

■ APPENDIX I ■

**GENERAL CHECKLIST  
FOR AN APPLICATION**

This checklist was adapted from a list I received from a Federal agency that funds proposals in the social sciences. It was a list of reasons why some proposals at that agency are not funded. I have reworded the reasons into positive statements and made some minor changes and additions to the list.

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## A. ARE THE RESEARCH GOALS APPROPRIATE AND CLEAR?

- A1. Is the topic/purpose of the Application:
  - a. Feasible in your environment and in the requested time?
  - b. Appropriate for support by the granting agency? If in doubt, call or write the agency to ask.
  - c. For an RFP (Request for Proposal): Is the topic responsive to the scope of the announcement?
- A2. Are the purposes of the study clear and sufficiently detailed? Are the hypotheses explicit?
- A3. Are the research goals worthy of support?
- A4. Have the collected data been analyzed appropriately and fully?
- A5. Where pertinent, have you included specific end points, Applications, or products in the research goals?

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## B. IS THE STUDY DESIGN GOOD?

- B1. Have you determined that the research proposed has **not** been done by others? Don't waste your time! Perhaps the study design was tried and judged inadequate by others (insofar as it is possible to assess this statement). Don't reinvent the wheel!
- B2. Is there sufficient attention given to related research by others? Have you cited their work?
- B3. Is the study design carefully related to the purposes of the project?
- B4. Will the study design provide the data needed to achieve the aims of the project? Will the study yield enough data (cases) to support the analysis?
- B5. Is there evidence of a coherent direction in the study rather than parts just thrown together?
- B6. Is the proposal well-coordinated and clearly related to a central focus?
- B7. Is the sampling design appropriate? Have you justified the sample size?
- B8. Are the data unbiased? Is there recognition of the problems of bias and ways to correct the bias?
- B9. Is the methodology sufficiently detailed?
- B10. Have you spelled out:
  - a. the major dependent and independent variables?
  - b. how the data will be obtained and analyzed?
  - c. how the data will be interpreted?

- d. whether the data contain enough information to support the proposed analysis?
- B11. If appropriate, have you built into the study design a means and time frame for evaluating progress toward fulfilling the aims of the project?

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### C. ARE STAFF, TIME, AND BUDGET APPROPRIATE?

- C1. Are specific tasks clearly related to personnel, time, and budget?
- C2. Is there sufficient time commitment by the Principal Investigators?  
(Avoid small allocations of time among a large number of Investigators.)
- C3. Are the scientific disciplines of the research team (including Consultants) appropriate for the topics to be investigated?

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### D. IS THE OVERALL PRESENTATION GOOD?

- D1. Have you spelled out a specific plan of research rather than expected the Reviewers to trust in your past reputation?
- D2. Have you accounted for the possibility that the Reviewers have not read about your past research? That is, is the proposal complete without the Reviewer having to refer to additional materials?
- D3. Is there a balanced presentation in the proposal?
  - a. Does the proposal focus on particular data sets and techniques of analysis without obscuring the overall research goal?
  - b. Does the proposal relate each specific focus to the overall goal?
  - c. Have you started with a problem or topic and looked for data sets that address the issues rather than started with a data set and looked for a research problem that might be appropriate for that data set?

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### E. ADMINISTRATIVE DETAIL

- E1. Is the Budget realistic for the work proposed?
- E2. Is the Budget Justification sufficiently detailed to allow Reviewers to relate each phase and level of the project to the budget?
- E3. Have you provided letters that outline willingness to participate and extent of commitment for all Consultants, Collaborators, and Subcontractors?
- E4. Have you
  - a. filled out and obtained signatures for the cover page? If you wait until the last minute, the appropriate official may be out of town.
  - b. entered the appropriate page numbers in the Table of Contents?
  - c. made sure the Abstract reflects the contents of the Application?
  - d. provided the necessary information and forms concerning

- i. human studies (including gender and minority inclusion)?
- ii. humane treatment of vertebrate animals?
- iii. Other assurances (inventions and patents, debarment and suspension, drug-free workplace, lobbying, delinquent Federal debt, misconduct in science, civil rights, handicapped individuals, sex discrimination, age discrimination, recombinant DNA)?
- iv. personal data on ethnic origin, etc.? (optional)
- v. other grant support?
- vi. resources and environment (facilities and equipment)? Include support services and description of work ambiance (who is available for collaboration and exchange of ideas?)
- vii. checklist (2 required pages for NIH Applications)? Have you numbered them as the last 2 pages of the Application?
- e. mailed the Application in time to be received by the deadline?
- f. provided a stamped, self-addressed postcard or/and an e-mail address (to receive acknowledgment of Application receipt)?
- g. marked your calendar at 2 weeks after submission to be sure you have received a postcard or an e-mail acknowledging receipt of your Application by the agency?
- h. marked your calendar at 6 weeks after submission to be sure you have received your review board assignment?

**NOTE:** Some of the above items will change as NIH (and perhaps other agencies) move toward electronic grants administration. Keep up to date!!!