

# Guidance for writing the lay case for support

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The lay case for support is an essential part of your grant application. As a charity, our research funded by the generous donations from our supporters, many of whom have psoriasis. It is therefore vital that the research they have helped to fund is accessible and relevant to them.

In addition to this, your grant application will be reviewed by our **Experts by Experience Committee (EXEC)**, which is made up of people with personal experience of living with psoriasis. They will use their experience to review your application and comment on the relevance, feasibility and potential benefits. **The comments and scores from the EXEC have equal weighting to those from the external peer reviewers’.**

It is therefore essential that the lay application is not only understandable to lay readers but also comprehensive. Please use the tips below to help write the lay application:

- **Write with your audience in mind**

The EXEC all have personal experience of psoriasis, therefore a detailed explanation of psoriasis is not needed. Use more personal language and consider how your writing may be interpreted by people who live with psoriasis, for example consider changing ‘psoriasis patients’ to ‘people with psoriasis’.

- **Have a clear objective**

Ensure that your project objectives are clear and the plans for achieving these are well defined and easy to understand.

- **Use plain English**

Try to use everyday language, like you would see in a newspaper article. However, the application shouldn’t be over simplified - just more accessible i.e. without the jargon, abbreviations or acronyms. If technical terms are required, provide a clear explanation or consider including a glossary. Avoid using unexplained abbreviations or acronyms. One of our EXEC members commented that ‘Too much scientific detail can make the objective hard to follow and appear as if little effort was made to engage the lay reader.’

- **Use shorter sentences**

Long, meandering sentences can be difficult to follow. Try to use sentences containing around 15-20 words for clarity, and use shorter sentences for impact. Ensure that any longer



sentences contain no more than three pieces of information, as this makes them easier to digest.

- **Use active phrases**

Active phrases will help to shorten and clarify the writing, for example instead of 'A blood sample will be taken by us' use 'We will take a blood sample'.

- **Use images and diagrams**

Pictures and diagrams are recommended if they improve comprehension and readability. Images should only be referred to in the abstract if they can be published on the Psoriasis Association website.

- **Use bullet points to break up blocks of text or complex information**

- **If possible, ask someone outside of research to read a draft and highlight anything they think is unclear**

- **For additional advice, contact your local Research Design Service run by the NIHR.**

They can give you free and confidential advice on all aspects of your application, including helping you to review your plain English writing. Contact details for your local service can be found at <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/support/research-design-service.htm>