Writing a Grant Proposal: A Set of Argumentative Moves
Researchers who study academic writing across the disciplines offer a number of models for the macro-structure of research grant proposals. This writing guide draws on that body of research to produce a versatile, malleable, and dynamic model or heuristic to help solve the problem of *what* a grant proposal achieves and *how*.

When adapting the model for your own purposes, keep in mind that some of these argumentative moves occur in cycles. That is, as a way to reduce cognitive load for readers, we stitch together complex texts with strings of argumentation that include repetition or reminders of what has come before.

Move 1: *Telling the Research Story/Summarizing the Conversation*
Provide background context and literature review to map out a relevant research story for readers.

Studies have shown that…
Recent research has investigated…
A variety of studies have addressed…
Much research has been conducted on…

Move 2: *Identifying the Research Space/Listening for the Silence*
Explicitly identify a gap in knowledge or a problem/need to solve. The *gap*, *problem*, or *need* might be in the real-world or the research-world.

However, little is known about…
Nevertheless, it is necessary to…
However, it is unclear…
Despite these advances, little is understood about…
To date, however, few studies have investigated…
Yet, there has been very little research on…
The mechanisms behind this pattern, however, remain unaddressed…
There is thus a relative lack of understanding…

Move 3 – Move 6: *Inhabiting the Research Space/Joining the Conversation*
Now it's your turn to tell your research story.

Move 3: *Goals*
Write a goal statement that identifies the aim/s or objective/s of the study. In other words, explain what it is you want to achieve.

The goal of this project is…
The aim of this study is…
The objectives of our research…
The hypothesis to be tested is…
The aim of the present investigation was to…

Move 4: *Means/Procedures*
Describe the study design and processes: the methods, procedures, and plans of action that the proposal specifies as leading to the goals. *How* will you achieve these?

We collected data on…
This study used a sample of…
Two sets of independent variables were used…
We used a random forest algorithm…
The sample was homogenized in…
We monitored/sampled/measured/observed…

Move 5: *Achievements/Outcomes*
Describe the anticipated results, findings, or outcomes of your study.

In sum, we expect that…
We anticipate that…
Outcomes of this project will include…
Our study offers strong evidence that…
The data from this study present…

Move 6: *Benefits/Significance*
Connect the projected outcomes of the study to the real-world, the research-world, and/or benefits to researchers in other fields. That is, consider going beyond the intended outcomes of the study to talk about the larger implications.

The significance of this project is…
The key innovation in our work is…
One of the most pressing issues…
The results should benefit…
Our research is vital and timely…

References
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