HOW TO WRITE A GOOD LAY SUMMARY

As part of your application to *BRAIN UK*, you should provide a **short lay summary of your research in plain English.** To try and improve the public's knowledge and engagement of neuroscience research, it is our intention to publish a lay summary of each of the studies supported on our [website](#).

Structure:
- Describe the problem that your research aims to solve.
- Briefly describe what you are going to do
- What are your expectations of the project - say how this research fits into the bigger picture.
- **Give us a reason to care about what you do. How will this research help people, even if it isn't in our lifetime?**

Sentence level
- Short sentences – max 15/20 words
- Avoid complex sentences
- Phrase positively
- Use connectives to develop links between ideas e.g. although, however

Word level
- Avoid technical language
- Active, not passive
- No jargon
- Only use acronyms after the full term has been used once
- Analogies are good

Simplify and reduce:

Don't say	Say
Participate in	Take part
Prior to	Before
Discontinue	Stop
In the event of	If
Duration	Time
Inform	Tell
Scheduled to undergo	Due to have
Accordingly, consequently	So
With reference to, with regard to	About
If this is the case	If so
In the event of	If
For the purpose of	To

AND THE GOLDEN RULE?
Do not copy and paste anything from your proposal. You are cursed with too much knowledge. This is the downward slope. Just follow the advice above. If unsure, please ask somebody (preferably somebody who is not part of the scientific community) to review it for you.

EXAMPLE OF A CLEAR, WELL WRITTEN LAY SUMMARY

BRAIN UK Ref: 21/002
Investigating a Surrogate Marker to Distinguish Astrocytomas and Oligodendrogliomas.
Dr Kathryn Urankar, North Bristol NHS Foundation Trust

Over 12,000 people in the UK develop a tumour that starts in their brain each year. That's over 30 people every single day. Different brain tumours grow at different rates, and each one is best treated in a different way. It is extremely important to reach the correct diagnosis as quickly as possible, because this gives every patient the best chance of survival and recovery.

Doctors normally diagnose the type of tumour by taking a small piece and looking at it down a microscope. However, this does not always give a clear diagnosis as some tumours can look very similar to each other. Other tests often need to be carried out to confirm the type of tumour. Some of these tests can be slow, perhaps taking weeks before reaching the answer. This can delay lifesaving treatment for patients.

We wish to try out a faster test, known as a 'surrogate marker'. This involves 'staining' a piece of tumour on a glass slide. The appearance of this stain could be used to rapidly tell the difference between certain types of brain tumour - perhaps even leading to a same day diagnosis.

We wish to investigate how well this marker can tell the difference between two of the commonest brain tumours in UK adults: astrocytomas and oligodendrogliomas. We hope that our results will reduce the time patients with these types of brain tumours have to wait before they can start treatment.