TIPS FOR DEVELOPING YOUR JUNIOR FACULTY FELLOWSHIP (JFF) PROPOSAL

This document is intended to supplement, not replace, the instructions and details provided in the JFF website: https://www.ou.edu/research-norman/research-support/research-council/funding-opportunities/junior-faculty-fellowship-program

Before you start writing

Read the description of the Junior Faculty Fellowship (JFF) Program available at the website above. A thorough and complete reading of these details is the most effective tool Principal Investigators (PIs) have for writing the best proposal that meets JFF Program expectations. Proposals that do not follow the required formatting and page length instructions will be returned without review.

Create a checklist outlining the 8 required components of a complete JFF application: 1) Application Cover Sheet; 2) Abstract; 3) Project Description; 4) Career Impact Statement; 5) References; 6) Use of Research Council Funds; 7) Budget and Justification; 8) Supplementary Information (note: CV and Endorsement Letter are required; Board/Committee approvals are included as appropriate).

General tips for writing a proposal

The fundamentals of success in grant writing are well known and can serve as a basic guide to PIs. Basically, all proposals are expected to answer the same core questions, and your JFF proposal will need to do the same:

- What will you do?
- Why will you do it?
- How will you do it--what is your research rationale and plan?
- What is the significance and context of the research to the field?
- What is your capacity and expertise to perform the research?
- What resources do you need to do it?

Your proposal should reflect clear and organized thinking and effective communication. Aim for economy, enthusiasm, and directness. Use basic English, avoiding jargon or excessive language so that a non-expert may understand the proposed research. Be consistent with terms, references, and writing style. Use the active, rather than passive, voice. Ask a colleague for feedback on your proposal. Revise; and revise again.

Top tips for writing a successful JFF proposal

Project Description: Proposal organization is an important part of writing well. Create a structure for your project description that reflects the details provided in the Proposal Preparation Instructions (see, Project Description) and Proposal Review sections of the JFF website. A good strategy is to use these details to create a narrative template that fully responds to all aspects of the solicitation, and that you do so in the order presented, which will be the order the reviewers will be looking for when reading your proposal. Format your proposal to make it easy to read, e.g., through the use of white space, readable font sizes, manageable paragraphs, etc. Your project description is limited to 5 pages; get to the point quickly. Finally, reviewers respond best to details and specifics, and not so well to vague generalities.

Outcomes and Impacts: Remember that the JFF is designed to help tenure-track faculty members establish their research/creative activity and make progress toward tenure. It is essential that you

clearly describe your project's expected outcomes and the specific impact of the work on your scholarship and your academic field more generally. As appropriate, include a description of any external funding opportunities that will be pursued as a result of the project outcomes.

Endorsement Letter: A letter of endorsement from your department chair/director is a required, important component of your JFF application that is weighed in equal measure with the other review criteria. Request the letter early, and provide your chair/director with everything they need to write an effective, thorough, and vivid endorsement (e.g., a description of your proposed project, a list/brief summary of your important scholarly contributions, the specific support services the department will be providing for your project, and key sections from the JFF solicitation).

Budget and budget justification: The budget should only include costs incurred to conduct the work outlined in your proposal. The accompanying budget justification should be specific, and each budget item should be presented in the same order as they appear in the budget table. Use the same terminology you used in the project narrative and link each budget item back to a specific activity. Ask yourself: *Is my budget feasible (enough resources to do the work), complete (all the costs required by the project), reasonable (based on actual costs when possible) and transparent (links budget with project activities)?*

Addressing Startup Funds: Some faculty are provided with startup funds to assist with research related expenses when they begin their positions at OU. If applicable to your position, you must include in your budget justification any amount available for the proposed JFF project through startup funds and describe why you are asking for additional funding from the JFF program. If you did not receive, or have already expended your startup package, specifically note this with an appropriate, simple statement such as: "I have not received startup funds from the University of Oklahoma," or "My startup funds have been expended." *If you choose not to address startup funding, it may leave some reviewers questioning whether your work could/should be supported by those funds.*