

Wednesday 27th April, 2016

**Outline: CICASP Seminar 29
Grant Writing Masterclass**

This was the second of two seminars, led by Ikuma, focused on the important skill of grant-writing. Reading others' applications can help you to see things from a reviewer's perspective and so improve your own grant writing skills. This time we looked over a student's first draft of the section covering 'background of your own proposed study'. As for last week's interactive activity, in pairs students came up with both good points of the writing and layout, as well as things that could be improved upon in the next draft. See page 2 for some important points that came up in discussion.

Note for the students who attended this seminar: Ikuma has kindly offered to give feedback to those who send in their draft applications by email.

Wednesday 18th May, 2016

**Outline: CICASP Seminar 30
Critical Thinking: Academic - Parasites & Religion**

This seminar will be the first of a block of three, led by Andrew on critical thinking. Critical thinking, the ability to evaluate the validity of information, is essential in academia, as well as being an invaluable transferable skill.

Grant-writing: some points to think about

- 1) Think carefully if you plan to use colour in your application. Colour can be used for highlighting text and for figures and photos. However, bear in mind that some grant applications can only be submitted in black-and-white. Also, regardless of the grant application regulations, reviewers may still decide to print out your application in black-and-white to read it over. These are just points to keep in mind.
- 2) Use highlighting sparingly otherwise it will not be effective.
- 3) It may be better to keep the words/vocabulary used in your headings as general as possible. Keep in mind that the reviewers are unlikely to be specialists in your area of research, and English may also not be their second language. If it is, for whatever reason, unavoidable to use specialist words in your headings, then do try to explain the meaning immediately afterward.
- 4) You will need to balance how much content you can fit onto the grant application with how easily reviewers will understand what you want to convey.
- 5) Perhaps the most important thing to keep in mind is that there are no hard and fast rules of right or wrong in writing grants.
- 6) Remember, that reading others' applications to give feedback will likely help your own grant writing skills.