

Grant and Research Proposals

Grant and research proposals are written to nonprofit organizations to request the approval of and funding for projects that solve a problem or fulfill a need. For example, a professor of education might submit a research proposal to the state

or federal Department of Education to request funding for research on the relationship of class size to educational performance; similarly, a community center might submit a grant proposal to obtain funding from a local government agency for an after-school job training program.

Many government agencies, private foundations, and other nonprofit groups solicit research and grant proposals. Granting organizations typically post opportunities, along with detailed application guidelines, on their Web sites, and they usually specify their own requirements for the format and content of proposals, as shown in Figure 13-9. Always research the grant-making organization first to familiarize yourself with its areas of interest and its purpose in granting the funding. If your organization pursues multiple grants, be careful to tailor your grant or research proposal to each specific audience by carefully following the guidelines provided by the granting agency. In addition, remember that proposals must always be persuasive: Explain your project's goals, your plan for achieving those goals, and your qualifications to perform the project.

Although application guidelines may differ from one organization to another, grant proposals generally require the following sections at a minimum:

- Cover letter
- Title page
- Introduction/summary/abstract
- Literature review
- Project narrative
- Project description
- Project outcomes
- Budget
- Schedule
- Conclusion

ON THE WEB

For samples of research and grant proposals, as well as the full text of the grant proposal shown in Figures 13-10 through 13-18, go to bedfordstmartins.com/writingthatworks and select *Model Documents Gallery*.

Request for Seed Grant Proposals

Discovery Park
Purdue University
West Lafayette, IN 47907
2013

Purpose

Discovery Park requests seed grant proposals from Purdue faculty and staff. A total of \$300,000 has been allocated to fund seed grants for proposals that catalyze new high-impact activities at Purdue. This program is not meant to fund complete projects, but rather to provide the necessary support to start new efforts that will be supported longer term by other funding sources. All funded project teams are expected to submit a proposal to an external funding agency through Discovery Park, or to receive support from an outside organization (e.g., company) for continuation of the project effort.

Eligibility

Anyone certified by the Office of the Vice President for Research to serve as a Principal Investigator to an outside agency may submit a proposal. The proposed team may include personnel from outside of Purdue.

Proposals: The deadline for receipt of proposals is 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 15, 2013. Proposals should be submitted as a single pdf file attachment to an e-mail message addressed to Marty R. at *****@purdue.edu. Projects should have a start date no earlier than March 1, 2013, and include expenditure of all funds by May 1, 2014.

Proposals are to be attached to a completed University Proposal Submission Form, and should follow this sequence:

Page 1. Face page, including:

- Proposal title
- Principal investigator, with signature
- Partnering Discovery Park Centers
- Total budget
- Project period

Pages 2-6. Research plan, limited to 5 pages, single-spaced, one-inch margins, and no smaller than 11 point font. Proposals must address:

- The review criteria listed below.
- What extramural funding will be pursued on the basis of the proposed activity.
- A plan for routinely meeting with the identified Discovery Park partners to monitor and direct project activity, further develop synergy, maximize impact, and discuss project goals.

Page 7. References.

Page 8. Support letter from a Discovery Park Center Director or Managing Director specifying the nature of the partnership. For example, Discovery Park Centers can provide project-management support, business-office support, assistance in preparing

Format guidelines

Figure 13-9 Request for a Grant Proposal (General and Specific Requirements).

Source: Purdue University, Office of the Vice President for Research <www.purdue.edu/Research/vpr/funding/docs/dp_seed_grant_RFP-HCK.pdf>.

Cover Letter

Usually a page long, the cover letter should identify who you are and your affiliation. It should specify the grant for which you are applying, summarize the proposed project, and include the amount of funding you are requesting. Be sure to include any credentials you feel reinforce your organization's ability to complete the project successfully. End the letter by expressing your appreciation for the opportunity to submit the proposal and include information about how you can be reached. The letter should include a subject line with the grant title in addition to the address of the recipient, date of submission, salutation (Dear . . .), and complimentary close (Sincerely), as in Figure 13-10 on page 466.

Title Page

The title page is the grant-proposal cover. On a single page, show the title of the project, names of team members and their affiliations, date submitted, and name of the recipient's organization, as shown in Figure 13-11 on page 467.

October 7, 2013

Ms. Joan Atwater
Executive Director
ABC Foundation
13 Hill Street
Boston, MA 02116

Subject: Read to Succeed! Program

Dear Ms. Atwater:

Orchard Middle School is pleased to present this proposal for your review. We look forward to partnering with you to provide a reading intervention program for our students with poor reading skills called Read to Succeed! Orchard Middle School has more than 50 at-risk students with a reading performance of at least two years behind their current grade level. The objective of the Read to Succeed! program is to help all students with poor reading skills learn to read at grade level and increase their reading speed, comprehension, and reading attention span.

*Summary of program
and objective*

Last year, we ran a pilot Read to Succeed! program with a small group of students with poor reading skills and have seen dramatic improvements, with most of the students increasing their reading ability by one or two grade levels. . . .

We have seen measurable success, and we are now seeking to expand our Read to Succeed! program to address the needs of all at-risk students in the Orchard Middle School. Our proposal requests \$16,504 in funding to obtain the software, hardware, and training necessary to equip the Orchard Middle School resource room with five assistive reading systems, each including a computer, a scanner, and assistive reading software.

Funding request

We appreciate ABC Foundation taking an interest in helping our students develop their reading skills through our new reading program! Please call me at 888-555-1212, ext. 342, or e-mail me at jhazelton@oms.edu if you require any further information or have any questions concerning this proposal.

Contact information

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Hazelton

Special Education Coordinator
Orchard Middle School
387 Pine Hill Road
Orchard, VT 02331

**Read to Succeed! Improving Reading Performance
for At-Risk Students**

Grant title

Submitted to: ABC Foundation

Date: October 7, 2013

Date submitted

Jennifer Hazelton
Special Education Coordinator
Orchard Middle School
387 Pine Hill Road
Orchard, VT 02331

*Recipient's
organization*

Figure 13-11 Grant-Proposal Title Page

Introduction/Summary/Abstract

The introduction, also called the summary or abstract, is your proposal at a glance. It briefly describes in a page the problem to be solved in the language used in the request for proposals, as in Figure 13-12 on page 467. Most important, your

introduction should sketch the expected outcomes of your grant proposal, answering the question: *What will you achieve?* For a research proposal, you may also describe your proposed research methods in a separate paragraph: interviews, questionnaires, videotapes, observations, and so on.

Project Abstract

The Orchard Middle School, in Orchard, Vermont, is seeking a grant to expand our Read to Succeed! program with the objective of helping all our at-risk students increase their reading skills and be able to read at grade level using the same classroom textbooks and materials as their peers. The objective is that by the end of the year the students will have at least doubled their reading speed and will have improved their reading skills by one to two grade levels. The Read to Succeed! program features computers equipped with assistive reading software and text scanners for reading instruction. Funding in the amount of \$16,504 is requested for staff training and to purchase the required software and hardware for the school's resource room.

Purpose and expected outcomes

Funding request

Figure 13-12 Grant-Proposal Introduction

Literature Review

The literature review allows reviewers of your proposal to assess your familiarity with current research in the field, as shown in Figure 13–13. Is your research up to date? thorough? pertinent? Be selective in listing sources, which may include journal articles, books, and Web sites, as well as interviews, podcasts, blogs, and

◆ *For additional information about creating literature reviews or for a sample literature review, see pages 183–213 in Chapter 6, Researching Your Subject.*

Selective program
research source in
APA format

References

- Elkind, J. (1998). *A study of the efficacy of the Kurzweil 3000 reading machine in enhancing poor reading performance*. Portola Valley, CA: Lexia Institute.
- Heckler, L., Burns, L., Katz, L., & Elkind, J. (2002). Benefits of assistive reading software for students with attention disorders. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 52, 223–335.
- Wise, B., Olson, R., & Murray, C. (1993). Using computer-based phonological awareness and reading instruction. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 45, 99–122.

Figure 13–13 Grant-Proposal References Section (Excerpt)

other sources. A literature review will also reveal whether conclusive research has already been done in an area or whether competing programs have successfully addressed the same problem. Some or all of the sources may be annotated to establish their scope and pertinence.

Project Narrative

The project narrative or statement of need is the heart of the proposal. It's where you describe in detail the scope of the work, expected outcomes, list of tasks, schedule from start to finish, and proposed cost. The detailed statement of need must be specific and thorough. The excerpt shown in Figure 13–14 from a grant proposal states the problem and includes pertinent data.

Project Description

The project-narrative section usually includes details of how the research will be conducted (the methodology), as in the excerpt shown in Figure 13–15 from the reading-performance proposal.

Project Outcomes

Having discussed the preparation for the program and how the participants will be evaluated, the grant must describe the outcomes, or deliverables, of the proposal. It must describe what results the organization can expect based on the time, labor, and funding it has invested in the program. In this case, the outcomes are stated as quantifiable objectives, as in Figure 13–16. This section is also called “objectives.”²

²Many grant writers find the system called SMART useful. The SMART system assists writers in setting feasible performance goals and means of measuring success. It is described at <www.yale.edu/hronline/focus/goal.html> and <www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections/iswebsite/projpubs/smartobjectives>.

Statement of Need

Orchard Middle School has 276 students, 59 of whom have been determined to be at risk in their reading performance for a variety of reasons, including learning disabilities, such as attention deficit disorder (ADD) and dyslexia, or other language difficulties based on economic status. Orchard Middle School is eligible for Title 1 funds, and if these students are not given an opportunity to improve their reading skills, they are, as studies show, more likely to be truant and drop out of school.

Scope of proposal

Figure 13-14 Grant-Proposal Statement of Need

Program Description

The Orchard Read to Succeed! program will enable at-risk students to improve their reading skills through the use of five computers equipped with scanners and assistive reading software. Students using this innovative reading system will be able to use all their classroom materials, including textbooks, providing them access to the general curriculum. The students will increase their reading speed and comprehension, which will help them obtain classroom subject proficiency. Included in the Read to Succeed! program will be a day of training for the reading specialist and classroom teachers on the features and use of the Kurzweil 3000 software.

Specific program details

Figure 13-15 Grant-Proposal Program Description

Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Read to Succeed! program is to enable at-risk students and students with learning and reading disabilities to improve their reading skills to the point where they can succeed in school and develop the reading skills that will prepare them for high school and postsecondary education. Studies have shown that poor readers, those reading at a grade level or more behind, are more likely to be disruptive in the classroom, truant from school, and at risk of dropping out of high school.

General program objectives

The main objectives of the Read to Succeed! program include the following:

1. Providing a measurable increase in reading speed, comprehension, and attention span. The objective is for the students to double their reading speed and increase their reading skills by one to two grade levels by the end of the school year.
2. Enabling poor readers to access the general curriculum through the use of assistive reading technology that will scan and read their textbooks and other classroom materials.
3. Providing learning-disabled students with a multisensory reading alternative that will help them increase their reading speed to the point where they can read on their own.
4. Helping learning- and reading-disabled students stay in their regular classroom with their peers so that they can continue learning in a least-restrictive environment.

Quantifiable program objectives

Figure 13-16 Grant-Proposal Goals-and-Objectives Statement

Budget

Include a budget narrative section that provides a detailed listing of costs for personnel, equipment, building renovations, and other grant-related expenses. This information must be clear and accurate. List costs in a format easily grasped by those evaluating the data, as shown in Figure 13-17. If your proposal is approved, you are being entrusted with funds belonging to someone else, and you are accountable for them. Your cost estimates may also be subject to changes over which you have no control, such as price increases for equipment, software, or consulting assistance. The project may also require ongoing funding following completion of the grant's tasks. Either estimate such costs or note that they will appear in a Future Funding section.

Schedule

Prepare a schedule of tasks that need to be performed to complete the project. Arrange them as bulleted points in sequence from first to last with due dates for each. Schedules can also be presented in table format, as shown in Figure 13-18.

Conclusion

The conclusion is a brief wrap-up section that emphasizes the benefits or advantages of your project. This section gives you one more opportunity to give the funding organization a reason why your proposal merits its approval. This is also the place to express your appreciation for the opportunity to submit the proposal.

ON THE WEB

For useful Web sources for grant-proposal preparation, go to bedfordstmartins.com/writingthatworks and select *Chapter 13*.

Budget

The budget includes funds for a Lab Pack containing five copies of Kurzweil Educational System's Scan/Read Color software, along with five computers and scanners. They will provide five independent assistive reading workstations. This combination will give students the greatest flexibility in using their textbooks and other classroom materials.

	Price	Quantity	Total
Kurzweil Scan/Read Lab Pack (Color) 5-Pack	\$7,095	1 (5-Pack)	\$7,095
Software Maintenance Agreement (SMA)	\$709	1 (5-Pack)	\$709
Epson 300 Scanner	\$300	5	\$1,500
Dell PC with Monitor	\$1,200	5	\$6,000
Training	\$1,200	1 day	\$1,200
Total			\$16,504

Detailed list of
program requirements

Figure 13-17 Grant-Proposal Budget Narrative

Activity	Date
Submit grant proposal	October 2013
Expected grant notification	December 2013
Obtain hardware and software	January 2014
Set up Kurzweil 3000 program	January 2014
Training session for teachers	February 2014
Student introduction	February 2014
Test initial reading speed	February 2014
Begin first 12-week phase	March–May 2014
Test reading improvement	June 2014
Prepare project results report	July 2014

Program time line and dates

Figure 13–18 Grant-Proposal Time Line

Finally, note the time frame during which the proposal is valid and close with a statement of your willingness to provide further information. Because proposals are legally binding in some industries, be sure that your proposal is reviewed by legal counsel, if applicable.