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Interdisciplinary Grant Applications



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What is interdisciplinary research?

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- Does it fit in another category?
 - Physical Chemistry vs. Chemical Physics
 - Nanoscience could fit in Chemistry or Physics
 - Physics vs. Math
- Functional MRI connected with Psychology, Medicine
- Big Data approaches to ...
- Does it contribute new knowledge in both fields?

Why Apply for Interdisciplinary Grant?

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- Fewer applications in interdisciplinary round
- Higher chance of getting grant
- People in own field do not consider my research novel enough
- My research area is not considered interesting by peers in my field
- My research does not fit in traditional fields
- ...

Important to realize

- NWO decides if your research is interdisciplinary (not the jury)
- Jury unlikely to contain any (real) experts in your field
- Jury supposed to rate based on the reviews
- Jury members from theology to biology
- Jury (may) make pre-selection of proposals to be send for review
- Proposals are distributed to the (two) 'most expert' jury members for in debt reading
- About 15 dedicated proposals per jury member
- 80% of the jury scores come from members reading the proposals less careful.
- Jury members are typically busy professors...

The Key Challenges

- Convince expert referees (in main part of proposal)
- Convince jury at the same time (in abstract and introduction)
- If there are interviews it should be aimed at the jury, not the expert referees – they are not at the interview

How to prepare

- Abstract and introduction must be possible to understand for lay people
- The (main) goal of the research must be clear to lay people
- The impact (knowledge utilization) must be clear and understandable to lay people
- What is interdisciplinary about the proposal?

Tips and Tricks

- Jury does not read pages of text (and surely not equations nor do they understand jargon).
- Make easy to decipher figures/graphs/pictures/illustrations
- Go for the WOW!

Tips and Tricks

- If you go interdisciplinary do it 100%
- Involve someone from the the discipline that you are least familiar with from the start
- Make clear in the proposal why the interdisciplinary aspect is crucial to answer the research question
- Why are you the one to do this?
- When involving groups from different disciplines – how will you communicate?

Tips and Tricks

- Go for the WOW!



Success



- I got all A's: I get the grant... No
- I got UF: I have no chance... No
- My research is not truly interdisciplinary: I don't get the grant... No
- No grant is end of my career... No
- All proposals deserving to get funded are funded... No
- Success in interdisciplinary rounds not different from in other rounds. About 90 applicants for VENI and 10 getting money. (2015 numbers)

Questions?