Specific Aims

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Specific Aims Page

- Page purpose and content
- Selling your idea
- Characteristics of successful Specific Aims
- Resources
Purpose and Contents
The Most Important Page of your Application

- Grab the reviewer’s attention so s/he understands, appreciates and is persuaded your idea is unsurpassed
- Illuminate the ‘big picture’ of the problem and your solution
- Impart confidence you are the best person/team to advance science in this field with your preliminary data
Contents

- Significant human health problem
- Goals of proposed research (short-term and long-term)
- Gap in knowledge and potential project impact
- Hypothesis
- Specific Aims
- Expected outcome(s)
Sell Your Research
Simple message
Enthusiastic presentation
Tired, overworked, experts in their field (not necessarily experts in your field) who genuinely want to understand each application through your enthusiastic, organized, concisely written presentation.
* Strategic Tip

“The Specific Aims section should be written to create a ‘partnership’ with the assigned reviewers who will represent you at the review-panel meeting. You provide a conceptual framework, on which the assigned reviewers will hang the details when they make their oral presentations at the meeting.”

Russell SW & Morrison DC. 2016. The Grant Application Writer’s Workbook; Grant Writer’s Seminars and Workshops, NIH Forms-D edition; pg 62
Preliminary Review
Scientific and Non-scientific
Peers and Colleagues

Scientific experts can provide the best check of your Specific Aims page – *given enough time to review.*
**Scientific Review Questions**

- Does the page grab your attention?
- Are the goals, significance and specific aims clearly written and easy to understand?

- Are the aims:
  - Related?
  - Independent?
  - Measureable?
  - Realistic?
Sample Layman Review ?s

1. What health concern does this project address?
2. What does the project hope to contribute and/or change?
3. Will aims answer the hypothesis?
4. Can all aims be completed even if one fails?
5. Can each aim reach a conclusion?
Specific Aims Review

- Related
- Independent
- Measureable
- Realistic
Related and Focused Aims

Answer the **hypothesis**
and only the **hypothesis**!
Related Aims – PBJ Study

Hypothesis: Use of one knife for peanut butter and a separate knife for jelly creates the PBJ that elementary students prefer. To test this hypothesis, we propose the following Specific Aims:

**RELATED**

**Aim 1:** Identify elementary students’ preference for single- or double-knife prepared PBJ.

**UNRELATED**

**Aim 2:** Determine feasibility of double-knife method in elementary school cafeterias.
Independent Aims

Each can be completed without dependence on results of another aim.
Dependent Aims in Community Health

- **Specific Aim 1**: Create a local community network to engage parents in selecting an evidence-based physical activity (PA) program.

- **DEPENDENT** Aim 2: Utilize the community network to select and implement the PA intervention.

- **DEPENDENT** Aim 3: Evaluate the cost and effectiveness of the PA intervention.
Measureable Aims

An achievable endpoint marks each aim as complete.
Measureable PBJ Aims

Hypothesis: Use of one knife for peanut butter and a separate knife for jelly creates the PBJ that elementary students prefer. To test this hypothesis, we propose the following Specific Aims:

Specific Aim 1: Determine elementary students’ PBJ preference by single or double knife preparation.

Specific Aim 2: Sample the association of student gender with PBJ preparation method.

*Not Measureable*: Sample the association of student gender with PBJ preparation method.

*Measureable*: Determine elementary students’ PBJ preference by single or double knife preparation.

*no predictable endpoint for ‘sampling’
Realistic Aims
Realistic Aims

Hypothesis: Use of one knife for peanut butter and a separate knife for jelly creates a PBJ sandwich preferred by elementary students. To test this hypothesis, we propose the following Specific Aims:

1. **Realistic**
   - Identify preferred PBJ method of students at Enos Elementary.

2. **Too Ambitious**
   - Determine jelly flavor preference by gender.

*Limitless variables (jelly flavors)*
Resources
ADR
Grants & Contracts Office

Use the team e-mail to reach Gabbie, Pam and Susan with one note

grants@siumed.edu

Instructions, forms and templates are available on the updated website:

http://www.siumed.edu/adrfa/grantinformation.html
Online Federal Resources

• NIH/NIAID Draft Specific Aims
  https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/draft-specific-aims

• NIH RePORTER
  https://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm

• NIH Grants & Funding, Writing Your Application
  http://grants.nih.gov/grants/writing_application.htm

• NIH Grant Writing Tip Sheets
  http://grants.nih.gov/grants/grant_tips.htm

• National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases, Apply for a Grant: https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/apply-grant

• National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
  https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Funding/Apply-Funding/Grant-Application-Overview
SIUSOM Library Resources

- Rogers SM. 2014. *Mastering Scientific and Medical Writing*. WZ39 R729m