



Grant Writing

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SPG Innovation Ltd

- ▶ Experts in commercialisation of IP in food, life sciences and agritech
- ▶ Working with innovators on early stage ideas
- ▶ Takes projects from ‘once in the lab’ concept to a product someone can invest serious money in
- ▶ We work from early stage market validation, securing funding, managing projects and commercialization
- ▶ As partners, consultants or with our own technologies and products

Along the way.....

- ▶ I have learnt how start ups, corporates and Universities operate
- ▶ Founded new companies from scratch
- ▶ Closed a \$multi-M licensing deal for IP with a FTSE100 company (more than once 😊)
- ▶ Pro-actively engaged with hundreds of companies
- ▶ Filtered many ideas (and even commercialised some!)
- ▶ Made mistakes!

More importantly....

- ▶ Applied for a many of funded projects - and won a few!
- ▶ Had positive and negative feedback from assessors
- ▶ Completed project of varying size and subject matter
- ▶ From food and nutrition to agri-tech and engineering
- ▶ From short 6 month feasibility studies to long term collaborative research
- ▶ Benefits of being involved in funded and collaborative projects
- ▶ Application process pointers

We Need to Translate Research!

- ▶ The UK is very creative
- ▶ Innovative companies and individuals
- ▶ Top quality research coming out of our academics
- ▶ Needs to get into the real world
- ▶ Taking products from concepts to reality is costly, takes time and risky
- ▶ Why bother?

What is funding??

- ▶ Free cash? Yes but....
 - ▶ Need match funding
 - ▶ Need to provide outputs
 - ▶ Need to do what you said you would in the application
- ▶ A specific project not ‘business as usual’
- ▶ These projects allow you to carry out cutting edge research which may be considered too risky to fund internally

Why and when to seek funding?

- ▶ The key is to determine your company's development strategy
- ▶ What are your key challenges you face?
- ▶ Use funding to de-risk advancements rather than for cash flow
- ▶ Ensure the projects are strategically important
- ▶ Identify the gaps in your knowledge, expertise or facilities where a consortium would fill these gaps
- ▶ Use funding to seek external or temporary expertise

HORIZON 2020_{UK}



Innovate UK



Which funding?

- ▶ Many different types of funding
- ▶ Project dependent
- ▶ Restrictions of what funding can be used for
- ▶ Different intervention rates
- ▶ Timescales
- ▶ Do you need partners? What type of partners?
- ▶ Should the project be funded internally or with private money?

The logo for SPG innovation, featuring the text "SPG" in a large, bold, dark blue font, with "innovation" in a smaller, dark blue font below it. To the right of the text is a graphic of several orange dots of varying sizes arranged in a cluster.

Collaborative Projects

- ▶ Access to expertise not feasible to have ‘in house’
- ▶ Grants de-risk working with partners
- ▶ A way to engage end users and for them to provide a steer for development
- ▶ Enable access to facilities we could not afford or get access to
- ▶ Built an on-going collaborative relationship with project partners
- ▶ Further funding (public or private) can result
- ▶ Develop Intellectual property
- ▶ Use the funded work as demonstrations in licensing negotiations

Consortium Building

- ▶ Identify the type of partners and what you need from them
- ▶ Identify funding source
- ▶ Use organisations such as Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN)
 - ▶ Consortium building events
 - ▶ Special interest groups
 - ▶ One-to-one support

Innovate UK
Knowledge Transfer Network



SPG
innovation

Key things for a grant application

- ▶ Grants need match funding
- ▶ Funders want to know where this is coming from:
 - ▶ Own cash
 - ▶ Loans
 - ▶ Private Equity
- ▶ Who are you pitching to?
- ▶ Why?
- ▶ What context?
- ▶ What is the deadline? Length? Format?
- ▶ Keep checking back to these as you prepare!

Application

- ▶ There are different processes for different funding streams
- ▶ The best way to start is to have:
 - ▶ Clear project plan
 - ▶ Clear benefit to the business
 - ▶ Market need
 - ▶ Outputs
 - ▶ Return on investments
 - ▶ Risks
- ▶ Most applications are via a form with questions on all these areas

Are you sitting comfortably . . . ?

- ▶ Humans like stories. Become the best story teller
- ▶ The introduction, although often not scored does set the scene and mood for the assessor
- ▶ Try to convey your enthusiasm for the project
- ▶ Assessors *want* to be convinced
- ▶ Funders *want* to fund

So . . . what's the story?

- ▶ Create a clear story about what your business is and what you are trying to achieve
- ▶ Demonstrate as many of the following as possible:
 - ▶ A clear vision: what you want, and what you can offer
 - ▶ The right team
 - ▶ An understanding of the market
 - ▶ Positive profile with key external people & organisations
 - ▶ Protected product (IP, trade secret, etc)
 - ▶ Initial and repeat sales to credible customers

Application Process

- ▶ Find a topic which is of strategic importance to your company and fits with the call - Don't try to shoe horn
- ▶ Ensure there is some innovation - can be commercial or technical
- ▶ Demonstrate that you know your market/ competitors/ opportunities/ challenges
- ▶ Explain exploitation - how will all partners benefit
- ▶ Have a clear, concise, realistic and appropriate project plan
- ▶ Talk to the funder!

Application Process

- ▶ Set up consortium early - events such as this are very useful
- ▶ Ensure the consortium is appropriate - having an end user is a great way to demonstrate customer need
- ▶ Collaboration agreement can be tricky - make sure you start to deal with any issues when you build the consortium
- ▶ KTN can help set up consortium
- ▶ Make sure all partners will benefit from the project - this helps when things get tricky!

Application Process

- ▶ Risk - ensure the level of risk is appropriate
- ▶ Low risk project leads assessors to question why the company does not fund this project themselves
- ▶ Clear reason for needing the funding - beyond 'we can't afford to do this'
- ▶ Explain how public funding will add value i.e. bringing partners together
- ▶ Explain costs - assessors don't always see your finance forms so explain how you will spend the money - this helps assessor judge value for money
- ▶ Try to make the application easy to understand and enjoyable to read!

Application Process

- ▶ Ensure that the technology you are developing will add value to UK Plc (or EU)
- ▶ Try to quantify (a realistic) return on investment and provide evidence!
- ▶ Think about your addressable market
- ▶ Displacing another UK business will not be as attractive to funders as increasing exports or reducing reliance on imports
- ▶ Think about benefits beyond the economic ones such as social, environmental
- ▶ Be honest about your technology and its potential plus its limitations

Do . . .

- ▶ Keep the story simple and accessible
- ▶ Target the right funder(s)
- ▶ Talk to the funder's representative in advance
- ▶ Try to use all available space, but don't repeat yourself
- ▶ Use external help if needed
- ▶ Applications can be reviewed by the KTN

The project

- ▶ Project management
- ▶ Regular communications
- ▶ Keep an eye on finances and eligible costs
- ▶ Regular communications with project monitor (if there is one)
- ▶ Progress reports
- ▶ Exploitation
- ▶ Finding out something doesn't work is a valid result

Key Lessons

Don't be afraid to give it a go

(even if it doesn't work out
you will still gain experience)

Find your own style

Be proactive and have a good story

Thanks for listening

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