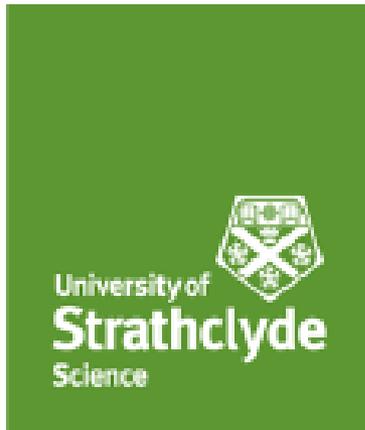


Practical sessions – Examples of proposals/budgets that were granted funding versus those that were declined

Prepared by Professor Brian Godman
For ECAVI VACCINE ACADEMY



1. Introduction

2. Successful and unsuccessful grant applications

3. Summary and Conclusion

Brian Godman – research activities

- PhD research activities (starting in 2006) initially in 7 EU countries to:
 - Increase the prescribing of generics first line and drive down their prices to enhance prescribing efficiency
 - Optimise reimbursement/ funding decisions for new drugs and their subsequent utilisation
- Extended across Europe and globally researching. Research interests including activities to improve the quality and efficiency of prescribing/ dispensing across multiple disease areas/ product classes including infectious and NCDs
- Co-Founder of Piperska (Europe - 2008) and MURIA (2015)
- Over 350 peer reviewed publications/ acceptances in the past 13 across multiple continents/ countries including Africa. African countries worked with include Botswana, Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland (Eswatini), Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe
- Successful as well as unsuccessful grant applications

There are key issues and hurdles to address when preparing grant applications/ proposals

- Grant applications are becoming increasingly competitive as new Universities and groups seek scarce resources – enhanced by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Consequently, a clear understanding of the disease area and application process are vital for progression as typically multiple steps are involved including successive review stages. In addition, a clear idea of the patient/ other benefits arising from your research and its translation to other settings/ countries
- Clear timelines, transparent and robust budget processes and a proven track record with colleagues are also increasingly vital - a proven track record helps ensure reviewers/ grant application bodies view your group as a 'safe pair of hands'
- Any inside knowledge about the personnel/ organisations providing the funding also helps to better shape any proposal/ discuss key elements in advance (take hold of any opportunity)

As stated yesterday - Przeworski and Salomon sum up a proposal as follows:

'A proposal's overt function is to persuade a committee of scholars that the project shines with the three kinds of merit all disciplines value, namely:

- Conceptual innovation
- Methodological rigor
- Rich, substantive content

But to make these points stick, a proposal writer needs a feel for the unspoken customs, norms, and needs that govern the selection process itself'

1. Introduction

2. Successful and unsuccessful grant applications

3. Summary and Conclusion

Key projects I have been involved with – success and failures

- Successful projects:
 - ❑ Newton/ MRC – Brazil
 - ❑ Newton/ MRC – Kenya
 - ❑ Newton/ MRC – South Africa
 - ❑ Commonwealth Pharmacist Association – Ghana

- Unsuccessful projects:
 - ❑ Newton/ MRC – South Africa
 - ❑ STINT (Sweden) – South Africa
 - ❑ Commonwealth Pharmacist Association – Zambia
 - ❑ Pfizer – Infectious Diseases – Nigeria (believe one of the reasons was that potential units were chosen in advance as no obvious reasons for initial rejection with a strong proposal and track record of the teams)

Successful project – Brazil – Strathclyde and UFMG, Brazil

- The project involved researching ways to collect information from outpatients on the effectiveness of anti-TNFs in inflammatory diseases include RA as well as measure the effectiveness and safety of insulin glargine in the population with patient level data
- Believed successful as:
 - ❑ Strong track record of joint publications of UFMG and Strathclyde personnel – demonstrating that we can successfully work together
 - ❑ Strong track record with both universities using national patient level data to analyse current treatment patterns
 - ❑ UFMG had already successfully conducted research with outpatients whilst they were waiting for their appointments – so showed this methodology could be successfully used
- Overall – proved a successful collaboration with multiple publications, etc., paving the way for future projects

Successful project – Strathclyde and University of Nairobi, Kenya

- Projects involved developing sustainable innovations to improve the rational use of medicines for infectious diseases and NCDs. This included ways to improve antibiotic utilisation across sectors including reducing self-purchasing of antibiotics
- Reasons why believe successful:
 - ❑ Strathclyde/ Scottish team – strong track record with researching/ improving the management of infectious diseases in Scotland as well as undertaking patient level research in both infectious diseases and NCDs
 - ❑ Scottish personnel strong track record with undertaking research into infectious and non-infectious diseases across Africa
 - ❑ Strathclyde and Kenyan team had already published/ submitted a number of joint papers – so established working practices. Overall seen as a ‘safe pair of hands’
 - ❑ This relationship has already generated a considerable number of papers/ abstracts which is progressing

Successful project – Strathclyde and SMU, South Africa

- Built on the unsuccessful STINT project between SMU and the Karolinska Institute (concerns with explanation/ details of the methodology and previous findings in Botswana)
- The project principally involved seeking ways to improve collection/ monitoring of antimicrobial utilisation across sectors
- Believe funded as:
 - ❑ Strathclyde/ Scotland – strong track record with improving infectious disease management/ reducing AMR as well as conducting patient level research
 - ❑ Scottish team – strong track record in conducting infectious disease research in sub-Saharan Africa including PPS and other studies
 - ❑ SA team – strong track record with conducting infectious disease research in SA in the public sector (also private)/ strong relationships with the MoH in Pretoria
 - ❑ Proven track record of working together including a number of published/ submitted papers - continuing

Successful project – Scotland/ Strathclyde and Ghana – Commonwealth Pharmacy Association

- Funding to improve the utilisation of antibiotics in Ghana through establishing antimicrobial stewardship groups
- Believe funded as:
 - ❑ Strathclyde/ Scotland – strong track record with improving infectious disease management/ reducing AMR – SAPG - as well as conducting patient level research
 - ❑ Scottish team – strong track record in conducting infectious disease research in sub-Saharan Africa including PPS and other studies including AMS groups
 - ❑ Proven track record of working together with the team in Ghana including a number of published/ submitted papers – showing successful working
- The partnership has generated teaching slides and joint publications/ abstracts including actively researching ways to reduce inappropriate use of antibiotics for SSIs – timing of the first dose as well as post operation. This is continuing
- Not successful in Zambia as less of a track record

Unsuccessful project – Strathclyde and another University in South Africa (Newton/ MRC)

- The proposal centred on potential ways to analyse and improve the management of both infectious and non-infectious diseases across South Africa and wider
- Believe not funded as:
 - ❑ Concerns with ability of working together as some previous publications – but not extensive
 - ❑ Concerns with the ability of the SA team with conducting extensive drug utilisation research in the public sector in SA
 - ❑ Lack of patient level data in the public sector – and not sure how to develop this as limited interactions/ joint research with the MoH in Pretoria
 - ❑ Limited team in SA to follow the project through
 - ❑ Concurrently funding the project in Brazil (seen as a 'safer pair of hands')

1. Introduction

2. Successful and unsuccessful grant applications

3. Summary and Conclusion

In conclusion as stated yesterday

- Need to make sure in advance that your proposal grabs attention in its title, format, and content and be as novel as possible
- This will be helped by knowing (as far as possible) who are the key decision makers and what are their needs/ wants/ wishes – as a number of potential groups are sometimes short listed in advance with the RFP tailored to their capabilities
- A proven track record in the disease area/ related disease area and the methodology is vital as well as a proven track record with some of those taking part across the universities/ countries is invaluable to give the reviewers/ funders confidence that the objectives of the proposal can be achieved
- Make sure diversity in the project team and how you intend that the findings translational and bring on new students
- Make sure the budget is consistent with the study aims and is realistic – in addition have contingency plans to avoid pitfalls

Thank You

Any Questions!

Brian.Godman@strath.ac.uk
briangodman@outlook.com;
brian.godman@smu.ac.za