

Tips for Educational Grant Proposals

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A proposal should answer the questions: Who - What - Where - When - Why and How. A well organized proposal will more clearly transmit your ideas to the reviewers and can aid in positive responses. Proposals should include (unless sponsor has a specific required format):

Title Page:

Clearly state title of proposal, identify requesting organization, include contact information and date submitted

Executive Summary:

This is your first opportunity to make the case for the need for the education you are proposing to the reviewers. Briefly summarize the contents of proposal, the main points of your rationale, their significance, and any unique aspects of your proposal. Make the reviewer interested in reading more about it. It can and should be short, as full details will be found in the body of the proposal.

Table of Contents (TOC):

A TOC will help organize your proposal and make it easier for reviewers to follow it, and to find specific information they may be looking for. Use the TOC feature in MS Word to create this easily, and don't be afraid to use headers and sub-headers if they help organize the proposal and break up blocks of text.

Introduction:

Similar to the Executive Summary, the Introduction outlines the issues you are addressing in the proposal, but can briefly provide a bit more detail about the proposal. The Introduction serves to lay out its internal structure, and can help guide the reviewer through what you consider the most important points. The Introduction should touch on educational content information as well as administrative materials such as budget, plan for implementation, and information about the requesting organization. It also should lay the groundwork for the project being creative, original, important, relevant, researchable and feasible

Statement of Need -- This section establishes the significance of the identified problem and ties it to your target audience. You need EVIDENCE ... and relevant literature citations. *All cited material should include appropriate attribution!*

- What problem have you found? Who says it's a problem? Why is your organization interested in this problem? Why is it a problem for the target audience?
- What will change if this problem is or isn't addressed?
- How does this problem affect patient care/patient outcomes?
- What (else) is significant about this project? Why is it important that this proposal be done?
- How does an educational activity affect this problem?

Don't just throw out a list of references, or set of statements. Your narrative should interpret what you are presenting in the proposal. Draw the conclusion explicitly... and thus lead the reviewer to your point of view. If you don't draw the conclusion for the reviewer, you risk having the reviewer (a) draw a different conclusion or (b) miss the relevance of the evidence to your identified needs

Goals and Objectives

Keep these separate – don't confuse educational goals with learner objectives!

- **Goals** are what you expect the education to accomplish in terms of its impact on the problem. List the specific aims of the study (bulleted or numbered list): "To...", or list of questions

EXAMPLE: Increase the referral rate to smoking cessation counseling thereby improving overall patient health

- **Learner objectives** are what you expect the learner to be able to do as a result of participating in your educational offering. List specific learner objectives based on the needs identified

EXAMPLE: Identify patients in your practice who smoke; Assess patient readiness to stop smoking using the XXX approach; Refer patients who smoke to appropriate counseling services.

Educational Design/Methods

Provide a concise description of the educational intervention, why you selected the educational design, and the ways in which you will deliver this education

- *Target audience*
 - Who is the targeted audience (type of healthcare professional, practice environment, specialist vs. primary care, geographic location, demographics?)
 - Anticipated numbers
 - Why this audience?
- *Design/Format*
 - What educational design will be used? Why?
 - What adult education theories inform your decisions?
 - Identify and explain discrete components of the educational intervention
 - Example: Intensive workshop, plus follow up activities
 - Identify and explain any unique aspects of the design

Evaluation Plan and Expected Outcomes

Evaluation Plan

Explain up front how you plan to evaluate the success of the activity and what methods you will use. Describe the components of the Evaluation Plan. Why did you make these choices, and how do they relate to the needs you identified and the educational design you propose? Who will develop the evaluation tools? Have they been used before?

Refer to Level of Evaluation to be attained (add Davis reference) and provide citations to support your decisions. There must be a good match between the level of evaluation and the rest of the proposal! (So, if you're proposing a series of traditional lectures, your expectation of evaluation level would likely be at the knowledge vs. practice level. If you think you can reach beyond knowledge, then tell the reviewers how and why)

- *Data Collection*
 - How will evaluation data be collected, how often, and from whom?
 - Why were these measures/data sources selected?
 - Are the data collection methods reliable and valid?
 - What are the issues, if any, with data completeness and losses to follow-up?

- *Data Management*
 - What will happen to data when collected/obtained?
 - What software will be used to manage data (if any)?

- *Data Analysis*
 - Who will analyze the data? When? Using what process (software)?
 - What is the plan for analysis? Which techniques will be used?
 - Analytic methods
 - Dealing with missing data
 - Statistical questions when using quantitative data
 - What is the study's power, based on the desired sample size?
 - Analysis plans when using qualitative data
 - Methodological limitations

- *Dissemination Plan*
 - What are the expected outcomes of the education?
 - To what extent are the process, design and/or outcomes expected to be generalizable?
 - How will these products be disseminated?
 - Final report
 - Manuscripts
 - Presentations

Budget

Be clear in budget line items, and provide a rationale within the proposal for budget items that may not be generally understood that ties them to the project plan. Be sure to account for all categories of expense, including any overhead costs that may apply (like fringe benefit rates, apportioned technology costs, etc)

Human Subjects Considerations [may be included in methods]

- Does your educational design/evaluation plan require an IRB review?
- If so, address the issues relevant to IRB/Human Subjects
 - Confidentiality
 - HIPAA guidelines
 - Enrollment and consent procedures
 - Risk/benefit ratio for subjects? (if applicable)

Management Plan

- Personnel
 - Who will be involved on the study team? At what % effort?
 - What are their qualifications? (includes “preliminary studies”)
 - What will their roles be?
 - How will the team work together? (meetings, communications, etc)

- Timetable
 - What are the study start and end dates?
 - What are the key tasks and when will they be done (table, grid)?