Getting that Grant!

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- Success rates are low, and success depends on many factors - keep trying.
- With each failure, use the reviewer comments to make your next application even better.

Some other suggestions

- Write the summary/introduction (and much of the application) so that the *importance* and *excitement* is successfully conveyed to a **non-specialist**.
- Get **three** people to read your proposal - an expert in your area, someone from a different area of mathematics, and a *non-mathematician* (the last is especially important for Leverhulme).
- Key questions you should affirmatively answer: *Does it fill a gap*? *Are you uniquely suited to bring this project to fruition?*
- *Begin with a bold/big claim*. Even if you are not going to solve a million dollar problem or cure cancer, connect your proposal to such big problems.
- Highlight challenging aspects of your methodology and show your expertise to meet these challenges. Discuss any contentious choices.

Applications to the Leverhulme Trust

Various Leverhulme Schemes

- **Research Project Grants** (up to £500K, very flexible)
- Research Fellowships (up to £55K; teaching replacement, research expenses)
- Early Career Fellowships (for those without permanent positions; 50% of salary for 3 years)
- Several others...

Leverhulme Research Project Grants

- Overall success rate about 18%.
- A **two-stage** process: approximately 1,000 Outline Applications received annually; all taken to Stage 1 peer review (approximately 12 weeks). (Leverhulme Advisory Panel members play key role)
- Positive recommendation (approximately 40- 50%) leads to invitation to submit a Detailed Application (3 deadlines per year)
- Detailed Applications submitted to Stage 2 peer review (you select 3 reviewers + Trust selects some more) and decision by Trust Board (success rate approximately 40%)

Some other key differences between Leverhulme and EPSRC grants

- You get to pick 3 reviewers at Stage 2, who are **all** asked. Choose your reviewers carefully!
- No impact statements, national importance section, etc.
- The Trust does **not** pay for overheads. (So a £300K Leverhulme Grant gives you similar returns as a £700K EPSRC grant).
- Leverhulme Grants do **not** pay PI salary.
- You **can** hire someone for replacement teaching.
- You **can** ask to recruit a PhD student.
- Ultimate decision made by Trust board (Comprises ten former members of Unilever senior management) and based on peer-review reports and LAP advice.

Particular weight given to

- The **originality** of the proposed work.
- The **removal of barriers** between traditional disciplines.
- Intellectual curiosity and **willingness to take appropriate risks.**
- The extent to which the research is the reflection of one **individual's vision** or aspiration.
- **Fresh directions** and departures from existing approaches
- Your answer to the question: **Why Leverhulme**?

The "Why Leverhulme" question

- Extremely important, especially at Stage 1.
- Avoid generic statements or jargon.
- Tie it in with what the Trust values (originality, breaking down barriers between disciplines, fresh directions, reflection of long-term dream/vision, high-risk/high-reward).

Good sentences to put in this answer

(Taken from Leverhulme Presentation by Professor David Lowe, longtime LAP member)

- "Therefore,the research programme will transcend traditional boundaries among physics, chemistry, materials science and engineering."
- " I am curious and eager to find out whether the proposed idea is feasible. This work represents the applicants long-term research ambition in developing next-generation microfluidic technology. The findings will re-shape the future research and technological development in the field."
- "The concept of emerging equilibrium-like states within non-equilibrium systems is radically new; it challenges the existing view in statistical physics that typically separates the two types of systems."

Good luck!