<table>
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<th>Grant Writing</th>
<th>Grant proposal</th>
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<tr>
<td>CV</td>
<td>CV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvia Cremer</td>
<td>project proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST Austria 18.4.2012</td>
<td>cover letter</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Before you start writing

- read exactly the guidelines and check application forms well in advance
- make sure you have the latest versions
- do you fulfill all the criteria?
  - if not, don’t waste time with the proposal
  - if you have doubts: contact the funding agency
- keep the criteria in mind, make your proposal match them
- find colleagues who have been successful
  get insider information / funded proposals

### Basic questions

- what exactly is my question?
- how can I answer it?
- is this question interesting? (if it isn’t, find another one)
- is it innovative? — read relevant literature
- what are the expected results?
- who will be interested in the results,
  how broadly applicable are they?
- do they crosslink to other fields?
- who will read this?
  how much detail do I have to give, should I give?

### Basic questions

- why should this project be performed now?
  - why has it not been done 5 years before
  - why can’t it wait another 5 years?
- why should you be funded for it?
  - what makes you the best candidate?
- is the project credible with your background?
- is the chosen host institute optimal for it?

  ▶️ your plan, your expertise and your host
  need to be a credible combination
  ▶️ be novel but do not restructure your entire profile;
    should be a major step forward in your development

- is the project feasible (in the limited time available)?
  - does the complementarity of you and your host
    allow a quick start?
  - can you offer a sufficient spectrum of parallel projects
    to allow some of them to fail?
  - can you include an implicit or explicit risk assessment
    in your time plan?

  ▶️ create a combination of high risk – high yield ideas
    and some safety parts that may be less innovative

  ▶️ if you can, give some preliminary data
    (typically not needed for PhD or postdoc grants)
## During writing

- be brief and keep your space allowance
- avoid redundancies, but remind reviewers of key points
- design your project as hierarchical table of contents and specify the maximum number of words for each section
- use subheadings
- use charts and diagrams
- don’t use fonts < 11
- add page numbers and your name in the header
- send the required number of copies
- send a complete application (mean 25% of applications are incomplete!), don’t send additional information

## Title & Abstract

- very important
- sets the first impression
- routes the application to appropriate reviewers

  - title should be descriptive, specific and appropriate
  - maybe split up into a general and specific part

  - abstract should be a brief, accurate description of project
  - must stand on its own!

- to be understood by both experts and „generalists”
- write carefully, spend time on it, write it last
- should cover all basic points of the project
- (remind reviewers of the details when read again weeks later)

## Abstract contents

- should include hypotheses, objectives, approaches, research plan and significance:
  - state hypotheses to be tested, give long-term objectives
  - state the specific aims
  - explain how the proposal links to the funding aims of the funding agency
  - describe concisely the research design and methods
  - tell why the proposal is unique, important, significant and worth supporting
  - Don’t be longer than allowed. Be shorter if you have nothing more to say

## Keywords, Acronym

- choose keywords with great care
- they will decide in which panel the proposal is reviewed
- try to cover all major topics (and methods)
- like a mini-abstract

- an Acronym is sometimes asked for
- the Header of your application
- will be used in all conversations with you (plus number)
- be brief (often only 20-30 characters), general, interesting
Introduction

- What is known?
- What is not known?
- Why is it essential to find out?

- set the scene for the project; introduce the reader to the topic, make clear why it is interesting (start broad, get more specific)
- let the reader know very quickly what your question is about, explain what leads you to this question
- give an overview over the history/recent work on the topic of different groups in the field, discuss controversies

- identify gaps or contradictions you want to clarify
- emphasize the importance and relevance of your proposal by bridging your hypotheses and long-term objectives
- integrate your own previous work, clearly state which work has been performed by whom!

Preliminary work

for PhD or postdoc grants, typically few/no preliminary data needed

- explain what your host institute has contributed to this field, state the still open questions
- state how your previous training makes you the right candidate to successfully carry out the project
- don't only state which methods you have learned, but also add organisational skills etc
- list your publications and manuscripts submitted or accepted (but not > 1 in preparation)

Project goals

- give a very short overview over the questions of your proposal
- list 1-3 questions, which serve as a guideline for your extensive work plan

Work plan

research design and methods (likely the longest part of your application)

- give detailed information on how you want to answer the outlined questions
- explain your methods
- make clear that the project can be performed at the host institute given the preliminary work and the funding
- address the outlined questions in the same order as above (this should be a logical or chronological order)
- use an easy to follow numbering system and subheadings
- distinguish clearly between overall research design and specific methods

Work plan

- specify which methods are already established an which will be new
- for new methods: explain why they are better than existing methods, and why they are feasible
- reference but do not describe well known techniques
- don't repeat identical procedures that apply to > 1 aim
- discuss relevant control experiments
- discuss potential difficulties and alternative strategies
- document collaborations with local and abroad colleagues
- give a tentative time plan
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time plan</th>
<th>Feasibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• divide the funded time into 6-12 months periods</td>
<td>• make clear that the combination of your own skills and the know how at the host institute make success of the project likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• explain which goals you want to have finished for each</td>
<td>state who and how many people work there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• be brief and maybe show this in a table or diagram</td>
<td>• also explain the role of collaboration partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• don’t forget that you will want to present your data on conferences or workshops, add some specific ones</td>
<td>• quality of the infrastructure: show that basic instrumental requirements are fulfilled at the host institute; list important machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• add time for writing publications and for new applications in the last year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• try to think in publishable papers: which project parts can be finished within a year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>Timeliness and Innovation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>know how and technical infrastructure &amp; backup plan</td>
<td>• summarize the most important expected novel results that you will gain by performing this project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• why is this an original and innovative approach?: clearly state how this study advances the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• what is its interdisciplinary relevance?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• how does it benefit your own career? how can you benefit both scientifically and personally from the project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• what other training effects will you gain? (e.g. paper writing, organisational skills, time scheduling etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>► show that you are far-sighted and that this project will be an important step for your career development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeliness and Innovation</th>
<th>Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How much money do you need?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How much money can you ask for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is likely / unlikely to be funded?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• check the guidelines carefully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• find out the average funding level for the agency</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• find colleagues / proposals that have been successful</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant applications</th>
<th>Application for position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• grant applications contain many parts that should all come together nicely in the end: think of them separately but keep the big picture</td>
<td>CV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• start writing well in time: 2 months for a PhD grant – talk to your supervisor when (s)he is busy 3 months for a postdoc grant – visit your future boss even before that</td>
<td>2 referees — give full contact details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• check application deadlines if possible 1 year in advance - note that often only 1 or 2 deadlines per year</td>
<td>application letter — explain how you know them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• choose the „perfect timing” for application note that the chances for a postdoc grant are much greater - when you have a paper published - when your PhD is finished or finished within 2-3 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• address your potential future boss formally (with title)  • avoid spelling mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• respond in detail to the position and suggested topic!  • make clear why you are interested and why the other should be interested in inviting you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• don’t make too many own demands at that stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>many candidates may apply, so don’t expect an immediate confirmation of receipt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CV

Personal data:
- always:
  - name, title
  - address
typically:
  - birth date and place
  - gender
  - nationality
maybe:
  - marital & family status

*for education and publications, start with the most recent*
- your primary school data are of less significance than your PhD

CV

Current position:
- what you do and since when

Education:
- Dissertation
- University Studies: BSc, MSc
- (military or civil service)
- High School
give: dates to the month
supervisor, institute & topic
grades!

*The more advanced you get, the more of the early*
*information on school details etc you can skip*

CV

Academic Activities
- participation of workshops and conferences
give: dates to the month
poster - talk
  title
- Practica & work next to your studies
- organisation of workshops or meetings
- (co-)supervision of e.g. Diploma thesis or practical students
- teaching activities

CV

Research honours and awards:
- prizes in school, MSc thesis etc...
- grants received (travel grants, PhD fellowships)
give date received
  institution from which received
  amount of money received

Memberships

Additional skills
- Languages
- Driving Licence ...

Non-scientific engagement & hobbies – if you want

CV

Publication List
*often integrated into CV*
- Papers in peer reviewed journals
  separate published papers
  manuscripts in press
  manuscripts in revision / in review
  manuscripts in prep. (not > 1 or 2)!
- other publications (e.g. research dissemination)

City, date
  (signature)

CV

• find a nice format
  - add something special
    (many people may apply to this position)
  - but don’t overdo it
• use your space efficiently; don’t press too much information
  into too little space
• show consistent activities and outputs

*avoid gaps (>2months)!*
- if you travelled around the world after school, write it

*be consistent in CV and other application parts!*