Grants and Grant Writing

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A grant will…

1. Fund your research / fieldwork
2. Validate your research
3. Indicate potential to your eventual employer
4. Help establish your record as a scholar

Job announcement, UC San Diego

Candidates should have a Ph.D. in Linguistics or a related field by the start of the appointment on July 1, 2015. Candidates should demonstrate evidence of research productivity, undergraduate and graduate teaching ability, and extramural funding potential.

Finding a Grant

Specific grants

- UF internal funding
  http://www.humanities.ufl.edu/grants.html

- External sources
  http://linguistics.georgetown.edu/graduate/apply/funding
  http://www.linguisticsociety.org/resource/grants

Informal networks

- Some of your fellow students have successfully applied for grants and may be willing to share their statements with you

- Your professors may also be willing to share successful grant applications with you

Funding agencies

- Have their own explicit agendas

- http://www.wennergren.org/

- Once you've identified a possible funding source, study the website to see the kinds of projects they've funded in the recent past

- http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=12816&org=BCS

- Study the guidelines

- Study the selection criteria

- Study the format

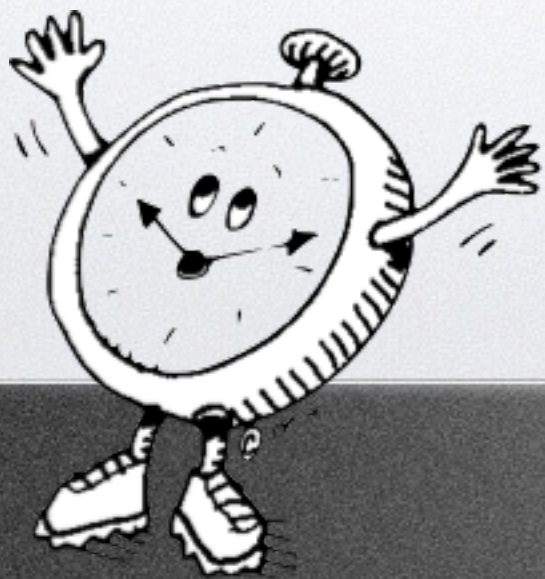- https://www.acls.org/programs/dcf/

Successful Grant Writing

Getting Started

- Start with a good idea!

- Allow yourself plenty of time

Developing Your Idea 1

- Key questions
  - What is your research question/hypothesis?
  - How do you intend to answer it?
  - Why is the work important?

Developing Your Idea 2

- Make sure the work is original and exciting
  - Conduct a thorough literature search
  - Talk with others in the field

Developing Your Idea 3

- Have an execution plan
    - Obtain preliminary data
    - Make sure the work is feasible
    - Determine your needs

Timing

- It's never too early to start but it's often too late!

  - develop a timeline for writing the proposal

How to Start

- Find a good funding match for your research

- Familiarize yourself with the guidelines

- Know the deadlines

- Plan first, then write

Main Parts of a Proposal

- Project Description

- Budget

Project Description

- Content

- Mechanics

Content

1. an interesting **research question**
   - contextualize the work in the relevant literature
   - the theoretical framework

2. **implementation** of the project and methodology
   - a clear analysis plan
   - a work timeline

3. the scientific **significance** of the work
   - broader impacts
   - your qualifications

Mechanics

- ## Be clear
  Write in a simple style

- ## Be logical
  Present linear arguments supported by evidence

- ## Use the PIE strategy (Point, Illustrate, Explain)

Easy as P-I-E

- Make each **Point** the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph

- **Illustrate** what you mean

- Add more **explanation**
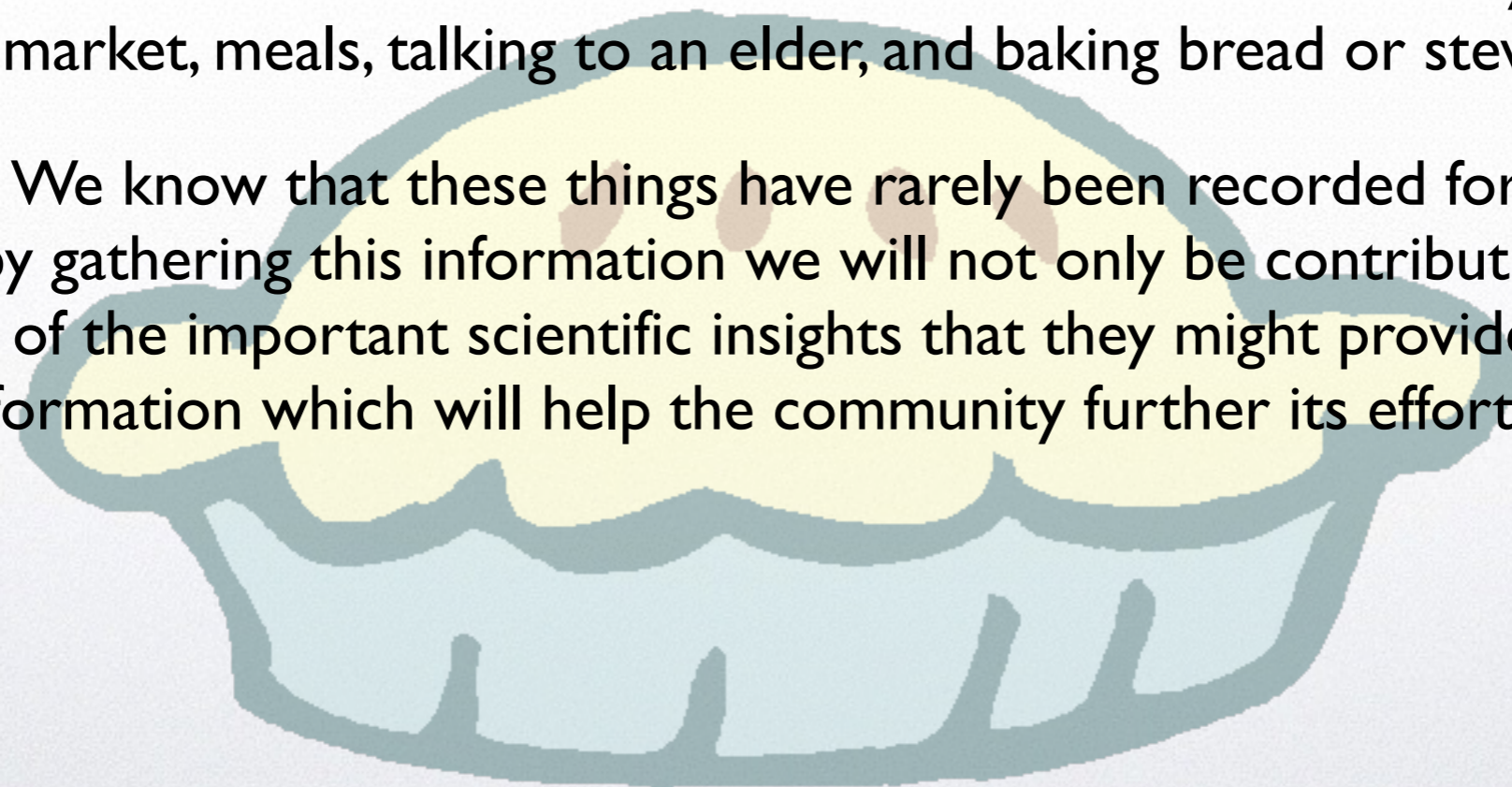
i hope you guys are ready for some pie!

Example

POINT>>>>   In our Native American community, there are no examples of recorded and archived conversation or even short dialogs between speakers.

ILLUSTRATION>>>>   We lack documentation of conversations of everyday activities such as going to the market, meals, talking to an elder, and baking bread or stew.

EXPLAIN>>>   We know that these things have rarely been recorded for indigenous languages and by gathering this information we will not only be contributing to the documentation of the important scientific insights that they might provide but we will also be gathering information which will help the community further its efforts at revitalization.

Random Tips 1

- Make your proposal hypothesis-driven

- Be clear
  Write in a simple style

- Be specific
  Give as many details as possible

- Be a little redundant

- Think about the big picture

Random Tips 2

- **Be gentle in your critiques**
  You never know who might be reading

- **Try to anticipate reasonable questions**
  Reread from a reviewer's perspective

- **Get feedback from experienced sources**

- **Make sure your proposal is technically correct**
  Sweat the small stuff. Careless writing, spelling, graphics, etc. imply careless scholarship

Budget

Budget

- Ask for what you need to conduct the research (not what you want)

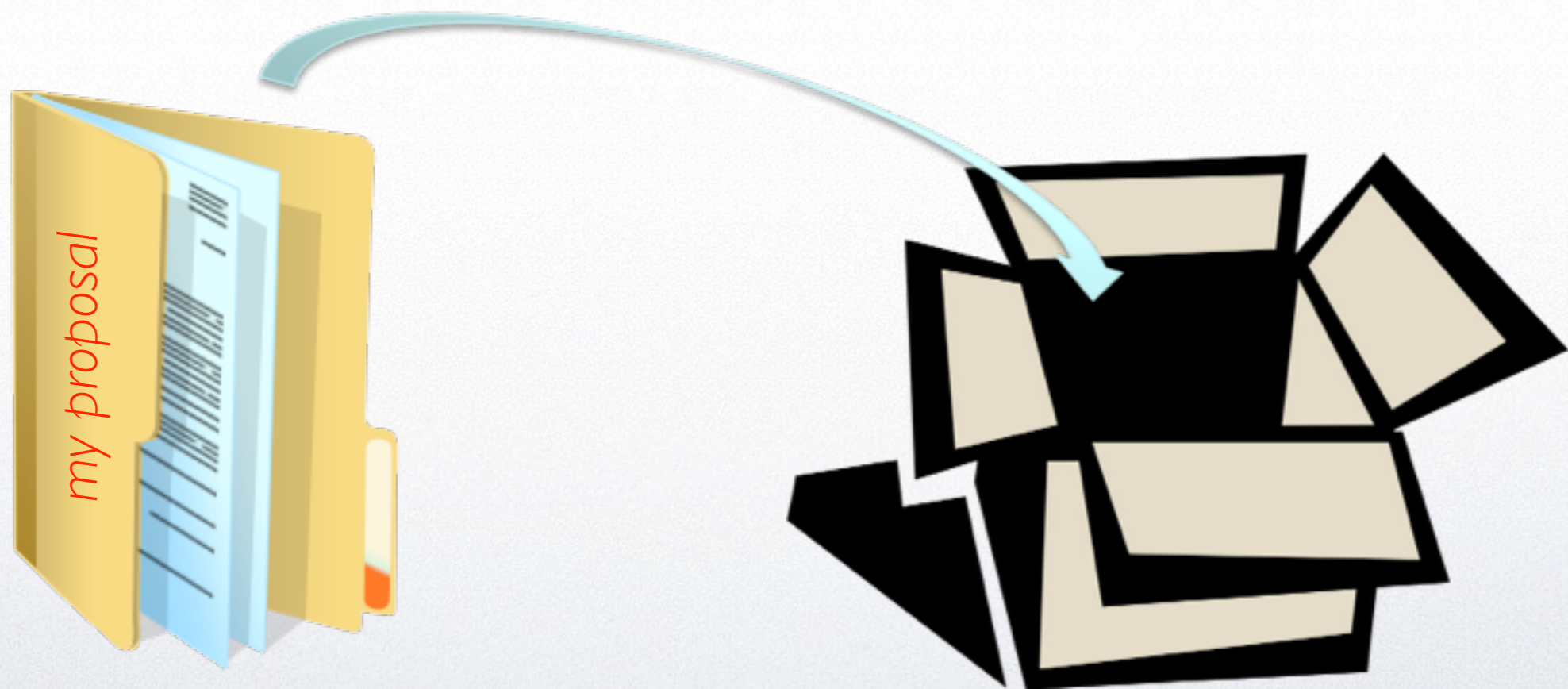- Include details such as actual prices

- Don't inflate your budget

Resources

Przeworski, Adam & Frank Salomon. 1995. *The art of writing proposals: Some candid suggestions for applicants to Social Science Research Council Competitions.* Brooklyn, NY: SSRC. http://fellowships.ssrc.org/art_of_writing_proposals

Chapin, Paul G. 2004. *Research projects and research proposals: A guide for scientists seeking funding.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Locke, Lawrence F., Waneen Wyrick Spirduso, & Stephen J. Silverman. 2007. *Proposals that work: A guide for planning dissertations and grant proposals.* Newbury Park, Ca.: Sage.

The Review Process

The Review Process I

- Your proposal is checked that it meets various format restrictions

- Outside reviewers are assigned to your proposal

  - Take the opportunity to suggest reviewers if you are given it

Reviewers

- If you were reviewing a proposal, what would you like to see?

  - *scientifically interesting*

  - *easy to understand*—don't make reviewers feel stupid

    - avoid jargon and define your terms

  - *memorable*—rich in details
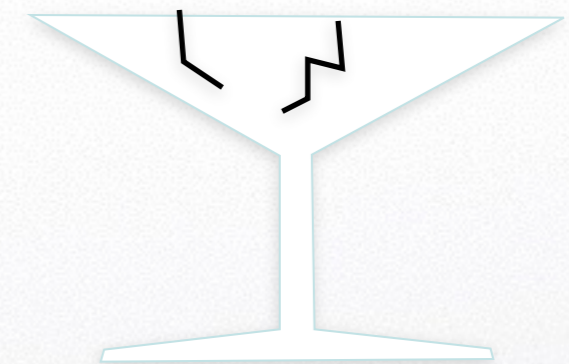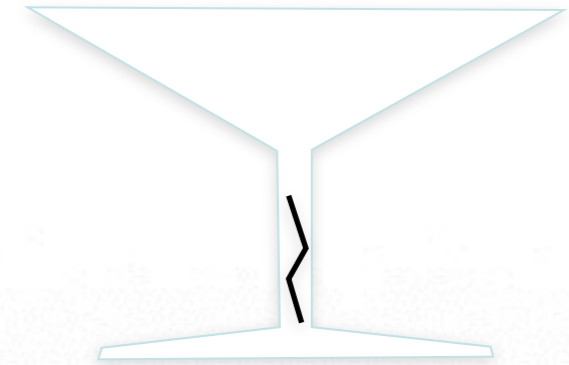
  - *well-organized*

The Review Process 2

- An advisory panel convenes and evaluates your proposal and others

- The advisory panel makes a recommendation regarding your proposal's competitiveness relative to the other proposals

- Program officers decide which proposals they are going to fund given panel recommendations, available funds, program priorities, and other factors

Major Reasons Proposals Are Declined

- Proposal fails to establish a sound theoretical framework and/or is poorly related to the relevant literature(s)

- Proposal fails to specify research methods in sufficient detail or has flawed research plans

- Theoretical frameworks are sound and the research plans are solid, but they don't match up with each other. The work does not address the research question.

Summary 1

- Preparation
  - Start with a good idea
  - Allow plenty of time

- Content
  - Research question
  - Implementation
  - Significance

Summary 2

- Writing
  - Plan before you write
  - Be clear and logical, use P-I-E

- Think about what a reviewer would (not) want to see

Parting Words

Good luck!

And remember:

- The time spend applying for a grant is never wasted, even if you don't get it

- If you don't get the grant, get feedback from the funding agency, if possible, and try again…