

Common Grant Writing Mistakes

- The proposal lacks significance or new and original ideas.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal raises ethical concerns.
Content from: Harvard Grant Writers
- The research has a low impact on advancing scientific knowledge.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The scientific rationale is not provided, or is not valid.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal is too ambitious with too much work proposed.
This is when you should seek advice or vet your proposal with senior faculty.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, Harvard Grant Writers
- The proposal has unfocused aims and unclear goals.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The aims rely too much on the success of prior aims.
Content from: Harvard Grant Writers
- The studies are based on a shaky hypothesis or data, or alternative hypotheses are not considered.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal contains too much unnecessary experimental detail, or contains insufficient detail, especially for untested approaches.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, Harvard Grant Writers
- The experiments are technology-driven, rather than hypothesis-driven.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The direction or sense of priority is not clearly defined.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal lacks alternative methodological approaches in case the primary research does not work out.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

- The proposed model system is not appropriate to address the proposed questions.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal is innovative but lacks enough preliminary data.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The preliminary data do not support the feasibility of the project or hypothesis.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal lacks appropriate controls.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal does not include discussion of potential pitfalls.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal does not include discussion of interpretation of data and alternative explanations.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The investigator does not have enough experience with the proposed techniques or has not recruited a collaborator who does.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal does not clearly show which preliminary data were obtained by the investigator.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The investigator has few recent papers.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The investigator failed to recruit collaborators or did not include letters of support from collaborators.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The proposal shows little institutional commitment.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
- The investigator has suboptimal access to necessary equipment or technologies.
Content from: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke