OOR Funding Workshop: Rethinking Funding Strategy

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Current Funding Status I

- **NCBO BioPortal Code**
  - Well funded NIH center
  - Specialized for biomedical ontologies
  - Centralized server

- **KEEPER Project**
  - Funded as part of another NIH project
  - Handles gatekeeping, workflow and policy enforcement
  - Not integrated with BioPortal code
Current Funding Status II

- SOCop OOR
  - Funded as part of an NSF project
  - Contains 27 ontologies
  - Contributed code?

- Other projects
  - Support for OOR instances
  - Does anybody know of any other projects that explicitly mentioned OOR in the proposal?
Funding Opportunities

- There are many funding strategies.
  - Seek project funding (e.g., an agency grant)
  - Incorporate (e.g., as a consortium)
- There are many potential sources of project funding.
  - Government Agencies
  - Charitable Foundations
  - For-Profit Corporations
- Incorporation strategy
  - Requires a business plan
  - A funding model is the central part of the plan.
Summary of Experiences

- The rest of the slides discuss experiences with proposals for funding the OOR.
- The focus is on project funding:
  - This is our only experience so far.
  - Any form of funding requires making a case to funding sources.
Obtaining Project Funding

- **Merit**
  - This has multiple components
- **Compatibility with Funding Source Mission**
  - Overall funding source mission
  - Specific program mission
- **Funding Source Evaluation Process**
  - Considerable variation among sources
  - Most sources do not evaluate merit separately from mission compatibility.
  - Vaguely worded mission statements are common.
Merit

- Typical merit categories:
  - Significance
  - Investigators
  - Innovation
  - Approach
  - Environment

- Auxiliary sections of the proposal
  - Budget with justifications
  - Resource sharing
Results of Past Proposals I

- **Significance**
  - The importance if completed successfully
  - Our proposals have outstanding scores on this criterion: “critical” “fundamental”

- **Investigators**
  - The personnel are well suited to the project.
  - Our proposals have scored highly on this criterion.
  - Possible weakness: graduate students and other personnel are not well specified.
Results of Past Proposals II

- **Innovation**
  - The novelty of the project
  - Difficult to make a case for novelty of OOR
  - Including OOR as part of another project is one possible solution.

- **Approach**
  - What the project will do.
  - Our proposals have been weak on this criterion: too much emphasis on requirements, too little on tasks.
  - This is solvable.
Results of Past Proposals III

- Environment
  - Equipment, software, etc.
  - Our proposals have been very good on this criterion.
  - This is seldom an important criterion for software projects.

- Budget
  - What the project will cost and team member responsibilities
  - Our proposals have been weak on this criterion mainly due to the lack of detailed approach.
  - This is solvable.
Results of Past Proposals IV

- **Resource Sharing**
  - Plan for sharing what is produced
  - Our proposals have been very good on this criterion because it is an open source project and the investigators have experience with open source.
  - Long-term support is a potential weakness.

- **Compatibility with Mission**
  - This was one of the worst aspects of our proposals.
  - Infrastructure development is seldom fundable.
  - Including OOR as part of another project is one possible solution.
OOR as Subproject

- **Advantages**
  - One way to address some criteria.

- **Disadvantages**
  - Must be well integrated with project objectives to avoid an adverse impact on evaluation.
  - Support for the main project dictates design choices.
  - Low priority within the main project
OOR as Consortium

● Advantages
  ● Alternative solution to some criteria

● Disadvantages
  ● Effectively a subproject of many projects, so has the same disadvantages.
  ● Different domains have different requirements.
  ● How much experience do we have for such an approach?
Suggestions

- Funding source
  - Agency
  - Program
- Domain for a subproject
  - Target domain
    - Must be other than biomedical and geospatial
  - Potential investigator/team
- Project objectives
- Other ideas