An informal template for formulating a grant proposal

Research quality (a.k.a. sex appeal)

The sexy idea:

Why it's a sexy idea:

Who else has thought about relevant things	What they thought	How this is different

Is this an incremental change, or a 'step change'?

Summary: Why the project is original:

Who cares?

Adventure

Why this is risky. (What about the project makes the outcome uncertain?)

Why the risk is worth the investment.

So what?
What happens if you succeed; what follows from this project:

new knowledge	new tools

Methodology

Try to articulate the aspirations of the project in increasing levels of specificity, making sure that there are relationships between the levels:

Aims (what in general you hope to accomplish)	**Objectives** (concrete outcomes you're *convinced* you will accomplish)	**Deliverables** (specific concrete outputs that you *know* you can deliver)

What's the methodology and why:

Now be specific:

method	yields what kind of data/output	relates to which stated objective or deliverable	is validated how	what depends on it

Assess risks and plan contingencies:

What's likely to go wrong	What happens when it does	Why you're convinced it won't

Check: How exactly does this plan address each objective?

Objective	Exactly how this plan addresses this objective

Check: What exactly are you going to deliver, and how is this plan going to deliver it:

Deliverable	Exactly how this plan is going to produce it

Management:

Why *this* team is the best team for the job. (Why, if anyone is going to succeed at this, you will.)

Who's responsible for what:

Collaborator 1	Collaborator 2	Collaborator 3

Make sure the table includes: who does the checking up, who does the time keeping
Indicate dependencies.

Resources

What you need to get this project done.

How you're going to find whatever you can't just buy.

What the funder gets 'for free'.

Beneficiaries

Who cares?

Who benefits.

How they're going to find out about this project.
(Check: Can you involve representative beneficiaries in the project?)