

Grant Submission Readiness Worksheet

Seven Checkpoints Before You Submit

Investigator: _____

Project title: _____

Target funder(s): _____

Date: _____

Work through the seven checkpoints below before deciding where to apply. If you can't clear a checkpoint, the answer is usually to refine the project, not to submit anyway.

The first checkpoint asks why the work matters. The last asks why it matters to the funder you're approaching. Everything between is about whether you can credibly do the work.

Checkpoint 1. Can you define the unmet need?

Prompt: What is the clinical or scientific gap this work addresses? For pediatric work, name it in concrete terms: which children, what outcome, what current care fails to deliver.

Checkpoint 2. Can you state the question in one sentence?

Prompt: Write it here. If it takes a paragraph, it isn't sharp enough yet.

Checkpoint 3. What is your testable assertion — a hypothesis, or a defined exploratory aim?

Prompt: State which type of work this is (hypothesis-driven or discovery / systems / unbiased) and write the specific assertion.

Checkpoint 4. Is your preliminary data matched to your target funder's expectations?

Prompt: Which funder(s) are you targeting? What level of pilot data do they expect? What do you have? Where are the gaps?

Checkpoint 5. Do you have the resources and the right team to execute the science?

Prompt: Models (cellular / animal / organoid), cohorts and biomaterials, computational, core facility access, statistical and regulatory support, and collaborators. In hand vs. needs to be built?

Checkpoint 6. What puts you in a unique position to do this work?

Prompt: Early career: novel methodology, unusual access, or a distinctive team. More established: a track record with publications, prior awards, visible contribution to the area.

Checkpoint 7. Can you clearly articulate why the funder's mission cares about your work?

Prompt: Write one sentence mapping your question to the funder's own mission language including what population, what outcome, what advance they explicitly say they want to support.
