

# FACILITIES & RESOURCES TOOLKIT



Suggestions on how to optimize this section of your grant to increase funding likelihood.

It's time to prepare your grant. You have a great idea, an interesting approach to solve a problem, and you're ready to write. The merits of your science will play a crucial role in determining whether your project is funded, but many applicants fail to consider the impact of other required sections of the application, such as *Facilities and Resources*. Using boilerplate language for these "less impactful" portions of the application may seem like a tempting timesaver. Avoid making that mistake; taking shortcuts may impact the score of your proposal. Each section of your grant contributes to the larger story that you are attempting to convey to reviewers. Tailor every section of your grant to give your proposal a competitive edge, which is crucial in the current funding environment.

Experienced grant writers use the *Facilities and Resources* section to strengthen their applications. Reviewers consider this section when evaluating your potential for success, and it will influence your overall score. If you want to write an engaging, winning proposal, leverage this content. Take the time to tailor it to your proposal. Make sure your information is clear, concise, and detailed. Doing so can substantially increase

your credibility and show reviewers that you have considered how to leverage the resources available to you at CHOP and Penn.

**"A grant application is not science; it is the marketing of science."**

James L.M. Ferrara and Alvin H. Schmaier\*

In the *Facilities and Resources* section, you will convince reviewers that your research will benefit from the unique features of your scientific environment, and that you have the necessary resources to be successful. Highlight resources that provide specialty assistance, or specific organizational units that will contribute to your specific project's success. By demonstrating that your institutional environment is appropriate for your training and/or research experience, you can convince reviewers that you are the **right person** to fund, not just someone with a good idea.

\* <http://asheducationbook.hematologylibrary.org/content/2002/1/484.full>

CHOP and Penn encompass a rich and collaborative environment with many available resources. For example, the clinic that you work in may see specific subject populations that are relevant to your proposal, or perhaps someone on campus is already working with a model relevant to your area of study. Use the *Facilities and Resources* section to identify relevant working groups or labs that you interact with. If any of your collaborators are writing a letter of support, use this section to confirm or expand upon support narratives discussed in those letters to draw a **line of continuity** throughout your proposal.

If you are a CHOP researcher proposing a collaborative experiment with Penn or another institution, be sure to describe the facilities and resources that are available to you at each site. Many reviewers will not be familiar with the location. Some institutions sprawl across a large geographical area. In other cities, collaborating institutions may not have the same **proximity** as CHOP and Penn, making frequent visits inconvenient. By explaining to reviewers that you are only a few blocks away from your Penn collaborator or shared equipment, you show that your collaborations position you for success.

Aside from institutional and physical resources, you will want to highlight the intellectual resources available to you. You may have **access to subject-matter experts** that are essential to the completion of your project. Discuss any useful collaborative arrangements and highlight your physical proximity to these collaborators. Reviewers like to know that you have opportunities for impromptu interaction with people related to your project.

**Use adjectives and descriptive words:**

modern	specialized
high-performance	centralized
specially constructed unit	sterile <small>(with classifications, if appropriate)</small>
multifaceted clinical operations	cutting edge / state of the art
high-throughput analysis	validated / certified
fully accredited	advanced technologies

The *Facilities and Resources* section has **no page limit**, allowing you to include additional details that may not fit elsewhere in your grant. Take advantage of the space to draw a mental picture for reviewers by using adjectives and descriptive words. You can even refer to the *Facilities and Resources* section in your Research Strategy, which will **save space in your proposal**.

## Guidance on how to organize your Facilities and Resources section

Identify the facilities you plan to use and describe the resources that are **directly applicable** to your proposed work. For example, your lab may do animal work, but if your project does not involve animals, you do not need to discuss the vivarium. This section is commonly organized into subsections with the following headers: laboratory, animal, computer/software, office, clinical, and other. Under these subheadings below, you will find detailed information on what to include within each subsection. Include square footage, addresses, relative proximity, and other important physical aspects of each. As discussed above, relative proximity to collaborators and other experts in your field of study is important to include. Discuss their capacities, pertinent capabilities, and availability to your project.

**LABORATORY:** Describe the lab's location on campus, including the building and room number. If you have a dedicated laboratory, list its size in square feet. If you are sharing space with another PI or working in a mentor's laboratory, describe that space and explain what is available to you for your project. Include specific information about pertinent capabilities and list availability of laboratory items including: biological safety cabinets, chemical fume hoods, tissue culture incubators, centrifuges, refrigerators, and freezers. If more than one laboratory will be used for your project, include this information under a separate bolded title for each research space.

**ANIMAL:** If your study involves animals, briefly describe where they are housed, and the proximity to your laboratory. Describe any specific procedure rooms or surgical equipment available for your animal studies. List available institutional resources such as veterinary care and basic husbandry.

**COMPUTER/SOFTWARE:** Describe what computer resources are available to you. Include computers, their operating systems, and basic software needed for your research (Microsoft Office, etc.). Describe your Internet access, and access to electronic journals. Use this section to list any specialized statistical or graphing software. Describe the computers available to lab staff.

**OFFICE:** If applicable, describe your office. List square footage, location, and proximity to the lab. List any office space available to your students, technicians, or other employees. Describe the size, whether it is dedicated office space, whether it is shared with others, and if it is located within the lab or elsewhere.

**CLINICAL:** Detail any clinical resources available to support your work, including clinic space and specialized equipment. If you receive support from any clinical cores, or use centralized laboratory services, indicate that here.

**OTHER:** Provide any information describing the other resources available to the project. This section is suitable to highlight any other institutional, departmental or divisional equipment or resources necessary for your project that do not fit neatly into the other sections. Resources such as 3D printers, machine shops, or electronic shops can be described here. Make sure to address the extent to which they would be available to the project.

**SCIENTIFIC ENVIRONMENT:** Here is a great place to detail your proximity to others who are important to the success of your project. Talk about relevant seminars and symposia that you are involved in. List other investigators who you interact with through these events. Highlight the importance of your environment to the success of your project.

## Special Considerations for Early Stage Investigators

If you meet NIH criteria as a New or Early Stage Investigator you will want to provide additional information that describes CHOP's institutional investment in your success. Some areas that may be specifically relevant to you as an Early Stage Investigator are listed below. While not an exhaustive list, these are examples of topics that may elevate your *Facilities and Resources* section.

### Examples

- Resources – class, travel training
- Collegial – structured mentor or peer support
- Relevant programming – career enrichment programs, training in lab management
- Guidance on mentoring trainees or students involved with your project
- Administrative management; centralized management support
- Financial support; protected research time with salary support

You may find it helpful to read examples of other successful grants. Even if the grant is not in your field of study, you can find inspiration on how others have successfully leveraged their *Facilities and Resources* section to convince reviewers they were the right person to fund. As you start preparing your near-final drafts, involve others in your revisions. Make sure your mentor and peers read your proposal in its entirety, including the *Facilities and Resources* section. Involve others who are slightly outside of your field of study and ask for targeted feedback. Ask if you have developed a cohesive narrative throughout your proposal, and if your *Facilities and Resources* align with that narrative.

## Key Takeaways

- Convey to reviewers that you are the right person to fund.
- Draw a line of continuity throughout your proposal, including the *Facilities and Resources* section.
- “Location, location, location” – Your proximity to space, resources, key personnel, *et cetera* is crucial.
- Highlight your access to subject-matter experts.
- Leverage the lack of a page limit to save desirable real estate within your proposal.
- Detail only the facilities and resources that are directly applicable to the proposal you are submitting.
- If you fit the criteria of a New or Early Stage Investigator, highlight the abundant training opportunities and other resources available to advance your career.

## Looking for More Information?

Grant Review Communities offer several grant-writing support options. If you are interested in learning more, and to identify other grant-writing resources available to you at CHOP, please contact [GRC](#).

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