

Industrial Strength Grantsmanship

Research grants written and submitted for industry funding or review have different nuances than grants submitted for federal funding. The following illustrates a few of these differences and provides suggestions for a successful industry grant.

Communication — is very important in securing industry grants.

Do get to know the target industry in general and companies within the industry specifically. Knowledge about the business and scientific needs of the industry are invaluable.

Do find an advocate within the specific company to pre-review the proposal and speak positively on behalf of the university, the principal investigator (you), and the proposed research.

Do recognize the proposal is about more than science. Business components, such as intellectual property, confidentiality, and overhead are important and must be addressed. Commercial application of the proposed research is even **more** important.

Do know the budget cycle of the industry, and submit your grant during their planning phase.

Do not stop communicating after the grant proposal has been written and submitted.

Do not assume you know more about the industry than its employees—keep asking questions even after the funding is received.

Content — is less technical and *more* business related.

Do include an executive summary that focuses on the potential applications/solutions for the industry and not the detailed materials and methods.

Do write an introduction that explains how the proposed research will directly benefit the company, and repeat that benefit often. *Do not* include a lengthy history of the science.

Do remember that industry grants are more about politics and the commercial application of science (technology) while federal grants are more about fundamental science.

Do include a **realistic** time line and budget. Remember also to include the company's contributions, monetarily and otherwise.

Do include preliminary data. Evidence that supports your hypothesis will show both the merit of the experiment and your commitment to the research.

Do not overestimate the amount of work that is possible in the amount of time specified.

Do not list specific competing companies in the proposal and imply interest in the proposed research unless you have permission to list a company employee as a reference. Instead, refer to general industries, such as the life sciences industry or the animal health industry, and indicate how the proposed research is applicable to the industry as a whole.

Format and Style — presentation is important.

Do write a proposal that is readable. Often, the industry employees reading the proposal have a limited technical background or their expertise is in a different area from the proposed research.

Do ask for assistance in reviewing your proposal.

Do not make the proposal too long or too technical.

Do not take an unfunded federal grant and submit it to an industry without considering *all* the above-mentioned points!

If you have any questions about writing grants to be reviewed or funded by industry, or have a proposal that you would like reviewed, please contact:

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