



writing/interpreting reviews

research paper/research grant application should look like this





*A proposal's main job is not, as it may appear, to get money for your research, but to convince its readers that you have an exciting research project in mind, that you know what it takes to carry it out successfully, and you are the right person to make it happen. **No proposal can do that if the power of your ideas is hidden by poor organization and writing.***

/Blackburn, 2003:3/





The writing style of the thesis of grant proposal may be the most important factor in conveying your ideas to graduate advisors or funding agencies.

/Locke, Spirduso, Silverman, 2014:127/





KISS

Keep it Short & Simple

(Keep it Simple, Stupid)

NOT: count every word, BUT:

make every word count





How to write a review?

Summarize the central argument or thesis of the paper. How does the author position his or her own views in relation to others' arguments?

If the author's central argument is unclear, what are some ideas for how it could be clarified? If it is clear, try to brainstorm a few ways to make the argument more precise or more convincing. Are there any pieces of evidence cited that are not interpreted as fully as they could be?

What aspects of the argument are most convincing? How could they be expanded in the paper?

What aspects of the argument are least convincing?

What possible objections has the author not accounted for?

General comments/suggestions





Questions for reading rough drafts:

If you can, identify the author's thesis and major arguments, whether explicitly or implicitly stated.

Identify a section where evidence is used well.

Identify a section where evidence (or more evidence) is needed.

Where do you think this paper is going?

What point or argument in this paper was most interesting to you?

If any questions were raised in the text, answer them.





Interpreting review

1. Which sections somehow seem important or resonant or generative?
2. What do you want to hear more about?
3. What are your thoughts on the topic after reading review?
4. What kind of voices do you hear in this writing?
5. What is going on in your mind as you read this review?





CONSENSUS REPORT

The project was not recommended for funding because of various substantial doubts and concerns raised by both panel experts and external reviewers. Following the discussion during the first panel meeting, the experts decided to send the proposal to external review, placing emphasis on a necessity of an opinion of a scientist (given the interdisciplinary character of the planned undertaking). Three (out of four) external reviewers, representing the fields of arts and humanities, proved quite favorable, but they also raised some doubts with respect to both the project and the publication track of the PI. More importantly, one reviewer - a scientist - put forward a significant number of issues, which should be carefully considered by the PI. The panel experts shared the general stance that every interdisciplinary research must imply at least basic knowledge in every discipline involved. Certainly, there is an unavoidable risk of interdisciplinary projects that specialists representing particular fields may notice several minor defects or that such an application is more likely to provoke disagreement among the reviewers. All of these would be legitimate, understandable and acceptable as long as the general idea is approved in terms of both cognitive value and methodological correctness. However, when a specialist in one of the fields involved essentially disqualifies the application, there is a high risk that the project is misconceived and as such it should be thoroughly reconsidered. This stance was further strengthened by the evaluation of the scholarly achievements of both the PI and her Supervisor. Neither of them has competences in the field confirmed by scholarly publications in internationally recognized journals and neither seem to participate in international scholarly life. Thus, they cannot guarantee that the project will contribute to the ongoing debate on various methodological approaches at the crossroads of arts, humanities, social sciences and biological sciences. A separate issue are bio-ethical controversies raised by Reviewer no 1, as negligence in this regard may not only affect the research, but also lead to serious legal consequences.

