


**25 Rules on how to Write a Good Proposal**

**Rule 1:**

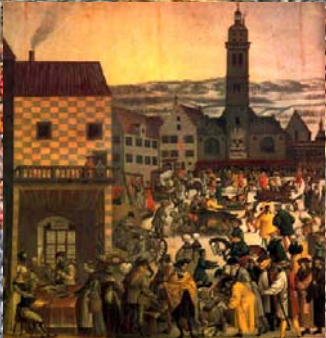
You need to have a good scientific idea or problem to be attacked !



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**Rule 2:**

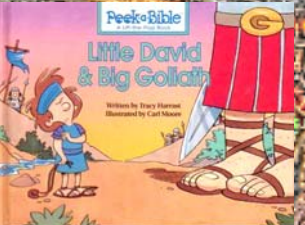
Good or bad idea - that is defined by your peers. Take this into account !



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**Rule 3:**

Before you start to write - make sure that your *mission* fits the *mission* of the funding agency !



Do not become an Anti-David !!!!!

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**Rule 4:**

Be optimistic - there are many, many funding agencies...

DFG	NSF
BMBF	NASA
DLR	DOE
ESF	Humbolt
EU	ESA
INTAS	

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**Rule 5:**

Find others who successfully applied to this agency. Study a sample proposal !

Scaling properties of dynamo models and planetary dynamos.

Proposal to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

1. General Information

Proposed in the priority programme

Cooperative structures: open proposal structure, proposals and efforts to explore further

Continuation of project CB7/11-2

1.1 Applicant

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1.2 Title Scaling properties of dynamo models and planetary dynamos.

1.3 Keyword: dynamo simulation

1.4 Research fields geophysics, geodynamo, planetary physics

1.5 Planned research period: Two years


1.6 Period covered by this proposal: subject is proposed for two years.

1.7 Start of funding period: 01/01/2003

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**Rule 6:**


Funding agency people are only partly administrators - they have experience, contact them with your questions !



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**Rule 7:**

Think about external and internal deadlines !




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**Rule 8:**

The display of the proposal should be attractive. Avoid spelling errors !


Handwritten proposal



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**Rule 9:**

The peer-reviewers are not paid ! And often are from different fields.



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**Rule 10:**

The title of your proposal should be sexy !


But do not prostitute yourself !

Study of the interaction of stellar winds with magnetized objects surrounding stars at habitable distances  
or  
Magnetospheres of Extra-Solar Planets

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**Rule 11:**

Follow strictly the rules of the funding agency for the title page etc.



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**Rule 12:**

The abstract is important. It serves as a first, sometimes also final information about the proposal

Sample abstract:

The proposed study aims at collecting statistical information about successful proposals. Details are found in the proposal proper.



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**Rule 13:**  
**Proposal writing is a very ritualized process.**

- Scientific hypothesis
- Specific aims
- Current state of knowledge
- Experience of your team
- Your pilot studies
- Methods and tools to attack the problem
- Timetable
- Resource level

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**Rule 14:**  
**Your scientific hypothesis should be testable ! And it should be significant.**

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**Rule 15:**  
**Specific aims are important ! You cannot do everything at the same time.**

Extra-solar magnetospheres:

- Find scaling laws for magnetospheres
- Find scaling laws for planetary magnetic field
- Apply laws found to known ESPs
- Find scaling laws for radiation

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**Rule 16:**  
**Current state of knowledge section is very important and critical.**

What is known ?  
 What is not known ?  
 Why is your hypothesis important ?  
 Give a fair review of previous and competing work. It is a peer-review process!

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**Rule 17:**  
**Experience of your team**

**Present your highly skilled team !!!!**

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**Rule 18:**  
**Pilot study results are very important.**

...but some colleagues already did the research they are asking funding for. This is somewhat absurd and non-scientific...

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**Rule 19:**

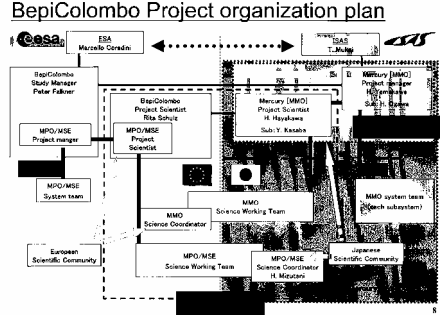
Methods and tools to be used should be described in some detail



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**Rule 20:**

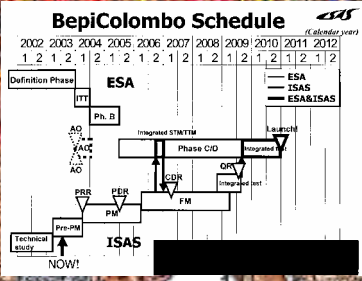
Prove your management qualities and provide an organigramme



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**Rule 21:**


Provide them with a time table and schedule !



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**Rule 22:**


Ressource level: be as detailed as possible ! Add a bit for the referees to cancel.



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**Rule 23:**

Only the one who tries can win !



Nur wer nicht sucht, ist vor Irrtum sicher.  
Albert Einstein

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**Rule 24:**

If you loose - keep on trying!

If faut imaginer Sisyphe heureux  
Albert Camus





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**Rule 25: If you win, have a party and invite me !**