

**ACS Petroleum Research Fund
Checklist of Common Errors
Please Review Carefully Before Submitting a Proposal**

Most unsuccessful proposals have problems with one or more of the following criteria. If in doubt, please email the appropriate Program Manager before the submission deadline. Program Managers and their email addresses are listed on the "Contact PRF" tab of our Website.

1. **Topic outside the scope of ACS PRF.** Research areas of all ACS PRF Advisory Board committees are listed on our website, along with "Research Topics NOT Supported by PRF." Be sure to consult this list to make sure your research topic is not outside the scope of the PRF Trust.
2. **Missing or insufficient statement of petroleum relevance** (*i.e.*, How is the proposal "advanced scientific education and fundamental research in the 'petroleum field'?" with the definition of 'petroleum field' contained within the downloadable "Agreement of Transfer of Trust" document.) This petroleum relevance statement is entered on the online submission page before the PDF file of the proposal is uploaded.
3. **Framing research in terms of "petroleum industry" and not "petroleum science."** The Petroleum Research Fund endowment provides funding for fundamental petroleum-relevant research. ACS PRF has no connection with the petroleum industry, and does not support "applied research" of interest to corporations or industry.
4. **Old version of the application form.** No proposals will be accepted on previous versions of ACS PRF application forms. The watermark and the footer of the application form contain the date of the PRF Advisory Board meeting at which the proposal will be considered.
5. **Incomplete application.** No late submissions or document substitutions after the deadline are allowed. [Early submissions are encouraged to allow for the possibility of being notified of errors that can be corrected with time to resubmit.](#)
6. **Budget for the wrong amount (must be \$110,000 for ND and DNI, \$70,000 for UR, and \$55,000 for UNI proposals).** If necessary to make the total request equal to the stipulated amount, add any "extra dollars" to the student support categories, or to the Expendable Supplies and Services budget.
7. **Insufficient student support.** The Advisory Board requires at least 60 percent of the total ND or DNI budget, or at least 40 percent of UNI and UR budgets, be devoted to support the education and training of students (graduate students, undergraduates, and/or post-doctoral fellows). See instructions.
8. **Principal Investigator salary over the maximum allowable amount of \$8,000 per year (*this amount includes fringe benefits and the salary of the co-PI, if any*).** The limit on PI Salary does not change as a result of any no-cost time extensions.
9. **Travel expenses over the maximum allowable amount of \$2,000 per year.** This is travel to meetings or symposia, to present research results. Travel to obtain data is included in the Field Work budget category.
10. **Proposal longer than 4,000 words, double-spaced in 12-point font.** The word count is entered at the end of the proposal narrative. Proposals that exceed this limitation will not be considered.
11. **Missing information on the PI or co-PI.** For each Principal Investigator (and co-PI), include all academic degrees, institution and date received, the name(s) of the dissertation director(s) of the PI, and any post-doctoral supervisor(s), if appropriate.

12. **Missing or incomplete information on suggested reviewers.** Include the names, professional organization, and email addresses of at least six peer experts who are qualified, willing to take the time to evaluate the proposed research, and who have no conflicts of interest with the PI (and co-PI, if any). This is required on both the application form and the online submission form.
13. **Missing signatures.** The signatures of the PI, the co-PI (if appropriate), and an authorized official of your institution are required on both the title page and the budget page. The institutional official is not the Department Chair, but is the person authorized to commit the PI's institution to performing the proposed research. **All signatures are required on both pages.**
14. **Incomplete reference citations.** Include the names of all authors, complete article title, journal title, year of publication, volume number, and pages of cited article. **Do not use "et al." in reference citations.**
15. **Submit early – Don't wait until the deadline.** Submission of a proposal in the first two weeks of the window may make it possible for us to catch mistakes while there is still time for you to resubmit. Minor problems discovered at the last minute may disqualify an otherwise competitive proposal.