtKisson Training Group, LLC. 2021. Planning and Writing Successful Grant Proposals. Workshop presentation to the University of Idaho.
Why Resubmit?

Resubmissions have higher success rates

Resubmission provides an opportunity to

- Understand reviewers’ perspectives
- Develop an intentional strategy to be successful
- Improve your work and likelihood of success

Planning for rejection is a crucial part of the granting process

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1. Table 214, NIH Research Project Grants (RPGs) and R01-Equivalent Grants. New Competing Applications, Awards, Success Rates, and Total Funding by Submission Number. Fiscal Years 2011-2020.
Common Reasons Proposals Fail

- Administrative errors
- Misalignment with the program or sponsor
- Inadequate Resources or Team
- Issues with Intellectual Merit/Significance
- Project Design is unfocused, lacks detail
- Budget concerns
- Problems with Presentation
What to do if you are not funded

- Give yourself time to process the rejection, but...
- Resist the urge to react or defend
- Developing a plan can help you bounce back from rejection
What to do if you are not funded

Start with the comments from reviewers

1. Read the review, then put it away for a few days
2. Highlight every positive comment
3. Seek constructive feedback from experienced colleagues
4. Talk to your program officer
5. Create a document that groups reviewer comments by theme

Decide on a strategy

- Decide whether to resubmit or submit it somewhere else.
- Decide what you think you can and should fix and develop a plan.
- Get help from the RFD team.

Tips for Contacting Your Program Officer

Start with the comments from reviewers

Purpose
- Gauge whether proposal should be resubmitted
- Uncover helpful information on what you can and should fix
- Resist the urge to defend!

Don’t cold call the program officer

Send an email to request a meeting

Listen carefully to their suggestions/recommendations

Take copious notes
Tips for Contacting Your Program Officer

Questions to ask – some examples:

- Was the project relevant to the program and their portfolio?
- Was a particular problem emphasized in discussion?
- Was there a particular issue that sunk the proposal?
- What’s the probability of doing better based on review comments?
- Ask them to clarify cryptic or conflicting comments
- Anything to add that wasn’t in the written reviews?
- Do they even want to see a resubmission?*
  - *Written confirmation is required for Operation: Resubmission Support
Deciding whether to resubmit

Analyzing Reviewer Comments - questions to consider:

1. Were reviewers right? Can you see their point?
2. Where did reviewers agree? Any outlier comments?
3. Where did reviewers get it wrong? Why?
4. Did reviewers misinterpret text or figures?
5. Is more detail necessary?
6. Identify the core problem(s)
7. Can reviewer concerns be fixed? How?
8. Overall tone of the review (+ or -)? Any fatal flaws?
Other Considerations for Resubmissions

Administrative and agency specific considerations

Know & follow your sponsor’s guidelines and restrictions

- Some agencies allow/require reviewer response, others don’t
- If you aren’t sure whether to include response to reviewers, ask your Program Officer

Deciding to respond to prior review

- Funding opportunity still active?
- Adequate time to address identified weaknesses?
- Other considerations, e.g., change in position, other grant awards

*RFD team has expertise across agencies
Strategies to Strengthen Resubmissions

1. Decide whether to resubmit or submit it somewhere else

2. Decide what you think you can and should fix and develop a plan

3. Develop action items to address weaknesses
   - Synthesis of reviewer comments organized by theme
   - Program officer feedback
   - RFD suggestions to increase competitiveness

4. Take advantage of ORED and RFD resubmission resources, services, and support

5. Don’t delay – get an early start
RFD RESUBMISSION SUPPORT

Get to know RFD resources, services, & internal support programs

Access proposal & leadership development resources
- Resources for Early Career Faculty
- Faculty Success Seminars

Request proposal development assistance
- Level 3: Resubmission Strategizing

Apply for resubmission support
- Operation: Resubmission Support
Proposal Development & Leadership Resources

Resources for Early Career Faculty
- **New Faculty Guide to Competing for Research Funding**
  *Mike Cronan and Lucy Deckard, © 2016 Academic Research Funding Strategies, LLC*

Leadership Training for Early Career Faculty
- Proposal Development Academy: *What You Need to Know Before You Write*

Faculty Success Seminars
- Tips for Successful Proposal Writing for All Disciplines *(Recording | Presentation)*
- Assessing Your Grant Readiness *(Recording | Presentation)*
Proposal Development Assistance
Level 3 Resubmission Strategizing Services

**Purpose:** Review and discuss comments from panel reviewers on a submitted proposal, in preparation for developing a resubmission.

**How we can help:**
- Review and discuss comments from panel reviewers
- Synthesize panel reviews, highlighting strengths and weaknesses
- Create a document that groups reviewer comments by theme
- Provide suggestions to increase competitiveness of resubmissions
- Help PIs prepare for meetings with program officers
- Help strategize Operation: Resubmission Support requests
Operation: Resubmission Support

**Purpose:** ORED Internal funding program to support U of I faculty members looking to resubmit competitive federal grant proposals that received favorable reviews but were not funded.

**Available funds:** ~$200K available in FY22

**Deadline:** Rolling deadline
- Program will close once funds are expended in FY22

**Requirements**
- Awardees **must** submit a Level 3 RFD service request and work with the RFD team to develop the resubmission proposal.
Operation: Resubmission Support

What the program funds
To address specific actionable issues raised during proposal review of a grant proposal to enhance the competitiveness of a resubmission.

Not a set limit – ask for what you need

Examples:
- Funds to generate preliminary data
  - student salary support, supplies, travel, facilities fees, instrumentation time
- Contracted Services
  - external proposal reviews, graphic design
- Travel
  - project team meetings

What the program does not fund: faculty salary support
Operation: Resubmission Support

How to apply
- Discuss your reviews and plans to address comments with Carly Cummings (ccummings@uidaho.edu)
- Submit applications through InfoReady Review

Required application materials
- Reviews from sponsor
- Documentation of correspondence with Program Officer about resubmission
- Your response to the reviews, how you plan to address weaknesses
- Budget and budget justification for items to address weakness(es)
- Biographical sketch of the PI
- Timeline for resubmission
REJECTION is a normal part of the grantseeking process and resubmission is an opportunity to improve your work.

**Perseverance is key**
- Make resubmission part of your regular practice
- Learn from every proposal rejection
- Always plan to resubmit

**Take advantage of RFD resubmission resources and services**
- [Operation: Resubmission Support](#)
- [Level 3 Resubmission Strategizing Services](#)
- [Proposal Development Resources](#)
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**WE GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETITIVE EXTERNAL GRANT PROPOSALS**

**Office of Research and Faculty Development**  
Email: orf-rfteam@uidaho.edu  
Website: uidaho.edu/orfd
THANK YOU FOR COMING!

QUESTIONS?
Potential Remedies for Rejection

Administrative
- Carefully review & follow sponsor/program guidelines

Misalignment with sponsor goals/mission
- Know your funder
- Seek program officer feedback

Resources
- Identify/add expertise, facilities, equipment, resources, budget, partners

Intellectual Merit
- Emphasize innovation of the concept and approach, include comprehensive literature review, highlight prior research
Potential Remedies to Common Errors

Project Design
- Demonstrate feasibility through preliminary data, pilot studies, publication record, access to resources, partners and collaborators

Budget
- Know your funder, e.g., allowable costs, award range and ceiling
- Match and justify the budget to project scope/activities

Presentation
- Improve the reader’s experience – use white space, graphics, organization, format, signposting, non-technical language