What to expect from the Arts Grants Facilitator

Introduction
The two major services offered by the Arts Grants Facilitator are comprehensive reviews of your written grant applications, and consultation meetings to discuss funding for your research. I am also available to answer any grant-related questions you may have. For any of these services, the following apply:

You will always be treated with respect.

Your privacy will be protected. Only the Associate Dean (Research) is aware that we are working together. I will not discuss your application with other faculty members in any circumstances. The Associate Dean (Research) will discuss your application in confidence at Dean of Arts’ office meetings, if necessary (for example, just to let the Dean know that you are applying, or if you request matching funding).

Your intellectual property will be protected, and your proposal will be kept confidential. Your documents are kept on a password-protected computer in an encrypted folder, with an encrypted backup. Your application will be kept on file for 7 years, as supporting documentation if the grant is awarded, and as a backup should you decide to re-spin the application at a later date. If during the grant facilitation process you ask a question which requires me to contact additional sources, only the essential information will be communicated, using the most general terms possible.

Comprehensive Review
A comprehensive review is defined as constructive feedback on all or part of your written grant application. Usually, I ask that you email me a complete PDF copy of your application, including your CV, as well as all major textboxes and attachments as Word documents; however I can also help with individual pieces of the application. I will use Word’s track changes and comments features to provide constructive feedback in the following areas:

1) Research plan: I’ll examine the literature review to see whether you’ve clearly described the previous research in your area, and how your current project fits within this context. Then I’ll review the research plan to see whether the methodological approach as described can answer all of the research questions, achieve all of the objectives, and lead to the impacts and expected outcomes you’ve proposed. I’ll note any potential caveats, roadblocks, or inconsistencies, and will suggest ways to account for them. I’ll examine the feasibility of the project’s scope and depth with respect to the proposed timeline, and may suggest modifications to the plan to improve feasibility. Finally, I may suggest additions to the plan which may enhance the competitiveness of the proposal.

2) Structural organization: I’ll examine the organization of the proposal to ensure that the structure speaks to both the application instructions and evaluation criteria, such that both are explicitly addressed and easily identifiable. During this process, I’ll check whether the application is cohesive across sections, and that internal cross-referencing is used to direct the reviewer to further relevant information; I’ll make structural suggestions as needed.

3) Spin: As I go through your application I’ll analyze its current fit with the agency’s mandate and evaluation criteria. I’ll make suggestions to help further enhance the fit, emphasize the originality, impact, and importance of your work, and market your specific experience and skills.
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4) **Budget:** The budget will be examined to ensure that all expenses are appropriate, feasible, and allowable. The following are examples of items that will be checked: All calculations; hourly and/or stipend rates for personnel, including benefits and vacation pay; adherence to MUN’s employment policies; use of MUN institutional tax rate on all applicable purchases; and adherence to MUN policies on eligible travel and accommodation reimbursements. Additional items to include will be suggested if applicable (for example, book purchasing costs, Visa fees, conference registration costs, in-kind and/or cash contributions, etc).

5) **Wordsmithing / Style:** This finer level of editing usually occurs after an initial review of the plan and structure of the proposal (see below). I’ll examine the application to ensure that it’s written for an intelligent but non-expert audience (for example, that technical language and jargon is minimized and, if used, is properly defined). I’ll make suggestions to increase clarity, logical flow, parallelism, and active vs. passive phrasing, and will also suggest alternate phrasing to promote positive and confident connotations.

6) **Adherence to technical specifications:** Finally, I’ll make sure that all necessary forms and attachments are complete and included, and that the font size, margins, and numbers of pages are within the application guidelines.

**Level of Feedback by Submission Date**

The level of comprehensive feedback I can provide varies depending on when the application is submitted for review. There are 3 types of comprehensive review (Full, Second, and Quick), as well as a non-comprehensive Technical Review. I usually recommend at least two rounds of comprehensive review, corresponding to the Full and Second round deadlines below. When you submit your application for review, I will give you a time estimate for when I will return feedback. Times will vary depending on the length of the queue, however for Second/Quick reviews I aim to provide feedback by 1 week before the Arts deadline, to allow enough time for you to revise your application. Applications are reviewed in the order they are received. **For SSHRC competitions, review deadlines will be earlier due to higher loads. Deadlines will be announced.**

**Full + face-to-face meeting (8+ weeks before Arts deadline):** This review covers sections 1-4 above, and is a very careful, unrushed reading and review of the application. It is not unusual for me to spend a day or more focused on one proposal. Grant crafting feedback is extensive and covers all sections of the application. I will notify you by email when the review is complete, and we can meet in person to discuss the feedback and any questions you may have. Meetings generally last between 30 and 90 minutes.

**Second (4 weeks before Arts deadline):** If you’ve already had one round of revisions, in the second round I’ll review any edits you’ve made and may provide additional suggestions for areas 1-4 above; I’ll also focus more on spin, as well as style and technical content (items 5 and 6).

**Quick (4 weeks before Arts deadline):** If this is your only round of review, the feedback will address areas 1-6 above, but will be less thorough and in written form only, as a Quick review is conducted in a quarter of the time of a Full review. That said, the review will include a thorough check of the budget and technical specifications.

**Technical (2 weeks before Arts deadline):** This review will ensure you meet basic requirements of the application in terms of eligibility, budget requests, necessary attachments / information, and technical specifications. Usually I cannot offer grant crafting advice at this late stage.
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Consultation Meetings
A consultation is any meeting during which we discuss your research, which can be at any stage of development. Some examples of common reasons people set up a meeting include:

Creating an action plan to become more competitive in external competitions
   Good for you if:  You’re trying to build your research portfolio at the start of your career, or are coming back to research after a hiatus, or simply if you want extra advice.
   What we’ll do: We’ll discuss your research interests, talk about your short and long-term research portfolio goals, and review your CV. Then we’ll discuss steps you could take to become a more competitive candidate for both small and large grant competitions. Finally, we’ll identify some appropriate entry-level funding opportunities which would enhance your research funding history and make you more competitive in future competitions.

Identifying and developing a fundable research project
   Good for you if:  You have a lot of ideas but don’t know which ones would be the most attractive to potential funding agencies.
   What we’ll do: We’ll discuss your general research interests, identify your passionate areas, and narrow down your ideas to identify a fundable research project. Then we’ll develop the project so that it addresses both your own goals and the objectives of potential funding agencies.

Finding funding for a research project you’ve already identified
   Good for you if:  You have a specific research project that you’d like to do, and you’d like to determine which funding agency would be the best fit.
   What we’ll do: We’ll discuss your project and identify a funding agency and program which provides a good fit between your goals and the funding opportunity. Then we’ll talk about how we could tailor your project to produce a more cohesive fit with the potential agency.

Crafting an application for a funding agency and project that you’ve already identified
   Good for you if:  You know the research project and agency you want to apply to, and you’re looking to craft a more competitive application.
   What we’ll do: We’ll discuss your project, as well as the mandates of the funding agency, objectives of the funding program, and evaluation criteria of the competition. Then we’ll create a grant crafting approach which emphasizes alignment between your project and the funding agency you’ve selected.

Re-spinning a prior application
   Good for you if:  Your previous application was not funded, and you’d like advice on how to enhance it for the next competition cycle.
   What we’ll do: Prior to our meeting, I’ll perform a comprehensive review on the unsuccessful application to examine the research plan, structural organization, and spin (see page 1). During our meeting we’ll discuss my comments and suggestions, as well as any adjudicator feedback you’ve received, and will develop a strategy to improve problem areas. We’ll also discuss modifications to the project which could improve its competitiveness. Finally, we’ll discuss how your project could be further aligned with the mandate of the funding agency, objectives of the funding program, and evaluation criteria of the competition.
After you submit your application

After you submit your application to the Dean of Arts Office it will be processed by a number of individuals, all of whom will treat your application with the utmost confidence:

**Arts Grants Facilitation Officer:** I may be asked to review your application, even if we have not previously worked together on this particular submission.

**Associate Dean (Research):** Carrie Dyck will review your application to provide a Faculty signature, and if she is not available, your application may be reviewed by the Associate Dean (Undergraduate) or the Dean to obtain this signature. You may be asked to modify your application at this point. Common requests include clarifications of the budget, and clarifications of cash and/or in-kind commitments from Memorial.

**Staff from the Dean of Arts Office:** Office staff will deliver your application and signature pages to the Office of Research Services (ORS).

**Staff at the Office of Research Services:** ORS staff will process your application and may request further modifications to your submission.

For further information

If you have any grant related questions, or would like my help to secure research funding, please email me at k bromley@mun.ca or call 864-8050. I look forward to working with you!