

WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL

· HOW TO WRITE YOUR PROPOSAL

The thing about money is that everyone wants it, especially in the arts! So even though the AD Grants application process is limited to Arc members and thus not as competitive as other funding opportunities, you still have to make sure you write a great application if you'd like to receive funding. Here are a few key tips for writing your proposal, which are also applicable to other grants applications.

1. Be clear and succinct about what you would like funding for. The grants committee often has many applications to read and limited time to read them, so you give yourself the best chance of success if they can identify what you're asking for and who you are in the first two sentences. This doesn't mean that you don't elaborate on the project further but you should be able to establish the key facts (I'm an emerging artist in an exhibition/I'm a masters student and I want to go to a conference/I'm an art theorist starting a publication) in your opening.

2. Once you've established what you want to do, spend the bulk of your proposal linking your project to the selection criteria. Grants are competitive processes that are not about no-strings-attached funding. Reading over the selection criteria carefully and making sure to address the criteria throughout your proposal will give you the best chance of success. This will mean you'll have to refer back to the criteria listed on the Arc website but taking a bit of extra time to familiarise yourself with the specific requirements of an AD Grant increases your chances of success infinitely. If connecting your project to the selection criteria is overly difficult then rethink whether your project is a good fit with the grant, or if you might need to either adjust your project or apply for different avenues of funding.

3. Other than being clear and talking about your project in relation to selection criteria, make sure your supporting material and proposal complement each other. You want

your application, as a whole, to be cohesive and legible. To make sure this is the case, get a friend to look over your application before you submit – preferably someone who is not familiar with your project – or get one person who is familiar and one person who is unfamiliar to read over your work. That way you'll be able to see if someone who doesn't have background knowledge about your project identifies holes or inconsistencies in what you're saying.

4. Finally, when in doubt contact Arc with any questions about the application process. Almost all awards, residencies and funding bodies will have an information service and it's always better to be clear about the details of what you're applying for.

· LANGUAGE / SPELLING / GRAMMAR

Some institutions will be open to receiving more experimental applications for exhibitions and residencies. Almost no institutions will be interested in receiving experimental applications for grants. The most important thing to understand about grants applications is that your success usually hinges on clarity and relevance to the institution, which even trumps artistic merit. So it's important that you use clear, precise and professional language in your application.

Paying attention to your spelling and grammar will enhance the legibility of your application and give the impression that you care about your proposal. Everyone's relationship to writing is different and many of us struggle with spelling and grammar, which is understandable. Unfortunately, the AD Grants committee and any other grants reviewers will probably not be familiar with you and the reasons why you may struggle with writing, and in the absence of a different reason for errors people will usually assume that you have rushed your application and not proof read it.

Make sure to write out your proposal in Microsoft Word or another program with spell and


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grammar check instead of typing directly into Orgsync, to make sure you catch as many errors as you can. Also take the time to read over your own work and have someone else read over your application wherever possible.

· FORMATTING YOUR PROPOSAL

Formatting is the easiest part of writing your proposal to get those cash dollars. When you format your exhibition proposal you need to make sure it's clear, concise and easy to read. That means:

- Using a size 11 font;
- Choosing a font such as Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri
- Single or 1.5 line spacing for paragraphs;
- Using bullet points where appropriate;
- Using clear and concise paragraphs;
- Using sub headings for paragraphs where appropriate;
- Keep it clean and simple.

When applying for an Arc @ UNSW Art & Design Grant this means filling out all the required sections on the application form, ensure your project description is broken into clear paragraphs and all support material is formatted to the specified requirements.