

*INSIDE THE MINDS of Grant Reviewers and Grant Recipients*

# Pitfalls in grant applications – Reviewers' Pet Peeves

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# Why should I care?

What is the issue?

*Is this important? Is this compelling? Is this urgent and/or relevant?*

Find the narrative – make it compelling. You need the forest and the trees....



# How is the grant being assessed? Make the job easy...

Evaluation criteria and





Formatting, images, white space and bolding are communications tools in a proposal (if possible to use them)

*Example*

Methodology

This research project has two components: i) an analysis of **socio-economic and demographic trends** in rural and small town Canada in order to document the types of economic transitions that communities are facing now and in the future (projected) and, ii) **a policy scan and institutional/policy mapping** of federal and provincial/territorial policies targeted to rural communities

# Contributions of the study—careful with the excessive superlatives...

## *Excessive*

..This will be the first study to ever provide a pan Canadian understanding of place based rural policies. Previous literature has neglected comparative analysis, instead focussing in narrow case studies.

## *Reasoned*

.....While such literature has provided a *depth* of understanding of community characteristics, impacts, and responses to economic decline, there is no pan-Canadian understanding of these phenomena. The proposed study will thus fill an important research gap.

# Feasibility and realism

Feasibility and realism in methodology, budget and timelines.  
Connections and networks are important.

*Experienced researchers will know what makes sense.*



# Demonstrating impact

What are the expected outcomes of the research?

Who is the intended audience and how will they be reached/engaged?

Knowledge translation activities?





# Passive and excessive language is to be avoided

Indirect – flowery.

*It is hoped that this research will contribute to important conversations among policy makers and researchers in Canada, informing how they work and communicate with one another.*

More direct

*The proposed research project aims to directly inform research and policy practice in Canada.*

Best practices – try to remove words, clean and concise language/ Read and read and read again, out loud.

Writing and communicating is your super strength - hone it. Stephen King: On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft

Thanks for listening!  
Good luck in your applications!

