

Grant Writing 501

Biosketch, Abstract & Specific Aims

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Overview of Application Structure

C. Specific Instructions

1. Face Page

2. Description, Performance Sites, Key Personnel, Other Significant Contributors, and Human Embryonic Stem Cells

3. Research Grant Table of Contents

4. Budget Instructions

5. Biographical Sketch

6. Resources

7. Research Plan

A. Specific Aims

B. Background and Significance

C. Preliminary Studies/Progress Report

D. Research Design and Methods

E. Human Subjects Research

Decision Table for Human Subjects Research, Protection and the Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children

F. Vertebrate Animals.

G. Select Agent Research

H. Literature Cited.

I. Multiple PI Leadership Plan

J. Consortium/Contractual Arrangements.

K. Resource Sharing.

L. Consultants.

25 page narrative

Bio Sketch

Educational Training

Professional Experiences

Peer-reviewed Publications

Funded Research



The big questions asked by a reviewer:

“Does the applicant have the knowledge, training, and experience to achieve study aims?”

“What is the concordance between study aims and the professional profile of the applicant?”

“Can the applicant manage the day-to-day budget, personnel, and scientific challenges in this project?”

“Is the “right” team assembled for this study?”

Common Errors/ Blemishes in Biosketches

1. Typographical errors
2. Listing papers “under review”
3. On-going and completed research not consistent across biosketches

Bottom line: Identified mistakes reduce reviewer confidence about the ability of the applicant to achieve study aims.

Addressing areas that need strengthening in your biosketch:

Grooming the PI, frequently there is the need for a 1-year plan

- 1. Publications specific to the study.**
- 2. Research experiences specific to the study.**
- 3. Significant collaborations**

Abstract

Most likely the one thing in your application that all members of the review committee will read.

Abstract TIPS:

**Avoid the excessive use of
Acronyms**

**Begin writing the abstract well
before the day of submission**

Be aware of space limitations

Read aloud to others

A Transtheoretical Model of AA-Related Behavior Change: NIAAA, R01-AA014197-01 Tonigan, PI

Little is known about how **behavior change is mobilized and sustained in AA**, and even less is known about how co-occurring psychiatric severity may mediate such changes. This is remarkable given that Twelve-step (TS) therapy is the prevailing alcohol treatment model in the United States and a majority of persons receiving alcohol treatment (TS and non-TS) will attend AA, if only for a limited time.

Significant gains have been made in identifying the: (1) characteristics of people most likely to attend AA, and (2) understanding the nature and magnitude of benefits associated with AA exposure. **What actually occurs in AA**, and how these specific behaviors may predict improved functioning, however, remains poorly understood and rarely investigated.

The **overall aim** of this study is to test a transtheoretical model of behavior change in AA, and to identify the specific AA-related behaviors that mobilize such change. This application proposes a 2-year longitudinal study (N = 300) of AA-exposed individuals, with participants recruited from AA and outpatient treatment. The study has five aims that prospectively test how prescribed AA-related behaviors mobilize AA-specific and non-specific change mechanisms, and how such mechanisms once mobilized predict reductions in drinking and other drug use.

A theme in this application is to argue for ecologically sound AA studies, but not at the expense of sacrificing rigorously designed and executed science. To this end, AA-related behaviors, behavior change mechanisms, and substance use are each defined multidimensionally, using assessments with strong psychometric properties.

New knowledge of the general and mediational processes of behavior change in AA is critical for **improvement of TS-based therapy**. Study findings will provide TS oriented therapies with evidenced-based feedback that is instrumental for improving intervention strategies.

Let's write an abstract !

1. Pieces to the puzzle
2. What we do and do not know
3. Aims and sample description
4. Strength of the application/Theme
5. Implications: Theoretical/Practical

Specific Aims Format:

**2-4 Paragraphs of text
(setting the stage)**

**What is currently not known
that needs to be known**

Specific Aims

(Generally 1-2 pages)

Frequently, 3-7 aims

**Aims are study objectives,
e.g., “To determine....”**

Frequently, last aim is exploratory

Listing of Specific Aims

Ordered in logical sequence

Stated in Active Voice

Precision in stating the cause and effects.

NIH focus on “mechanisms”