

# Before You Get Started

Consider these Top 10 Tips

1. **Get to know the program or grant officer.** A quick call to the grant officer can provide insight that may help you identify the important points in their evaluation rubric.
2. **Connect to the funder's desired outcomes.** Describe how your research contributes to the criteria on which they (the funder) will be evaluated.
3. **It's their money.** Know what they fund and how your project will add value.
4. **Show your research is urgent/timely.** Connect your research to a nationally or globally recognized issue.
5. **Tell a good story.** Grab their attention in the first paragraph. Answer the "who cares?" question.
6. **Mirror their terms.** Look for their key "buzz words" and use them in your proposal.
7. **Follow the guidelines.** Use their headings and adhere to their manuscript specifications. Answer their questions. But, use boldface and italics and add headings to make key terms stand out.
8. **Find a partner.** Especially for a first time grant submission. Collaborate with a colleague with a strong publishing record/recognized gallery showing or performance. But be careful, sometimes more partners mean more work.
9. **Know how you will spend the money** – travel, summer salary, graduate students, equipment, computers, conference. Will the funder support your specific financial needs?
10. **Less is more.** Make it easy for the reviewer.

And one more...

11. **Make a friend in the DSP.** Contact UF's Division of Sponsored Projects (DSP) right away of your intent to submit the proposal. Writing the proposal is only half the effort. It takes almost as long to prepare the university paperwork to accompany your proposal and you will need their help in preparing the final submission.