



Grant Proposal Writing for Funding Success

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Date: May 15, 2026 (Friday)

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.

Venue: Main Campus, HKU

Overview


Grant proposal writing is a core form of academic writing and an increasingly important skill for research postgraduate students across disciplines. During their candidature, many doctoral students are expected to participate in the preparation of research grant proposals, yet such writing involves complex rhetorical, strategic, and evaluative considerations that are rarely taught explicitly.

This workshop introduces research students to grant proposal writing from a genre-based and reviewer-oriented perspective. Drawing on research in genre analysis as well as practical guidance on successful grant writing, the workshop aims to demystify how grant proposals work as persuasive texts situated within institutional, disciplinary, and funding contexts. Particular attention will be paid to how key sections of a proposal (e.g. abstracts, background and significance, and research approach) are used to signal originality, feasibility, and scholarly competence to reviewers.

Authentic and publicly accessible materials related to grant proposals—including funded project abstracts, funding scheme guidelines, and selected illustrative examples from international funding contexts—will constitute the core learning materials in the workshop.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- understand grant proposals as a distinct academic genre with specific communicative purposes;
 - recognise common rhetorical moves and strategic signals used in successful grant proposals;
 - analyse authentic proposal texts from different disciplines to identify effective practices;
 - develop initial confidence in planning and drafting parts of a grant proposal;
 - gain insight into the broader process and expectations of grant application and review.
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Learning Activities

Learning activities are designed to be feasible within a short workshop format and accessible to research students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds. Activities draw on publicly available grant-related texts, including funded project abstracts, selected proposal excerpts, and guidance materials from funding agencies.

Through guided small-group and whole-class activities, participants analyse how successful grant applications communicate key elements such as the research problem or gap, project aims, significance, and feasibility to non-specialist reviewers. Comparative discussion across disciplinary clusters (e.g. science and engineering, humanities and social sciences) is used to highlight both shared rhetorical patterns and disciplinary variation. Short reflective and discussion-based activities support participants in transferring insights to their own prospective grant applications.

