

Problem Statement or Needs Assessment: Grants-Researching the Literature Review

An Academic Library Approach

A short and precise overview about the current state of the research that is immediately connected with your grant research project. The review of research literature section is very important because it shows reviewers you understand the field and have a balanced and adequate knowledge of it.

- Reference the most important contributions of other authors/researchers/scientists.
- Discuss the theoretical scope or the framework of ideas that will be used to back the grant research.
- Demonstrate that you are fully conversational with the ideas you are dealing with and that you grasp their methodological implications.
- Indicate the open problem which then will be the motive for your grant project. State clearly how your grant research will contribute to the existing field of research on your grant topic.
- What is the grant topic? Why is this grant topic important?
- What are the grant research questions that you're trying to answer? What relevance does your research questions have?
- What are your grant hypotheses?
- What are your research methods?
- Why is your research/project important? What is its significance?
- Do you plan on using quantitative methods? Qualitative methods? Both?

This is the central part of your Grant Research Outline.

- Detail your research procedure within the given time. (books, journal articles, statistics, magazines, newspapers, trade publications)
- List sources and quality of evidence you will consult, the analytical technique you will employ, and the timetable you will follow.
- Depending on the topic, suitable research strategies should be defined to ensure that enough and adequate empirical data will be gathered for a successful research project.
- Describe the intended methods of data gathering, the controls you will introduce, the statistical methods to be used, the type of literature or documentary analysis to be followed, etc.

- The best way to collect research information about the problem is to conduct and document both a formal and informal needs assessment for a program in the target or service area.
- The information provided should be both factual and directly related to the problem addressed by the proposal. Areas to document are as follows:
 - Purpose for developing the proposal.
 - Beneficiaries—who are they and how will they benefit.
 - Social and economic costs to be affected.
 - Nature of the problem (provide as much hard evidence as possible).
 - How the applicant or organization came to realize the problem exists, and what is currently being done about the problem.
 - Stress what gaps exist in addressing the problem that will be addressed by the proposal.
- It should include a retrospective literature view of the situation, describing past efforts to enhance it, and making projections for the future. The problem statement, developed with input from the beneficiaries, must be supported by statistics and statements from authorities in the fields.

Organizing your proposal

Although each funding agency will have its own (usually very specific) requirements, there are several elements of a proposal that are fairly standard, and they often come in the following order:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Introduction (statement of the problem, purpose of research or goals, and significance of research)
- Literature review
- Project narrative (methods, procedures, objectives, outcomes or deliverables, evaluation, and dissemination)
- Personnel
- Budget and budget justification

Resources:

- How to Write a Research Project Grant Application >> http://www.ninds.nih.gov/funding/write_grant_doc.htm#developing
- How to write a research proposal >> <http://www.studygs.net/proposal.htm>
- Writing a Grant Research Proposal >> <http://www.mrc.ac.za/researchdevelopment/researchgrant.pdf>
- Grant Proposals (or Give me the money!) >> <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/grant-proposals-or-give-me-the-money/>

Congressional Research Service

>><https://himes.house.gov/sites/himes.house.gov/files/How%20to%20Develop%20and%20Write%20a%20Grant%20Proposal.pdf>

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