

Tips for a Successful CFR Proposal

About the Council on Faculty Research (CFR) grant...

This internal grant competition funds projects for research and creative activity. CFR's goal is to fund the best quality projects at EIU regardless of discipline.

The Summer Research and Creative Activity Awards provide personal services dollars (salary) for research and creative activity projects performed during the summer months.

The Council is composed of nine faculty; two from each college and one from Booth Library.



GENERAL PROPOSAL SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ Carefully review all instructions and proposal narrative questions prior to beginning the proposal.
- ✓ Include all required information and attachments.
- ✓ Use concise wording to stay within page limits.

METHODOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS

- ♦ Set realistic expectations regarding what can be accomplished in the timeframe of the grant.
- ♦ Including students is a plus based on EIU's mission.
- ♦ External or interdepartmental collaboration is also a positive.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Provide a clear and specific timeframe that includes dates and/or date ranges.

Support your timeframe by including a timeline that accounts for all aspects of your project.

- ♦ Include time for analysis and presentation.

SUMMER CFR TIMELINE

The project must be a solid unit of work that is worthwhile and can be accomplished during the summer.

Publication can occur after the summer timeframe.

Projects involving P-12 or on-campus classrooms should make sense within the summer timeframe.



Utilizing the summer to complete a concrete segment of a larger project is allowed but you must explain how the segment is part of the whole project.

For example, "I will write the four most important chapters of a book during the summer and finish the rest by the end of the fall semester."

THE PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Consider the following guidelines when completing the narrative portion (Questions 1 - 10) of the application packet:

Avoid redundancy

Many applicants provide more information than necessary in the first few questions, and end up repeating information as requested in subsequent items

- ♦ Read all questions before responding, and review your responses to ensure they are appropriate for the question

Provide all information requested

Several items have sub-questions; be sure to address them all.

Remember your audience and make it interesting

Write for a broad audience; CFR has a cross-disciplinary membership.

- ♦ Avoid the use of jargon and define any terms that would only be known to someone in your profession.
- ♦ Write as if you are writing for the *New York Times*. Ask yourself if someone outside of your discipline can imagine and understand the methodology.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

Successful proposals address the following for each item listed:

QUESTION 1

In this response you will explain **what** you propose to do.

- ♦ Research Projects: Clearly describe hypothesis or goal.
- ♦ Creative Activity: provide detailed description of the activity

Take care not to provide responses to subsequent questions within your response to Question 1.

QUESTION 2

Reviewers will seek to understand **why** the work is significant. Demonstrate the value of your project to society and to your professional field.

- ♦ Do not exaggerate or speculate excessively

Utilize literature and cite it according to the instructions.

- ♦ Include all cited works in the attached bibliography.
- ♦ Provide background literature and explain what has already been accomplished.
- ♦ Show how your project is situated in the context of current trends.
- ♦ Define the gap in the literature. Make clear what is needed in addition to the current literature.
- ♦ Consider other references beyond self-referencing. Are other people working on this same topic?
- ♦ Consider density of information for interdisciplinary audience.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

Successful proposals address the following for each item listed:

QUESTION 3

In this response you will demonstrate how the work is **novel**. Explain what makes your project different from precedent, and how this project differs from your own previous work.

- ♦ Use comparisons to demonstrate the novelty of your proposed project

If you have received CFR or other EIU internal funding in the past:

- ♦ It is helpful to demonstrate past use of CFR funds.
- ♦ Clearly describe the uniqueness of your proposal relative to past funding.

Remember to use words like "new," "novel," or "innovative"

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

Successful proposals address the following for each item listed:

QUESTION 4

Reviewers will seek to understand **how** you will accomplish the work.

Provide a **clear** and **detailed** explanation about how the project will be completed.

- ♦ Describe specific actions that must be completed and include enough detail to demonstrate how the project can be credibly accomplished
- ♦ Include timeframe; show how time will be budgeted
- ♦ Provide detail regarding any student involvement

Research Projects: Variables and coding should be clearly defined.

- ♦ Qualitative studies should provide information about type of coding.

Remember to write for a broad audience.

- ♦ Describe specific actions and provide detail.
- ♦ Provide a precise, realistic timeline.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

Successful proposals address the following for each item listed:

QUESTION 5

In this response you will explain how you will disseminate project results.

Provide *specific* venues.

- ♦ For example, if seeking to publish, name the potential publication(s). Do not merely write “publications”
- ♦ Explain how the venue is appropriate for the project dissemination

QUESTION 6

Reviewers will seek to learn how you will grow professionally.

Explain specific professional goals of yours and how those goals drive the project

- ♦ Address at least one example supplied in the question
- ♦ Be realistic about your professional goals

QUESTIONS 7-10

Be clear and specific when describing funding sources.

- ♦ Provide publisher information for book projects

OTHER ATTACHMENTS

Remember the following attachment requirements:

Vita

Mark all relevant items with an asterisk. Relevant items include publications or papers that...

- ... relate to the proposed project
- ... provide evidence of your ability to complete the project
- ... demonstrate the project is consistent with your professional development

Research Proposals: Instruments

Proposals involving written or printed research instruments (such as surveys or tests) must include:

- a) identification of the population or groups to be studied
- b) copies of the instruments.

A research instrument does not count as a proposal page

Fall CFR Only: Proposed Budget

The totals in each category of the itemized budget must match the Budget Summary on the cover sheet of the Application Packet.

- ♦ Separately list expenditures for commodities, contractual services, travel, equipment, and student help.
- ♦ **Itemize** specific expenditures within each category.

OTHER FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Consider whether your project would be better funded by another source. See the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs website for further details.

REDDEN FUNDS

Instructional development grants for the Improvement of Undergraduate Instruction. Consult your Dean for further details.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM INNOVATION GRANT

Supports projects designed to foster new curriculum innovations, enhance the academic reputation of the university, & impact enrollment.

EIU STUDENT IMPACT GRANT FOR FACULTY MENTORS

Supports faculty who engage in high impact student practices that lead to external recognition of EIU.

EARLY CAREER GRANTS

Supports projects with potential to lead to significant external funding. All EIU personnel within their first six years of employment are eligible.

OTHER INTERNAL FUNDING

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Awards

FDIC Partnership Grants

The Graduate School

URSCA: Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities