

**Most Common CIHR Applicant Mistakes:
New Investigator Awards & Operating Grants**

1. Organization of the research proposal deviates significantly from the tried and proven:

RATIONALE (including **HYPOTHESIS/AIMS** listed on first page)

BACKGROUND (concise and brief)

OBJECTIVES/SPECIFIC AIMS (more detailed than first page)

RESEARCH PLAN (that addresses each aim and a plan for results that differ from expected outcome)

SIGNIFICANCE

2. The proposal summary does not adequately highlight (through bolding or use of bullets/paragraph structure) the specific aims and hypotheses of the research project and provides no visual cues (indenting, bolding, numbering) to the reviewer as to the structure of the research plan.

3. The rationale for the proposed study is either omitted entirely or given only a sentence cursory treatment, leaving the lay reader or reviewer in the dark as to the motivation for the proposal and the importance of the subject.

4. A rationale is provided, but it lacks the Canadian health care statistics required to back up the claims of the applicant and to justify the submission of the proposal to a national grants competition.

5. The formatting of the proposal (headings and subheadings, numbering system for sections, adequate spacing) is either impenetrable or non-existent, making navigation for the reviewer difficult.

6. Use of the phrase “see below” or “see above” is excessive; the exact location (page or section) of the material to which reference is made is never specified, complicating navigation for the reviewer.

7. Contrary to CIHR format rules, figure captions are excessively long and involve discussion of concepts that should appear in the body of the proposal.

8. The text is filled with excessive jargon and short forms that are never defined, making for an extremely difficult read. Abbreviations are used without ever writing out the full term first, assuming the reviewer knows what the abbreviation stands for.

9. In concluding the proposal, the applicant never addresses/summarizes the significance of the proposed work with respect to the original problems set out in the opening Rationale.

10. The proposal does not follow the required spacing, margins, font type/size, or it has additional pages added.