

Proposals & the Narrative

- At least 2/3 of proposal ideas quality as “Good to do”
- This isn’t enough : telescope time & \$\$\$ are always more limited than the supply of good ideas.
- You need to move from:
“Good to do” to “Must be done”
- This requires a really strong story, backed by a really strong argument, explained with impeccable clarity.

I. Crafting a strong story.

1. Topic X is important and interesting.
2. But.
3. This is how we will address “But.”

A proposal is best viewed as an argument that leaves the reader believing that #1 & #2 are true and that #3 is the best way forward.

Your goal with #3: Put words in the reviewer’s mouth that they can parrot back to the committee.

The Narrative – For a proposal this usually centers around a question →
“the problem”

*We propose for *OBSERVATORY* observations of Molecular cores in the Monoceros molecular cloud in order to determine if they follow a power-law mass distribution with a slope similar to the IMF.*

Q. What is the Target? And the Key Component?

- Target: Monoceros molecular cloud
- Key Component: Observatory obs of molecular cores

What is the Story? i.e. the
“Problem/question”?

Possible stories:

- “How do stars form?”
- “What is the substructure within molecular clouds?”
- “Is the substructure within molecular clouds driven by compressive or solenoidal forcing?”
- “What is the origin of the IMF?”

Your proposal would be completely different depending on your choice of story !!