



ACOUSTICNEUROMA
ASSOCIATION

Helpful Guidelines for Research for Proposal Applicants 2023

In an effort to assist Research for Proposal (RFP) candidates in submitting a proposal application, the following is a brief summary of potential issues that can significantly impact the quality of an application submitted to the Acoustic Neuroma Association Research Review Committee. This summary is not meant to be all-inclusive. Rather, it is a compendium of issues that the committee experienced over the past two years of RFP reviews.

For purposes of clarity, the summary components used in evaluation an RFP is divided into 5 components of the RFP guidelines: (1) Introduction, (2) Research Question, (3) Impact Statement, (4) Research Strategy, and (5) Budget and Personnel. Each category is rated independently by 4 reviewers on a 5-point low to high scale. The application must include the following 5 categories, and should be limited to 5 pages for categories 1-4. Submissions that do not use these categories in the application will not be reviewed. Page lengths for each section are recommendations for the 5 page limit.

- 1. Introduction to Application:** The Introduction should include a brief summary of the most recent and relevant research and a statement of the primary purpose or research question(s) for the study (**1 page**).

Typical problems encountered in the review process revolve around the following:

- Failure to follow page request: The application gives far more detail than is needed to explain the appropriate/relevant background research. For example, a lengthy recounting of the background of etiology, characteristics, diagnosis, or treatment of acoustic neuroma took more space than was appropriate to the focus of the proposal.
- Failure to cite relevant supporting research: The application does not adequately justify the proposal based on current related research such as pilot data, published studies, or logic model. Citations of sources using dated sources (e.g., 30-year-old studies) need to be justified as necessary to support the application. If there is no relevant research published recently, the support for the current application must be clearly referenced, supported, and linked to the proposal.
- Inclusion of Reference Pages: References should be included as an addendum in the application and are **not** counted toward the 5-page limit.

- 2. Research Question(s) and Impact:** Give a concise statement of the research question(s) to be answered with the strategy and analysis of the data to be gained from this study (e.g., solve a specific problem, test a hypothesis, evaluate a treatment approach, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, assess feasibility, etc.). Identify the primary impact(s) for the Scientific community and the AN Patient of each of the Research Questions. What will be added to our current knowledge of AN. **(1/2 page)**

Typical problems encountered in the review process revolve around the following:

- a. Absence of Both Research Question and Impact: Failure to provide either a Research Question or an impact statement of both Scientific value and Patient value. The scientific value should reflect the contribution of the current proposal to the body of knowledge and the advancement of the science in the area of AN. The patient value should reflect how this project will improve the life of the AN patient as a result of this project long or short term.
- b. Limited Description of Both Research Question and Impact: The description of both the study objective and the impact for science and patient was generic, nondescript, or not presented in a compelling manner. A summary of this section should point the reader to a substantive contribution in the acquisition of knowledge or practice for the scientific community in areas of diagnosis, treatment, or rehabilitation. A lack of previous relevant, timely, or appropriate sources referenced in the background may affect the clarity of this section.

- 3. Research Strategy:** Order this answer in the following order: Participants, Procedures, Study Design, and Analytical Method(s) **(3 pages)**

Typical problems encountered in the review process revolve around the following:

- a. Absent or Limited Participant and Procedure characteristics: Simply giving the number of participants with any demographics or procedural activities (e.g., age, gender, AN features, recruitment, instrumentation, length of study including projected total time to completion, length of procedures for patients, outcome collection procedures, etc.) gives insufficient information to the reviewer to evaluate the potential impact or role in the project.
- b. Absent or Limited Description of the Study Design: No information was provided regarding patient sources, recruitment, group assignment, dependent/independent variables. Study design should be clearly stated (e.g., RCT, cohort, single group, single subject, etc.) and justified in relation to the project procedures, research question(s), and participant characteristics.
- c. Absent or Limited Description Analysis Method: This section should describe the procedures used to analyze the collected data whether qualitative or quantitative, what type of statistical analyses will be used to analyze the data to answer the research question and assess the outcome(s) of the study. Studies involving survey or retrospective data should account for the number of participants with respect to the quality of the results addressing the research

question(s).

- d. Inclusion of IRB approval: Projects that require IRB approval will not be funded until such approval is awarded and the ANA is informed. If IRB is not required, a letter from the appropriate IRB office so indicating will be required prior to awarding the project.

4. **Budget**: Provide an estimate of the budget that will be needed to complete the project including, salaries, materials, instrumentation, contractual support, etc. The ANA grant does not include any indirect costs as part of the award. **(1/2 page)**

Typical problems in the review process revolve around the following:

- a. Inclusion of Indirect Costs: If included in any award without prior consent from the ANA, the amount will be deducted from a final budget.
- b. Limited Description of Project Costs: The budget should include all costs related to completing the project including patient expenses (if needed), instrumentation, contractual support, materials and supplies, lab costs, data collection costs, etc. Inclusion of statistical analysis should be explained but is not typically viewed as necessary for the project. If additional sources are to be accessed in addition to the ANA project, an explanation should be included.
- c. Over Appropriation for Salary: A budget that uses all or near all of the available dollar amount available is not acceptable and will be discounted in the review process.
- d. Inclusion of Publication Fees: Publication fees are not considered for the budgetary award and should be omitted in the application.

5. **Personnel**: A maximum of 3 pages per PI, Co-PI, or Contracted support should be included as an Addendum and **does not** count toward the 5-page limit.

Typical problems in the review process revolve around the following:

- a. Inclusion of Personnel: All vitae for personnel should be submitted using the e-Commons format with only the relevant research listed in the bio and a maximum of 3 pages in length. Additional vitae information will be requested if needed.
- b. Recognizing Key Personnel: Vitae should be for key personnel only. Key personnel are generally those individuals who have a direct supervisory or active role in the conducting of the project.