



Understanding the Grant Landscape in 2025-2026

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Presentation Objectives

- ◆ Application process from start to finish
- ◆ Different types of funders and funding opportunities
- ◆ Grant review criteria
- ◆ Some trends and tips



Purpose of a grant proposal

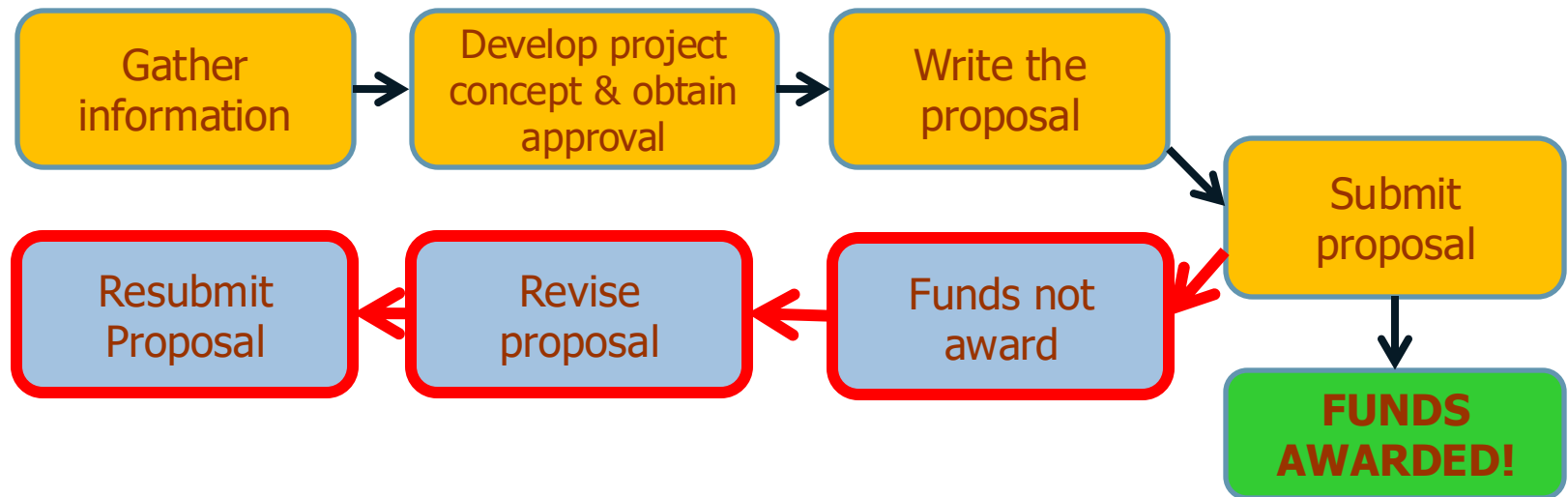
- ◆ A grant proposal's overt function is to persuade reviewers that your research idea is worth funding by:
 - Conceptual innovation
 - Methodological rigor
 - Rich, substantive content

TIP: A successful proposal is written with an eye to the perspective of the reviewer

What is the point?

- ◆ A grant proposal convinces an agency of the importance of your project idea and your ability to carry it out.
- ◆ A grant proposal gives the funding agency a reason to trust you with highly coveted resources.

Process of writing a proposal



◆ ***TIP: Start early. Begin thinking about your topic well in advance of a call for proposals***

What documents do I need?

◆ Background documentation

- Concept
- Program
- Expenses
- Published literature

Gather
information

Key questions for developing concept

1. What are the aims or researchable questions?
2. What is the significance of the project to the reviewers of the funding organization?
3. What is your project going to show that we do not know now?
4. Why is the information you collect worth knowing?
5. How will we know that the conclusions are valid?

Develop project
concept & obtain
approval

Tips for writing the proposal

✦ Writing style and tips

- Prepare an outline
- Keep narrative clear and simple
- Formatting is EXTREMELY important
- Follow the guidelines in the request for proposal RELIGIOUSLY (page limitations, method of submission, section order, paper size, page margin)
- Revise and edit

Write the
proposal

**Tip: Aim for clarity and
avoid jargon**

Submitting the proposal

- ◆ Cover letter
- ◆ Abstract/executive summary
- ◆ Submission dates
- ◆ Neatness
- ◆ Online submission requirements

Submit
proposal

Typical proposal review process



Funding agencies

- Understanding the different types of **funders and funding opportunities** for **clinical research** is key to developing sustainable research programs.
- Their primary goal is to **provide** financial resources for research.

Multilateral and International Agencies

Funding for health and clinical research aligned with global health priorities. Their typical focus areas are health systems, maternal and child health, infectious diseases, vaccines, implementation science.

- **World Health Organization (WHO):** Supports implementation research, capacity building, and disease-specific programs (malaria, TB, NCDs).
- **World Bank:** Funds health system strengthening and operational research linked to development programs.
- **UNICEF / UNFPA / UNDP:** Provide research funding related to maternal and child health, reproductive health, and HIV.
- **African Development Bank (AfDB):** Occasionally funds health research and innovation through regional programs.

Bilateral Donors (Government Aid)

Usually from high-income countries that provide grants or partnerships for research in LMICs. Their typical focus areas are capacity building, infectious disease control, public health trials, health policy research.

- ◆ **USAID:** Infectious diseases, reproductive health, and health systems.
- ◆ **NIH (U.S. National Institutes of Health):** fund for African biomedical research, particularly through the Fogarty International Center and NIAID.
- ◆ **DFID / UK International Development:** the *Joint Global Health Trials Scheme* and *NIHR Global Health Research*.
- ◆ **European Commission (Horizon Europe):** Funds large multi-country clinical and translational research consortia.
- ◆ **NORAD (Norway), SIDA (Sweden), Global Affairs Canada, AFD (France), GIZ (Germany):** Support regional research partnerships and capacity-building.

Philanthropic Foundations

Private foundations that fund innovative and high-impact research in Africa. Their typical focus areas are vaccine and drug trials, innovation, data systems, and global health equity.

- ◆ **Gates Foundation:** One of the largest funders of vaccine, malaria, and maternal/child health clinical research in Africa.
- ◆ **Wellcome Trust:** Supports investigator-led research, fellowships, and large consortia such as *H3Africa*.
- ◆ **Rockefeller Foundation:** Historically focused on health systems/innovation.
- ◆ **Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI):** Works on implementation and operational research related to access to care.
- ◆ **Carlos Slim Foundation, MasterCard Foundation, Ford Foundation:** Occasionally fund research linked to health and development.

Regional and Pan-African Initiatives

African-based mechanisms for building research ecosystems and promoting local ownership. Their typical focus areas are clinical trials networks, infectious disease control, genomic medicine, capacity strengthening.

- ◆ **African Academy of Sciences (AAS)** – through the *Alliance for Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa (AESA)*
- ◆ **EDCTP (European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership)**: Funds multi-country clinical trials on HIV, malaria, TB, and emerging infections.
- ◆ **African Union (AU) / Africa CDC**: Funds regional surveillance and outbreak response research (e.g., through *Africa CDC Pathogen Genomics Initiative*).
- ◆ **TDR (Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases)**: WHO-hosted operational and implementation research.

Academic and Research Partnerships

Universities and research institutions often collaborate across continents to attract joint funding. Their typical focus areas are joint PhDs, clinical research networks, mentorship, data sharing platforms.

- ◆ **NIH/Fogarty programs** with African universities.
- ◆ **UKRI GCRF and NIHR** collaborative research centers.
- ◆ **EU-Africa Global Health EDCTP3** partnerships.
- ◆ **Partnerships for Clinical Research (e.g., LSHTM, Oxford, Johns Hopkins, Makerere, Stellenbosch, Wits, etc.).**

Grant review criteria

1. Overall impact
2. Significance
3. Team/investigators experience
4. Approach
5. Environment
6. Budget and timeline

Details on review criteria

Overall Impact

- ◆ Reviewers will provide an overall impact score to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project **to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s)** involved, in consideration of the core review criteria, and additional review criteria (as applicable for the project proposed)

Details on review criteria

Significance

- ◆ Does the project address **an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field?**
- ◆ If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved?
- ◆ How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?

Details on review criteria

Investigator(s)

- ◆ **Are the PIs, collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project?**
- ◆ Do they have appropriate experience and training?
- ◆ Have they demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)?
- ◆ Do the investigators have complementary and integrated expertise?
- ◆ Are their leadership approach, governance and organizational structure appropriate for the project?

Details on review criteria

Approach

- ◆ Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses **well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project?**
- ◆ Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented?
- ◆ If the project is in the early stages of development, will the strategy establish feasibility and will particularly risky aspects be managed?

Details on review criteria

Environment

- ◆ Will the **scientific environment** in which the work will be done **contribute to the probability of success?**
- ◆ Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed?
- ◆ Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?

Details on review criteria

Budget and timeline

- ◆ Reviewers will consider whether the budget and the requested period of support are fully justified and reasonable in relation to the proposed research

Any Questions



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Thank
You



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