FACULTY RESEARCH AND SUPPORT FUND

Hints for FRSF Proposals

Style Considerations:

- Use page numbers.
- Avoid the passive voice.
- Follow the format that FRSF recommends (See "Sources" below).
- Avoid generalizations.
- Avoid compound or overly-complex sentence structures.
- Lead with a detailed "Executive Summary" of not more than one page, outlining contribution to field and UHCL, and with a brief listing of the budget.
- Every proposal should have an introduction (in the Executive Summary, most likely) that explains the research and its value or potential in 250 words or less. This should be understandable to someone with no background in your field, avoiding jargon where possible.
- The proposal should highlight any leveraging of existing funding or ongoing research streams – it should connect to both the future and the past.
- Poor writing stands out. Have the proposal read by someone in the field to make sure it makes sense. Some FRSF committee members are willing to do this, provided that the deadline is at least a few weeks away.
- Proof for typos, grammar and/or complete thoughts. The importance of this cannot be overstated. If English is not your first language, please ask someone to proofread your proposal before submission.
- Write in such a way that someone who is outside your discipline can understand what you are saying.

Design & Method Considerations:

- FRSF has funded both quantitative and qualitative studies in the past.
- Quantitative proposals work best with testable hypothesis.
  - Not more than a half dozen of them.
  - Refutable, not open-ended.
- Control groups and comparisons are recommended.
- If you're planning to use a survey:
  - Be sure to have the Human Subjects Committee approve it <u>before</u> submission.
  - Provide a copy of the <u>approved</u> survey instrument. That shows the Committee that you are serious.
- If you are using statistical techniques based on prior work, be careful to state that fact <u>and cite the prior work effectively</u>.
- For qualitative studies, be sure to include an explanation as to why a qualitative approach is appropriate. Ensure that you have a clearly defined plan, including the purpose for your study.

Describe the qualitative methodology that will be utilized. Assume that your readers may not be as familiar with qualitative research as you are.

- Statements such as "Prior research has found that…" should be accompanied swiftly by citations of that prior research.
- A complete, concise literature review is appropriate. Tailor the review to the request.

Budget & Justification:

- A comprehensive justification of each and every item on your budget is an essential part of your proposal. Explain *exactly* why each item is needed.
- Explain the responsibilities of the RA. Be specific.
- Justify the hourly rate for the RA. Why that much? What skills do they need to have?
- What, specifically, is the role of the Principal Investigator (PI) and/or each Co-Investigator?
- Be sure to itemize. More detail is better.
- If asking for equipment or supplies, provide an appendix telling us why each item or piece of equipment or software is needed. Explain why your school (or UCT) cannot provide the items you require. Also, please indicate what will happen to the items after completion of the research project.
- Travel must be essential to the project, reasonable, and well-documented. Every effort should be made to reduce the travel budget. This effort should be made obvious to the committee. Request to travel to present at conferences will not be considered. Other sources are available for conference travel funding.
- A list of the PI's prior FRSF submissions, funding, and outcomes (one-liners perhaps) is also helpful.

Pre-Submission Requirement:

- Awards cannot be made to any PI with an outstanding FRSF award.
- If prior FRSF award has expired (or is completed), a final report must be submitted **prior** to new protocol submission.
- All previous awards must be reconciled before new awards are considered.

Sources

A useful chapter on research design from NYU

Official FRSF Guidelines (with format prescription)

Official FRSF Cover Page Format