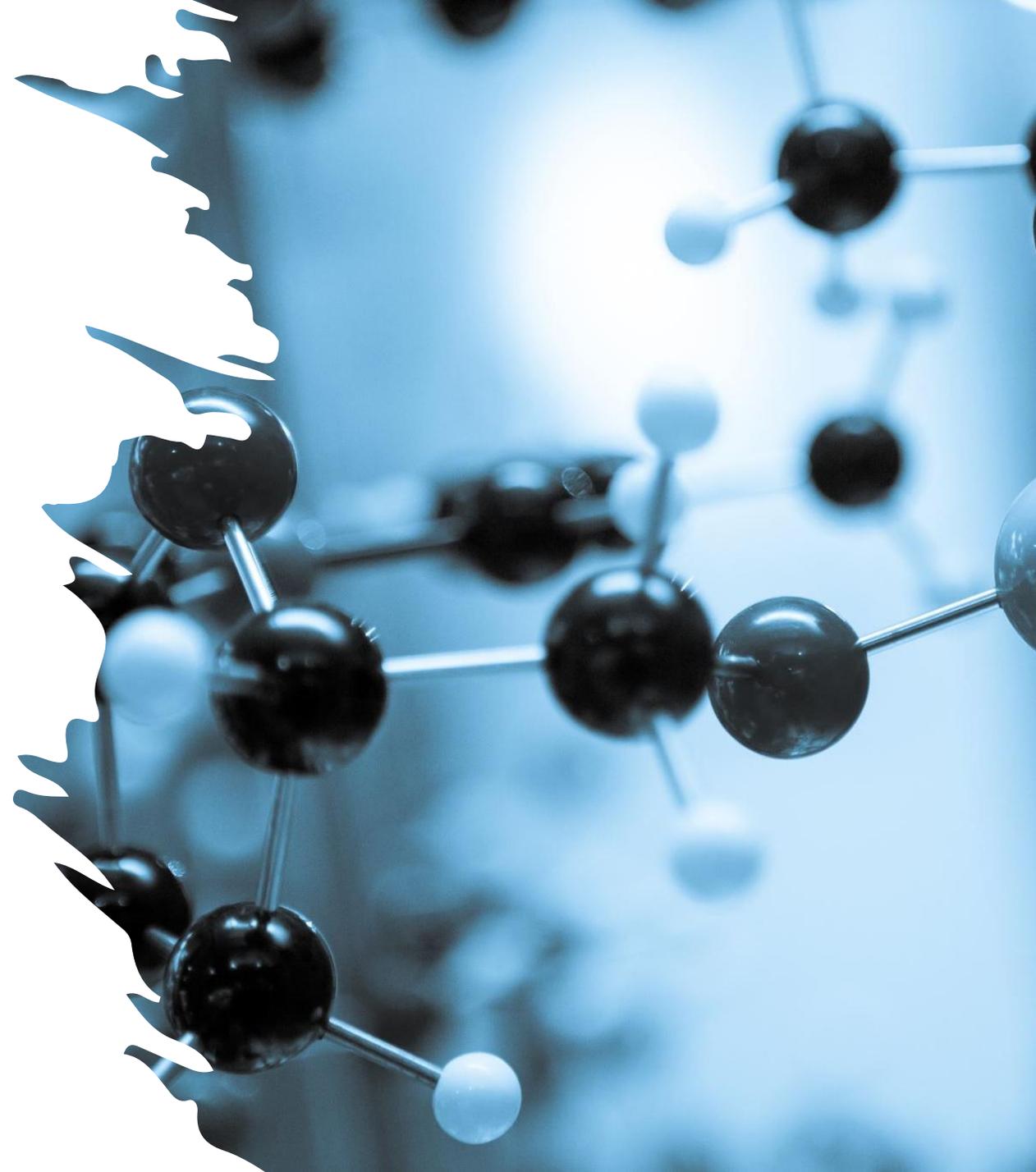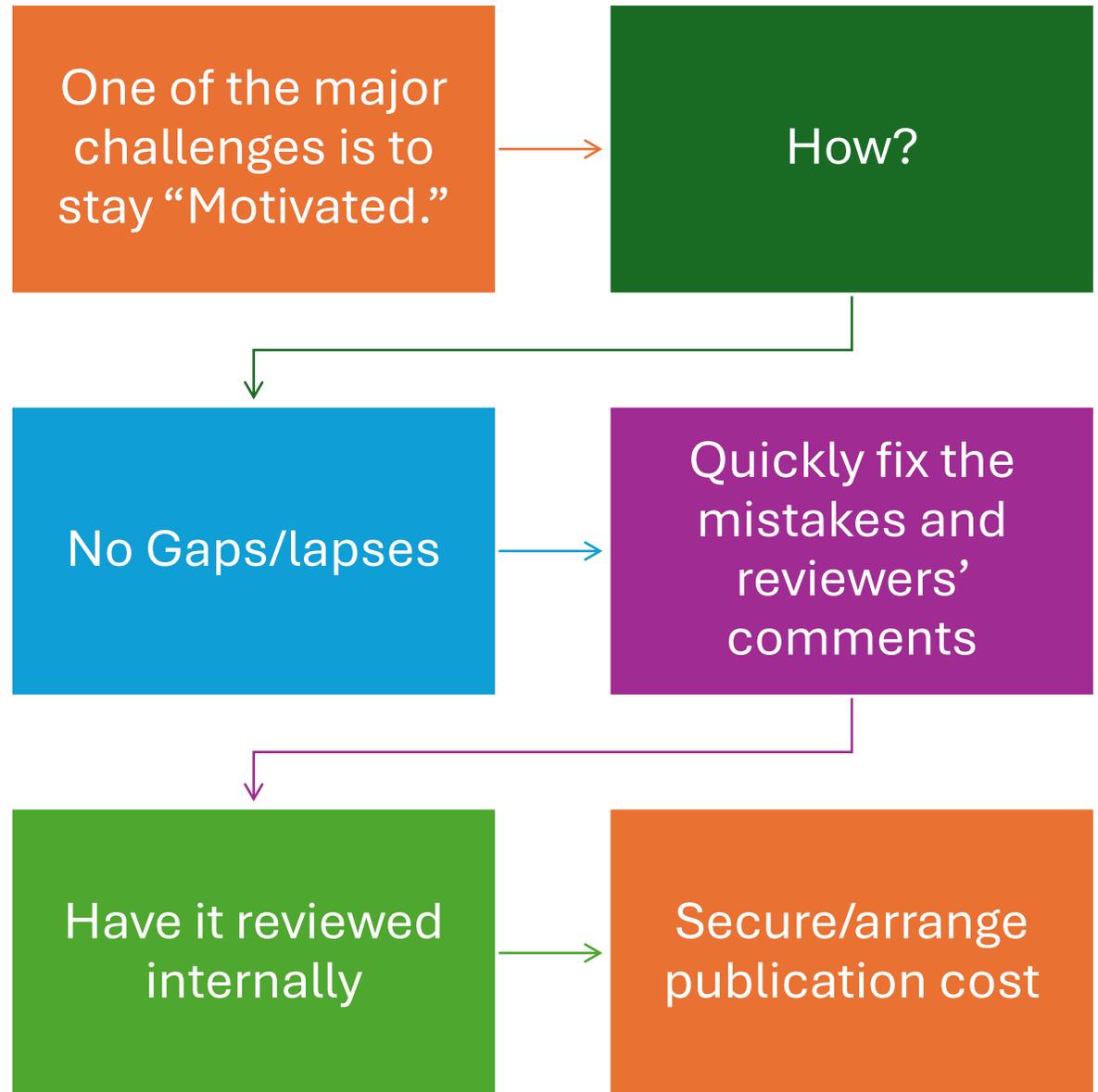# Persistence and Quality Control in the Publication Process: How to convert into a Grant Proposal.

Anwar Ahmad

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Motivation

One of the major challenges is to stay "Motivated." → How?

No Gaps/lapses → Quickly fix the mistakes and reviewers' comments

Have it reviewed internally → Secure/arrange publication cost

EXPERIENCE

Sit

If dealing with Students, sit with them and go over the paper line by line, critiquing every aspect and angle for each section at a time.

Pay

Pay special attention to matching scores and literature review for accuracy and timeliness.
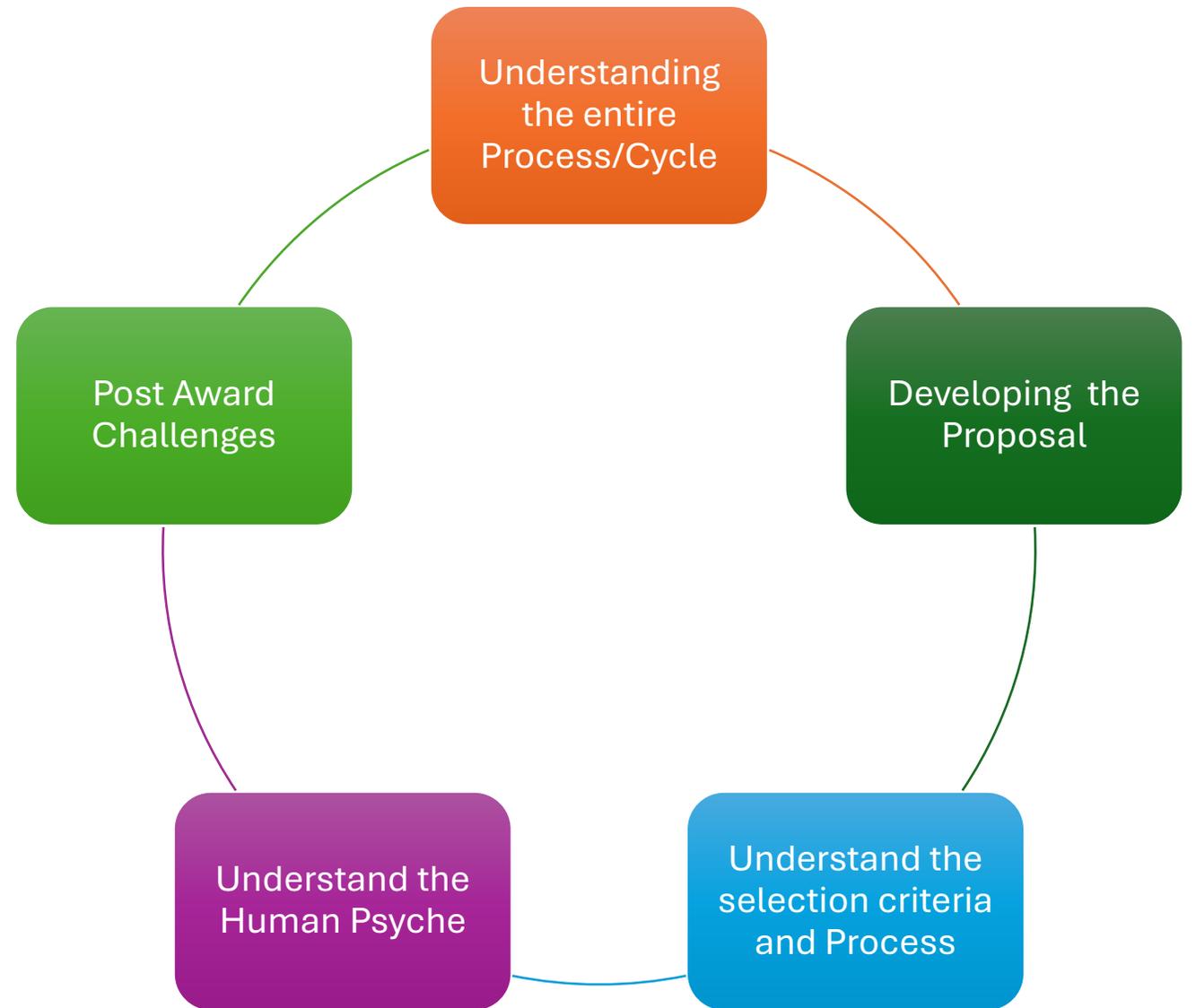
Match

The objectives must match with aims and must not be overly ambitious.

Share

Share your reviewing experience; if not, try participating in CDC/NIH review panels or any Interna review process, such as RCMI

The Process

- Understanding the entire Process/Cycle
- Developing the Proposal
- Understand the selection criteria and Process
- Understand the Human Psyche
- Post Award Challenges

Review Experience

If not, try to be a part of a review panel/process

Recently participated in two review panels: CDC and RCMI/NIH

Initial review at individual levels

Review Panel Participations

Reviews and Expectations

Not only should your proposal be adequately developed, addressing the Funding Agency Objectives

Must be meticulous and well-explained

Reviewers need clarity and unambiguity

Materials should be well-written and organized

The Proposal

Be	Your proposal must be aligned with your objectives and carry them through specific aims, methodology, delivery, and dissemination, all well-knit.
Be	Specific Aims must be standalone, clear, and achievable
Meet	Methodology must meet the objectives, be appropriate, and bring something new to the existing knowledge.
Review	Carefully review what has already been done; do not reinvent the wheel, and if proposing new, be aware of the bandwagon effect.

Revision

When reviews are received back, take a moment to get over the shock effect

Carefully examine the feedback

Guard against the Defense mechanism

Proposals are refined over time and are persistent without losing motivation

Pilot Project

How to survive publishing and turning it into a metascience research question: how does the *process* of surviving affect the *product* of science?

To convert this topic into a viable grant proposal:

Identify a problem

Propose a way to study it

Offer potential solutions

The Process: **Phase 1: Reframing the Topic for Funders**

Understand the Funding Agency's Objectives and funding criteria for the given cycle. They fund research that promises to *improve* the system.

Current academic publishing relies on two conflicting forces: the immense persistence required of authors to navigate high rejection rates, and the rigorous quality control (peer review) required to maintain scientific integrity.

Phase 2: Identifying Key Research Questions

A grant needs specific, answerable questions. Here are ways to operationalize your topic:

The Efficiency Question: Does the multi-cycle submission process (reject, revise, submit elsewhere) significantly improve the final published paper, or does it merely delay dissemination and waste resources?

The Human Element Question: How does the pressure for persistence impact researcher behavior? Does "reviewer fatigue" lower QC standards? Does "author burnout" lead to cutting corners or abandoning valuable (but difficult to publish) results (the "file drawer problem")?

Phase 3: The Grant Proposal Structure

Here is how you map your topic onto a standard grant proposal structure.

Working Title Examples:

The Grit Filter: Evaluating the Interplay Between Author Persistence and Peer Review Rigor in Scientific Publishing.

Optimizing the Pipeline: Balancing Efficiency and Integrity in the Academic Publication Process.

I. Executive Summary / Project Abstract (1 Page Limit)

The Issue: Scientific advancement depends on rapid dissemination of high-quality research. However, the current publication ecosystem is characterized by high rejection rates, long delays, and overburdened peer reviewers.

The Knowledge Gap: While we discuss "persistence" as a virtue and "peer review" as a mechanism, we currently lack empirical data on how the *demand* for author persistence positively or negatively affects the *mechanism* of quality control.

The Project: This mixed-methods study aims to quantify the "persistence tax" in academic publishing and determine its impact on final publication quality. We will analyze bibliometric data and conduct surveys with authors and editors.

The Impact: The findings will inform evidence-based policy changes for journals and funding bodies to improve the efficiency of science communication without compromising rigor.

II. Specific Aims (The "What" and "How")

Quantify

Aim 1: Quantify the relationship between submission cycles and article fate.

- Approach: Partner with selected publishers or use preprint-to-publication tracking to analyze the "life cycle" of papers. How many rejections precede acceptance? Does the impact factor of the final venue correlate with the number of previous revisions?

Investigate

Aim 2: Investigate the behavioral impacts of the persistence/QC dynamic on key stakeholders.

- Approach: Conduct surveys and interviews with: a) Authors (regarding burnout, decision to abandon data, temptation to cut corners after repeated rejection); and b) Editors/Reviewers (regarding decision fatigue, how they weigh "persistence" vs. "novelty" in borderline cases).

Develop and model

Aim 3: Develop and model interventions to streamline QC while maintaining integrity.

- Approach: Based on data from Aims 1 & 2, propose and model alternative frameworks (e.g., "portable peer review," journal-independent review platforms) to see if they reduce the burden of persistence without sacrificing quality.

III. Background and Significance (The "So What?")

The Context: Describe the current landscape: exponential growth in submissions, static number of reviewers, the "publish or perish" pressure.

Defining the Terms:

- *Persistence:* The resources (time, emotional labor, funding) required to move a paper from initial draft to acceptance.
- *Quality Control:* The mechanisms (editorial triage, peer review, reproducibility checks) used to vet science.

The Problem: The current system assumes these two work in harmony. We argue they are often in conflict. High persistence requirements slow down science. Overburdened QC systems let errors slip through.

Significance: If we find that high persistence demands lead to lower quality submissions (due to burnout) or that good science is being abandoned because authors lack the resources to persist, this is a major systemic failure in scientific advancement that funder need to address.

IV. Innovation

How is this different from existing studies on peer review?

Your Angle: Most studies look at peer review bias or effectiveness in isolation. This proposal is innovative because it treats "author resilience" as a quantifiable variable in the publication ecosystem and examines its direct interaction with quality control mechanisms. It shifts the focus from the *document* to the *process*.

V. Methodology (The Research Plan)

Crucial: You need a credible way to measure these abstract concepts.

Quantitative Strand (Measuring Persistence & QC):

- *Data Sources:* Web of Science/Scopus metadata; Preprint servers (bioRxiv, arXiv) tracking time-to-publication; (Ideally) confidential submission data from partner journals showing rejection histories.
- *Metrics used as proxies for Quality:* Citation counts (long-term), journal impact factor (short-term proxy), retraction rates, reproducibility scores (if available in specific sub-fields).

Qualitative Strand (Measuring Human Impact):

- Survey instruments designed to measure "publication burnout" and ethical decision-making under pressure.
- Semi-structured interviews with journal editors about how they manage the tension between speed (lowering persistence burden) and rigor (maintaining QC).

VI. Expected Outcomes and Dissemination

Outcomes: Empirical evidence regarding the "cost" of rejection and revision in terms of time and resources; identification of bottlenecks where persistence requirements degrade rather than improve quality.

Products: Academic papers in metascience journals; a "Best Practices White Paper" for journal editors and professional societies proposing structural changes to the review process.

Post Award Challenges

Understand	Understand the paperwork involved and manage the signature trail
Initiate	Initiate every process from fund release to travel arrangements well in advance
Start	If it takes 2 months, start 3 months before
Watch	Watch for data reporting requirements
Start	Start collecting and managing data as it is produced
Prepare	Prepare annual report template well in advance

Thanks

QUESTIONS? SUGGESTIONS COLLABORATION