# 2026 PRF Grant Writing Tips

## Tips for grant success from the APA Grants Review Committee

Part of the purpose of the PRF grant application process is to enhance physiotherapists' grant writing skills so they can be more competitive for this and other funding opportunities. To this end, the Grants Review Committee has provided some suggestions based on their experience assessing PRF and other successful grant applications.

1. **Ensure you directly address the evaluation criteria.**
    - Read the evaluation criteria carefully as applications that do not address these will not score highly.
    - Use key words from the criteria and directly outline how your project addresses them.

2. **Make sure the methodology you are using, including your statistical analysis, is appropriate to answer each of the research questions proposed.**
    - If your proposed study is a pilot/feasibility trial, ensure you utilise appropriate outcomes (e.g., feasibility outcomes as primary and patient outcomes as secondary).

3. **Study Type**

If proposing a **pilot or feasibility randomised controlled trial**, please follow guidance from the CONSORT 2010 statement: extension to randomised pilot and feasibility trials (https://www.bmj.com/content/355/bmj.i5239). For example, propose feasibility measures as primary outcomes (e.g., acceptability, recruitment processes, adherence, fidelity) and avoid planning inferential statistics to make conclusions about intervention effects. Although it is important to justify the sample size for a pilot and feasibility trial, a formal sample size calculation is typically not necessary as the findings should inform the sample size calculation for a full trial. See the above CONSORT statement for more guidance on this. Please note, if proposing a full trial, reviewers will carefully scrutinise the sample size calculation to ensure it is adequately powered.

If proposing an **observational or cohort study**, please consider the STROBE Statement/s relevant for the design being proposed (https://www.strobe-statement.org/). Although the STROBE statements were developed to strengthen the reporting of observational studies the elements can be a valuable guide for components to include in the proposal. Some key elements to consider are clear rationale and objective for the proposed study, planned recruitment strategies and anticipated sample size, data collection procedures, follow up methods, clearly defined outcomes/variables of interest, measurement of confounders if relevant, justification for any planned subgroups and planned analysis methods,

If the proposal includes a **systematic review,** please follow the PRISMA – Protocol Statement (https://www.prisma-statement.org/protocols). Please include a clear rationale and objective for the review, outline the eligibility criteria, information sources, search strategy, screening and data extraction processes, primary and secondary (if applicable) outcomes, quality assessment, risk of bias assessment, and planned data synthesis methods including any planned meta-analyses. The following publication may also be of benefit to review (https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2023.105803).

4. **Ensure all relevant research components are adequately discussed in the research proposal.**
    - Allocate a proportionate amount of the application to all aspects (quantitative and qualitative as relevant) of the project.
    - If your proposed study is mixed or multi-methods, ensure all aspects are adequately discussed.
    - Describe the quantitative methodology including the recruitment strategy, eligibility criteria, sample size, outcome measures and analysis in detail, as relevant.
    - Describe the qualitative methodology including the sampling approach, eligibility criteria, sampling framework, sample size, and analysis in detail, as relevant. Ensure trustworthiness and rigour discussions are appropriate for qualitative research (e.g., not 'reliability' or 'bias' but 'richness/depth', transferability', 'reflexivity' or similar).
    - Use references to support your chosen methodology.
    - Discuss how you or your team have sufficient experience in your chosen study design and methodologies.

5. **Ensure adequate details are included for the knowledge translation strategy.**
    - This section requires further details than simply saying you will publish your findings in a peer-reviewed journal and present at a particular conference (as these are considered passive dissemination strategies).
    - The strategy does not have to be completed within the project timeframe: it can include future plans of how you see your research findings being translated by, and generating impact for, relevant stakeholders, including healthcare providers, managers, policy-makers, informal caregivers, patients, and the public in the improvement of health.
    - Consider including a variety of elements of knowledge translation such as knowledge synthesis, knowledge dissemination, knowledge exchange and knowledge application.
    - The strategy should be appropriate for the project. For example, for basic science research, knowledge translation may also comprise application of the findings to future research (and an explanation of how this will be achieved).
    - Describe how you will access your target populations (e.g., team members have existing connections).

6. **Make sure you have a research team with the appropriate skills, expertise and commitment to support your project.**
    - Where appropriate, please consider including consumers/people with lived experience of the condition on the team.

7. **Consider your audience.**
    - Your application might be reviewed by people who do not have specific expertise in this area. Have someone not associated with the project carefully read the application to identify any areas that are not clear or inconsistent. Offer to do this for other people too! Reading other grants is a great way to improve your skills.

8. **Address feedback from the EOI stage in the full application (only applicable if shortlisted to this stage)**
    - Make sure you carefully consider any issues identified by reviewers.
    - While you do not necessarily need to provide a formal response, make sure it is clear in your full application how any concerns will be addressed.