Tips for applying to the Researcher Collaborations Grant

It is impossible to guarantee success when applying for any grant. However, we hope these tips will help you to submit the best application you can for the Researcher Collaborations Grant.

Read the Guidance for Applicants carefully

Before you start your application, take the time to thoroughly read the Guidance for Applicants. This document, although detailed, is crucial as it provides important information on eligibility and the scheme's objectives. Understanding these aspects will help you determine if your project aligns with the grant's goals and save you time in the long run. Avoid speculative applications that do not clearly fit the scheme's aims, as these are unlikely to score well with reviewers.

Understand the assessment criteria

Each grant scheme has specific assessment criteria that reviewers use to score applications. Familiarise yourself with these criteria and ensure your responses in the application form address them directly and clearly. Mapping your answers to the criteria will make it easier for reviewers to evaluate your application.

Start early

The best applications are driven by a good idea and not by the scope of the grant scheme. You should therefore avoid creating a reason to apply for a grant scheme just because there's an open call. If you have a vision or a desire to develop a specific collaboration, you can start building this idea up before the grant round opens. This will allow you to form a more complete narrative before the grant round even opens.

During this time, you can also investigate what support you can receive from others to help with your application. Speak to colleagues or your university (particularly if they have a grants or research office) and see if there are expertise or assistance you can take advantage of.

Dedicate time to your application

Grant schemes are highly competitive, and the Researcher Collaborations Grant is no exception. A hastily written application is unlikely to succeed. Invest time in crafting well-thought-out responses that demonstrate how your project will achieve the grant's desired outcomes. Show how your project will foster meaningful scientific collaborations and contribute to the scheme's goals.

Involve contributors early

The Researcher Collaborations Grant requires contributions from others, such as letters of support from collaborators. Ensure you start your application early enough to give your contributors ample time to complete their parts. This will help you avoid last-minute rushes and ensure a complete and polished application.

Make it easy for reviewers

Reviewers may not have specialist knowledge of your project or collaborators, so it's essential to explain key elements clearly and concisely. Provide detailed justifications for your funding needs and avoid making assumptions. A clear, structured explanation will help reviewers understand why your project deserves funding.

Budget carefully

When preparing your budget, request only what you need and provide clear justifications for each expense. Avoid inflating your budget to reach the maximum limit, as this can give reviewers a negative impression. A realistic and well-justified budget will strengthen your application.

Set realistic goals and timelines

Ensure your project objectives are achievable within the proposed timeline. Clearly define your goals and explain how they align with the time and resources available. Be honest about any risks and how you plan to address them. For example, is there a risk that your research visit won't achieve the scientific results you expect? If so, what can you and your collaborator do to still make your collaboration a success? Reviewers appreciate realistic and well-thought-out plans.

Review before submitting

Before submitting your application, review it carefully to ensure all requirements are met and all relevant information is included. If possible, have someone else review your application to provide an outside perspective. This can help identify areas for improvement and ensure your application is clear and understandable.

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By following these tips, you can strengthen your application for the Researcher Collaborations Grant. Good luck!