



Episode 1: Experiences and Challenges with Proposal Writing

Summary: Episode one of the STARTcast features a conversation between START's senior program specialist Dr. Mary Thompson-Hall and Dr. Chandni Singh, a Research Consultant with the Indian Institute for Human Settlements. Chandni highlights her experiences and challenges with writing scientific proposals, along with some useful tips she's learned along the way. We will use her feedback and that of other early and mid-career scientists to set the agenda for the rest of Season 1 of the STARTcast.



Dr. Chandni Singh, IIHS

Highlights:

- Bringing together diverse people across geographies and institutions can be very complex and challenging but it will make the work much richer.
- Start small! If you are just starting out writing proposals, try focusing on one country or location and build from there.
- Be open minded and listen to new ideas for how different viewpoints can strengthen the proposal and the work.
- Start networking early and talk to supervisors and experienced researchers to see how you can get involved in proposals early on to gain experience.
- Leave yourself plenty of time for working on a proposal budget.
- Realities of COVID-19 are presenting new challenges for scientific research but also creating a lot of new opportunities and approaches
- It's alright to feel discomfort and tensions with writing the research for impact section. Make sure you put processes in place in your proposal to help keep this a central focus.
- Everyone has experienced rejection, learn what you can, repurpose and resubmit!

Links:

- [Indian Institute for Human Settlements \(IIHS\)](#)
- [Recovery with Dignity](#)
- [Adaptation at Scale in Semi-Arid Regions](#)