Grant Proposal Writing for Funding Success
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Date: May 15, 2025 (Thursday)
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 9:20 p.m.
Venue: Main Campus, HKU

Overview

Grant proposal writing is a basic form of scientific writing. Increasingly, research students are getting involved in writing academic grant proposals during their candidature. Yet such writing calls for complex skills which take time to develop. This 3-hour workshop offered to research students from across disciplines aims to provide explicit instruction on grant proposal writing to lay a crucial foundation for novice researchers' journey to build grant application success in their disciplines. Based on the theories of genre analysis and social construction, the workshop will draw insights from relevant academic literature to shed light, firstly, on the structural and linguistic conventions and constraints of the genre of grant proposal, and secondly, on the skilful writing in successful grant proposals. Authentic texts of grant proposals gathered from the webpages of reputable funding agencies in varied contexts will constitute the core learning materials in the workshop. While the weight of the workshop will be on the discursive (writing-related) dimension of grant application, non-discursive issues (beyond the writing itself), such as unethical practices in the undertaking, will also be touched upon. By attending the workshop, the participants will develop a level of confidence as they embark on the journey of seeking funding success through crafting grant proposals.

Learning Outcomes

- Acquiring knowledge of a framework for understanding the genre of grant proposal
- Understanding the key moves and linguistic features of grant proposals
- Being able to analyse authentic proposal texts to identify good practices
- Developing basic skills of writing a grant proposal
- Gaining insights into the process of grant application

Learning Activities

Learning activities will be designed based on a collection of authentic grant proposals gathered from the webpages of reputable funding agencies in varied contexts. Worksheets (handouts) will be used for the learning activities during the workshop. The tasks will typically be done in pairs or small groups; feedback from the instructor and the peers will be incorporated. Several types of learning activities are shown below with examples of tasks:

Analysing texts
- match extracts from grant proposals with rhetorical moves (indicating functions)
- identify key linguistic features associated with particular moves
- identify moves and associated linguistics features in parts of authentic grant proposals
- compare the writings of different genres: grant proposals vs. research articles

Reading, sharing, and discussing
- "Can I use generative AI to write grants?"
- read extracts from the guidance notes of particular funding schemes
- share one's experience of participating in the writing of a grant proposal
- share insights about grant applications in one's discipline

Crafting & critiquing
- visualise a project and work with sentence templates to draft segments in a grant proposal
- critique segments of unsuccessful grant proposals