



General Feedback to Trainee Applicants for Research Start-Up Applications

1. Know your audience and keep them in mind

When applying to CanVECTOR competitions, you can expect that your application will be reviewed by thrombosis experts. Thus, it's not necessary to provide very general background information about venous thromboembolism; for example, defining DVT and PE, and justifying that VTE is an important problem. Instead, focus on describing the knowledge gaps and how your proposed project will address them.

2. Writing an effective summary is an essential research skill

As part of the application process for most grants, you are required to summarize your project in various ways, e.g. a "Lay Abstract" and/or a "Summary of Research Proposal". While it may be tempting to consider these summaries lower priority, given all the other tasks you must complete, they are among the most important parts of your application. Learning to write a succinct and informative description is a worthwhile investment. Ask mentors or supervisors for examples of summaries from successful funding applications.

3. Vigorous writing is concise

Summarizing all relevant information about a project is difficult when you're allocated a single page. Write concisely by avoiding unnecessary words, extraneous content, and complex descriptions. CIHR advises that you make sure that your summary provides: a concise account of the subject matter; an overview of each part of the research plan; specific project aims and the methodology. A general timeline for the project and description of how you'll be involved/supervised is advised for trainees or early-career investigators.

4. Include a FINER research question

Writing an excellent research question is also a developed skill. An exceptional research question can give the reviewer a sense that your study is FINER:

Feasible, Interesting, Novel, Ethical, and Relevant

5. Relate your budget to your proposal

Be sure that the requested items in your budget can be linked directly to the research described in the summary. Avoid vague descriptions or introducing new elements in the budget.