

## CIHR PROJECT GRANT SUBMISSION – TIPS

The following is a list of links and suggestions (TIPS) that may prove effective in **increasing reviewer favorability** for the Project Grant competition. Be sure to reference ResearchNet for the latest PROJECT competition [guidelines](#): **(TIP: Print the most recent guidelines in colour. CIHR adds important changes in red type!)**

### **PICKING A COMMITTEE - KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE:**

Be sure you choose the most appropriate [Peer Review Committee](#).

### **SUMMARY:**

Be sure your Summary is **clear and appropriate to the research** you will be doing. Reviewers may spend substantial time focusing on the Summary. Include some methods information here, and **use the headings**: BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE, GOALS/RESEARCH AIMS, METHODS/APPROACH/EXPERTISE, and EXPECTED OUTCOMES.

### **HOT TOPICS and “REVIEWER-GUIDED” WRITING:**

**Indigenous** research; Northern communities – sometimes a target for pockets of money and areas of concern (consider this when planning different sites and populations, particularly marginalized or underserved populations).

**Sex & Gender** – identified as a key area for reviewers to focus; be sure your explanation is adequate and perhaps state that this is an area for future development or a reason to justify higher animal costs (e.g. are mice all one sex?). If sex and/or gender is not applicable to your research, be sure to explain **why**. Discuss sex and gender-based analysis **throughout the proposal** where applicable. CIHR has provided a helpful document for accounting for sex in animal research [here](#).

**Headings** – use the evaluation criteria headings to guide the reviewer to content they are reviewing for/against.

**CIHR’s Peer Review Manual – Project** – CIHR has published a guide for reviewers that outlines the criteria and areas of focus for Project reviewers. Reading [this manual](#) can provide insight into what peer reviewers are looking for.

**Panels** – Be very clear as to why your grant belongs on the specific panel.

**Grantsmanship** – don’t forget the importance of **writing clearly** and **selling your project**. Reviewers will thank you!

Remember that grant-writing is also a **marketing exercise**.

### **LOOKS AREN’T EVERYTHING, BUT:**

**White Space** – be sure to leave white space. Too much print with no breaks can be exhausting for a reviewer.

**Bolding/Underline** – overuse is distracting. Be selective and use interchangeably, not at the same time.

**Figures/Tables** – ensure legends are legible. Figures must be readable at 100% magnification.

**Headings** – **RCT headings required** when an application has RCT as a major component, regardless of committee.

**Include technical data** in Proposal and Appendices but ensure the grant is still readable. Too much data can hinder readability and can add to reviewer fatigue. Embed figures where possible and appropriate. Reviewers are not required to read Appendices.

### **BUDGET:**

**Be reasonable** – ensure your funding request is in line with the scope of the project and the PI’s personal capacity for supervision.

**Show your work** – Subtotals: make the numbers jive; use **subtotals** in budget justification paste boxes. Where you have multiple items, show how each item is multiplied by the years requested. Use brackets for subtotals. Consider using the Proposal Appendix to include a more detailed, robust budget justification.

### **RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS:** **Foundation ECR can use this area to add ½ page to contextualize their Foundation grant**

Respond to all reviewer concerns. This two-page reply and original reviewer comments **must be compiled and uploaded as a single PDF—original reviews comments must be included**. **Address feedback in a collegial way, and highlight positive changes to the proposal.** Although this is optional, for re-submissions, **it is highly recommended to take advantage of this section.**

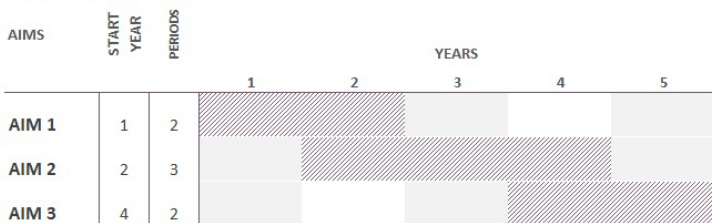
**FEASIBILITY:**

**Timeline/timeline by budget item** - Consider creating a visual that supports your budget, your aims, or both. “De-risk” your Proposal by making the aims doable within the proposed timeline and budget.

# Timeline

Aims visually portray feasibility of research work over time

 Aim Duration



**GANTT or Budget Timeline** - use aims or the budget item/headings and create a GANTT table across the budget periods (years requested).

Budget Timeline							
Budget Items visually portray feasibility and cost over time - Justify Budget			Budget Item Duration (in years)				
Budget Item	START YEAR	DURATION	YEARS				
			1	2	3	4	5
Research Coordinator	1	5	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
Tech	1	5	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
PDF 1	2	3		Shaded	Shaded	Shaded	
PDF 2	3	3			Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
Grad 1	1	2	Shaded	Shaded			
Grad 2	3	2			Shaded	Shaded	
Summer trainee	5	1					Shaded
Travel	5	1					Shaded
KT	3	3			Shaded	Shaded	Shaded

**APPENDIX:**

Use judiciously: do not over-use. Documentation such as case reports for clinical grants, REB approval, trial documents, investigator brochure(s) for clinical trials, **additional budget information**, etc. are recommended to include here. Consider using this “bonus” space to include a detailed budget justification that **expands on the experimental methodology**.

NOTE: **Information critical to proposal must be included in 10-page proposal**—reviewers are not obligated to read the Appendices. Over-use of appendices was noted as contributing to reviewer fatigue during the previous competitions.

**PRIORITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Priority Funding** – choose up to 3 Priority Areas if they apply to your project. This is a second chance to get some funding instead of no funding (may need Relevance Form). Note that only successful applications will go ahead to the Priority Announcement pool if not funded during the initial review.

**REVIEWERS TO EXCLUDE:**

List anyone here who might have a bias against the proposal for any reason. If this is a resubmission, consider who was on the previous panel and be strategic – excluding a specific reviewer might impact which panel the application goes to.

Suggesting external reviewers **to include** is also highly recommended.