

NSERC RTI Q&A Session

September 10th, 2019
University Centre, Rm. 442



General Trends and Tips for Success from ORS and the Colleges

- Co-Applicants
 - Aim to involve multiple co-applicants on your application where applicable and appropriate (i.e. their involvement should make sense for the research being proposed and the nature of equipment being requested), to demonstrate to NSERC that there are a variety of researchers/research programs that will benefit from the equipment/equipment upgrade.
 - The aim is to demonstrate the maximum use and impact of the requested equipment.
 - When choosing co-applicants, be sure to clearly outline to them that they are not allowed to be a co-applicant on any other RTI application in the current competition year (at UG or other institutions). Being a co-applicant on multiple RTI applications may result in all applications being rejected.
- Additional Support
 - Clearly outline, whenever possible, if there is any support for this equipment request, being provided by the PI or Co-Applicant's Department or College. Any Department or College support should have a corresponding email/letter outlining the commitments, that will stay on record at ORS.
 - Support from the vendor (software license, reagents, etc.) is also viewed positively
- Career Stage
 - Be aware that some researchers who have experience with RTI awards would recommend that mid-career researchers are the lead PI on an application, rather than early-career researchers. The justification for this is that RTI reviewers are aware that mid-career researchers may not have the opportunities for acquiring tools, instruments and infrastructure as early-career researchers (e.g. start-up funding, CFI JELF). Also, because of a briefer track record or smaller research program, it is more difficult for early career researchers to justify need for the equipment.
- Equipment Requests

Opinions differ as to whether the requested infrastructure should be leading edge or a "work horse" or both. Either way, there should be a demonstrated need for the equipment. You should be requesting one piece of equipment or one functional cluster of equipment. You should not request funding for several unrelated items. Be sure to clearly outline that this equipment is strictly for use in the field of natural sciences or engineering.
- Quotes for Equipment
 - NSERC requires that you provide two quotes for any individual items or any systems from a single supplier costing more than \$25,000 before taxes. Clearly outline in your justification which quote you prefer and why. If you are able to obtain only one quote, be sure to justify it fully and clearly (e.g. there is only one manufacturer of this equipment)
- Requested Amount
 - The maximum cost for equipment should be \$250,000 (before installation, shipping, customs, taxes)
 - NSERC will provide up to \$150,000 in support
 - Taxes should be listed at the UG subsidized rate of 3.41%

- NSERC Evaluation Criteria
 - Throughout your proposal, be sure to clearly articulate the following:
 - **Need, urgency and suitability** (40% weighting)
 - Why the equipment is essential carrying out your proposed research, and that there are no other more cost-effective solutions of obtaining results
 - The availability (or lack thereof) of similar equipment in the region
 - The impact of delays in securing the requested equipment
 - Expected degree of utilization by the applicant(s) and other users.
 - Need to upgrade or replace failed equipment
 - **Merit** (40% weighting)
 - Potential of this equipment to have a major effect on the advancement of your research program
 - Feasibility of the plan to use the equipment
 - The excellence of the applicant and co-applicant(s), including relevant experience and demonstrated ability to use the equipment
 - Consideration of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the rationale of the team composition, including all major users
 - **Training of HQP** (20% weighting)
 - How many HQP have been/will be trained on the equipment or will use the equipment in the future
 - Quality of the training, and any opportunities for hands-on training
 - What critical and marketable skills will be acquired through this training.
 - Consideration of EDI in the training of HQP