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Winning External Research Funding

Iain R. Spears
Sport and Exercise Subject Group
SSSL
Social Futures Institute
Overview of Workshop

1. Previous grant writing
2. Application process
3. Stages of the application process
4. Comparison with unsuccessful bids
5. Workshop Task
   - Develop an outline for a new bid (Groups of 5)
   - Prizes
Previous Grant Writing

**Research Grants**


Technogym Spa (£10,500). Feasibility study into low-cost motion capture system for use in gym environment (Spears).

The Leverhulme Trust (£54,829). Biomechanical analysis of carpal bones: Implications for changes from quadruped to biped locomotion (Macho, Spears, Leakey) 2004.


**Partnerships**

Natural Environmental Research Council (£180,500). Dietary adaptations of extant primates and Plio-Pleistocene hominids: Masticatory biomechanics and teeth. (Macho [Spears named as sole collaborator]).

German Research Council (£89,500). The effect of patient activity on the micromotion in cementless acetabular cups: Optimisation of the conditions required for boney ingrowth. (Morlock, Hille and Schneider [Spears named as international collaborator], 2001).
Previous Grant Writing

Rejected

EPSRC: Fifth metatarsal fractures in footballers (2009)
EPSRC: Stresses on the perineum during cycling (2007)
EPSRC: A three-dimensional model of a 2\textsuperscript{nd} molar (2003)

And many more...
Application process

Digital Economy: Research in the Wild Call (EPSRC)

• Looking for projects which build on early research and puts the concept/prototype in an unusual environment (wild)
Stages of the Application process: Existing knowledge

Health Inequalities

– Discussion over health inequalities (scary stats).
– Metabolic Syndrome (potent cardiovascular disease risk factors including diabetes and pre-diabetes, abdominal obesity, high cholesterol and high blood pressure) is caused, in part, by sedentary lifestyles
  • Worse in males, particularly in deprived areas.
  • If you take a 10 minute walk across Glasgow you see a drop in life expectancy by 15 years.
Stages of the application process: Existing knowledge

• Background Technology
  – DigiTeeser, Tracking of LEDs, Wii Hacks

• Physical Gaming
  – Proven popularity of physical gaming Nintendo Wii
  – Nothing physically demanding (meaningful exercise)
Stages of the Application process: Existing knowledge

• Exercise Intervention

  – High Intensity Interval Training
    • 2 min 3 times a week (huge health benefits for very little effort).
    • “Remarkable” reduction in insulin resistance (Type 2 Diabetes)
    • Massive potential for our population
  – Boxing against resistance bands in an “exergaming” environment
Stages of the Application process: Engagement with partners

• **Working Mens and Social Clubs**
  – Buffs Social Club
  – Beechwood and Easterside Social Club

• **Primary Care Trusts**
  – Middlesbrough
  – Stockton
Impact

**Society**: PCTs, FUSE, Gaming Community, Night-time economy

**Economy**: Computer games companies, Fitness industry, Local Pubs and Clubs, Pub chains, Potential University spin-out

**Knowledge**: Technique to monitor energy expenditure, Technique to capture whole body movements from 3 sensors, Advanced computational techniques for 3D visualisation, Techniques to promote high-intensity exercise, Potential technique to improve metabolic fitness in target-setting.

**People**: UK Skills shortage, New collaborative venture between project partners and research team, Inward investment
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Good news!

EPSRC
Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Panel Rank Ordered List Panel - Digital Economy - Research In The Wild 3
Date of Panel: 27 April 2010
Panel Contact: Dr Helen Daley

Pan...
9 months into the 18 month project

Objectives
3.5 of our 8 objectives have been met

Additional funds
EDF money to create motion capture system
HEIF money to support commercialization

Commercial Edge
2 technology licensing deals
3rd in the pipeline

Knowledge
2 patents applications
4 high quality papers
Fine line between success and failure

Metatarsal Fracture
• Overall, the significance of the research is: GOOD, VERY GOOD, VERY GOOD
• I believe this proposal Could Proceed, Should Proceed, Should Proceed.
• Prioritisation Panel: 17 out of 31

High-intensity Exergaming
• The excellence of this proposal has been demonstrated
• FULLY, FULLY, FULLY, ADEQUATELY
• Prioritisation Panel: 1 out of ??
Success and Failure: Some things which were done differently

• Go for a “Call” mode of funding
  “Are the criteria addressed?” vs “Is this excellent or not?”
• Read and stick to the criteria
• Focus on the project (not yourself).
• Dedicate yourself to the proposal
  – Time out from publishing
• Give value for money
• Use Youtube
• Try and involve a more experienced researcher who is keen on the project (FUSE, PCTs)
Workshop Task: Work up a bid

• **Problem**
  – Much of modern technology in use today is specifically designed to help us minimize our energy expenditure.
  – Lack of physical activity is a major risk factor for life-threatening diseases.
  – In NE only one in three men meet the minimum exercise recommended.

• **Solution**
  – New generation of computer games
  – HIIT low-volume

• **Impact**
  – We will reverse the negative impact of modern technology and instead, use it to get us moving once again.
**Current Calls**

**BBSRC**, High performance sport as a model for the acquisition, retention and retraining of an individual’s skill base

**European Science Foundation Research Conference Scheme**, Proposals invited for high-level research conferences to take place in 2013. Scientists or researchers based at European universities or research institutes in ESF member organisation countries may apply for a grant to organise a single conference lasting for three to four days, which may include up to 130 participants.

**The Spencer Foundation**, based in Chicago, accepts project proposals from around the world and is interested in the ways in which education, broadly conceived, can be improved.
Workshop Task: Work up a bid

• Problem
• Solution
  – Emerging technology
  – Emerging evidence
• Impact
• Prizes
  – Chocolates,
  – One-to-one help from Lisa Briggs to turn the idea into something bigger,
  – Awarded “Best outline bid” (Teesside University Research Conference, 2011) - URF