



25 Rules on how to Write a Good Proposal

Rule 1:

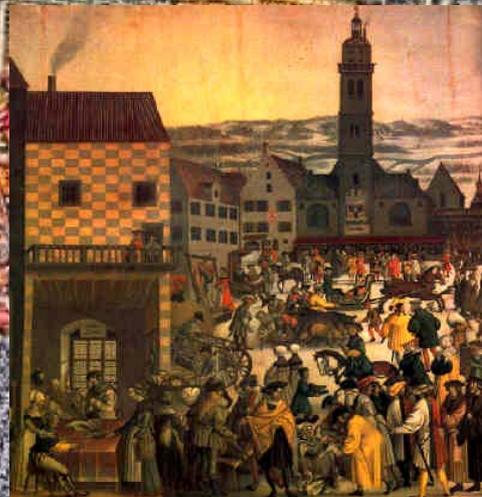
You need to have a good scientific idea or problem to be attacked !



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Rule 2:

Good or bad idea - that is defined by your peers. Take this into account !





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Rule 3:

Before you start to write - make sure that your *mission* fits the *mission* of the funding agency !



Do not become an Anti-David !!!!!



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Rule 4:

Be optimistic - there are many, many funding agencies...

DFG	NSF
BMBF	NASA
DLR	DOE
ESF	Humbolt
EU	ESA
INTAS	



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Rule 5:

Find others who successfully applied to this agency. Study a sample proposal !

Scaling properties of dynamo models and planetary dynamos.

Proposal to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

1. General Information

Proposal in the priority programme

Geomagnetic variations: spatio-temporal structure, processes and effects on system Earth

Continuation of project Ch77/11-2

1.1 Applicant

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1.2 Title Scaling properties of dynamo models and planetary dynamos.

1.3 Keyword: dynamo simulation

1.4 Research fields: geophysics, geomagnetism, planetary physics

1.5 Planned research period: Two years.

1.6 Period covered by this proposal: support is requested for two years.

1.7 Start of funding period: 01.04.2003



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Rule 6:

Funding agency people are only partly administrators - they have experience, contact them with your questions !





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Rule 7:

Think about external and internal deadlines !



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Rule 8:

The display of the proposal should be attractive. Avoid spelling errors !

Handwritten proposal





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Rule 9:

The peer-reviewers are not paid ! And often are from different fields.



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Rule 10:

The title of your proposal should be sexy !

But do not prostitute yourself !

Study of the interaction of stellar winds with magnetized objects surrounding stars at habitable distances

or

Magnetospheres of Extra-Solar Planets



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Rule 11:

Follow strictly the rules of the funding agency for the title page etc.



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Rule 12:

The abstract is important. It serves as a first, sometimes also final information about the proposal

Sample abstract:

The proposed study aims at collecting statistical information about successful proposals. Details are found in the proposal proper.



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Rule 13:

Proposal writing is a very ritualized process.

Scientific hypothesis

Specific aims

Current state of knowledge

Experience of your team

Your pilot studies

Methods and tools to attack the problem

Timetable

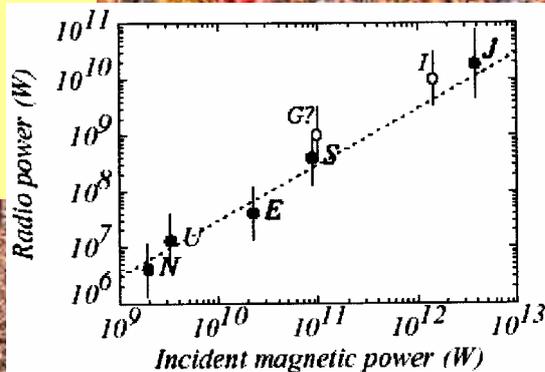
Resource level



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Rule 14:

Your scientific hypothesis should be testable ! And it should be significant.





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Rule 15:

**Specific aims are important !
You cannot do everything at the same time.**

Extra-solar magnetospheres:

Find scaling laws for magnetospheres

Find scaling laws for planetary magnetic field

Apply laws found to known ESPs

Find scaling laws for radiation



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Rule 16:

Current state of knowledge section is very important and critical.

What is known ?

What is not known ?

Why is your hypothesis important ?

**Give a fair review of previous and competing work.
It is a peer-review process!**



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Rule 17:

Experience of your team



Present your highly skilled team !!!!



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Rule 18:

Pilot study results are very important.

...but some colleagues already did the research they are asking funding for. This is somewhat absurd and non-scientific...



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Rule 19:

Methods and tools to be used should be described in some detail

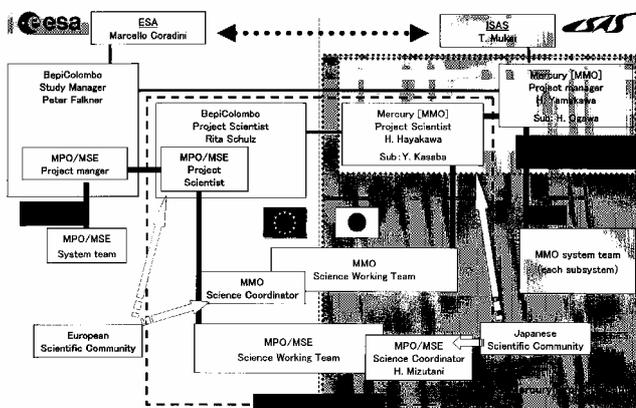


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Rule 20:

Prove your management qualities and provide an organigramme

BepiColombo Project organization plan

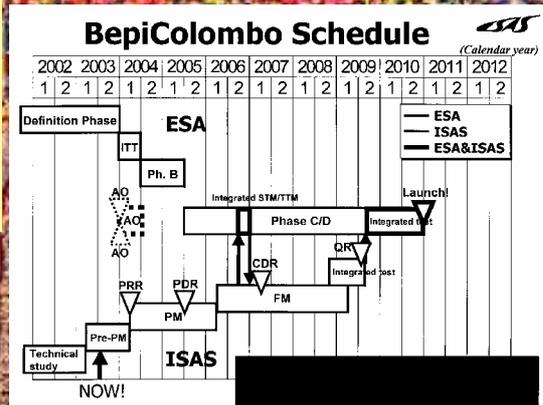




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Rule 21:

Provide them with a time table and schedule !



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Rule 22:

Ressource level:
be as detailed
as possible !
Add a bit for the
referees to cancel.





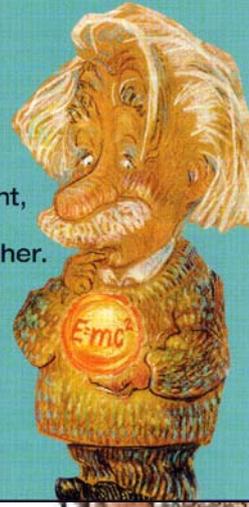
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Rule 23:

Only the one who tries can win !

Nur wer nicht sucht, ist vor Irrtum sicher.

Albert Einstein



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Rule 24:

If you loose -
keep on trying!

If faut imaginer
Sisyphé heureux

Albert Camus



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Rule 25: If you win, have a party and invite me !