



Grant Application Handbook for Office for Learning and Teaching grants

**Tips and tricks for
grant application preparation**

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First Edition 2013.

National Library of Australia in Publication Data

A catalogue record of this monograph series is available from the National Library of Australia

ISBN: 978-1-921597-55-8

Edition copyeditor: Dr Miriam Verbeek

Graphic Design: Trish Donald

Illustration: Trish Donald and Raph Roberts

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2013

Acknowledgement

This publication is funded by the Australian Government Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education through the DEHub Project.

Last reviewed: July 2013

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER: Programs, priorities, technologies, funding levels and many other details change regularly, and advice in this guide is updated annually. Make sure you have a recent version. Following the advice given here certainly does not guarantee funding, although hopefully it will help applicants develop strong projects and write better and more competitive proposals. The Program Information for any particular grant scheme is the best possible guide for preparing a proposal for funding—they should be read carefully and followed precisely. We have attempted to ensure that the advice contained in this document is accurate, but if any differences are discovered, the OLT Program Information takes precedence.

Forward

This handbook provides a comprehensive A-Z of what you need to do to prepare a robust Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) grant application and is arguably the first of its type in the Australian context. Its release is set against the backdrop of a range of learning and teaching grant initiatives deployed by Australian national governments over the past 20 years. The Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT), for example, allocated approximately \$8 million to its grants program in 2012. This commitment builds on the legacy of similar levels of funding allocations from the Australian Learning and Teaching Council that has mobilised and enabled systemic change and improvement in learning and teaching in Australian universities in previous years.

The handbook is designed for those committed to making a real difference in learning and teaching through an Office for Learning and Teaching grant, whether as a first time or veteran grant applicant. Its content spans generating ideas, project planning, considering teams and collaboration, to the budget and final submission. The handbook's eBook format, plain language, hyperlinks, lift-out quotes, templates, resource materials and, most importantly, direct intersection with OLT grant requirements, makes it an essential companion guide when drafting an OLT grant application.

As the Manager of Queensland University of Technology's Awards and Grants service with more than 20 years experience in providing advice, writing successful grant applications, contributing to and co-leading national learning and teaching grant projects, I can say with confidence — if you are seeking to develop a persuasive OLT Grant application start and finish with this handbook by your side.

Georgia Smeal

Manager Award and Grants Service

Queensland University of Technology

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Part 1

Introduction

1.1 Who this is written for

Writing a grant application is vastly different to the type of writing undertaken professionally by most academics. It requires a convincing argument for an effective concept, combined with details of a practical approach, all written directly and powerfully. Even a great idea will not be funded if poorly conceptualised and described.

As each discipline has its own writing norms, each person will encounter different challenges in the process of learning to write in this new way. To help you understand the challenges, we ask you to think about it based on your experiences as an educator. In this role, you set student assignments and explain them with the greatest clarity you can. You answer questions about the requirements in class, in conversation, by email and on your discussion boards; and yet some students still don't seem to understand. Some may not address the question, go over the word limit, use the wrong format (e.g. essay instead of business report) or, more likely, simply present a weak argument based on limited evidence.

A grant application can be likened to an assignment in that there is a set format and marking criteria, all laid out in the Program Information. Addressing these will ensure you remain within the word limit and present your proposal in the right format, but you still need to build a compelling argument based on extensive evidence.

This handbook, therefore, is written primarily to assist those who are attempting to prepare a grant application worthy of an HD grade. It may also be of benefit to professional staff members who make a range of contributions to the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) grant projects, including executive leadership, project management, team membership, peer review of applications and reports, mentoring of applicants, project evaluation and coordination of institutional support strategies. Sadly, we can offer no guarantees of success, as funding is tight and even extremely high quality applications may go unrewarded.

Much of the general guidance in this handbook reflects good practice when writing any grant application, not just OLT proposals.

You may find this handbook useful if you are:

- preparing a teaching and learning grant for submission to the (OLT) for the first time,
- refining a previously rejected application for resubmission,
- developing an Expression of Interest into a full application,
- a successful grant applicant who is keen to improve a following application, or
- supporting or mentoring grant applicants within your university.

1.2 Using this handbook

It is best to read this handbook in full and in conjunction with the most appropriate Office for Learning and Teaching grants program, Program Information. First time applicants may find this suggestion daunting and are advised to perhaps begin with Parts 2, 3 & 5, then expand their reading as they need. More experienced authors may prefer to go directly to chapters of relevance or interest.

Those in mentoring and support roles are likely to find [Part 5 Generating and Developing Ideas](#) to be particularly useful. In these roles, you are likely to be called upon to assist people to develop their ideas for projects into a concept worthy of funding. Appropriate feedback is crucial in this process, and this section will give you hints about how to assist with ideas generation and give critical review and feedback.

To illustrate the technical aspects of preparing an application, the appendices show how a project concept is translated into a range of project activities, including dissemination, and how these would be reflected in the budget, budget justification, timeline and letters of support. The budget process shows how an initial plan is modified to suit the grant program budget restrictions.

The following additional resources, some of which appear as part of this book, are available for download for free from <http://dehub.edu.au/publications/books/>. These may be used freely by individuals, or with appropriate acknowledgement adapted for use within institutions.

- Concept Form ([Appendix A](#))
OLT_Grants_Concept_Form.docx

- Support Letter Templates and Examples ([Appendix B](#))
- Budget Workbook ([Appendix C](#))
OLT_Grants_Budget_Workbook.xlsx
- Budget Template (referred to in [Appendix D](#)) is only available as a download <http://dehub.edu.au/publications/books/>
OLT_Grants_Budget_Template.xlsx

1.3 Abbreviations

The main abbreviations used in this book are as follows.

OLT	Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching
ALTC	Australian Learning and Teaching Council (predecessor body to the OLT)
Program Information	2013 Program Information and Application Instructions for any of the grants programs
I&D	Innovation and Development Grants
Leadership	Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
Seed Projects	Seed Projects
Extension	Extension Grants
HoS/CC	Head of School/Cost Centre
DVC(A)	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) or equivalent The equivalent may be the PVC(A)

1.4 About the authors

Dr Rosalind James is the Director, Distance Education Hub (DEHub) at the University of New England (UNE), NSW. She was UNE's ALTC Institutional Contact Officer and, as Faculty Research Development Coordinator, mentored researchers writing grants. Rosalind has supported and prepared applications for numerous successful ALTC grants, as well as numerous other grant applications for a diverse range of funding bodies, helping to secure millions of dollars in funding.

Cathryn McCormack has a background in computer programming, administration, adult education, and evaluation of teaching and is now a lecturer (teaching and learning) at Southern Cross University, NSW. She has extensive experience initiating and supporting business processes, and through her work in the ALTC Promoting Excellence Initiative has successfully applied this approach to developing grant applications.

Part 2

Overview of OLT grants

2.1 What are OLT grants?

The Australian Government has committed \$50.1 million in program funding 2012-2015 towards the Promotion of Excellence in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (PELTHE). PELTHE is administered by the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT). The grant programs funded in 2013, and which are likely to continue with minor changes are:

- Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program, which supports systematic, structured and sustainable models of academic leadership in higher education at the disciplinary, cross-disciplinary and institutional levels as well as building Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership.
- Innovation and Development Program, which addresses a wide range of priorities including assessment and promotion of student learning, curriculum design, improving tertiary pathways, improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's higher education access and outcomes, innovative use of technology, internationalisation, research and development, and enhancing student access and progression and responding to student diversity.
- [Seed Projects](#), which test and evaluate an original idea for each of the above programs or any other topic, or build the career of early career academics.
- Extension Grants program, which provides for the continued dissemination and embedding of completed learning and teaching projects.
- Commissioned Projects program, which addresses particular issues and responds to Government priorities, as determined by the Strategic Advisory Committee.

Section 1.2 of each grants program Program Information states "the aim of the grants programs is to provide funding for academics and professional staff to investigate, develop and implement innovations in teaching and learning. Grants facilitate scholarship and research into learning and teaching, and promote systemic change in the sector".

Must see documents:

- 2013 Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program Information and Application Instructions (Leadership Program Information)
 [\(PDF 819KB |](#)
 [DOC 422MB\)](#)
- 2013 Innovation and Development Grants Program Information and Application Instructions (I&D Program Information)
 [\(PDF 786KB |](#)
 [DOC 446.5KB\)](#)
- 2013 Seed Projects Program Information and Application Instructions (Seed Program Information))
 [\(PDF 115KB |](#)
 [DOC 410KB\)](#)
- 2013 Extension Grants Information and Application Instructions (Extension Information)
 [\(PDF 160KB |](#)
 [DOC 91KB\)](#)
- 2013 Commissioned Projects Requests for Proposals
 [\(PDF 360KB |](#)
 [DOC 219KB\)](#)

The specific goals of each program are noted in Section 2 of the respective Program Information under the heading “Summary of grants programs”, and expanded on in Section 3 where the program is introduced and its objectives specified. Within the program, priorities for funding change from time to time and may be allocated across the two closing dates.

OLT encourages submissions that are designed to extend the scope of successful work already undertaken or to assist in the further implementation of demonstrated good practice.

2.2 Funding range and project duration

Funding and project duration is available across a broad range:

- Extension projects to a maximum of \$30k
- Seed Projects to a maximum of \$50k (1 year or less)
- projects building directly on completed projects funded by OLT or other predecessor bodies \$50k-\$150k (2 years or less)
- new projects \$50k-\$220k (time to be specified)
- large projects of national significance may apply for more than \$220k (time to be specified)

2.3 Eligibility

Institutions listed in Table A and Table B of the Higher Education Support Act (2003) and other approved higher education providers receiving places under the Commonwealth Grants Scheme are eligible to apply for grants. Eligible institutions are listed on the OLT website.

2.4 Research status of OLT-funded projects

From 2013, nearly all grants administered under the OLT’s programs are listed on the Australian Competitive Grants Register. They, therefore, contribute to Category 1 income in determining Research Infrastructure Block Grant (RIGB) entitlement. If a grant program is not Category 1, this will be stated in the Program Information.

2.5 Aim of the OLT grants programs

The overall aim of the grants program is to “provide funding for academics and professional staff to investigate, develop and implement innovations in learning and teaching. Grants facilitate scholarship and research into learning and teaching, and promote systemic change in the sector. They play an important role in providing esteem for learning and teaching scholarship and practice” (Program Information: Section 1.2).

These general aims are reflected in the program objectives for each grant program, all clearly outlined in the appropriate Program Information.

Applications must address a single priority within a specific program, ensuring it can be assessed against the five assessment criteria: project outcomes and rationale, approach, value and need for the project, project management and budget. Within the first criteria, project outcomes and rationale, applications will be assessed for their contribution to the overall aim of the OLT, the aim of the grants programs and the objectives of the specific grant program. It is, therefore, essential to explicitly document how the proposed project will do so.

The Innovation and Development Program and Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program share four of five objectives, with the only one differing being objective (d). As they address the same priorities, Seed Projects also share these objectives.

OLT Aim

- To provide funding ... to **investigate, develop and implement innovations** in learning and teaching
- To facilitate **scholarship and research** into learning and teaching
- To promote **systemic change**

Criteria for Assessment

- Project outcomes and rationale
- Approach
- Value and need for the project
- Project management
- Budget

Objectives: Innovation and Development Program and Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program

- (a) promote and support strategic change in higher education institutions for the enhancement of learning and teaching, and the benefit of the student experience
- (b) raise the profile and encourage recognition of the fundamental importance of teaching in higher education institutions and in the general community
- (c) develop effective mechanisms for the identification, development, dissemination and embedding of good individual and institutional practice in learning and teaching in Australian higher education
- (d) Leadership Program: identify learning and teaching issues that impact on the Australian higher education system and facilitate national approaches to address these and other emerging issues
- (d) Innovation and Development Program: develop and support reciprocal national and international arrangements for the purpose of sharing and benchmarking learning and teaching processes
- (e) develop and enhance a deep understanding and knowledge of the learning process appropriate to the disciplines being taught.

The Extension Grants program supports systemic change. As these grants are smaller and designed to extend the work of existing projects, their objectives are correspondingly less complex.

Objectives: Extension Grants

- (a) raise the profile and encourage recognition of the fundamental importance of teaching in higher education institutions and in the general community; and
- (b) develop effective mechanisms for the identification, development, dissemination and embedding of good individual and institutional practice, including addressing particular contextual barriers to taking on the good practice identified.

2.6 OLT assessment process

OLT Assessment processes are documented in Section 7.3 of the Excellence Program information and the I&D Program Information. In the first instance applications are checked for compliance with the requirements set out in the relevant Program Information. Following this, proposals are externally assessed against the five criteria by at least two peer reviewers. Assessors do not necessarily share your deep disciplinary knowledge or teaching and learning experience/background; therefore, it is essential your proposal is understandable to those with only a general understanding of teaching and learning in higher education.

Following this initial assessment, and moderation if appropriate, assessors meet to discuss their evaluations and make joint recommendations to the Grants Program Standing Committee who make the final decision. Their decision is then sent to the Minister for ratification, after which formal announcement to applicants is made. After all applicants have been notified of the outcome, an assessment report that details the outcomes of that particular grant round (the number of applications received and funded, general comments on applications) will be published on the OLT website. For unsuccessful proposals, OLT will provide written feedback directly to the appropriate researcher/s.

Part 3

How ready are you?

3.1 Are you ready?

Preparing an OLT grant application takes a significant amount of time to do well. You will also need to be open to input and critique from those with more experience. That experience may be in writing ALTC/OLT or other grants, or in understanding your discipline or learning and teaching, or in the form of in-depth knowledge and understanding of the OLT grants programs and protocols for institutional engagement with them.

Based on our experience in supporting successful grant applicants, a time input of between 80 and 160 hours minimum is required, depending on how much work you have already done on your topic of interest. Be prepared to develop a number of drafts of your application and for best results a lead time of 6-12 months is recommended.

Adequate time will be needed for:

- developing your concept to a point where it is clear, coherent, achievable within the scope of the project and, most importantly, clearly addresses the grant program priority selected and complies with the OLT aim and relevant program objectives
- background research to demonstrate need and impact of the project outcomes
- developing an operationalised project plan that is realistic and will achieve the project goals, and calculating an accompanying budget that is accurate and justifiable
- identifying and engaging project partners and clarifying who exactly will do what, when, in what time frames and for what money
- Complying with institutional requirements and obtaining letters of support from your DVC(A) and partner institution DVC(A)s.
- writing and re-writing the application

If you are unsure whether your idea justifies the time required to develop a full application, for the Excellence in Leadership and Innovation and Development programs in 2013 you can submit an Expression of Interest

ARE YOU READY TO APPLY?

Applying for an OLT grant takes a significant amount of time and effort.

It will likely take a minimum of 80 to 160 hours to develop your application.

You need to start the grant writing process EARLY!

Your only guarantees are that:

- Your computer will malfunction within 48hrs of your deadline.
- You will get sick.
- You will make some mistakes.
- Essential materials will arrive 2 days late.
- The people from whom you need letters of support will be on holidays.
- One of your 'very interested' potential project partners will change their mind.

(EOI). Do not be deceived into thinking this can be thrown together in a day or so; a high quality EOI still requires you to develop your concept, demonstrate need and impact of the project outcomes, and outline potential partners and a project plan. An EOI that will stand out from the crowd will require one third to one half the preparation time of a full application.

3.2 Institutional requirements

It is likely your university has processes in place for submission of OLT grant applications. Documentation of these processes and support in preparing your application may be available from your ICO, teaching and learning, grants management, research services or a specific OLT support area. We recommend identifying these processes at least six months before the OLT closing date to ensure all of your work is compliant and to take maximum advantage of any support available.

To ensure compliance with OLT requirements, institutional requirements (details in Section 4.2.2) will include:

- registering your application with your Institutional Contact Officer (ICO)
- obtaining institutional endorsement for your application, which will involve at minimum obtaining a letter of support from your DVC(A).

Your institution may also require formal notification of intention to apply, budget consultation/sign-off, checking of letters of support or centralised lodgement of the final application. It is in your best interests to find out about and understand your institution's internal processes and requirements for grant submission.

3.3 Proposal evaluation criteria

As you are preparing your proposal, pay careful attention to the five assessment criteria. Put yourself in the position of a reviewer and evaluate how well you would rate your proposal according to each criterion. Look for opportunities to highlight how your proposal meets these criteria. Look through past [assessment reports](#) on the OLT website to give you an idea of the sorts of things assessors look for.



(i) Project outcomes and rationale

The proposal must demonstrate clearly how the project addresses the selected program priority and what the outcomes of the project will be. More generally, all project proposals will be assessed for their contribution to the enhancement of learning and teaching in higher education. It is also important to demonstrate you are aware of previous OLT/ALTC projects in the area to show that your project builds on previous work but adds a new contribution, perspective or application.

If applying to the Leadership Program, you will also need to read the [Leadership resources](#) on the OLT website. It is essential to demonstrate that you understand and can clearly articulate the leadership framework used by the OLT and will be applying it, as appropriate, to your particular project.

(ii) Approach

The proposal must present an approach that is grounded in the literature and is based on a set of strategies that are considered, coherent and will achieve the project outcomes. For example, if an outcome is to prepare an online resource, then relevant literature must be cited to justify the content and approach to development of the online resource, and the project activities should include, at minimum, consultation with stakeholders regarding the web resource design and implementation. The approach should demonstrate alignment between plans for the dissemination/ embedding of the project outcomes and the project design.

A key objective to address in your approach is to ‘promote systemic change’ in higher education institutions for the enhancement of learning and teaching. The design of projects should address the potential to support systemic change and how the project will maximise dissemination and embedding of exemplary institutional and/or individual practice in learning and teaching in higher education. Try to incorporate ways to support adopters to engage in professional development that will assist them to effectively adapt, implement and evaluate your project outcomes and achieve stakeholder buy-in (e.g. implementation guides, case studies, exemplars of best practice, training workshops, information seminars, consultancy support from the project team, online resources such as help documents, useful links, wikis or blogs). Your project should encourage stakeholder ‘buy in’ early in the process, so when the deliverables are ready, your stakeholders will be ready to use them. Dissemination resources developed by the [D-Cubed Dissemination Project](#) provide an evidence-based approach to building dissemination into a project.

Your overall approach also needs to include an evaluation plan. Ideally your

evaluator will be nominated in the proposal and have provided input to the plan. Planning the evaluation in advance will ensure the data required for the evaluation is collected over the course of the project. As well as considering outputs, the evaluation may also consider processes, which will require the evaluator to either observe or view recordings of key events. The OLT has an excellent [Evaluation Resources](#) page to refer to for assistance.

Overall, the approach needs to be in general alignment with the OLT aim and grant program objectives.

(iii) Value/Need for Project

Your project firstly needs to demonstrate there is a need within the sector or a specific area of higher education for your project outcomes. It is not enough that you and a colleague believe your project is essential. Your case will be more strongly demonstrated if you can use Government policy direction, reports from Universities Australia, documented issues in higher education, a sector survey/needs assessment and, of course, the literature from your discipline, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) or higher education management to demonstrate the need for your project.

Once need is demonstrated, project proposals will be assessed in terms of value for money. The processes associated with decision-making, compliance requirements, evaluation and monitoring should also be designed to ensure the best value for money, while being consistent with appropriate stewardship of government funding, fairness and transparency. Look for opportunities (e.g. in the budget justification or the project methodology) to mention how your project is value for money. Perhaps your method is more cost-effective than others; perhaps it is the redundancy savings from collaboration; perhaps it is the amount or type of in-kind contributions, the types of outcomes or deliverables, or meeting such a widespread need.

OLT asks that the project demonstrates how it utilises and advances existing national and international knowledge relevant to the program priority, so investigate the literature regarding what exists already. Consider how your project has the potential to advance learning and teaching or address emerging issues for learning and teaching in higher education. In this broad context, projects may provide new approaches, build on and systemically embed approaches already developed, facilitate capacity building or focus on changed understandings and practices to promote and advance learning and teaching.



(iv) Project Management

Projects succeed or fail based on the strength of their project management. The assessors will, therefore, be looking to see that you understand and have made plans for a strong project management approach. At minimum, you need to state who will be doing what, but you will also need to demonstrate adequate time and budget have been allocated for activities, communication processes amongst team members have been planned and risk management strategies are in place to minimise disturbance caused by a project partner withdrawing or a project stage not being completed to satisfaction within the time frame. Look for opportunities to present examples of successfully meeting challenges in previous project management/leadership roles and read through the appropriate [project management resources](#) on the OLT website.

(v) Budget

Your budget must be appropriate to the activities and outcomes undertaken. The funding agreement for the project is signed by the university and it is, therefore, essential that the budget is accurate, as any shortfall must be made up by your cost centre. Letters of support included with the application should clearly state any in-kind support to be provided. Institutional support for budget preparation is likely to be available through your teaching and learning centre or research grants management.

Does your project:

- Promote excellence in learning and teaching in higher education?
- Support the objectives of the grant program to which you are submitting?
- Address a single program priority?
- Have clear outcomes and a clear rationale for those outcomes?
- Use strategies which align with the literature and OLT aim and that will achieve and disseminate the outcomes?
- Have a clear value and need within the sector/specific area of higher education?
- Demonstrate a thorough approach to project management?
- Have an appropriate budget?

Part 4

Application preparation

4.1 The process overall

First time grant applicants will find it helpful to consider the full process they are about to undertake. The table below gives an idea of each of the stages you will need to work through and their associated timeline.

Main stage	Processes – Project Leader	Project Partners
Idea (6-12 months prior to deadline)	- Research existing work in the area - Develop idea through discussion with supervisor, colleagues, potential collaborators, support staff - Identify details of institutional support and processes for application	- Contribute to research - Assist with development of idea through research and discussion - Identify details of institutional processes for partnership
Project concept (3-6 months prior to deadline)	- Define the project concept clearly, have defined outcomes and a project plan - Identify internal and external stakeholders, e.g. HoS/CC, potential collaborators, potential reference group members, senior manager(s) - Prepare a brief for stakeholders and use this to obtain conceptual support	- Assist with concept development - Identify local internal and external stakeholders - Obtain conceptual support from local stakeholders
Draft (2-4 months prior to deadline)	- Prepare first draft of application - Refine draft using feedback from collaborators, colleagues and support staff - Prepare budget - Prepare draft letters of support - Register intention to apply with ICO	- Provide feedback on draft, write sections as appropriate - Review budget - Prepare and/or review draft letters of support for your institution
Penultimate draft (1-2 months prior to deadline)	- Obtain letters of support from project partners - Obtain internal letters of support	Obtain signed letters of support and return
Final application	Submit as per university processes	
If Successful (16-18 weeks)	- Agreement with OLT signed - Work with research grant management to ensure all necessary processes are followed	Work with research grant management to ensure all necessary processes are followed

A start time of 6-12 months prior to the deadline means the exact Program Information will not yet be available. However, while OLT introduces changes to the Grants programs each year, these changes are usually minor (apart from priorities for the Commissioned Projects). For planning purposes, you can confidently use current documents as the basis for commencing your application.

4.1.1 Application preparation research outputs

As previously noted, an indicative minimum development time for a major grant for the project leader is 80-160 hours: 20-80 for concept development (which will take you to EOI stage), and 60-80 for writing. The project partners and support staff will also contribute many more hours. This is a substantial amount of work with no guarantee of success, so it is advisable to consider research outputs that could be obtained from the grant preparation process itself.

It may be possible to publish a literature review on the topic, a needs analysis, a commentary identifying gaps in the area, work from a pilot study, or a summary of work done overseas that would benefit Australian universities. If done early in the process, a conference paper or workshop on how the issues could be addressed could provide you with ideas for developing your grant project and a range of potential collaborators. Consider the full range of publication options, for example journals, conferences, disciplinary newsletters or professional association newsletters.

4.2 Identifying institutional processes

In order to maximise the chances of success in grant applications to the OLT, many universities have institutional support available, and all have formal endorsement processes and may also have in place review and endorsement processes that precede the DVC(A) or equivalent's institutional endorsement of your application. Furthermore, with the large range of grants offered, application processes may vary according to the grant program and size of the grant. Check with teaching and learning, research services, grants management or OLT grants support area in your institution for documentation of these processes and support in preparing your application.

Given the time required to develop a high quality application, you will want to maximise your chances of success. Early contact with support staff

Does your institution have

- Institutional support available?
- Processes and procedures with which you must comply?
- Concept feedback?
- Previous applicants you can approach for feedback or mentoring?
- A peer review process?
- A formal process to obtain institutional support, such as an OLT Grants Committee or Panel?
- Forms to complete and submit?
- Particular people to consult with about budget details?
- Previously successful applications to review?

ensures you can take maximum advantage of all support offered through your institution. Additionally, support staff will ensure you are aware of institutional processes and inform you of any other people with whom you need to liaise.

Longer lead times allow for greater reflection and development of your idea. We recommend you make contact with your institutional support staff and identify institutional processes 6-12 months prior to the advertised OLT closing date.

Processes will vary according to whether your institution is the project lead or a project partner. They may also vary according to the type of grant.

4.2.1 Institutional support

Institutional support comes in many forms. There may be a specific person (or people) in your faculty/college or central teaching and learning or grants management office or research support services area with responsibility for supporting applicants. If so, this person will refer you to, and possibly coordinate, any other forms of support available. Support may be in the form of assistance from a specialised support person, mentoring by a previous applicant, feedback on your concept or drafts, budgetary advice or a peer review process. You may also be alerted to work of the same or a similar nature being undertaken by other researchers in your institution. This possibly presents collaboration opportunities.

Starting on your application early (ideally at least a year in advance) will allow you to take full advantage of the support available. In the early stages support will likely involve discussing your idea and considering it in the context of the OLT Program Information. More than likely, you will be directed to the OLT website for the grant Program Information and to the OLT websites to investigate previous work in the area. If you are lucky, you may be able to continue with regular meetings as your concept develops.

4.2.2 Institutional requirements

To ensure compliance with OLT requirements, institutional requirements will include:

- registering your application with your ICO prior to submission
- obtaining institutional endorsement for your application. You need to find out what is required at your institution. Endorsement may be through a formal process such as approval by a Committee or submission to grants management who will obtain institutional

Last minute applications

Applications commenced close to the deadline may find institutional support is not available and there is difficulty in obtaining letters of support from your own or partner institutions.

Without time to reflect on the concept and written application, the concept may be poorly conceived and the overall quality of the application lower. Feedback from OLT will reflect this.

It is important to be aware of your institution's internal endorsement processes before any contact is made with the DVC(A) as you may find this direct contact is not aligned with your institutional processes.

endorsement on your behalf, or direct submission of your application to the DVC(A), as appropriate. Institutions with a formal process normally advertise an internal closing date 4-6 weeks prior to the OLT deadline.

- obtaining support from your Head of School/Cost Centre (HoS/CC). We strongly recommend consultation with your HoS/CC at the concept development stage, with ongoing liaison throughout the application process. A key topic to include is the in kind support required for the project. Allow plenty of time for obtaining formal approval.

Your institution may also require notification of intention to apply, budget sign-off, checking of letters of support, or centralised lodgement of the final application.

To encourage compliance with internal processes, the OLT requires your ICO to submit a list of applications each round. If you have not registered your application with your ICO and it is not on this list it will be rejected.

4.2.3 Project leadership

Most commonly, the person initiating the project will be the project leader and their institution becomes the lead institution. The lead institution is responsible for submitting the final application and overseeing the conduct of the project and budget. Where an institutional levy is applied in the grant budget, the full amount goes to the lead institution. As a result, the lead institution provides most if not all formal support and defines the processes for submission to the OLT.

The lead institution will define (note that some may not apply at your institution):

- available support
- registration process of intent to apply
- intermediary steps, such as approval of a project concept or project budget
- processes for formal approval of the final application
- processes for obtaining HoS/CC letter(s) of support
- process for obtaining institutional endorsement
- support available for formatting, editing or proof reading the final document

- compliance checking requirements
- registration requirements with grants management
- processes for submitting the application
- timelines for all the above and registration of your project with the ICO

Submission processes may require the researcher to submit their application to the OLT grant submission portal as a draft. If so, final submission may not be made by the researcher as this would preclude them gaining institutional endorsement, which is an OLT requirement.

Additionally, if successful, the lead institution will define:

- processes for organising contracts with the project partner institutions
- internal financial processing including setting up a project account and accounting requirements
- internal reporting requirements
- any other administrative requirements for management of your project



4.2.4 Project partnership

If you have been invited to be a partner on another institution's application, there will likely be internal processes with which you must comply. At minimum, a letter of support from your DVC(A) will be required by the lead institution, agreeing to your participation in the project and any in-kind contributions, including your time, that are proposed in the budget.

Your institution may define:

- available support
- process for registration of intent to apply
- intermediary steps, such as approval of a project concept
- processes for formal approval of the final application
- process for obtaining letters of support from the DVC(A)
- registration requirements with grants management

Grants Deadlines 2013	
Innovation and Development	Rnd 1: 25 Feb Rnd 2: 2 Aug
Leadership for Excellence in Teaching and Learning	OLT has foreshadowed Round 1 2014 will be in Nov 2013
Seed Projects	
Extension Grants	Rnd 1: 2 April Rnd 2: 2 Sept
Strategic Commissioned Projects	(28 June in 2012)

The researcher will be responsible for sending the letters of support to the lead institution by their required date.

Additionally, if successful, your institution will define:

- requirements for institutional filing of the final submission (either to grants management or OLT grants support)
- internal financial processing including setting up a project account and accounting requirements
- internal administrative requirements for management of your project
- requirements for obtaining ethics approval

Institutional approval

Letters of support are required from:

- DVC(A) of the lead institution
- DVC(A) of all partnering institutions

4.3 Submission dates

There are two main acceptance dates for grant applications each year. These apply to the Innovation and Development Grants program and the Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching program. In 2013 all applications must be submitted to round 1, either as a full application or an EOI. Round 2 is reserved for full applications developed from successful EOIs.

Extension Grants are due approximately one month later. The table in the sidebar shows the 2013 dates for the bi-annual grant rounds. These dates change slightly from year to year, but provide a general guideline for ongoing timeframe considerations. There will be a major change in 2014 as OLT have foreshadowed that Round 1 2014 will be in November 2013.

It is likely that your institution will have an internal closing date (typically 4-6 weeks before the OLT deadline). These will be advertised on your institution's website and advertised either through research or grants management, your teaching and learning centre, or OLT support area.

A further grant program, Strategic Commissioned Projects, normally has a single acceptance date each year. In 2013, the priorities for this program, which change annually, were "Learning Analytics", "Graduate Employability" and "Technology Enabled Learning". Topics may be informally foreshadowed and these may be available from your OLT grants support area. There is usually only a short timeline between advertisement and submission. You may find a concept being developed for the Innovation and Development Program can easily be adapted to fit well with one of the strategic priorities.

If so, it is well worth fast tracking to meet the earlier deadline as you will be competing against fewer and possibly less well-prepared applications.

4.4 Responsibilities

4.4.1 Responsibilities – project leader

The lead researcher is ultimately responsible for writing the proposal, timelines, evaluation framework and dissemination plan, as well as preparing the budget.

All submissions to OLT must be endorsed in writing by the DVC(A) of each institution partnering in the project must provide written support for the project, agreeing to time release of staff and any in-kind contributions mentioned in the budget. Applications submitted without the necessary letters will be rejected. It is the lead researcher's responsibility to organise all required letters of support from their home and partner institutions.

The Program Information for each grants program (see Value/Need for Project) notes other letters of support that may be required.

Your institution will define whose responsibility it is to obtain institutional endorsement and lodge the application through the OLT Grants Portal. When preparing your submission, note the reference number and password for future editing. Once submitted an email confirmation will be sent (within three working days) to confirm your final submission has been received.

If the grant is successful, the lead institution is responsible for managing the performance of the project through the project leader(s).

4.4.2 Responsibilities – project partner

More often than not, when you are a partner in a project led externally by another institution, the lead institution will develop and write the proposal and prepare the budget, timelines and evaluation and dissemination plans, although you may be asked to contribute information or write some parts of the proposal, or to provide comments, feedback and/or editing assistance.

If you are a partner/team member on another institution's OLT grant application, you will be asked to provide written endorsement from your DVC(A) to accompany their grant application, agreeing to your time release and any in-kind contributions mentioned in the budget. It is your

responsibility to arrange for the appropriate letters to be signed and supplied on time to the lead institution.

4.4.3 Minor changes

Prior to notification of outcomes, OLT may require minor changes and, if so, will specify their requirements and the re-submission date.

4.4.4 Notification of outcomes

Notification of outcomes is received from OLT about 16-18 weeks after submission and is sent directly to the project leader and other contact people named on the submission cover sheet. Additionally, a letter of congratulations may be sent from the Minister to the Vice Chancellor of the lead institution.

4.4.5 Unsuccessful applications

For unsuccessful proposals, written feedback will be provided by OLT to the appropriate researcher/s. It is useful for the project leader and institutional support staff to discuss this feedback to assist the project leader in assessing whether it would be worthwhile revising/further developing the proposal and re-submitting it in the next grant round. The feedback will be received with notification of the outcome.

Remember that the ALTC success rate was only about 15-20% on first submissions (about 50% of resubmissions that were denied the first time round were successful). This is not said to discourage you, but rather to ground you in the reality of the competitiveness of the process, so that you do not take rejection too personally. Grant writers need to develop a thick skin. There are many reasons your proposal may not be successful first time round, including that there simply was insufficient money in the pot to fund all the good proposals submitted. If your proposal is not funded, take account of the feedback, which will guide you as to whether your idea is worthwhile for re-submission in the next round.

4.4.6 Successful applications

Where a proposal has been successful and your institution is the lead, OLT will notify all nominated contact people and the lead researcher.

Upon acceptance of the proposal, the lead institution will be required to enter into an agreement with the Commonwealth, managed by the OLT



(Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 8.3; Seed Projects, Section 6.3). A copy of the 2013 Model Funding Agreement is available from the OLT website. Compliance with institutionally designated procedures for grant applications will ensure this document is sent to the appropriate institutional delegate, signed, and returned to OLT.

4.4.7 Expending grant funds

The initial payment of grant funds for the first year will be deposited centrally with your institution (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 8.5; Seed Projects, Section 6.5). Where a project's timelines extend into a second year, receipt of funds in the subsequent year is dependent upon progress against agreed milestones and quality of completed work.

Your institution will likely require up to a 10% Institutional Overhead levy. Generally, this levy will be deducted prior to funds being deposited into a project account. Be warned: if the budget stipulated a levy and the full amount is paid into your project account, do not spend the budgeted levy! The institution can transfer the funds to the correct account at any time without notifying you. Furthermore, permission needs to be sought from OLT for changes in allocation of expenditure, so you cannot spend this money on anything other than the institutional levy.

With a project account established, the project leader can begin disbursement of funds (including to other partners), as appropriate, and is responsible for execution of the budget. Again, there will be internal processes at your institutions that will dictate how payments are approved and made to partners and for other budgeted disbursements.

4.4.8 Institutional levy

Institutions will use the institutional levy in a variety of ways. It may be paid into general revenue for the overall upkeep of the university, or it may be allocated for specific purposes (for example, project infrastructure costs, purchase of ICT or other equipment for projects, seeding grants for projects or development of concepts, etc.). If the latter is the case, check with support staff to determine how these funds are used. It may be possible to request expenditure to benefit your project.

A number of project management [resources](#) developed by the ALTC are available at the OLT website to assist project holders in planning, implementing, reporting and evaluating their OLT funded project and for disseminating outcomes.

4.5 Identifying support and responsibilities

4.5.1 Project leader

Main stage	Processes – Project Leader	Answer these questions for your institution:
Idea (6-12 months prior to deadline)	• Research existing work in the area • Develop idea through discussion with supervisor, colleagues, potential collaborators, support staff • Identify details of institutional processes for application	• Who provides support? What format is the support e.g. discussion, workshops, peer review? How do you access it? • Where are your institutional processes documented? • What internal deadlines apply? • Is registration of your intent to apply required? • Are there any other intermediary processes?
Project concept (3-6 months prior to deadline)	• Define the project concept clearly, have defined outcomes and a project plan • Identify internal and external stakeholders, e.g. HoS/CC, potential collaborators, potential reference group members, senior manager(s) • Prepare a brief for stakeholders and use this to obtain conceptual support	• Can you access university support? • How much input will stakeholders require? (Pay particular attention to your HoS/CC as their approval will be required.) • What form of brief is required (e.g. verbal presentation, summary, completed concept form)?
Draft (2-4 months prior to deadline)	• Prepare first draft of application • Refine draft using feedback from collaborators, colleagues, and support staff • Prepare budget • Prepare draft letters of support	• Can you access writing/feedback support? • What budget support is available? Is it compulsory? • Is budget sign-off required? If so, by whom? In what timeframe? • What budget information needs to be included in the letters of support? • Is an editing/proofreading service available? If so, what timelines and processes apply?

Main stage	Processes – Project Leader	Answer these questions for your institution:
Penultimate draft (1-2 months prior to deadline)	- Obtain letters of support from collaborators - Obtain internal letter of support	- What timelines apply to obtaining letters from collaborators? - What processes apply to obtaining a letter of support from the DVC(A)? Does this include an internal approval process? If so, what is required and when? Is there a cover sheet to complete? - What processes apply to obtaining letters of support?
Final application	Submit as per university processes	- Are you responsible, or does an independent check your application against the checklist? - What assistance is available for collating documents into a single PDF? - What are the university processes for submission? - What are the requirements of grants management? When do they require a copy of the grant application? Is a cover sheet required? - What processes need to be followed if OLT requires changes?
If successful (16-18 weeks)	Get the project underway!	- What processes will you have to follow with regard to finance, legal agreements, HR, and general grants management? Where are these processes documented? - What assistance will be available?

4.5.2 Project partner

Main stage	Processes – Project Partner	Answer these questions for your institution:
Idea (6-12 months prior to deadline)	- Assist with development of idea through research and discussion - Identify details of institutional processes for partnership	- Who provides support? What format is the support? For what? How do you access it? - Where are your institutional process documented? - What internal deadlines apply? - Is registration of your intent to apply required? - Are there any other intermediary processes?
Project concept (3-6 months prior to deadline)	- Assist with concept development - Identify internal stakeholders - Obtain conceptual support from internal stakeholders	- Can you access university support? - How much input will stakeholders require? (Pay particular attention to your HoS/CC as their approval will be required.) - What form of brief is required (e.g. verbal presentation, summary, completed concept form)?
Draft (2-4 months prior to deadline)	- Provide feedback on draft, write sections as appropriate - Review budget	- Is budget sign-off required (as it relates to your institution)? If so, by whom? In what timeframe? - What budget information needs to be included in the letters of support?
Penultimate draft (1-2 months prior to deadline)	Submit draft letters, obtain a signed letter of support and return	- What timelines apply to obtaining a letter of support? - What processes apply to obtaining a letter of support from the DVC(A)? Does this include an internal approval process? If so, what is required and when? Is there a cover sheet to complete? - What processes apply to obtaining letters of support?
Final application	Obtain a copy of the final application	What are the requirements of grants management? When do they require a copy of the grant application? Is a cover sheet required?
If successful (16-18 weeks)	Get the project underway!	- What processes will you have to follow with regard to finance, legal agreements, HR, and general grants management? Where are these processes documented? - What assistance will be available?

Part 5

Generating and developing ideas

5.1 Getting ideas that get funding

Ideas are the first step in obtaining funding. No bad idea can be disguised by good writing to look like a good idea. And a good idea poorly presented can be misunderstood, under-rated or overlooked by reviewers and funding bodies.

No bad idea can be disguised by good writing to look like a good idea. And a good idea, poorly presented, can be misunderstood, under-rated or overlooked by reviewers and funding bodies.

5.2 Don't have an idea?

As discussed in the previous section, the OLT grants programs are directed towards the investigation, development and implementation of innovations, and the promotion of systemic change, in learning and teaching in higher education. Additionally, each particular program has aims and objectives. If you are seeking an idea, keep these grant program aims and objectives in the back of your mind while thinking about possible projects.

The starting point is your own experience of teaching in your discipline. What learning and teaching problem sparks your interest? What are the issues for you? Are they part of a broader issue? How important is this learning and teaching problem or issue for the advancement of learning and teaching in higher education? What research has been done in the area? What preliminary research have you done? What are the gaps in knowledge? You may find there is no gap, as others have already published in the area. Are there findings of studies from past work that could apply to your problem? Talk with colleagues to see if the issues are shared. Does your idea go beyond what is considered 'business as usual'?

The starting point for an idea is your own experience of teaching in your discipline.

Review what has recently been funded by checking the [OLT site](#) (use the filter form to select individual programs or search by key word). Reports from completed projects and fellowships are available in the [OLT Resource Library](#). In particular, the Good Practice reports (search for "good practice") covering a range of topics are highly recommended. These summarise the literature and previous grant funded projects on the topic, highlighting gaps in the literature and outstanding questions.



Do any of the areas of investigation or discussion spark an idea? Consider whether you could build on that project's foundation by applying or implementing the results, or applying/implementing them in a different context? Could you develop and trial resources for students or staff based on the outcomes of a previous project? Perhaps they spark ideas in new directions for what could be a seed project?

Keep abreast of what is topical in higher education learning and teaching. Some sources of information/inspiration can be:

- read the Higher Education supplement in The Australian newspaper every week (grant/funding body assessors are)
- read the NTEU Bulletin for topics of emerging importance
- read your own disciplinary Association Bulletins/Journals
- subscribe to Ministry RSS feeds
- skim through Campus News
- ask students what they think are important issues in regard to learning in your discipline
- ask AA's what students and staff complain about the most
- review results from internal and external student surveys
- do a web search for higher education projects conducted in Europe or the USA
- check DEHub: [Innovation in distance and online education](#) resources:
[Wikieducator Research Themes](#)
[DEHub Database](#) of Research on Distance & Online Education

Think about how general issues in learning and teaching overlay your discipline. Here are some suggestions for discussion starters:

Scholarship of Learning and Teaching:

research/teaching nexus,
engaging staff, staff
professional learning,
embedding good practice
(from good practice reports)



Students:

social
inclusion, engaging
mature-aged students, increasing
science and technology graduates, employability
and arts/humanities qualifications (big concern
for students), Indigenous education, pathways to
university, student diversity, 'authentic' learning
experiences, student support



Course development:

benchmarks
in a range of areas, first year
core subject efficiency and consolidation
across universities (same content—build one
large core unit that is delivered at each institution),
re-positioning or re-shaping of discipline-based
courses, the future direction and coverage
of programs of study



IT:

digital revolution,
innovative use of ICT
for learning, Web 2.0
applications, improving
staff uptake



Other:

models for enhancing community
engagement, staff capacity building,
academic leadership, promotion of
learning and teaching, policy and
management issues, building partnerships
with other educational institutions,
industry and community



Distance Education:

quality
frameworks,
managing large groups
online, peer assessment,
self-assessment, collaborative
spaces, remote supervision,
practical subjects by distance, open
education resources, remote and
authenticated assessment,
flexible or self-directed
learning, MOOCs



5.3 Developing your idea

To develop your ideas into a strong research project potentially suitable for OLT funding, you'll need to undertake some research.

Consider the following questions:

- Are you familiar with the literature pertaining to learning and teaching in your proposed research area?
- Can you identify the important research questions in relation to learning and teaching in your field or your discipline?
- Do you have a learning and/or teaching issue for which you could devise a solution?
- Can you nominate areas that need further exploration?
- Could your study fill a gap? Lead to greater understanding?
- How much research has already been conducted on this topic?
- Is your proposed study innovative, or has it been done before? If the latter, is there room for improvement? Or evaluation? Or implementation/application? Or a different context/discipline?
- Does the topic still have currency, or is it becoming obsolete?
- Are your potential stakeholders interested?

A good project begins with a sense of why it will provide a significant improvement over current practice, and a good proposal relies on a clear idea of the goals and objectives of the project. Envisage what improvements your project could make, and then think about what activities, course(s), resources or expertise must be developed, what instruments will be needed, what collaborations must be formed to bring about the desired improvements. Focusing first on the goals and objectives enables you to design the activities to reach those goals.

Projects should investigate, develop or implement innovations in learning and teaching or promote systemic change in the sector. To achieve these aims they could explore teaching and learning methods that use equipment, knowledge or teaching techniques in effective (or more effective) ways; perhaps by adapting techniques to a new context or by teaching in a novel or more attractive manner. Smaller projects could test a new approach, or extend an existing approach to a new context.

Focus first on the goals and objectives. This will enable you to design activities that will help you reach those goals.

Most importantly, your project should benefit higher education, provide new teaching perspectives and/or directly improve student opportunities to learn. That said, however, the proposal must be written in sufficient detail to allow reviewers to understand:

- what the project hopes to accomplish;
- whether the project personnel have the necessary expertise to accomplish the goals and objectives;
- the potential of the project to improve some area of higher education;
- the national impact and cost effectiveness of the project; and
- the appropriateness of the planned evaluation and dissemination.

5.4 New idea?

Check whether [OLT](#) have previously funded similar projects, and ensure that your idea is sufficiently different/innovative to warrant the funding requested. If it is not sufficiently different, it could possibly be funded as work building on a previous project or as an Extension Grant.

Review previously funded projects at the [OLT](#) website to see if your project is already being undertaken or how you could build on work currently in progress. If an idea similar to yours was recently funded, don't despair; this is obviously a targeted area, and you may be able to find a project that complements the work already underway.

It is also worth reviewing the OLT resources and [previous assessment reports](#) to note the strengths and weaknesses of past proposals. If a relevant Good Practice report exists, it will provide a summary of work to the date of the report.

Even a Google search can give you some indication of whether your idea is innovative. Check the websites of any professional/association/accreditation organisations associated with your discipline/topic area, relevant government departments, other universities or education providers, commercial stakeholders, as well as online conference programs/proceedings, blogs and the recent disciplinary literature, all of which can help you gauge whether your idea is timely and how receptive stakeholders might be towards your proposal.

Assessing your idea

- Is this a new idea? (If not, is your idea more suitable for an extension grant?)
- Does your idea address a need?
- Can you document that need?
- Does your project fit within promotion of excellence within higher education?
- Does your proposed project have a well-defined target group?
- Will your solution be suitable for the group targeted?
- Can you achieve your outcomes within OLT's funding and timelimits?



5.5 Before you start writing

Although it is tempting to immediately begin writing, your proposal will be much more effective if you develop your concept thoroughly first. Your institution may have some type of Concept or Expression of Interest (EOI) form, or you could choose to use the one provided in [Appendix A](#).

Some aspects that require consideration in the early planning stages are discussed below.

5.5.1 University procedures

All funding agencies have detailed instructions to guide the submission of proposals: these require careful attention. The previous chapter discussed the type of procedures you may encounter in order to prepare and submit an application.

There are also policies to be followed should your project be funded. These include procedures about recruiting and hiring personnel, ethics approvals, procurement policies, paid outside work policies, reporting and claiming grant-related expenses, and submitting required budget and progress reports, depending on the nature of your project. You need to be familiar with such policies and procedures early in the proposal development process.

Some things you might need to consider include:

- What resources are available to help you prepare a budget?
- If your application requires hiring new personnel, what procedures must you follow, and how long is it likely to take?
- What are the procedures for processing payment of grant expenses?
- What are the policies regarding the distribution of indirect costs on OLT grants?
- What other policies related to the implementation of grants exist?
- Do you need legal advice regarding IP arrangements?
- What other approvals are necessary (e.g. ethics clearance)?
- What other factors will impact on project timelines, e.g. action research projects may need to align with particular teaching periods?

Your university will have staff available to advise you on most of these issues. There may be a school, faculty or centrally-based research officer or finance officer. Alternatively, your grants management area should also be familiar with all the processes surrounding research funding and paid outside work and, often, much of this information can be gleaned from the appropriate section of your institution's website.

5.5.2 Which grant program?

The first thing you must be aware of is the deadlines and internal procedures for submission of OLT grant applications. The Program to which you intend to apply determines your deadline, although most will be submitted into the two main rounds 2013 (remember internal deadlines are likely to be 4-6 weeks earlier than the OLT advertised dates and round 1 2014 is foreshadowed to be November 2013). 2013 Extension Grant applications are due 2 April or 2 September.

Begin by determining the OLT grant program and the priority areas within that program that your project could meet. In crafting your project and the application, keep in mind that each application may address a single priority area only.

Funding for projects addressing the priorities within the Innovation and Development Program and Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program is available at four levels:

- Seed Projects (<\$50k)
- projects that build directly on completed projects (\$50k-\$150k)
- new projects (\$50k-\$220k), or
- nationally significant projects (no specified limit).

The purpose of **Seed Projects** is to test and evaluate an original idea, fund a stand-alone small-scale project, or build the capacity of early career academics. These may be a single institution project or involve collaboration.

Extension Grants are designed to extend the dissemination of outcomes from completed projects. Applications may be made by part or all of the original team, or a new team at your institution that wants to work with the project results. These, therefore, do not require a new original idea, but do require at least two deliverables, each with an explicit audience, appropriate to the outcomes from the original project. Collaboration is encouraged but not essential.

Review the following documents

- [2013 Innovation and Development Program Information](#)
- [2013 Leadership Program Information](#)
- [2013 Seed Projects Program Information](#)
- It is also worthwhile reading through a range of Assessment Reports at the [on each grants program page](#) as these will show what the assessors are looking for.
- [2013 Extension Grants](#)

5.5.3 IP considerations

Check the intellectual property information provided in the 2013 appropriate Program Information (Leadership and I&D, Section 8.1; Seed Projects, Section 6.1) and to determine whether the IP arrangements are appropriate for your project or IP issues are likely to arise. If issues are expected, think also about how IP will be negotiated with any partner institutions.

Unless you negotiate to the contrary with OLT and include any changes in the contractual funding agreement with OLT, intellectual property rights in any material created under the grant will vest immediately in the Commonwealth, in order to facilitate broad dissemination of the outcomes across the higher education sector. Authorship, of course, always remains with you, and unless you believe there may be commercialisation possibilities, negotiations regarding IP will usually not be necessary. If you have any concerns over the IP arrangements, please consult your legal office about the implications.

5.6 Concept mapping

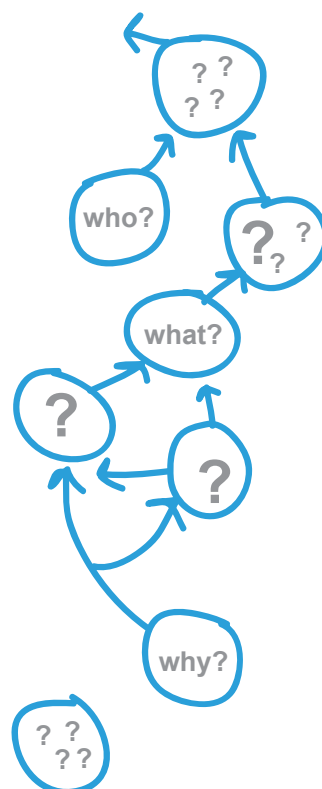
Once you've thought through the key elements of your research questions, hypotheses, goals and objectives, specific aims and research design, you have the ingredients to produce a concept overview. However, a strong research idea should also pass the 'so what' test. Think about the potential impact of the research that you are proposing. What is the benefit of answering your research question? Who will it help (and how)? Do you have any partners in mind? What do you need money for?

When you have developed a broader perspective of the tasks and resources required to achieve your aims, don't be surprised if you have to modify your project. It may be that you will not have access to the expertise or data that you will require. Or perhaps you have to re-scope the project into stages if it is too big to achieve all at once within OLT's funding or time limits. Perhaps you will have to rethink the expected benefits if you cannot devise a way to measure the results that have been achieved. Maybe you will need to use a different approach if the one selected will not lead to the desired outcomes. Do not become discouraged, just reconceptualise your project: all these changes are likely to result in a more robust project.

Of the total time spent developing a grant application, at least half should be taken up in developing the concept in depth by addressing the questions on the Project Concept Form ([Appendix A](#)).



Your project concept may sound good to you, but **SO WHAT?** Why should your project be funded over any other great idea?



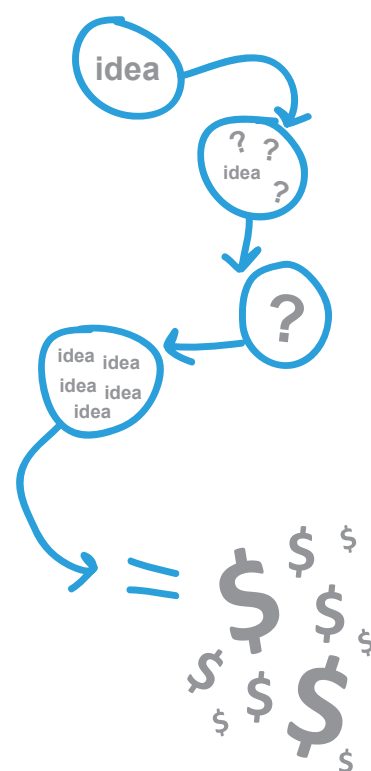
5.6.1 The Project Concept Form

The OLT Project Concept Form ([Appendix A](#)) is designed to help you turn your idea into a project worthy of funding. Our experience with helping people develop their grant applications is that answering the questions on the form clarifies the project and summarises the key issues. Completing the Project Concept Form will lead to a well-thought out project and, thus, the grant writing process will be much easier, as the focus will be on expression of the ideas, not project design. This will mean it is less likely that a complete re-write will be necessary, and the total number of drafts will be reduced.

Use the Project Concept Form to prompt you to think about necessary aspects of your project. As a working document, it can be completed in note form or dot points, or you can cut and paste bits from other documents that you have prepared, or if you wish, you can write your ideas more formally so that you will be able to cut and paste the Project Concept Form sections as the basis of your application. Eventually, you will have to supply all the information in the Project Concept Form and thinking about these questions now will help you to plan a more robust research project.

Be flexible

Your first idea may not be your best idea.



Ten steps to project development

1. Understand the problem
2. Brainstorm solutions
3. Identify your solutions
4. Decide on your approach
5. Outline expected outcomes (results and benefits)
6. Determine activities to accomplish outcomes
7. Estimate resources required
8. Reassess the viability of your approach and solution
9. Reassess expected outcomes
10. Identify evaluation methods

Part 6

Implementing your idea: project planning

6.1 What will your project achieve?

6.1.1 The importance of understanding needs

Identifying and understanding the need addressed by your project will help in formulating clear project goals, aims and objectives. For example, if your project goal was to expand the content of a course of study in order to meet employer needs, then, where you do not already know the answers, you may need to undertake research to exactly identify employer needs, possible ways these could be included in the curriculum, and how to get stakeholders engaged.

Ask yourself the following questions about addressing stakeholder needs:

- What ideal condition could exist if this problem were eliminated, prevented or improved?
- What is the overall, long-term condition desired for your target group?
- What are the overall, long-term benefits for each of your stakeholder groups?

To consider the project outcomes and deliverables, put yourself in a non-collaborating colleague or stakeholder's position and ask "What would I need to implement the findings of this project in my situation?"

As value/need for the project is one of the key criteria for assessment, at this stage, ensure you can make a clear statement or list of dot points about need.

6.1.2 Project goals

Goals are the desired or ideal state of things and, as such, are not generally attainable over the short-term. One to three (at most) goals is sufficient, and it is best to restrict the geographic scope of your goals and their target group (e.g. to support deeper professional learning experiences for disabled students in Australian higher education institutions).

The goal provides a general aim and direction for the project, but lacks specificity as to what will be achieved.

Aims or objectives describe major activities within the context of the goals and their impact

Your project will have both long- and short-term goals. For example, your long-term goals might include improving student retention, providing a more inclusive learning context or enhancing graduate employability. These are things that you hope will result from your endeavours, but which are unlikely to be realised within the life of the project. The project's short-term goals, on the other hand, will be more constrained: for example, to expand the content of a course of study in order to meet employer needs or to embed Work Integrated Learning (WIL) in a particular course in order to ensure work-readiness of graduates.

6.1.3 Project aims and objectives

The aims or objectives of the project, on the other hand, are the actions taken to attain your goals and, as such, are most often specific, achievable, measurable statements about what you will accomplish within a certain timeframe and budget. Typically, you will have 3 or 4 objectives for each goal.

For example, if your goal was to improve employability skills, then your objectives may be: create two units that address two specific aspects of the job using WIL; ensure the effectiveness of the units by informing resource refinements via feedback from test implementation of the units with a sample of users and stakeholders; increase uptake by wide dissemination to the sector.

Sometimes, your objectives will be processural; that is, more concerned with how something is achieved, rather than what is achieved. For example, you might wish to examine how you would build an effective community of practice for post-graduate students, in which case you would be more interested in how the community of practice is formed and maintained than in what the impact of the community of practice will be on the post-graduate students.

The way in which you express your objectives will determine how your results or outcomes are evaluated. For example, changes in attitudes might be assessed using a scale instrument, whereas observation, survey or interview might be more appropriate to assess behavioural change, and skill changes would most often be monitored using a pre- and post-test of competencies.

Keep your objectives simple and clear. It is a common mistake to put more than one measurable outcome in an objective. Ensure that the aims are feasible, given the time and money you are requesting. Remember, the aims are directly linked to milestones and the expected outcomes for which you will be accountable to OLT. When devising aims, stretch as far as possible to

Well-stated objectives provide:

- a timeframe
- the target group
- extent of impact (e.g. number of students)
- expected measurable results and benefits
- geographic scope

make the project cost-effective and, therefore, attractive to OLT, but not so far as to find that your objectives are unattainable.

Your specific aims should lead logically into and be consistent with the long-term goals. For projects completed in two phases, indicate how the activities performed in the first phase lead directly into the activities planned for the second phase.

ALTC previously advised against designing projects that are too broad and, thus, unlikely to produce a targeted outcome that could be taken up and embedded in practice. They also advised against projects that are actually two projects in one and, thus, typically too large and thinly spread to do full justice to either idea. This good advice applies to OLT applications also.

6.2 Project outcomes/deliverables

Project outcomes and deliverables should relate directly to the specific aims of the project and, also, to the more abstract, conceptual longer term goals of the project. What is the ultimate application or use of the research? What are the long-term implications?

We would be inclined to go for broke at the beginning of the planning process, then pare back to what time, budget and available personnel/ expertise will allow.

Remember, the project outcomes must include something of value across the HE sector and something that can be applied/ implemented in different contexts across the sector. Think about how your deliverables could be developed to allow more generic use across disciplines and the sector. ALTC warned in the past that a weakness of some applications was a reliance on outcomes that demonstrate scholarship rather than change in strategy, teacher behaviour or expectations about the role of the student in assuming greater responsibility for learning.

Project outcomes and deliverables could include all or any of the following:

- a new teaching initiative or student learning experience
- enhanced learning outcomes or other impacts from changed teaching
- a handbook for implementing the new initiative
- tangible products or resources, such as teaching resources, learning material modules, a computer-based simulation or a printed teaching aid

What are you going to do?

How and why are you doing it?

What are the limitations of your approach?

When will you do things?

Where will you do them?

- a framework, policy, protocol, guidelines or implementation plan for effecting some change in practice or behaviour
- indirect effects, including staff development
- communities of practice and/or formation of other networks

6.3 What are you going to do?

How will you achieve your aims? List the specific tasks you will have to undertake. Do not include preliminary literature reviews and sector consultations; OLT consider this pre-work, which should have been carried out in the phase of establishing the viability or need for the project – that is, before the proposal is submitted. Think about what data you will need to answer your questions. How will the data be collected and why? How will it be analysed? When will the project happen? Where will the project take place? What people will you need to help you?

Think creatively. Think about whether it is necessary for you to do all the work yourself, or whether you could commission some of the tasks.

If undertaking a survey, for instance, commercial companies such as the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) can conduct a survey on your behalf. If contracting out work, ensure the quotation is specific about the exact work to be included, e.g. for a survey discuss the inclusion or exclusion of question pre-testing, data analysis, and the quality/detail of reporting. Whatever level of survey service, it is likely you could use telephone follow-up to clarify or expand upon answers. If conducting the survey yourself, be specific about the software to be used (e.g. SurveyMonkey or Qualtrix for data collection, NVIVO for qualitative data analysis, SPSS/SYSTAT for quantitative data analysis, or whatever you are using) and why it is appropriate.

Travel is very expensive, quickly eats up your budget and takes more time. Can you use tele/video-conferencing, wikis, blogs to achieve the same ends? Can you drive/train instead of flying? Can you piggyback on another meeting or disciplinary conference that everyone is likely to attend anyway (i.e. their travel costs are already paid and do not have to be added to this project's costs)?

Consider your options carefully if your project is 'too big' (i.e. would cost more than allowed under OLT funding rules and/or take longer than the specified time limit). Do not simply move it into the next category, as a strong Seed Project could become a weak larger project; or to extend a \$220k project to a larger amount would require demonstration that the project is of national significance. Think instead whether you can break your

If your project is '*too big*' do not simply move it into the next funding category. What was a strong project in the initial category could now appear much weaker.

project into logical stages that could be submitted separately for funding. For instance, a seed project could be followed by a more significant project; or a larger project could be followed by one that builds directly on the work. Be cautious in extending the timeline for new projects beyond two years – while the Program Information states that applicants may specify the duration of the project, going beyond two years may spread your budget so thinly the project loses momentum.

Projects that build on previous work are welcomed by OLT. However, if you are seeking Stage 2 funding for a previously completed project, remember the report for Stage 1 must be finalised and available to the sector at least ten weeks before you submit your application for follow-on funding. Inclusion of new team members is strongly encouraged. (Leadership and I&D Program Information, Section 6.4).

Must see documents:

- [Dissemination Resources](#)

6.4 Dissemination

Think about how you will disseminate information on the success of your project to other researchers and educators. How will you inform the sector of the outcomes of your project and encourage uptake and/or implementation across the sector more broadly? In general, setting up a web page about the project is a good idea, but not considered sufficient on its own. Nor do publications and presentation of papers at conferences by themselves constitute a comprehensive dissemination program.

The [D-Cubed](#) project investigated the effectiveness of dissemination for ALTC Grants Scheme projects in the period 2006 to 2009. The Final Report outlines an approach to dissemination that aims to increase opportunities for achieving productive change in learning and teaching. The new dissemination framework presented incorporates three key aspects. These are:

Dissemination:

- How have you assessed the climate?
- How can you engage targeted potential adopters on an ongoing basis?
- How will you enable transfer of project outcomes?

i. Assess climate

Is your target audience ready to change? Do they also see the same needs you do? If the sector is crying out for an answer to a problem (that you are about to provide), dissemination will be far more effective than if you are trying to convince people they need your solution. Look for opportunities to write about how strong and widespread the need for your project is. Make sure you can back up your claims with literature, reports and/or letters of support.

ii. Engage throughout the project

Your dissemination activities will need to ensure you interact with targeted potential adopters on an ongoing basis. Ongoing interactions will allow them to provide input during the project development, build ownership, empowerment and be ready to implement your solutions at the end of the project. Look for opportunities to write about this throughout the project description, not just in a special section on 'dissemination'.

iii. Enable transfer of project outcomes

How will you make the outcomes and products of your project available to those who need it most? OLT is looking for more than a website, conference presentations and journal publications. How can you make your outputs and products findable and adaptable?

Dissemination can include, among other things:

Online forum, webinars and social media: to promote and discuss project progress, findings and outcomes, or for other institutions to talk to project participants about their experience.

Publications: disseminate the findings of the project through peer-reviewed journal articles, books or book chapters

Conferences: such as HERDSA, ASCILITE, ODLAA, and International Distance & Flexible Learning Forums

Reports: prepare reports for relevant stakeholders (e.g., DVC/PVC(A)s; via DEHub networks and WikiEducator) and providing updates quarterly to the following distribution lists HERDSA, AARE, ASCILITE, ODLAA

Participation: in OLT leadership events and others as requested and inclusion of project progress reports

Presentation: of seminars reporting on the project processes and outcomes for staff at the partner institutions by team members, or other institutions or conferences when the opportunity arises

Online posts: posting project progress to various HE & professional or other stakeholder group blog site/discussion forum for comment and/or appropriate feedback/comment

Press Releases: submission of project briefings and progress reports to Campus Review and Higher Education Supplement

Must see documents:

- [OLT Evaluation Resources](#)

Online Resources: creation of a website and open education resources available via RSS to disseminate processes and outcomes of the study

Workshops: running workshops for staff at other HE institutions, or for specialist stakeholder groups, either face-to-face, online or via video-conference; many regional universities would welcome offers of a visiting scholar

Colloquia: to both obtain feedback from others and share news about the project. Joint research projects could be seeded or shared.

In planning dissemination, think about your stakeholders, their interests, desired frequency of contact and appropriate communication channels. This will easily extrapolate to a dissemination plan and schedule for your application.

Be creative with dissemination activities. You are looking for activities that are effective at communicating an aspect or aspects of the project to a particular audience. Some projects have incorporated highly creative dissemination activities, such as a masked ball for [Project enRole](#) (which investigated role playing as a learning activity).

Think also about the sustainability of any disseminated resources. What are the plans to ensure that electronic dissemination will lead to broad implementation of material so provided, and that such material will be subjected to continued scrutiny for editorial quality and currency of content? Can you embed these resources or learning and teaching models within other institutions? Could you run training workshops to transfer skills? In the long term, how will student learning outcomes be evaluated?

6.5 Project evaluation

Evaluation refers to the process of acquiring information to assess a program or program activity and provide useful feedback. Different types of evaluations can be conducted depending on the goal of the evaluation and the aspect of the program being evaluated. Process Evaluations examine the process of program delivery, including alternative delivery procedures, and may include

- **Implementation Evaluations** which monitor fidelity to an established program model and/or

- Determine the evaluation questions
- Determine the types and sources of evidence needed
- Devise data collection and analysis plans
- Identify ethical considerations
- Identify reporting procedures

- **Formative Evaluations** which examine the quality of implementation and assess organizational context, personnel and procedures with a view to improving programs.
- **Outcome Evaluations** which investigate whether the program or technology caused demonstrable effects on specifically defined target outcomes.
- **Impact Evaluations** which are broader and assess the overall or net effects—intended or unintended—of the program or technology as a whole.
- Evaluation can also include **Cost-Effectiveness** and **Cost-Benefit Analyses**, which determine the efficiency of programs by assessing outcomes in terms of their dollar costs and their value relative to those costs.

The OLT evaluation process encompasses all these aspects of program evaluation.

Process evaluations provide an understanding of how you achieved results (i.e. they describe what happened, how activities were accomplished, the level of effort required and the effectiveness of the tasks undertaken). They are usually ongoing throughout the project and can be used as formative feedback, informing decision-making and systematically investigating progress.

The evaluation at the end of the project is a summative process associated with accountability: were the project outcomes achieved and were monies spent as expected? They usually answer the question what and how much were achieved. Evaluation should be stakeholder-driven: there is a high correlation between stakeholder participation in the evaluation and uptake of the project outcomes.

A good evaluation plan appropriate to the scale of the project will provide information as the project is developing and will determine how effectively the project has achieved its goals. How will you know whether you achieved the desired impacts? To put it another way, how will you prove you didn't waste the money? This should influence your overall project design. If using an external evaluator, make contact with your chosen evaluator to discuss your evaluation plan, before including them in the application. Seek their agreement to do the work and their fee.

Do not set yourself up for a poor evaluation, and make sure that you are evaluating the project process and the immediate outcomes (not the long-term goals, for example). Think about evaluation when you are formulating your project objectives. Don't make wild claims. For example, if you are developing a new unit, but not implementing it (even as a trial), then it will

Must see documents:

- [OLT Evaluation Resources](#)

Projects over \$120k must commission a formal independent evaluation

Some criteria that may be used to assess a potential evaluator include:

- their evaluation plan and a detailed outline of how to carry it out;
- successful experience evaluating a similar program;
- knowledge about evaluation methods;
- knowledge about the population to be evaluated, including knowledge of the population's culture and first language;
- cultural sensitivity and ability to work with varied target populations;
- ability to submit work in a timely manner;
- ability to communicate well with the targeted audience, in person and in writing;
- understanding of the rights and privileges of study participants and the operations of institutional review boards;
- references, especially from clients; or
- cost.

not be possible to claim that an outcome of your project will be increased student satisfaction. How would you assess that? This may be a longer term goal, but it is not an immediate outcome (which is what must be assessed). Remember, that an evaluation is also assessing the project's processes and whether they were appropriate and effective, not just whether you achieved the planned outcomes. How you got there and whether this was cost-effective and efficient is just as important. An evaluation can uncover indirect benefits of the project.

In addition, the evaluation plan needs to be appropriate for where the projects lies in terms of the maturity of that topic area (e.g. in relation to WIL, not enough is yet known to understand how it will affect the sector). In the **developmental stage**, consider the implementation process, the extent of take-up and support and what next steps would be appropriate. In the **impact stage**, success in terms of outputs/outcomes, cost effectiveness, explanation of the impact and any improvements and future plans should be taken into account. Where relevant, sustainability will also be assessed as part of the evaluation, or rather the potential of the **sustainability** plan will be assessed, since sustainability cannot actually be measured. So, for example, if you are developing a website as part of your dissemination program, how will it be maintained and updated when funding for the project ceases?

OLT have provided a [web-based resource](#) to assist in planning the evaluation framework component of your application. It can help project teams clarify what they expect from an independent evaluation and how to carry out ongoing evaluation of the project. Do not just regurgitate the example evaluation questions tabled in the summary of key elements in evaluating grant projects in the OLT Evaluation resource. The reviewers have seen them all before! Think about the questions in relation to your project's objectives, outputs and audience and tailor them to reflect consideration of your project.

6.5.1 Choosing an evaluator

The evaluator may be internal (i.e. someone from within your organisation) or external; however, all projects provided with funding of greater than \$120k must commission a formal independent evaluation (i.e. external) of the project. In the latter case, you could also consider using an internal evaluator, whose work is supervised by an external, independent evaluator. This may prove to be a more workable solution, as an internal evaluator is 'accessible' for meetings, staff interviews, to monitor project processes and so on; whereas an external evaluator most probably cannot be on-hand and would have to be 'transported' to your location to meet their evaluation responsibilities, thus incurring greater costs.

You may wish to use an outside evaluator even when not required by OLT, because someone with specialist expertise or broad experience in program evaluation is needed, or because the need for an objective perspective is great, which is often the case for expensive and controversial programs. External evaluators are thought to possess two special assets: a vision or understanding, sometimes called objectivity, of issues and concerns that is not constrained by the day-to-day operations of a program, and freedom from the pressures and constraints that can derive from evaluating the work of colleagues and/or one's institution.

An evaluator needs to have knowledge about research design, methodology and statistics. Four key sources of information can help you determine the experience and skills of an evaluator:

- (1) written examples of past work performed by the evaluator,
- (2) the resumes and references provided,
- (3) the actual evaluation plan submitted for the program at hand, and
- (4) feedback from other OLT grant-holders about their external evaluation experience.

A suitable evaluator can often be found amongst your own disciplinary contacts. Network by asking colleagues or obtaining contacts at conferences or large meetings. Contact schools in relevant fields at universities and/or research organizations and professional associations that have a large membership base of evaluators (such as the Australasian Evaluation Society (AES), which has short biography listings of evaluation practitioners at <http://www.aes.asn.au/consultants-directory.html>) and invite proposals from a few evaluators. Alternatively, you might advertise: post an advertisement on your website, where it is easily accessible and potential evaluators can download the terms of reference and other information/forms needed to submit a proposal, or advertise in the newspaper or on listservs.

You may find the following resources useful:

[EVALULEAD: A Guide for Shaping and Evaluating Leadership Development Programs](#), W.K.Kellogg Foundation.

[Success Case Method: Summary](#), W.K.Kellogg Foundation

[Assessment and Evaluation Handbook Series](#) U.S.

Department of Justice

[BJA Centre for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement](#)

Part 7

Building a team and organising collaborators

7.1 Project personnel

7.1.1 Project leader/s

The project leader is the person responsible for directing the study or project and is accountable to the funding institute for proper conduct of the research. Project leaders typically need to demonstrate

- recent publication in peer-reviewed journals related to the proposed research area;
- prior supervision or leadership of research team members; prior position as a key member of a funded research team for similar project;
- receipt of prior funding for grants/contracts in the proposed research area;
- membership in relevant disciplinary societies; and
- preferably a doctoral degree, but sometimes a bachelor or master degree with extensive research experience in the proposed field of study will suffice.

The project leader function can be shared by several team members/partner institutions; however, the lead institution remains responsible to OLT for performance management and reporting, as well as acquittal of the funding and the deliverables from the project. Furthermore, if the role is shared the application will need to be explicit as to how the project leadership will function effectively.

The project leader/s must take significant intellectual responsibility for the proposed project, its design, conduct and results (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 6.5 Seed Projects Section 4.4). This requires a serious time commitment (usually at least 20% of the leader's time). Where the project leader has previously been an OLT or ALTC grant-holder, the quality and timeliness of their previous work will be taken into account (N.B. even where a project seeks and was granted an extension of time, this will be considered a 'late finish', as it indicates that either the project was not scoped adequately or not all potential risks were taken into account).

Project Manager

- ✓ Self-directed
- ✓ Thorough and accurate
- ✓ Patient
- ✓ Familiar with institution's internal processes

Able to:

- ✓ Liaise directly with project partners
- ✓ Prepare draft documents
- ✓ Manage project finances and report accurately and appropriately
- ✓ Keep tabs on project activities

If Research is also required

Able to:

- ✓ Undertake literature review
- ✓ Assist with data collection and analysis
- ✓ Prepare drafts of academic papers

Individuals may not hold the substantive responsibility (e.g. project leader/director) for more than two OLT grants concurrently, unless the DVC(A) approves a greater commitment and provides details of how sufficient time will be allocated to enable the individual to acquit his/her responsibilities to the projects. While this restriction does not apply to project team members, care should be taken by individuals not to over-commit.

You may go over this limit during the grant application phase in terms of the number of applications on which you are mentioned as a team member or project leader, based on the assumption that it is unlikely that all the proposed projects will be funded. If more than two projects involving you are successful, you can consider your commitment level at that stage—it may be that your School/Department can accommodate greater time release to allow you to work on more than one or two projects, or you may have to withdraw from some projects, in which case a replacement will have to be found. If a project leader has to withdraw from the project, **written notification must be provided to the OLT**, with information on how the project will continue to be supported by the lead institution (Program Information: Leadership and I&D Section 8.6; Seed Projects, 6.6).

Project Leader

Desirable

- ✓ Good grant track record
- ✓ Clean OLT grant record
- ✓ Relevant peer-reviewed publications
- ✓ Prior supervision or leadership experience
- ✓ Disciplinary involvement
- ✓ PhD preferable

Required

- ✓ Can commit to 20% time contribution
- ✓ No more than 2 concurrent OLT grants
- ✓ No overdue or unsatisfactory ALTC/OLT reports

7.1.2 Project manager/research assistant

As your institution has overall responsibility for the project, they may nominate a staff member to oversee project management in a general sense, ensuring the project meets key milestones and providing financial management advice to facilitate accurate record keeping aligned with the university and OLT acquittal processes. If this is the case, your application should note this. However, this person will not undertake the day-to-day management of your project.

Your budget should, therefore, make allowance for appointment of a Project Manager to monitor project activity and progress, carry out financial and administrative functions, liaise with team members, partners and stakeholders and generally facilitate the project's smooth running and successful completion on time and within budget. The project manager will also arrange for all meetings to have agenda and minutes and ensure that these are kept as part of the records of the project. For small projects, it may be possible for an existing professional staff member to take on this role in addition (or as replacement) to their current duties; however, for larger projects an half-time recruitment is likely required.

Depending on the project, the skill level and time requirements for the project manager will vary. If your project also requires a research assistant, you may find a combination of research assistant, existing professional staff member to undertake minor financial and administrative duties,

and yourself overseeing the project is a suitable combination. In other circumstances, a half-time project manager employed at Academic A or equivalent professional staff level can undertake a substantial amount of responsibility.

However you structure the support position(s), attracting a person with the right combination of skills will be essential to the success of your project. It is likely you will need a project manager who is: self-directed, thorough, accurate, able to liaise directly with project partners, patient, able to undertake research, prepare draft documents, manage project finance, report accurately and appropriately to you, take minutes and keep tabs on everything that is happening, as well as being familiar with your institution's internal processes. To attract the right person to the position will therefore require payment at an appropriate salary level.

7.1.3 Advisory roles

The project may benefit from contributions of advice or specific expertise. Advisors/mentors/'significant friends' would not normally have close contact with the project, typically donating their time to the project and seeking no monetary compensation, and so would not normally be considered part of the project team (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 8.9; Seed Projects, Section 9), although it is as well to mention in your proposal individuals who have agreed to undertake an advisory role in your project.

7.1.4 Steering committee

Where OLT funds several projects with similar objectives or outcomes, they might require a formal Steering Committee to guide the combined strategic direction of the projects so as to avoid duplication and ensure complementary outcomes. In such a case, OLT will select the members.

7.1.5 Reference group

It is an OLT requirement that all projects appoint a reference group (including external participants) to guide the project and ensure its maximum impact (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 8.9). Appointment of a reference group is optional for Seed Projects (Program Information: Seed Projects, Section 6.9).

A reference group is not directly involved in the day-to-day work of the project, but rather is an advisory committee that usually comprises high level stakeholders and/or reputed experts who provide project guidance

Reference Group:

- Representatives from the key user/stakeholder groups
- expert knowledge of the topic area
- experience at running similar projects
- broad knowledge of the discipline
- useful networking skills and contacts
- previously lead researcher

(by interaction with the project leader) on key issues such as vision, mission, policy, objectives, budgetary control, marketing strategy and resource allocation, as well as contributing to decision-making. Drawing on the range of experience and perspectives of its members, the reference group oversees the study design, execution, analysis, evaluation plan and dissemination, regularly giving guidance and feedback on project directions, actions and materials/outcomes and undertaking milestone status reviews.

OLT requires that the Reference Group is provided with terms of reference that reflect the responsibilities outlined above or, at the very least, that the role of the reference group should be discussed at their first meeting and the agreement reached minuted.

A reference group comprising representatives from the key user/stakeholder groups can greatly assist with the consultation and implementation phases of a project. Often members of the reference group have beneficial networks that would assist dissemination. Usually members of the reference group would be chosen for their expert knowledge of the topic, experience at running similar projects, broad knowledge of the discipline, and/or useful networking skills and contacts. If your project is building on the findings of a previous project, it is a good idea to invite the lead researcher on the original project to be on the reference group for your project.

It is not usual practice (which is not to say it is never done) to pay members of a reference group. The major function of a reference group is to keep the project honest, give impartial advice, tell you whether you're on the right track, using appropriate methodologies etc, a bit like a brains trust that does peer review. People generally agree to be on a reference group because they have an interest in the topic area and want to be able to have input into the direction of the research/outcomes, rather than because of the promise of income from the exercise. Anyone being paid needs to make a tangible contribution to the project. If you think these people have more to add to certain aspects of the project or particular tasks, then it would be reasonable to offer them some consultancy funds for completion of specific tasks that they undertake in addition to (or instead of) their function as part of the reference group.

Applicants are advised to contact the OLT prior to the inclusion in the budget of fees for reference group members (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 8.9; Seed Projects, Section 6.9).

7.1.6 Project team

The project team consists of the full-time and part-time people assigned to

Typical Project Team:

- Project Leader(s)
- Partner Institutional Leader(s)
- Researchers Project Support staff may include:
 - Project Manager
 - Project Evaluator
 - Research Assistant
 - Data Analyst
 - IT Consultant and/or Web Developer
 - Forum Facilitator

Project valued at over \$120k?
You must appoint an external evaluator.

Inclusion of early **career researchers** in substantive positions on the team is encouraged.

work on the deliverables of the project (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 6.5, Seed Projects, Section 4.4). They are responsible for:

- understanding the work to be completed
- planning out the assigned activities in more detail, as needed
- completing assigned work within the budget, timeline and quality expectations
- informing the project manager of issues, scope changes, risk and quality concerns
- proactively communicating status and managing expectations
- participating in project evaluation

Advantageous partner qualities

- disciplinary reputation
- specialist skills or knowledge
- useful contacts
- extensive disciplinary networks
- access to useful resources
- ability to share workload
- alternative institutional context

The project team can consist of people from one institution or it can consist of members from many different institutions or organisations. Consider bringing in consultants to meet any gaps in expertise in the team provided by your own institution and your partners. Small projects should allow for a Project Evaluation Officer, and projects **over \$120k** must appoint an **external evaluator**. Other team members will be determined by your project's objectives and activities.

Inclusion of **early career researchers** in substantive positions on the team is encouraged by OLT.

Although there are no limits on the number of OLT projects on which team members can work concurrently (Program Information, Section 3.5), team members must be wary of over-committing, with the result that they are unable to acquit their responsibilities to the projects.

7.2 Collaborations/partnership and other roles

OLT favours projects involving more than one institution, as the participation of multiple universities and/or commercial institutions demonstrates that the project is considered worthwhile, improves sustainability and goes some way towards ensuring better cross-institutional/cross-sectoral 'buy-in' or dissemination and uptake of the results and outputs. Collaboration between higher education institutions and/or relevant other bodies is encouraged (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 6.5; Seed Projects, Section 4.4). Funding can also be shared with international partners, where appropriate (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 8.9; Seed Projects, Section 6.9).

Choose partners carefully:

- Too many and you could spend all your time coordinating people and activities
- Too few and your project could fail to demonstrate value/need and effective dissemination

Single institution applications are allowed for case studies of an issue, an idea or an approach of importance to the higher education sector. However, the proposed outcomes must be applicable within other institutions, and your proposal must be explicit about how you will ensure that different institutional contexts are accommodated and sharing will be embedded into the project to ensure broad, effective dissemination.

In deciding whether taking on a partner would be advantageous, think about:

- *what a partner might add to the project in terms of a successful application:* a partner's reputation in the field may add considerable weight to an application or your project design may require the involvement of more than one institution to legitimate its findings
- *the skills required to carry out the project:* perhaps the proposed partner has specialist expertise/contacts that your university does not possess or does not have available for your project. Is their skill-base complementary?
- *the workload:* would a partner who will have equal responsibility to produce make it more likely/easier to achieve your outcomes? Do they have access to more appropriate resources?
- *broadening the scope of the program:* e.g. perhaps offering an additional or alternative context, larger sample
- *promotion and/or dissemination:* a partner with good disciplinary networks can broaden dissemination and/or facilitate uptake
- *sustainability:* partners may expand access to and maintenance of resources

As the lead institution is responsible for carriage of the project, they have final decision over what input any partner will have to the project (subject to their agreement, of course). You can have as many partners as would be useful, but be mindful that if too many partners are adopted, the time expended co-ordinating people and monitoring progress will increase considerably, and the project may become unwieldy, with progress hampered rather than aided.

The optimal number and structure of partnerships will depend on the nature of your project. Your project may be best served by a group of two to five partners (including you), who distribute workload amongst the group. Alternatively, you may have a core group of two partners (you and one other), who undertake the bulk of the research, with a larger number of peripheral partners acting perhaps as research sites.

Letters of Support

ALL INSTITUTIONS represented as project partners must provide a letter of endorsement signed by the DVC(A) to formalize the collaboration.

Letters must stipulate support for teaching relief or relief from normal duties for the person to participate in the project.

It is wise to also summarise other financial details such as in-kind support and financial support to be received through the project.

Letters of support from other stakeholders are highly regarded.

If you are having difficulty identifying potential/suitable partners, ask colleagues for suggestions and contacts, approach acquaintances made at conferences, utilise networking/professional sites or approach the national Promoting Excellence Network (PEN) members within your own institution and other institutions (PEN members normally have responsibility for, or involvement in, developing, supporting and implementing the OLT engagement strategy in each institution and are facilitators of cross institutional contacts/connections). If you identify another higher education provider with similar needs or interests, but have to cold call, a good place to start is the learning and teaching department, who may be interested themselves or may be aware of potential partners within their institution. Identifying another university with similar needs can be advantageous to promotion and dissemination of your outcomes.

After you have found one or more partners to work with, you will need to formally document your relationship in the grant proposal, both by submitting letters from your collaborators and by mentioning them in the text of the proposal. These collaborations or partnerships are formal, being acknowledged in documentation regarding the project. Collaborating institution/s must contribute substantially to the project, usually through provision of staff time for a project team member. Partners can also donate other “in-kind” services such as web space, office space, advertising and marketing assistance, expert advice etc. To acknowledge their commitment to the project, project proposals must be **endorsed in writing by the DVC (Academic) or equivalent** of all collaborating/partner institutions before submission (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 6.5; Seed Projects, Section 4.4). Proposed changes in partner institutions (e.g. withdrawal or addition of a partner during the project) must be supported by the DVC (Academic) or equivalent of the institution/s concerned, and written notification of the change and endorsement must be provided to OLT (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 8.6; Seed Projects, Section 6.6).

It is also advantageous to garner support or participation from **professional accrediting bodies and associations and other stakeholders**. Collect a list of organizations or individuals that you think will be interested in your project and start calling/emailing (this is a good time to utilize any personal contacts you may have made over the years). You can use the Project Concept Form (EOI) or prepare a one page project brief to illustrate your idea to potential supporters. You can also deliver seminars at potential partner institutions and look for opportunities to present your project at conferences or to professional organizations. It is important to demonstrate to OLT that members of your target audience (those who will adopt or implement your findings) think you are doing something useful.

Letters of support and partnership commitments are critical to enhance the credibility of your application. Note that it is your job to solicit any letters of support to include in your application. You are dependent upon others for them; so **start this process early**, as you may need to ‘remind’ people to write the letter several times. A template for a letter of support that you can send to potential partners is included in [Appendix B](#). based on the Proformas provided by OLT (Program Information: Appendix 2). A completed example has not been included as this can result in “cookie cutter” style letters. We encourage you to write about the benefits for your School, Faculty and institution. We recommend you use the template to create a draft for your project, then encourage each partner institution to modify the letter to fit their needs. Each letter should reflect why your project is important for that particular institution/organisation and the specific contribution that they will make to your project, rather than being just a generic expression of support or goodwill. This also helps prevent you from submitting duplicate letters. Uniquely-phrased letters of support from different institutions are better than nearly identical letters. Seek written support from as high within an institution’s executive as you can in order to demonstrate the broadest possible support across the institution.

Letters of support need to clearly state the resourcing and support to be provided, such as any in-kind support and time release for staff to work on the project. A template and some example resourcing and support paragraphs are provided in [Appendix B](#). Your institution’s support staff may assist in drafting these paragraphs for your project.

Part 8

Preparing your budget

8.1 Disclaimer

The suggestions below are guidelines only. The factors affecting what expenses can be included in budgets vary frequently. You **MUST** check the current OLT Budget Instructions and obtain specific information from your own institution.

Note that Expressions of Interest do not require a budget.

8.2 Introduction

A high quality budget accurately reflects your project and demonstrates it represents value for money. It shows how much the project will cost. In developing it, be realistic! Promising to do more than is possible with the requested funding suggests to reviewers that the principal investigator does not understand the fiscal requirements and personnel effort necessary to conduct high-quality research. Remember, you will have to live with this budget: you can't go back to OLT and ask for more money because you forgot something. Any additional funds will have to be supplied by the lead and possibly partner institutions, or more realistically, you will be unable to fully complete the project. Whatever the outcome, it will not reflect well on your project management skills and could impact on future applications to OLT (Program Information, Section 3.3 Project Management).

Your budget will need to:

- match your project activities
- comply with OLT budget requirements
- comply with institutional requirements, e.g. accurate salaries.

With your budget, you must justify the cost to accomplish your research aims. This is called the budget justification and is normally written after your project budget is calculated. Your institutional support staff may provide examples on which you can base your case, or if you are extremely lucky, they may prepare it for you.



8.3 Recommended approach

In the first instance, use the budget workbook provided in [Appendix C](#) and the worked budget example in [Appendix D](#) to consider the range of expenses necessary for your project. Note any figures you already have available. It is a good idea to do this as you are conceptualising your project, as it will assist with scoping the project. The timeline for refining your concept and developing your budget outline is approximately 3-6 months prior to the OLT deadline.

Next, if you have not already done so, identify who in the university is responsible (and available) for providing budget support. Support may be available within your School or Faculty, or centrally in your teaching and learning centre, finance, research or grants management areas. When it comes to budgets, you may need to consult with more than one person. Start general (e.g. OLT grants support) and become more specific (e.g. Finance) in seeking help as your budget develops.

Get in touch with support people as early as possible, as it is likely that once budget details are calculated, you will need to make adjustments to your project to bring the budget into the required range. You will also need plenty of time to finalise agreement on payments to project partners, as these details need to be approved by their HoS/CC and included in their DVC(A) letters of support. You may also need time to negotiate with your own HoS/CC over their in-kind contribution to your project.

8.4 Preparing your budget

8.4.1 Things to include

Think carefully about all the expenses you will have. Look at the line items listed in the Budget Workbook ([Appendix C](#)) and the worked budget example ([Appendix D](#)) as prompts to give you an idea of typical things that may be included. Remember to include costs associated with a main activity; for example, if you will be hiring people, don't forget recruitment costs. Also, take the time to get accurate estimates. If you will be printing a brochure, don't guess the cost. Call your Publications department or a printing company and ask for a quote for printing 2,000 copies of a two-colour, A4, printed on both sides and folded twice glossy brochure (or whatever your final format). For items in the second year, add an inflationary component – salary increases are likely to be advertised on your HR website, and add a simple 4% for other items (this is equivalent to the



**Matched funds are required
for Extension Grants**

In-kind contributions demonstrate:

- The variety of ways your project is being supported
- The good value your project represents
- The true cost of making the project work
- A contribution toward matched funds

Consumer Price Index). Check whether quoted amounts are inclusive or exclusive of GST (Goods and Services Tax) and note this for discussions with support staff.

8.4.2 In-kind or “Other” items

In-kind items are gifts of goods or services. They could include donated space, materials or time. Be careful not to double up on items that are covered by the institutional levy (see **Section 8.4.8**) by also including them as in-kind contributions.

Enter in-kind contribution amounts in the “**Other**” column of your budget template and make note of the source (e.g. institution, Faculty grant, local council funding).

In-kind contributions are important for several reasons. First, it shows all the ways the collaborators or other stakeholders are supporting your project even though not everyone is donating cash. Second, it aids in demonstrating the good value of your project. Third, it shows the true cost of making the project work—what OLT would have to spend without the extra support. The final reason to show in-kind contributions is if you are required to match funds, as in Extension Grants (Extension Grants Eligibility Criteria 8). A part of these matched funds can be in-kind. For all other grants programs, OLT do not ask for matching contributions, but do require you to include ‘other’ sources of funding, such as contributions (cash or ‘in-kind’) from the lead institution or partners or other funding sources, in order to reflect the total cost of the project.

8.4.3 OLT rules

OLT specify their budget requirements in the Program Information, Section 9.10 for Leadership and I&D, and Section 7.8 for Seed Projects.

For OLT budgets, all costs should be quoted ex-GST and in whole dollars. Furthermore, the total must be rounded to the nearest \$1,000 with all figures adjusted to ensure things add up correctly; In practice, this means adjusting one line item to a number that will create the rounded total, as necessary. Extension Projects require each line item to be rounded to the nearest \$100.

For projects that will take more than 12 months to complete, the project activities should be staged (usually in 12 month periods), and the budget should be itemised to reflect the costs of each stage. Payment for the second and succeeding stages of the project will be reliant upon the satisfactory achievement of Stage 1/Year 1 outcomes.

The budget should be grouped under the following specific sub-headings:

- Personnel
- Project Support
- Project Activities
- Attendance at OLT events
- Administration and overhead levy

With reference to the OLT Program Information, most items are easily categorised into the appropriate section. If you are unsure, check with your institutional support staff for assistance.

The Program Information suggests cutting and pasting the budget into the application document as a spreadsheet rather than an image; however, as the final application is submitted as a PDF other methods are acceptable. One of the simplest is to cut and paste the budget as an image. This allows the image to be easily stretched and expanded/shrunk to fit on a single page. Details of how to do this are supplied in [Section 10.8](#).

8.4.4 Personnel

Personnel expenses include the expenses for all the people who will work directly on the project, including those managing and those implementing it. They will usually be employees of the lead or a partner institution. Indicate what each person's role will be, the level of appointment, the hours per week or percentage of time committed and the number of weeks each will work on the project.

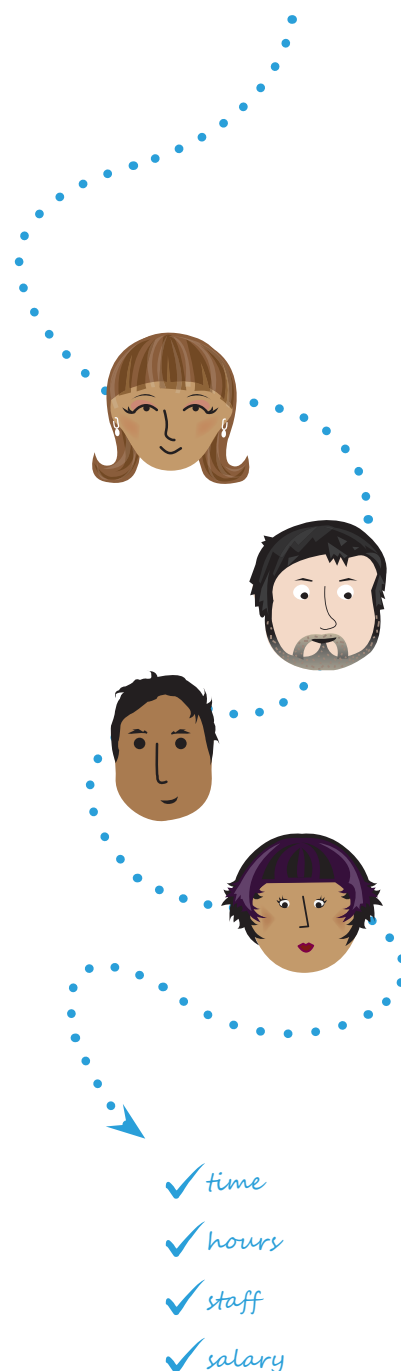
Personnel expenses could be claimed as direct costs to OLT, as in-kind contributions (from the lead and partner institutions), as time release charged to OLT, or as some combination of these alternatives. Be mindful of the limit of \$35,000 per institution for time release (don't forget that you could get your partner to do some more and take it out of their time release allowance). Those costs being claimed as in-kind should be entered in the **Other** column of your budget template; those charged to OLT as time release or direct employment costs should be entered in the OLT column. Don't forget to apportion your costs over both phases of activities for longer projects.

Depending on the complexity of the project, salary or time release costs in the Personnel section may be for project leader, project manager, institutional leaders, project administration, project liaison officer and research assistants, if they are to be employed under contract for a

Personnel

Expenses for personnel other than those engaged for specific project activities

Personnel engaged for specific project activities, e.g. roundtable facilitator, web programmer, report editor should be included in the **Project Activities** section.



substantive period or they are to work on the project under time release (if they are to be employed for short periods on a casual basis, put the expense under project support). Time release for the project leader should be factored into the budget at a rate of 20% of a Lecturer (Level B Academic). Alternatively, their time can be an in-kind contribution, or some mix of the two may be used. Consultants, specialists and other such people contracted to carry out specific tasks are generally listed as logistic support in the Project Support section of the budget (see [Section 8.4.5](#)).

Generally, salary rates from the lead institution are used for all time release calculations. For appointments specific to the project, salary rates will be based on the institution where the person is located. Salary rates and future pay rises are generally available on your HR department's website. These will allow you to calculate increases for the second year of the project. The OLT limits on-costs to 28%. If your institutional on-costs are higher you can either include the balance in the 'Other' column (meaning your cost centre will contribute this as cash), or your institution may meet the balance from the institutional levy (see [Section 8.4.8](#)).

Try not to make positions less than half-time (0.5 FTE), unless you know someone who will be willing to take them on, as it can be quite difficult to appoint someone at less than half-time, and time delays in appointing team members can severely impact the progress of a project. Often you can combine some tasks (e.g. project manager and research assistant) to create a half-time (or greater) position. If you are uncertain about how much time to allocate to a task, seek advice from your institutional support staff.

Both support personnel costs (e.g. consultants, specialists or casual staff contracted to complete a specific task) and non-personnel expenses (e.g. office space, utilities, computers, telephone, copying, postage or office supplies, insurance, management meeting expenses, such as venue hire and refreshments) related to the project must be divided into those expenses associated with logistic support of the project overall and those related to a specific activity or outcome.

8.4.5 Project support

These expenses must be specifically associated with the administration of the usual day-to-day operation of the project and logistic support and not directly contributing to any specific outcome. Ask yourself, is this expense associated with one particular activity or with the overall execution of the project. So, if you have to make 500 copies of a questionnaire for distribution, this would be considered an extraordinary cost rather than an ordinary day-to-day administrative expense and would, therefore, be

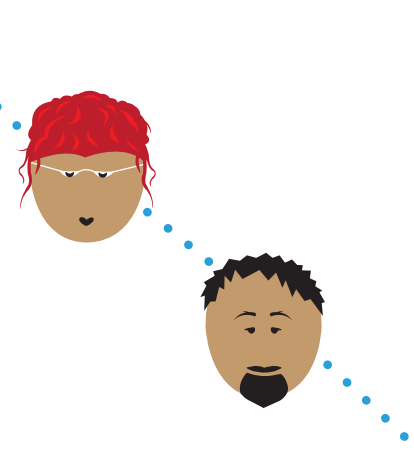
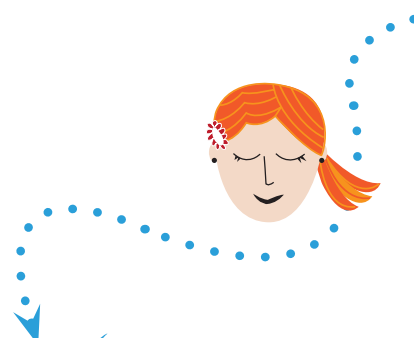
Project Support

Expenses associated with day to day operation of the project These may include (\$ or in-kind):

- Cost of project management meetings for project team or reference group (travel, venue, facilities, catering, video-conferencing)
- Stationery, postage
- Photocopying, printing and other consumables
- Web hosting
- Publicity and collateral (e.g. flyers, bookmarks, postcards) for the project
- Personnel costs: Commercial consultant, IT support, web development

As in-kind contributions only:

- Computers, specialist equipment (rent or purchase)
- Phone, internet and office space for project staff

- 
- 
- ✓ management
 - ✓ consultants
 - ✓ specialist
 - ✓ full time staff
 - ✓ casual staff

charged to the project as an itemised expense in the **Project Activities** section rather than in this section.

Itemize what is needed that fits the study. Then decide who is going to contribute or pay for each item. Expenses to think about for the **Project Support** section include management meetings (venue, facilities and refreshments or video-conferencing facilities), stationery, postage, photocopying, printing and other consumables, software licensing fees, software upgrades, web hosting and publicity and collateral for the project. You could also include, as in-kind contributions, things like computers, specialist equipment or other items that are usually thought of as assets and, therefore, not approved OLT budget items. It would be appropriate to claim travel expenses for a meeting with the project leader, steering committee or reference group, or training and presentations. All project reference groups should meet whether by phone or in person at least twice during the project. The project team should meet at least twice face-to-face in each year of the project.

Note that costs associated with the maintenance of any websites should be estimated for at least three years.

This section would also include support personnel costs (e.g. commercial consultant, technical support or expertise, IT support, web development, instructional designer or other specialists). Like personnel expenses, these can be claimed as direct costs to OLT, as in-kind contributions (from the lead and partner institutions), as time release charged to OLT, or as some combination of these alternatives, being mindful of the limit of \$35,000 per institution for time release. Don't forget to apportion your costs over both phases of activities for longer projects. If the support personnel are employees, list the same details as explained above in the **Personnel** section. For example, if an employee will work half-time on the project from March to November: *Researcher (0.5 x Level A at \$64,000 x 0.75 years) = \$24,000*. For contractors, you can show either the flat fee you will pay: *(\$1,500 to design a web page)* or the hourly rate: *Curriculum consultant (\$60/hour x 35 hours) = \$2,100*. Also, consider time that other staff not directly involved in the project may have to contribute, as this can be included in your budget as in-kind contributions (e.g. the project leader's administrative assistant will inevitably spend some time on project related activities, even if it is only answering the phone or arranging a meeting). Any remuneration of advisory or reference group members also goes in this section.

Project Activities

Expenses directly linked to a specified activity or project deliverable

NON- APPROVED BUDGET ITEMS

- building works (including purchase, construction, lease, renovation or fit out of premises);
- purchase of motor vehicles;
- purchase of assets unless agreed to by the OLT (normally includes computers, small digital devices etc, which should be provided by the institution/s as a contribution to the project);
- travel which is not directly related to achieving the project outcomes; or
- general recurrent funding.

(N.B. These types of costs can (and should) be itemised in a budget as in-kind contributions in order to reflect the true overall cost of the project.)

8.4.6 Project activities

The **Project Activities** section of the budget refers to any expense that is directly associated with a specific activity or outcome and includes things like

- paper/copying charges relevant to data collection (e.g., questionnaires),
- report production,
- project evaluation (including travel to meetings),
- dissemination costs (such as the hosting of conferences and workshops, website development and hosting),
- publications (including production costs), and
- travel relating to specific activities (e.g. travel to undertake evaluation). It would be appropriate to claim travel expenses for presentations or attending workshops, forums or conferences. Also, include any local travel for data collection purposes.

The **Project Activities** section also includes personnel expenses if personnel are recruited for a specific project activity (e.g. facilitator for a workshop or forum, independent evaluator, publications editor, designer of promotional materials). Apply the same rules to documenting to these personnel expenses as suggested for the two previous sections of the budget.

Don't forget to include **evaluation** costs. Typically, programs are advised to allocate 10–20% of their program budgets for evaluation activities (including both process and outcome evaluations). Usually, a minimum of \$15,000 is allocated for an external evaluation. Salaries take up a large portion of evaluation budgets; however, it is also important to consider the following factors that can have an impact on the overall cost of evaluations: travel/transportation and per diem costs if an external evaluator is used (to allow attendance at project meetings and to collect data); data collection, including training and staff development; incentives for participants in the evaluation (e.g. 'complete the survey to be entered in the prize draw'); data analysis and processing, including training and staff development; office and administrative costs, such as copying, faxing, telephone consultation and meeting room space; and dissemination of findings.

8.4.7 Attendance at OLT events:

It is an OLT requirement that the budget include an allocation of \$3,000 for attendance at OLT events during the course of the project (to be allocated in Year 1 for a multi-year project). A request may be made to OLT to allocate

Incorrect addition on budgets is one of the most common errors in a proposal. *Don't let your application to be rejected on the basis of incorrect arithmetic!*

Finally

- Check the budget totals
- Adjust one line item to round to the nearest \$1000
- Check the budget totals **AGAIN**
- Check **AGAIN** after any last minute adjustments
- Have a colleague or support person undertake a final check before submission

any unspent funds against other project activities. This request must be made via email to OLT (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 9.10). For any institution with a high travel cost that exceeds this amount, applications for an additional allowance from OLT will be considered on a case by case basis. These funds will most commonly be used to send your project leader and project manager to the training offered by OLT.

Seed Projects are not required to include this budget item, but may include it if they or their project manager wish to attend the training offered by OLT (Program Information: Seed Project, Section 7.8).

Extension Projects should not include this budget item.

8.4.8 Administration and overhead levy

Institutions may levy up to 10% on the total budget amount. Any institutional levy charged goes to the lead institution, in recognition of their added responsibilities for carriage of the project (e.g. payroll and other HR functions, finance or grants management). Note that costs such as office space or furniture, computers, utilities, internet access, phone, postage, photocopying, and equipment repairs, maintenance and depreciation are generally met by the School/Cost Centre as part of their in-kind contribution.

Check with your institutional support staff for the exact percentage charged by your institution and what the levy is used for. Any difference between the levy charged and the maximum 10% allowable can be shown as an in-kind contribution.

8.5 Adequacy and accuracy

To assess the adequacy of your budget, ask yourself the following four questions:

- Can the job be accomplished with this budget?
- Are the costs reasonable for the market, or too high or low?
- Is the budget consistent with proposed activities?
- Is there sufficient budget detail and explanation?

When finally satisfied with your overall budget, check the totals in your budget several times. Adjust appropriate line items until the total is rounded to the nearest \$1000. Then, check the totals again, especially if there are last minute adjustments. Finally, have a colleague or support person (finance staff have eagle eyes when it comes to identifying errors) do one final check before submission.

Part 9

The nitty-gritty of writing

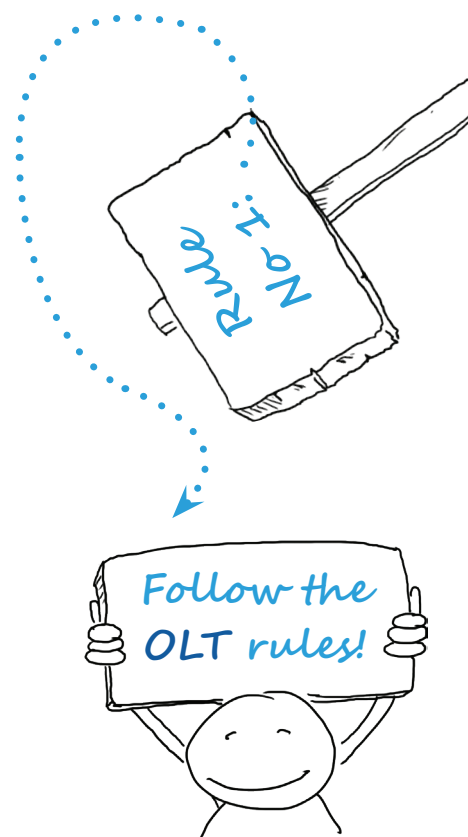
9.1 Tips and advice for writing a proposal

Inability to follow guidelines is the major reason for grant proposals being rejected. Public and private funding organizations normally set up their guidelines as a preliminary screening device. By following the OLT Program Information and Application Instructions to the letter, you will ensure that your grant proposal will pass the first hurdle and be in a favourable position for funding.

All research proposals include the following general elements:

- you need to identify a clear issue of importance to the sector and how you will impact on this issue;
- the scope (geographic boundaries and target audience) should be defined;
- collaboration arrangements should be explicit (who, why, how, how will it be managed, who does what and when will you get together);
- budgets should indicate how and when funds will be spent; and
- a comprehensive dissemination program needs to be developed (not just a website, published papers and presentations at conferences, but also other initiatives, such as embedding resources in other institutions, learning workshops to transfer skills etc).

The Project Concept Form (see [Appendix A](#)) will help you map out your project with clarity and, with most of the thinking and planning done, the writing will be that much easier to approach. Consider your proposal a **sales pitch**, a request for dollars for a product—the findings of the research project. Thus, it is important to present a very clear and persuasive proposal that is easy for the reviewers to understand and is well-presented. For an easy-to-read writing style, use active verbs, concise language and short sentences. The elements of good presentation are simple: adherence to the required format, clear and concise writing, paragraph/heading organization that facilitates intelligent skimming and inclusion of answers to anticipated questions and objections. Your first draft will not necessarily yield a proposal that is easy-to-read. You need to plan on writing and rewriting your proposal



several times. Each round of editing moves the proposal one step closer to a proposal that is easy-to-read.

9.2 *Organising collaborative writing*

Determine who will write the proposal. Will it be a group effort or will one individual take responsibility for the writing? Will the partners want to have input to the writing? Will drafts be circulated to partners for comment or editing? If more than one writer is involved, delegate the data collection and writing tasks.

For collaborative efforts, you might consider using a wiki or Google Docs so that everything is stored in one location, and everyone involved in the process has access to the same material and works on a single document. This can be somewhat problematic when writers are from different institutions, as these collaborative spaces are difficult to make secure—your application is a confidential document, so alternatives to poorly secured online areas (e.g. GoogleDocs, DropBox etc) are preferable. Often the tried and tested sequential team editing using track changes works as well as anything else.

Ensure that you leave sufficient time to edit, proof-read and integrate the different writing styles.

Getting started

You don't have time to let writer's block get in your way:

- Don't be overwhelmed by a big proposal: take it section by section
- Outline sections before you start
- Brainstorm the content of sections with partners or your team
- Begin writing the section that seems the easiest (often this is the background literature review because you will be familiar with that)
- Don't try to write the perfect draft in the first sitting
- Give yourself a break and come back to it

9.3 Project abstract

All applications submitted through the online Grants Portal (i.e. everything except Extension Grants), will require an abstract of up to 160 words. It is not required in the body of the proposal, but if space permits it may present a useful summary introduction to the reader. The general rule is: no jargon and keep it snappy. Think about it as your 'elevator conversation'; you're coincidentally in the elevator with the chair of the OLT grants committee and have 15 seconds to convince them of the value of your project. Make sure your abstract does so!

9.4 Writing the grant application: *Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching; Innovation and Development*

The following pages work progressively through the various sections that need to be written for an OLT grant application. The length suggestions presented below add up to slightly more than the maximum limit of 10 pages and, therefore, will need to be slightly shortened during editing. Be aware that [Part 10](#) makes suggestions about how to present your work to maximise space usage on a page. In the first instance, concentrate on including all the important information and arguments to promote your project and worry less about length (but don't go completely overboard or you will have a tough editing job on your hands).



Suggested Proposal Structure and Section

Purpose of the Project
Previous Work
Rationale for the Project
Significance of the Project
Project Aims
Project Outcomes/Deliverables
Project methodology and Approach
Key Stakeholders
Project team, reference group and evaluation team:
 Membership, roles/responsibilities and executive governance
Project Dissemination
Evaluation Plan
References
ATTACHMENT A: Budget and Timeline
ATTACHMENT B: Biographies of Project Team Members
ATTACHMENT C: Letters of Support

For projects involving technology:

ATTACHMENT A: Budget and Timeline
ATTACHMENT B: Biographies of Project Team Members
ATTACHMENT C: Letters of Support
ATTACHMENT D: Design Specifications

9.4.1 Purpose of the project (*about 1 page*)

This section should answer the questions: What is the problem? Why is it a problem? Who is experiencing this problem? What do you intend to do about it? Give a brief overview or snapshot of the project, providing a short, general description of your research plan (i.e. what you want to do) and approach (i.e. how you intend to do it). This is like an introduction, so leave the detail for later.

Try to describe the problem from the stakeholders' point of view. Mention any pilot studies that you have conducted and any sources of pilot data within the partner universities, as well as from outside sources. If no pilot data are available, specifically mention any data you may have from similar projects that support any of the ideas, endeavours or hypotheses of the proposed study. Or flag the lack of data on this topic.

Nominate the OLT objectives and specific priority within the relevant grant scheme (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 4; Seed Projects, Section 3.1) that your project will meet, and explain how the project will address these criteria and contribute to the enhancement of learning and teaching in higher education.

Open with an overview of the following:

- What is the problem?
- Why is it a problem?
- Who is experiencing this problem?
- What do you intend to do about it?
- How do you intend to do it?
- Nominate the OLT objectives and specific priority to be addressed

9.4.2 Previous work (*about 1½ pages*)

Your critical review of the relevant literature, including highlights of ongoing research and gaps in knowledge, should demonstrate that you have a broad knowledge and understanding of current scholarship and activities in the proposed research area and how these are relevant to your project's design. You should include relevant current research in teaching and learning practices. Your project partners or teaching and learning centre staff may be able to assist with the learning and teaching aspects of your proposal if you are unfamiliar with this literature.

The literature review also provides the opportunity to foreshadow the significance of the topic. Every major concept from the aims should be included in the literature review. Point out ways in which the project both utilises and advances existing national and international knowledge relevant to the grant program priority or priorities.

It is essential that the references referred to are comprehensive, current, accurately represented, well-synthesized and relevant to and congruent with the project aims. They must also support the purpose of the project. Make sure your review includes the most recent publications in the field and those considered seminal works in regard to signature articles or major publications. As a general rule, citations more than 10 years old should not be used unless they are absolutely necessary in making the case for the

proposed study, or they are seminal works that ought never be omitted by any informed scholar. Don't forget to cite your own work and/or that of other team members or partners, where relevant. But don't get too carried away with citations—remember the allowed length for proposals; reference lists take up space.

9.4.3 Rationale for the project *(about 1 page)*

This section is your opportunity to convince reviewers that the issue you want to tackle is important and that your research is imperative. In other words, the rationale should be a carefully constructed, subtle argument for the fact that your research simply must be done. Explain why you should be funded to do this work. Provide a rationale for your ideas—where did they come from and why are they strong? Build a well-grounded theoretical basis for your study or project. Provide information about your research topic and why it's widespread, serious, or important (usually called "scope of the problem"). Describe the problem, if possible, in both numerical and human interest terms. Providing good data about your problem shows your expertise in the field.

Describe your issue in as local a context as possible and describe a problem that is about the same size as your solution. By that we mean, for example, if you want to address some aspect of learning materials in one country, in the main tell the funder about the problem with learning materials in that country, not in the world as a whole, although you might mention that it is a world-wide problem. Keep the scope of your discussion in sync with the scope of your solution, rather than the scope of the overall problem. You might make a claim that your solution could be a model suitable for implementation at a larger scale, thereby linking back to the scope of the overall problem, but this should not be the focus of your argument. You haven't got a lot of words to play with, so keep your argument targeted.

Establishing the need

What evidence do you have that there is a need? To whom did you talk or what research did you do to learn about the issue and decide how to tackle it? Use data, where possible, to emphasize the need. A few pertinent facts are better than overwhelming the reader with too many statistics or quotations from experts or the literature. In a way, this is a defence of why this study needs to be done and why this research is relevant and necessary for the identified stakeholders. To create a compelling need, you need to demonstrate how stakeholders will be affected by your proposed program, that is, the need is not the research but, rather, the benefits of the research and the problems it can be used to solve. Mention any support for

Rationale should:

- Describe the problem/need or gap that you will address
- Outline the causes of/reasons for the problem and/or the circumstances creating the need
- Detail the impact of the problem and who it affects
- Explain why this problem needs to be addressed now and what will happen if it is not
- Identify approaches and solutions used to address it to date
- Lead into your solution
- Demonstrate why support for your program is warranted

the proposed project from other institutions, stakeholders or community leaders and obtain letters of support from them, if possible.

Sometimes it will be necessary to undertake pre-work in order to establish the need. There are six basic approaches for assessing and documenting need:

- literature search for information published on the subject
- quotations from people who know about the problem or are experts in the field
- public meetings or stakeholder forums to obtain testimony on the problem
- case studies of the needy target group
- collection and analysis of statistical data
- survey of stakeholders

If this work has not been done as thoroughly as is required, it may be more appropriate to apply for a Seed Project to undertake a needs analysis.

Your project

Explain why your project is attempting to address this particular problem in this particular way. Discuss alternative approaches and why you chose the ones you did over others? Include your knowledge of any similar programs, or past programs, to convince the reviewer that you are not duplicating existing programs or trying something that has already failed. Briefly describe the solution you intend to provide.

The rationale is **not** the place to develop or detail your specific 'solution'; rather it lays the foundation for your particular solution to emerge. The argument you are trying to make is: *Based on all this past research and experience and consideration of the possible barriers, the most promising approach is mine.* Keep in mind as you write that the way you define the cause of or reasons for the problem will lead into the way that you attempt to solve it; hence, the factors that you highlight as contributing to the problem should be linked to your proposed objectives and approach. If your proposed solution does not address the obvious, major causes, then you need to explain why it does not.

Who are your contributing partners, and what do they bring to your project to improve it? Introduce your partners and showcase any relevant specialist expertise, facilities, equipment or other resources and past research

Factors that will strengthen your rationale include:

- clear identification of the target group
- demonstrating a stakeholder need
- building upon previous work
- a novel approach
- a cost-effective solution
- utilising existing resources
- promoting collaboration between stakeholders
- potential for uptake of the solution
- fitting with the Grant Programs aims
- a sustainable program

successes for all participating institutions in relation to their contributions to this project. Reviewers need to be convinced that the partners form a team with extensive experience in conducting large-scale projects and/or with considerable expertise in the field.

You must also consider sustainability: most projects that are needed, effective and require grant support today will still be needed, effective and require financial support tomorrow. What a funding body wants is demonstration that you have thought about a long-term vision and funding plan for your project beyond the requested funding period. If you don't have one, you had better start thinking about it. Consider whether you can build a plan into the initial proposal that enables you to develop relationships with corporate or institutional partners who may be able to use your resources or services so that, at the end of the initial funding, there is an opportunity for continued corporate or institutional support. Is this a project that could attract the support of community organisations? Are there components of your project that could be adopted or sponsored by corporations for the positive public relations that they can generate (e.g. awards, printing costs, conference costs or hosting, training components)?

9.4.4 Significance of the project (about ¾ page)

Explain why the project is significant. This section should succinctly mention what is known, what is not yet known, and the important gaps in knowledge that the proposed study will fill. Explain what impact your project will have—what will change about the situation as a result of your project. Who will benefit, how many (your best guess) and how? Draw upon your list of stakeholders. The impact of a project is sometimes hard to define. *Most often, impact is difficult, if not impossible, to measure.* The desired impact of a leadership program for post-graduates may be an increase in their self-esteem, but that is a fairly ambiguous concept that is difficult to measure. To add to the difficulty, it is often not possible to prove conclusively that a given impact was directly caused by your project. Nevertheless, you need to do the best job you can to define your intended impacts.

Sum up this section by briefly outlining why your proposed research is important, innovative, timely, worth doing and value for money. Emphasize the potential usefulness of the project and its outcomes to any of the following:

- the higher education sector as a whole;
- particular kinds of organisations within that sector; and
- the development of national approaches or policies related to learning and teaching in higher education.

Include in your Significance:

- gap in knowledge will your project address
- the impact your project will have
- summary of why your project is important, innovative, timely, worth doing and is value for money

Don't forget the long-term uses of this research, including the contributions to the existing pool of knowledge.

9.4.5 Project aims (about ½ page)

Now begins the detailed description of *your* project. This section should serve as a succinct description of what you plan to accomplish during the project. Begin with a brief description of the overall broad **aims** and the importance of your research project; then state the specific short- and long-term goals and expand in terms of measurable, highly focused, time-phased objectives. You are explaining what you want to achieve, exactly how you intend to do that and how this project will contribute to that program.

Discuss both the long- and short-term goals of your project. When explaining the **objectives** of the project, make sure you are stating the expected *outcome* of your program, not describing the program itself. Use active verbs (e.g. increase, decrease, promote, demonstrate, improve, reduce) to indicate an expected change in behaviour, attitudes, knowledge, skills or circumstances and specify the topic area (e.g. employability skills, communication skills, leadership capacity, student retention) and timeframe in which the results can be expected.

Keep your objectives simple and clear. Numbering or bulleting each specific objective can be an effective way of “walking the reader through the proposal”. Be sure to mention any hypothesis (or hypotheses) to be tested and make sure each hypothesis is matched with a specific objective. For projects completed in two phases, indicate how the activities performed in the first phase lead directly into the activities planned for the second phase.

9.4.6 Project outcomes/deliverables (about ½ page)

List the project outcomes and deliverables and relate them directly back to the specific aims of the project, and also to the more abstract, conceptual longer term goals of the project.

9.4.7 Project methodology and approach (about 1½ pages)

This section describes the method and processes you will use to accomplish your goals and objectives. The objectives provide the foundation for developing the methodology. The goal of the research design and methods section is to minimize the number of assumptions others (reviewers) must make about your project and to show that you are using sound research techniques. Your approach must be in general alignment with the aims

The **aims** provide a general goal and a direction for the project, but lack specificity as to what will be achieved.

The **goals** outline specifically what the project will achieve.

The **objectives** describe major activities within the context of the goals and their impact (what, who, how many, when).

The **objectives** provide the foundation for developing the methodology.

of the OLT Grants programs and be underpinned by a strong theoretical framework.

This is the nuts and bolts section of your proposal that explains exactly what you plan to do and how, why you have chosen your particular approach and who does what when. It explains to the reviewer how the objectives will be attained and presents a reasonable action plan that justifies the resources requested. It should convince the reviewer that yours is the most feasible approach for addressing this problem/need.

Think about the planned outputs, general tasks associated with project start-up (e.g. staff appointments, equipment needs, collaborative agreements and plans, stakeholder involvement and linkages, outreach to target groups etc), resource development, implementation activities, dissemination strategies and evaluation plan. All of these will be associated with specific tasks that need time and resources allocated to them in your project plan and timelines.

Justify all of your decisions—provide explanations for what you propose to do and why you did not propose something else. This shows reviewers that you have given careful thought to the study you are proposing and that you have considered alternative approaches.

What are you going to do? Provide an outline of the activities in phases and/or stages. There is a project timeline showing the different phases of activity after the budget, so do not duplicate that information here, but give an overview and be consistent (e.g. “This project will be carried out in three phases over two years. During Phase 1, our already completed literature review and analysis will inform development of a survey instrument and data collection will begin...”).

Do not be overly ambitious and try to attempt too much in too little time or with too little resources. Funders are generally looking for projects that they believe will be successful.

Discuss the **design of the study and why** that design was chosen. Explain why you chose the methodology you have chosen rather than alternative methodologies that you elected not to use. Your decision should be presented as having been based on merit and appropriateness, rather than on the basis of convenience or simplicity. Make sure that the study you describe corresponds with the specific aims you listed earlier in the proposal so that you have a set of strategies that is considered coherent and appropriate to the desired outcomes of the project. The project design should demonstrate a clear relationship with the proposed outcome and so should the allocation of resources.

Explain:

What you are going to do

How you will do it

Why you are doing it that way

The **limitations** of your approach

When and **where** you will run the project and activities

Methodological strengths and weaknesses should be described. This brief discussion of the limitations of the proposed study and alternative methodologies for carrying out the proposed research plan is delicate balancing act: if you provide too much information about potential limitations of your work, it gives reviewers ammunition to score or evaluate your project less favourably. On the other hand, if you fail to address key limitations of your study, you could be held accountable (in the form of a poorer grant score or evaluation) for failing to address the limitations of the research that you are proposing. Try to provide reasons why the limitations are acceptable or how risks can be mitigated.

When will the project happen? Provide the project start and end dates and duration.

Where will the project take place?

What project **preparation** has already taken place? If you have already done research, a pilot study, identified sources of existing data, secured the commitment of participants or done other initial work, be sure to describe it so that you get credit for being well-prepared.

Outline your **research protocol**: What sort of data will be needed to answer your questions? How will the data be collected and why? Who will collect the data? What procedures will be used? What will the basic research protocol be for data collection? How will subjects be recruited? Briefly describe any instruments, including previous reliability and validity data for the instruments. And so on. Do not include preliminary literature reviews and sector consultations which OLT consider should have been carried out in the phase of establishing the viability or need for the project – that is, before the proposal is submitted.

Data collection. What data is needed to answer your research questions and what procedures and methods will you use to collect data? Why were they chosen?

Data analysis and evaluation. What procedures and methods will you use to analyse the data? Why were they chosen? Provide plans for the **dissemination**/embedding of the successful strategies and outcomes that are integrated within the project design.

Although you have already discussed the project **deliverables**, here you need to outline how they will be produced/executed/implemented.

Outline your **research protocol**

What data?
Why?
How to get it?
Who will collect it?
What collection processes instruments?
What analysis methods?
What deliverables?
How you will disseminate your findings?

9.4.8 Key stakeholders (about ¼ page)

Who are the stakeholders, and how will they be involved in the activity? Most projects will have two audiences: the direct participants and the indirect beneficiaries. If so, describe both. Make sure you include wider stakeholders, such as the broader higher education sector, internal executive, Deans of the discipline or other disciplinary associations or accreditation bodies etc. Be specific about how each group will benefit. Indicate if any have already expressed an interest in or support for the project.

Stakeholders =

- direct participants
- +
- indirect beneficiaries
- +
- others with a vested interest in outcomes or knowledge

Stakeholder Example

The key policy audiences for this project will be:

- staff in relevant teaching units of Universities
- relevant University Pro Vice Chancellors concerned with teaching and learning policies
- the various professional associations in Australia
- Australian Government: major focus of the Australian Government's Digital Education Revolution (DER)

The key practice audiences for this project will be:

- students
- employers of graduates
- practising professionals in Australia

9.4.9 Project team, reference group and evaluation team: Membership, roles/responsibilities and executive governance *(about 1 page)*

This section gives details of who is going to do the work and their credentials. Outline who the project team are and their specific roles and responsibilities (that is: what they will do in the project, what they will contribute etc.) If you don't know yet who will do the work, explain how you will select the team members once you have the money and what each of the positions will be expected to do. Don't forget to include a role for the evaluator in this section.

The goal is to demonstrate the experience and competence of the staff who are to perform the tasks of the proposed project. Use this section to show reviewers that, based on your past successes with similar research, the project team is 100% capable of carrying out this work. If you have limited experience, be creative! Complement your experience with teaming arrangements, or use consultants to enhance your expertise in certain areas.

Reference group

A reference group is required for Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching and Innovation and Development Grants, and is optional for Seed Projects (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 8.9; Seed Projects, Section 6.9). Describe members of the reference group, their credentials (i.e. why and how they were selected) and their roles and activities. The reference group should include some external participants who have appropriate expertise to ensure that there is constructive advice on the design, development and ongoing evaluation of the project and that the project has maximum impact within the institutions/s engaged in the project and more broadly.

Governance

Governance describes the processes that need to exist to ensure a successful and timely completion of the project within budget. Typically, this section will talk about the project's decision-making processes. Who will be responsible for monitoring the project's progress, stakeholder commitment, the results being achieved and the leading indicators of failure? Outline the relationship between all internal and external participants and project team members. Discuss reporting lines. Describe the proper flow of information regarding the project progress to all stakeholders. Give details of the management and review processes for issues encountered during the project and for conflict resolution.

This section should also outline the arrangements for communication between members of the project team and between the project team, the reference group and the evaluator. Give specifics: how will project teams meet (e.g. face-to-face, videoconferencing) and how often? How and how often will interaction with the reference group be initiated? What meetings will the evaluator attend to observe process, how often and how?

If the project has multiple project leaders, clearly outline how the role will be shared and the responsibilities and accountability of each leader. In the past ALTC commented that proposals often neglect to discuss how collaborating partners will work together and what these roles will be; how large project teams will be led and managed to ensure outcomes are achieved and focus is maintained. Collaboration is difficult and requires resources to support the collaboration itself –ensure you don't underestimate the need for this resourcing, the need for face-to-face meetings and working systematically through responsibilities.

9.4.10 Project dissemination (*about ½ page*)

Explain in detail how you will disseminate information on the success and content of your project to other researchers and educators. How will you engage the sector during the project and *transfer* the outputs to them by information regarding the outcomes of your project and encouraging uptake and/or implementation across the sector more broadly?

For projects that are creating instructional materials, include information on potential for commercial publication or creation of open education resources. What products (text, software, CD ROMS, manuals or other publications) might result, and what plans are in place to distribute them effectively or make them easily accessible to the sector?

9.4.11 Evaluation plan (*about ¾ page*)

Describe the process of acquiring information to assess your project activities and outcomes. Include how you intend to evaluate the final project and how you will determine whether this project met your research and pedagogical expectations. Ethical considerations can shape the evaluation plan as well. Tell the funder who will gather the evaluation information, and how you will use it. Include a short biography of the lead evaluator or team. It is best if you can involve the evaluator in writing the evaluation plan.

Evaluation Plan

- Determine the evaluation questions
- Determine the types and sources of evidence needed
- Devise data collection and analysis plans
- Identify ethical considerations
- Identify reporting procedures

You should also mention:

- what is to be evaluated,
- who are the stakeholders and what are their needs (to nominate appropriate criteria as indicators of success),
- evaluation criteria (e.g. how many more will constitute ‘an increase’ or ‘improved’?) and how they will be applied,
- what types of data will be appropriate,
- the level of data required (provide a data source matrix with timeline indicating from whom data will be collected),
- how will data be managed (collected from whom, given to whom, stored how, used how) and
- how will the evaluation results be disseminated, highlighting protection of human subjects.

In other words, you should end up with a list of evaluation questions and an outline of the types of data that will answer them and where to source the data.

The evaluation should be factored into the budget and detailed within the time-lines for the project. Do not forget that preparing a detailed evaluation plan should be mentioned as one of the first tasks in the project timeline; however you should include 3-5 key evaluation questions in your proposal. In your project plan/timeline, you will also need to allow for regular reports from the evaluator to the project team, involvement of the evaluator in project meetings and preparation of publications and provision of a mechanism feedback to participants, especially project staff. In your dissemination section, talk about the evaluation report and that successful dissemination will be encouraged/supported/ underwritten by the evaluation report.

9.4.12 References *(up to 1 page)*

References must be included where cited in whatever style is appropriate for your discipline, as long as you are consistent and do not use footnotes. Reference lists are included within the 10 page proposal limit, but can be in a smaller font size than 12 (as is required for the main body of the proposal). There is no magic number of references—it is a compromise between the strength of your case and the space they take to list. So, only include essential references.



9.4.13 Technology projects: Design specifications *(must be 1 page only)*

Applications which propose technological developments must also submit a one page design brief, addressing the following issues:

- user interface and useability issues;
- a brief site map or story boards (if the proposal includes website design); and
- a user scenario;

OR

- the functionality, sustainability and scalability of what is being proposed;
- the technical expertise available to the project team; and
- availability of required technology/ infrastructure.

Applications proposing software development should aim to develop open-source software.

9.4.14 Budget *(1 page)*

To ensure your budget is accurate and complies with OLT guidelines, it is essential to seek out experienced support. Ensure you use the OLT [budget template](#) or our adapted version <http://dehub.edu.au/publications/books/>, for ease of reading, insert it into the proposal as a single page (see [Section 10.8](#) for details).

9.4.15 Budget justification *(1 page)*

The budget justification (see example in [Appendix E](#)) should be the monetary rationale for the study, and it should explain why you will need funding for the period requested. It is often helpful to go through each line of your budget and provide a convincing explanation and rationale for each expense listed. Use the notes you made when completing the budget. Imagine you have to argue for each budget item, convincing the reader that there is a very good reason for each proposed expense and that your projected budgeted amounts are a realistic estimate of the costs.

Your justification should begin with a summary statement of the total revenue required by the budget, then progress to the detailed explanation and justification of each budget item. For example, “This project requires

total funds of \$XXX to complete. OLT funds represent x% of the requested budget, and in-kind and cash contributions constituting the other x% have been sourced from.....”.

For personnel, include descriptions of each person’s responsibilities and main tasks/contributions to the proposed study. It should be obvious after reading the Budget Justification what each person is supposed to do AND why the specified percentage of effort each is proposed to devote to the study is appropriate and necessary. Provide a similar level of detail for every other budget item. What software licences are you renewing and why? Who is travelling where, and how? How many brochures will you produce?

9.4.16 Timeline (2 pages)

You must produce a timeline that specifies the start and end dates of the project and a schedule of activities. The timeline should assume that the project will begin immediately after the funding agreement is finalised. This means a project start of 1 August 2013 for February submissions or 1 February 2014 for August submissions (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 9.9; Seed Projects, Section 7.7). For projects designed to go beyond 12 months, the timeline should be developed around stages with discrete staged outcomes and deliverables for each year of the project.

Your timeline can be presented as a MS MS Word table (e.g. listing month, task, outcomes), or as a Gantt chart-type timeline in MS Excel, or any other format you deem appropriate (see [Appendix F](#) for some example formats).

List the task, who is responsible and when the activity begins and ends. If you are realistic in your estimates of the amount of time each task will take, this will help you determine the staffing levels and budget you require to achieve your outcomes within the time limits. Once you have made your best time estimate, it is wise to add 25% as things usually take more time than you think and there will inevitably be unforeseen delays. Often, when you have calculated the true extent of time and resources needed, the activities or objectives will have to be modified to conform to timeframes and budget restrictions. Be mindful that a reviewer is looking for a well-reasoned plan with a reasonable timetable.

A realistic timeline will include sufficient time for ethics applications and be aware of university teaching schedules, if necessary.

9.4.17 Biographies of project team members (3 pages)

Brief biographies are required for all key personnel proposed on your project. Key personnel are defined as those who contribute to the scientific

development or execution of the project, whether or not salary funds are requested. The biographies should outline the qualifications and experience of the project leader(s) and project team, emphasizing the following points: (1) research skills and experience, (2) management or supervision experience (especially regarding key roles played on major projects or studies) and (3) a short list of relevant publications or paper presentations.

The statement on the project leader/s should include a list of all current projects, research and fellowships including the progress of any OLT-funded projects involving the project leader, and give an estimate of the time that the leader/s can contribute to the proposed project. Note the restriction of two OLT grants for which an individual can take substantive responsibility concurrently.

Focus on each person's experience relevant to the work they will do on your project. It is not necessary to, and indeed should not, include every publication bearing that individual's name. A short list of three or four relevant, selected publications will suffice. In some cases, it will be more useful to list experience on other projects rather than publications.

The biographies may include people other than the team members. For instance, it may be useful to include information on advisors or consultants if used in the project. If the project evaluator has been confirmed they should also be included. Note that advisors and consultants may also provide a letter of support for the project.

The biography section is limited to 3 A4 pages. Project leaders may wish to provide a sample biography for project participants to encourage a common format. In any event, some editing of material supplied is likely to be necessary to ensure the information fits within the three page limit and provides the essential information required by OLT.

9.4.18 Letters of support

You must provide:

- a letter of support from the DVC (Academic) or equivalent of each partner institution detailing time release agreements and possibly in-kind support for the project; and
- any other relevant letters of support for the project.

For leadership applications, or any other proposals that require high-level 'buy in' for project success (e.g. permission and support to survey students) or effective dissemination (e.g. policy change required), you should seek

Biographies

- Maximum 3 pages in total
- More information is required for the project leader
- Maintain a similar style for all other team members
- Include the project evaluator (if known)
- Include advisors and consultants

Letters of support

- A letter of support from the DVC(A) of each institution
- Other letters may come from Heads of School/Cost Centre, Council of Deans, consultants, advisors, reference group members

letters of support from the higher executive, VC, Senior DVC or equivalent, as appropriate, to indicate there is the necessary institutional support for your proposal.

Additional letters of support need to demonstrate:

- that the project addresses a clearly identified need and is significant across the higher education sector;
- the significance and potential usefulness of the outcomes to the higher education sector as a whole, or particular sections or kinds of organisations within the sector or community of practice;
- the specific benefits of the project outcomes for the endorsing institution/organisation;
- commitment to the project outcomes by the proposing organisations;
- support for in-kind contributions and time release for each project team member; and
- support for the project objectives from professional bodies, Councils of Deans or other stakeholders.

Please refer to the letter template and sample paragraphs provided at [Appendix B](#) for further guidance.

9.5 Writing the grant application: Seed Projects

Seed Projects

Applications for Seed Projects are limited to:

- five pages addressing the rationale and aims, approach, anticipated deliverables and outcomes
- letter of support from each participating institution's DVC(A) or equivalent
- one page budget, one page budget justification, and one page timeline
- one page of biographies

Applicants should consider collaboration carefully with these projects, given the maximum \$50k budget and 12 month timeline. Collaboration requires time and effort, and the inclusion of additional institutions must balance the increased benefits arising from their involvement in the project with the time and effort required.

Suggested Proposal Structure and Section Headings

Rationale and Aims:

Including purpose of the project, previous work, significance of the project, and project aims

Project Methodology and Approach

Including key stakeholders, dissemination, timeline, project team, reference group and evaluation

Project Outcomes/Deliverables

References

ATTACHMENT A: Letters of Support

ATTACHMENT B: Budget, Budget Justification and Timeline

ATTACHMENT C: Biographies of Project Team Members

9.5.1 Rationale and aims (2 pages)

To begin, read Sections [9.4.3](#) through [9.4.5](#) above, which talk about rationale and aims.

Seed Project funding is available to test and evaluate an original idea, to conduct a small-scale standalone project, or build the capacity of early career researchers. Seed Projects may address any of the priorities of the Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching or Innovation and Development Grants, or any other topic.

If testing and evaluating an original idea, you will need to report from the literature to clearly demonstrate your approach is original. OLT will

also want to see a strong literature base that shows it is likely to work. Projects could involve undertaking a larger trial of an approach that has previously only been undertaken in a single unit, or piloting an approach from a different discipline such as applying an inquiry oriented approach in business.

Clearly state your research questions and how you will know if your approach was successful. This means defining what success means – are you expecting a direct impact on student learning or engagement, or a more indirect impact through a new approach to professional learning? State the evidence you will collect to answer your research questions and the ethics processes you will need to comply with.

If addressing a leadership priority it is essential to include a definition of leadership capacity for the purposes of the project, and the proposed leadership outcomes of the project.

9.5.2 Approach (1 page)

Check the general instructions in Sections 9.4.7 through 9.4.9 above.

As with all project, the approach should reflect an appropriate research method, such as action research or an appropriate evaluation framework to be used. These research methods can also be very useful ways to build the capacity of early-career researchers, generally by mentoring a small group who undertake research on a shared theme.

Document how staff will work together on the project and what the leader will do. How often will you meet? Will you use electronic tools for communication, or will it all be via face to face meetings? If you are collaborating with another institution, will travel for meetings be required or will you meet via videolink or Skype? Include a description of how you will work together and how much time will you spend on the project. Details of when things will get done can be recorded in the timeline.

9.5.3 Anticipated deliverables and outcomes (1/2 page)

Check the general instructions in Section 9.4.6 above.

As the timeline for seed projects is limited to one year and funding to \$50k, outcomes and deliverables will be correspondingly smaller than the larger projects. Think very carefully about the outcomes that can be achieved; they may, for instance, relate to identification of successful aspects and conditions for potential failure of the trial or be more processural. Deliverables are somewhat easier to define, and should include a project

report and website. Other deliverables and outcomes may include case studies or how-to guides, as appropriate to the nature of the project. Think about your stakeholders and what deliverables would be most effective for them.

Given the time scale of the project, OLT will understand publication prior to the project ending will likely be limited to unreviewed conference papers, posters or workshops.

Include a description of exactly what you plan to do to disseminate your findings. Use the [D-Cubed](#) dissemination framework to give you ideas on how to involve stakeholders throughout the project, so they will be ready for the deliverables you will produce for them.

9.5.4 Project management (3/4 page)

Check the general instructions above relating to the project team, and evaluation in Sections [9.4.6](#), [9.4.9](#) and [9.4.11](#) above.

This section should include a description of the roles and responsibilities of the project team, how the project will be governed, summary of the timeline, and project evaluation. If you are planning to employ a project manager, that should be introduced here, along with a brief description of what their role will entail. Describe what project leadership entails, e.g. chairing meetings, mentoring less experienced staff, facilitating workshops, coordinating research activities etc, and what the project team will do.

Include details of how frequently and by what mode the project team will meet, whether face to face or via videolink. If you have opted to have a reference group, explain why you chose to do so. Address the benefit they will bring to the project, along with a short description of how often they will meet and what they will do.

Provide a basic outline of the project timeline, e.g. “The project will commence with a one day forum for the project team and early career academics. At the workshop participants will ... Following this the team will The project will wrap up with another one day forum in December.”

As with any project some form of evaluation of the project should be undertaken, however there is no requirement for the evaluation to be undertaken by a person independent of the project team. Evaluation should be built into the design of the project, with key questions and data collection methods described. If trialling a new teaching approach, for example, appropriate evaluation would be an assessment of learning outcomes, student satisfaction, and feedback from staff; all of which could be collected and analysed by the project team. An independent evaluation

may be more appropriate where the project team are deeply involved in all activities and an independent viewpoint would be beneficial. Reasonable costs for an independent evaluator can be included in the budget (Program Information: Seed Projects, Section 4.5). Whatever form of evaluation is selected, it should be described and justified.

9.5.5 References (1/2 page)

Given the limited space for references, select your references with care. Use a single, powerful reference, rather than two or three of lesser impact that make the same point. Consider which best illustrates the point you are trying to make, and whether a reference is required at all. Be judicious, however, as removal of too many references may detract from your case.

References

Space for references is limited, so select with care. Use a single, powerful reference rather than two or three of lesser impact.

9.5.6 Budget (1 page) and budget justification (1 page)

Check the general instructions in Sections 9.4.14 and 9.4.15 above and see examples and templates in [Appendix C](#), [Appendix D](#) and [Appendix E](#).

In general, the same rules and guidelines apply to preparing the budget as for the larger projects. The standard OLT budget template must be used. Just as for larger grants, an in-kind contribution is expected.

There are four significant differences for seed projects compared to the general rules:

- As a single year project, only complete the year 1/stage 1 section.
- Inclusion of the \$3000 attendance at OLT events is optional.
- Inclusion of an amount for evaluation is optional.
- NO institutional levy can be charged.

Budget

Follow the standard rules except:

- Only complete year1/stage1
- \$3000 attendance at OLT events is optional
- NO institutional levy can be charged

9.5.7 Biographies (1 page)

Check the general instructions in [Section 9.4.17](#) above.

The space assigned by OLT reflects the expectation that there will be few members of the project team. People listed should therefore be restricted to those undertaking work paid for by the project funding or otherwise playing a significant role in the project. Where a project involves a number of participants in a minor role, such as staff whose approach will be part of an evaluation, a summary or list would be appropriate.

9.5.8 Letter(s) of support

Check the general instructions in [Section 9.4.18](#) above.

The same rules regarding letters of support apply. The letters required are therefore:

- A letter of support from each participating institution's DVC(A) or equivalent
- A proforma for DVC(A) letters of support for the lead institution and partner institutions is provided by OLT (Program Information: Seed Projects, Appendix 2). As well as including any time release, it is also good practice to specify any in kind support provided at the institutional or School/CC level in the letters. Refer to the letter template and samples provided at [Appendix B](#) for further guidance.

9.6 Suggested proposal structure: Extension Grants

This section is based on the 2012 Extension Grants Information and application instructions. There are likely to be changes when the 2013 Program Information is released.

The total page limit for Extension Grants is 5 pages, with a single letter of support from the institution's DVC(A) or equivalent required. Even where time release or collaboration is involved, no further letters are required.

The [Extension Information](#) (Section 4.10) notes that the size and significance of the activity will be taken into account, as will the potential benefit to the sector. Institutions, therefore, need to carefully consider whether they are asking for funds to support what OLT would consider their core business or whether the request is reasonable.

Final Task

Check your completed application against the Seed Projects Checklist (program Information, Section 8)

Check you haven't made one of the fatal mistakes listed in Appendix G.

Extension Grants

Suggested Proposal Structure and Section Heading

Rationale and Aims:

Including purpose of the project, previous work (related to extending the original project), significance of the project, and project aims

Proposed Activities, Deliverables and Timeline

Budget/Budget Justification

Biographies of Project Team Members

References

ATTACHMENT A: Letters of Endorsement and Support

9.6.1 Rationale and aims (1½ pages)

Check the general instructions in Sections 9.4.3 through 9.4.5 above.

Some questions to think about include: Why should you get the money instead of anyone else? Your institution might need the funds, but what benefits will this Extension Project have for the sector, or part of the sector? If you are undertaking a project within your organisation, consider how you can spread the benefits a little wider. If inviting a visiting scholar, can you make presentations, seminars and workshops open to guests?

Note the specific project(s) or fellowship(s) or combination thereof that your project will be extending. Given the limited funding available, focus will be required, so consider carefully how synergies are obtainable if more than one project/fellowship is being built upon.

This section will provide the main background information and, therefore, include the literature review. It is not necessary to repeat information about the importance of the general topic as OLT obviously believed it important enough to be funded in the first place. Rather, focus the literature on why it needs to be extended in your particular institution/group of institutions, or at a particular conference. In what ways were the specific issues not addressed in the original project? Has your particular area/issue emerged since the original project? Does your institution reflect a group insufficiently addressed in the original project?

9.6.2 Proposed activities, deliverables and timeline (2 pages)

Extension Grant applications require specification of at least two deliverables, each with an explicit audience (Program Information: Extension, Section 4.4). The size and scope of deliverables and, therefore activities, should be proportional to the funding requested. That is, deliverables for a \$30k project (the maximum allowable) should be proportionately larger and/or be delivered to a larger or more influential group, than those for a \$5k project. Deliverables should be designed to address one or both of the program objectives (Program Information: Extension, Section 2).

The proposed activities and timeline will, therefore, specifically relate to the deliverables and the specified audience. In some instances, an activity will actually be the deliverable. For instance, if the project was to trial resources or curricula, it may include a workshop with one of the original project team. It would certainly add to your case to include an evaluation of the workshop; however, the workshop itself would be both an activity and a deliverable.

For a larger project, however, the workshop may simply be an activity leading into more substantial deliverables such as case study documentation of the implementation plans, or a report analysing institutional support required for successful implementation.

It is important to keep in mind the strict time limit on Extension projects. These must be completed within 12 months of the application date, resulting in an actual maximum time of about 10 months after the funding is announced and contracts signed. If trialling resources or curricula, evaluation is, therefore, likely to be restricted to the planning and implementation process.

9.6.3 Budget and budget justification (1/2-1 page)

Check the general instructions in Sections [9.4.14](#) and [9.4.15](#) above and see examples and templates in [Appendix C](#), [Appendix D](#) and [Appendix E](#).

The Application Form contains the budget format and is where the budget should be recorded. Space that the budget would have taken up within the statement can, therefore, be used in building your argument and describing the activities to be undertaken. Note that the application form specifies all **line items** and **totals** must be rounded to the nearest \$100.

Item 4.8 of the Extension Information requires the institution to match the funded amount. This does not need to be a cash contribution and can be

Budget

- Record the budget in the application form
- Round all amounts to the nearest \$100
- NO institutional levy can be charged

completely in-kind. This is reflected in the single column supplied for 'Other \$' in the budget template.

Despite the budget being placed in the application form, it remains essential for a budget justification to be included in the statement (see example in [Appendix E](#)). This should explain how each line item was calculated and the nature of the in-kind contribution to be made by the institution. If the institution is making a significant cash contribution, this should be highlighted in the budget justification.

No institutional levy is permissible.

9.6.4 Biographies (1 page)

Check the general instructions in [Section 9.4.17](#) above.

The project team can be part or all of the original team, or a new team, or a combination of the two. If extending a fellowship, the original fellow does not have to be a member of the extension project team (Program Information: Section 4.5). Note that only one application may be submitted by any particular project team in each round.

With limited space available, people listed should be restricted to those undertaking work paid for by the project funding or otherwise playing a significant role in the project. Where a project involves a number of participants in a minor role, such as staff whose approach will be part of an evaluation, a summary or list is appropriate.

9.6.5 References (1/2 page)

Given the limited space, select your references with care. Use a single, powerful reference, rather than two or three of lesser impact that make the same point. Consider which best illustrates the point you are trying to make, and whether a reference is required at all. Be judicious, however, as removal of too many references may detract from your case.

Final Task

Check you haven't made one of the fatal mistakes listed in [Appendix G](#).

9.6.6 Letter(s) of support

Check the general instructions in [Section 9.4.18](#) above.

For Extension Grants, letters of support are restricted (Program Information: Extension, 4.7) to one or both of the following:

- a letter of support from your institution's DVC(A) or equivalent
- evidence of acceptance of conference abstracts

It is likely the 2013 Program Information will specify a proforma for the letter, but in lieu of this it should at minimum address:

- endorsement and support for the activities
- confirmation of the institutional in-kind contribution
- staff time release

Note that no letters were required in 2012 from collaborating institutions.

Final Task

Check your application against the checklist provided in the relevant Program Information

Check you haven't made one of the fatal mistakes listed in Appendix G.

Part 10

Collating for submission (finally!)

10.1 Document format

OLT have specific document formatting rules and page limits (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 9.7; Seed Projects, Section 7.6; Extension Grants, Section 5) that must be followed. All proposals should be presented in 12 pt font on A4 paper, with margins sufficient for clear printing. Pages beyond the maximum will be removed.

The following table summarises the requirements for each grant program. The pages stated are maxima.

Item proposals	Extension Grants	Seed Projects	All other over \$50k
Application Form	Download from OLT website	Online Grants Portal	Online Grants Portal
Proposal	5 pages	5 pages	10 pages
Timeline and/or budget	Include in application form with additional details in proposal	3 pages	4 pages
Biographies	Include in 5 page proposal	1 page	3 pages
Letters of support	Letter from Lead Institution's DVC(A) or evidence of conference acceptance or both No other letters required	Letter from each Institution's DVC(A) Other letters as appropriate	Letter from each Institution's DVC(A) Other letters as appropriate

10.2 The Application Checklist

Before collating the final application, use the Application Checklist (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 10; Seed Projects, Section 8) as a final check for your application. This final check may be undertaken by an independent person within your institution. Contact your institutional support staff early to identify your institutional processes.

The Application Checklist does not have to be submitted as part of your application; nonetheless, it is a useful tool.

10.3 Structure of proposal

Different presentation rules apply to different parts of your application. There are five main parts to your application:

- application form
- the main body of the proposal
- letters of support
- the budget, budget justification and timelines
- biographies of key members of your project team.

Always check the latest version of the Program Information at the OLT website!

Changes made from time to time may not be included in this version of the Handbook.

Note that minor updates to the Program Information may be issued between the first and second grant rounds. Checking the latest requirements on the OLT website is, therefore, essential.

This section of the handbook focuses on larger grants; however, the same principles apply to the Extension Grants and Seed Projects. Where there are explicit differences, these will be noted.

The structure of the main body of your proposal and suggested headings to use are outlined below. The first page of your proposal should have the project title at the top of the page, followed directly by the main body of your proposal.

Extension Grants require a five page statement that includes the project description, project team members and their roles, project management including timeline, and budget justification. The timeline and budget must be included in the application form, and OLT have informed us that these only need to be repeated in the statement if further detail is required. One letter of support from the DVC(A) or equivalent is to be attached. No further letters are required, even if the project is collaborative.

Seed Projects require a five page statement, including references.

Appendices include: DVC(A) letters of support from each institution, with an additional 3 pages allowed for the budget, budget justification, and timeline, and 1 page for biographies. Additional letters of support may be included to demonstrate the support of professional bodies, councils of deans etc. (Program Information: Seed Projects, Section 4.3).

All Other Proposals require a statement of a maximum of 10 A4 pages, including the references. Three appendices are required. Letters of support from each partner institution's DVC(A). The budget, justification and timelines are restricted to a length of 4 A4 pages: this usually translates as one page for the budget, one page for the justification and two pages for the timeline. Finally, the biographies of your project team must not exceed 3 A4 pages. Additional letters of support may be included to demonstrate the support of professional bodies, councils of deans etc. (Program Information: Leadership, Section 5.3; I&D, Section 3.5).

10.4 Formatting to reduce length

Experience suggests that most often you will be looking for ways to edit your writing to fit within the page limits. There are some fairly obvious ways to format your text to help with this.

- Given the requirement to use a 12 point font, if it is not specified Times New Roman is the most popular choice as it allows for more words per page than almost any other font while maintaining excellent readability. The Innovation and Development Grants require 12 point Arial or Calibri (Program Information: I&D, Section 9.7), of which Calibri will provide more words per page.
- It is a good idea to establish and apply **styles** for your headings and paragraphs to ensure consistency of presentation and to facilitate quick changes to the formatting/spacing as you later struggle to stay within page limits. This will not only save you time, but will also afford you more control than spacing everything using the return key. If you don't know how to use styles in MS Word, read the help or ask someone. Learn! It is a useful skill.
- Use single **line spacing**.
- It is best not to bother with fancy formatting and wide spacing for **headings**. Stick to simple methods of differentiating your headings, such as large or small capitals, bold or italics, and minimal spacing (e.g. 6 pt before and 3 pt after).

To reduce length:

- Use styles
- Use single line spacing
- Simple formatting on headings
- Reduce paragraph spacing
- Reduce margin sizes
- different presentations (e.g. use tables, images, dot points)
- Reduce font size for reference list
- Edit, edit, edit!

- Set the **paragraph spacing** as 0 pt before and 6 pt after, rather than using a blank line (i.e. hitting return twice) between paragraphs.
- There are no prescribed **margin sizes**, so you can reduce margins to give yourself more room on the page, although 1.25cm is probably the minimum. It is better to reduce margins rather than squash up text. Assessors may read your application in hard copy so allow room for a staple.
- Try to think of **different presentations** (e.g. use tables, images, dot points etc.) that may reduce the length if you are over the length limit.
- Try to keep your **reference list** down to one page, one and a half at most (one third to a half page for Seed Projects and Extension Grants). You can usually achieve this by reducing the font size (even a font size as small as 8 point is probably acceptable, since the references are no doubt cursorily checked, but rarely read).

When inserting the MS Excel spreadsheet of your **budget**, the easiest way to ensure it fits on a single page (remember to maintain readability) is to cut and paste it as an image. This allows it to be readily adjusted to size if necessary. The Program Information suggests cutting and pasting the budget into the application document as a spreadsheet rather than an image; however, as the final application is submitted as a PDF, the image cut and paste method is acceptable.

Don't just keep squeezing everything up to make it fit. Readability is essential as assessors read quickly rather than attend to every detail. Ensure there is sufficient differentiation between paragraphs and margins maintain an adequate space around the page. Instead **edit, edit, edit**. Every time you re-write, your writing will usually become clearer and, as a result, more concise.

10.5 Text formatting

OLT have specific text formatting rules (Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 9.7; Seed Projects, Section 7.6) that must be followed (see summary in box below). OLT requires a font size of 12 point for the main body of the proposal for substantive applications (Calibri or Arial for Innovation and Development Grants), although the list of references may be in a smaller font. Any attachments can also be in smaller or larger font size. Note that Extension Grants do not require 12 point font, but if you choose something else ensure readability at all times.

Formatting Summary

- Type in **12 point font ONLY, Calibri** recommended for Innovation and Development Grants, Times New Roman otherwise (except references and attachments)
- There are no prescribed margin settings
- **Extension Grants:** Maximum length = **5 pages** including description, team members, timeline and budget
- **Seed Projects:** Maximum length =
 - **5 A4 pages** - Main body (including references)
 - **3 A4 pages** - **Budget, justification and project timeline**
 - **1 A4 page** - **Biographies** of project personnel
- **Larger Projects:** Maximum length =
 - **10 A4 pages** - **Main body** (including references)
 - **4 A4 pages** - **Budget, justification and project timeline**
 - **3 A4 pages** - **Biographies** of project personnel
- **No Shading** in tables, e.g. timeline or budget
- Include page numbers in the footer. It is also a good idea to add the surname of the lead researcher and year.
- Fully justified right margins are to be discouraged. They may be aesthetically pleasing, but research shows that the resultant variable, arbitrary spacing is often confusing or distracting and more tiring for the eyes to read.
- In general, avoid abbreviations. For example, use laboratory, not lab and mathematics, not maths
- The first time you use an acronym, write out what it stands for and put the acronym in parentheses. For example, Australian Medical Association (AMA). After that you can use the acronym.
- Use styles to ensure consistency and save yourself editing time

10.6 Presentation

Presentation is important. Always keep your reader in mind when writing—the convenience of the reviewers should be one of your primary considerations.

Don't forget to spell-check your work. Get someone else to check your grammar and sentence structure.

While reviewers may have expertise in your general field, they know nothing about your particular project until you explain it to them. It is also the case that your reviewers could have no or limited expertise in your discipline or in learning and teaching. Don't take any chances—as OLT suggest, define all important terms, don't use discipline-specific terminology without explaining it and use abbreviations sparingly. Remember to be enthusiastic: a dull proposal will not catch anyone's eye.

Presentation:

- Write to your reviewers
- Spell-check your proposal
- Check grammar and verb tense
- Explain all important terms
- Use abbreviations sparingly
- Be enthusiastic!

10.7 Project title and abstract

Project titles should be **no more than 15 words long** and should describe clearly what the project will be doing. If the project is based in a discipline or field of study, this information must be included in the title.

A maximum 160 word abstract is required for the online Grants Portal. It is not required in the body of the proposal, but if space permits it may present a useful summary introduction to the reader. The same general advice applies as for the title: no jargon and keep it snappy. Think about it as your 'elevator conversation'; you're coincidentally in the elevator with the chair of the OLT grants committee and have 15 seconds to convince them of the value of your project. Make sure your abstract does so!

Project title and abstract:

Title max 15 words

Abstract max 160 words

No jargon! Keep it snappy!

10.8 Budget

The OLT [budget template](#) is provided in MS Excel format. This facilitates accuracy in addition, and in particular allows for direct insertion of calculations of salaries and other costs. In preparing the draft budget however, caution must be exercised when setting the display to whole dollar amounts (as required by OLT), as the rounding process may result in apparent errors in addition.

To ensure these errors do not occur in the final budget and to facilitate accuracy of totals, we have devised a spreadsheet that automates most of the budget calculations and formatting—this can be downloaded for free from <http://dehub.edu.au/publications/books/>.

Alternatively, two approaches can be suggested:

- Copy the fully calculated budget to a new sheet within the same workbook. Working with each section of the budget in turn, highlight the line items, then: copy, paste special -> values to the same place. This will replace any line item calculations with the equivalent figures. If totals remain as calculated numbers, any previous inconsistencies due to rounding will become apparent. Adjust necessary line items by \$1 as required to ensure the total remains rounded to the nearest \$1,000.
- Create a second version of the budget ensuring totals are calculated from the line items. Manually enter the amounts from the fully calculated budget version, adjusting as necessary to ensure the total is appropriately rounded.

Extension Grants require line items to be rounded to the nearest \$100, and the budget completed in the Application Form (Word document). In this case, create the budget in Excel, then use the latter approach rounding each line item to the nearest \$100. When complete, manually type the budget into the Application Form.

For instructions on inserting the budget into the final document see [Section 10.9.5](#) below.

10.9 Putting it all together

You have to collate the various sections of your proposal before submission. OLT request a single PDF for submission, but if this is not possible a maximum of three files is allowable. Additionally, your institution may have specific requirements for internal submission. To collate your application yourself will most probably require access to Adobe Professional. If you do not have access to this software within your School, contact your institutional support staff for assistance.

10.9.1 Innovation and Development Grants and Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Grants

For Innovation and Development Grants and Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Grants, we recommend your final application should appear in the following order:

- main body of proposal (10 pages)
- letters of support (1 for each collaborating institute)
- additional letters of support e.g. from professional bodies of council of deans
- budget, budget justification and timeline (4 pages)
- biographies of team members (3 pages)
- IF REQUIRED, a design specification (1 page)

These documents are likely to be in a variety of formats: MS Word, MS Excel and PDF. If not already present, add page numbers to the main body of the proposal, and print or convert this to a 10 page PDF.

Save the remaining sections (the attachments) in a separate MS Word document without page numbers. These will be added using Acrobat Professional after collating the document into a single PDF.

10.9.2 Seed Projects

For Seed Projects in both the Innovation and Development Program and Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program, your final document will include the following:

- main body of proposal (5 pages)
- letters of Support (1 for each collaborating institution)
- additional letters of support e.g. from professional bodies of council of deans
- budget, budget justification and timeline (3 pages)
- biographies of team members (1 pages)

These documents are likely to be in a variety of formats: MS Word, MS Excel and PDF. If not already present, add page numbers to the main body of the proposal, and print or convert this to a 5 page PDF.

Save the remaining sections (the attachments) in a separate MS Word document without page numbers. These will be added using Acrobat Professional after collating the document into a single PDF.

10.9.3 Extension Grants

For Extension Grants, your final application will appear in the following order:

- application Form
- main body of proposal (5 pages)
- letter of support from DVC(A) or equivalent.

The Application Form can be completed as a MS Word document. Signature is required by your institution's DVC(A) or equivalent. It may be possible for the signature to be inserted electronically, facilitating direct creation of a PDF from the MS Word document. If printout for signature is required, the entire form or the signed page will need to be scanned.

Print or convert the main body of the proposal to PDF format.

10.9.4 Letters of support

Support letters may come to you in various forms: hardcopy, MS Word documents or PDFs.

MS Word Documents

Open the MS Word document used for the attachments. Match the margins to those of the main body of the document and ensure there are no page numbers.

At page 1 insert a page with the heading ATTACHMENT A: LETTERS OF SUPPORT. If you have a substantial number of letters, you may wish to list them on the first page. If listing, start with the letter from the DVC(A) of the lead institution followed by letters from the partner institutions, and finally any letters of support from other stakeholders. The listing is especially useful if support staff will be collating the PDF for you, as it ensures they know in which order the letters should appear.

Next, insert any support letters supplied to you as MS Word documents, ensuring each starts on a new page. Judiciously format to try to keep the length of each letter to two pages.

We recommend against inserting letters as an image into the MS Word document as the multiple processes of conversion to image and subsequent conversion to PDF results in a significant loss of clarity and therefore readability.

Hardcopy letters

Scan any letters supplied as hardcopies to PDF. These will be inserted when the final MS Word application document is converted to a PDF.

PDF

Most commonly, letters from partner institutions will be supplied in PDF format so do not require any additional action at this stage.

10.9.5 Budget, budget justification and timeline

The OLT guidelines recommend copying the budget into the application document as an MS Excel spreadsheet; however, this limits flexibility in formatting. Alternative options are:

- Cut and paste the budget into the document as an image
- Format the budget in MS Excel to a single page, then print or convert to PDF. This page can be inserted into the appropriate place in the PDF application.

Inserting the budget as an image

In the attachments document, insert a page after the letters (or letter heading page) and insert the heading ATTACHMENT B: BUDGET AND TIMELINE.

In your completed MS Excel budget template, highlight the budget table, then go to the View tab and un-tick the Gridlines box.

1. copy the table
2. move to the MS Word document and position cursor at point of insertion. Select paste.
3. select Paste Special, Picture (Enhanced Metafile) or Picture (Windows Metafile). If Paste Special doesn't appear with a right mouse click, you can find it by clicking on the Paste submenu below the clipboard symbol.

This will allow you to re-size the pasted image so that the budget table fits on one page. Double check the correct version of the budget is included, that all rows and columns are included, and that it is easily readable.

To print the budget directly from MS Excel to a PDF file:

1. Add a heading to your MS Excel budget, ATTACHMENT B: BUDGET AND TIMELINE. Match the font to the headings in the attachments document.
2. Highlight the area of the budget and title, then select Page Layout, Print Area
3. Adjust the page margins to match the remainder of the document.
4. Print the page to PDF.

You may need to adjust the margins and print options to ensure it fits readily onto one page while remaining easily readable. No additional action is required at this stage.

10.9.6 Create the Appendix PDF

Check the format of the team biographies, then print or convert the attachments document to PDF.

10.9.7 Collating the PDF

If you do not have access to Adobe Professional, at this point you will need to obtain assistance from a support person in your university who does. If an editing/proofreading service is available, it is likely they will be able to collate the final document.

With Adobe Professional available:

- Open the Attachments PDF.
- If the budget was saved as a PDF, replace the blank page set aside for the budget with the budget page.
- Insert the letters of support. If the letters are listed, insert the letters in the same order. If not, the order recommended is: letter from the DVC(A) of the lead institution, followed by DVC(A) letters for each partner and finally any letters of support from other stakeholders. For Extension Grants, there is of course only one letter.

- Save the PDF. This will ensure you can return to this point if the page numbers are inserted incorrectly
- Insert page numbers
 - In Acrobat Professional XI, Select Tools -> Pages -> Header and Footer -> Add header & footer
 - Click in the appropriate footer box (left, centre or right) then click “Insert page number”. If the placement is left or right, set the margin for left or right to match the text, then return to the footer box
 - Add additional text, e.g. “Page” to match the main body of the document.
 - Click “Page number and date format”, and type “11” for “Start at page”.
 - Check the preview to see if the page numbers will be inserted at the correct place.
 - Click the “OK” button to insert page numbers.
- Insert PDF of the main body of the proposal BEFORE page 1
- Scan through the PDF to check all pages are present and in the correct order.
- Save the PDF using the name convention as specified in the Program Information. Leadership and I&D, Section 9.5: Seed Project, Section 7.5.

Extension Grants

- Collate the form, main body of the proposal, and letter of support into a single PDF, save using the standard naming convention. Note the program letters are ‘eg’ for Extension Grants.

10.9.8 Internal institutional requirements

At this stage, it is essential to comply with your institutional requirements. You may have an internal deadline and likely internal processes with which you must comply. Most often, there will be a cover sheet required by your grants management area for registration of your application on their database.

If internal processes include submission of the application on your behalf, then there will also be an internal form requesting all the information required by OLT when submitting through the Online Portal.

Note that Extension Grants are NOT submitted through the OLT Online Portal and require download of an Application Form from the OLT website. Executive sign-off is required on the form, and your institution will advertise appropriate procedures for obtaining this sign-off.

10.9.9 Final submission

Follow your institutional procedures for submitting your application. If you are requested to submit your application in draft form, follow the instructions for submission to the Grants Portal provided in the Program Information: Leadership and I&D, Section 9.4; Seed Projects, Section 7.4.

Extension Grants are not submitted via the Grants Portal and are instead emailed to learningandteaching@deewr.gov.au by 5pm on either of the two advertised deadlines (2 April or 2 September in 2013, likely to be similar timing in 2014). Check with your Institution as to appropriate procedures for submitting the application.

OLT Project Concept Form

An MS Word version of this document is available for free – download from <http://dehub.edu.au/publications/books/>

This concept form can be used to assist in developing your grant proposal concept. Assessment of the concept needs to be made against the OLT criteria: Project outcomes and rationale, approach, value/need for project and project management.

OLT Project Concept Form			
Proposed Project Title			
Project Summary (160 word abstract)			
OLT Grant Program:	Innovation and Development Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching		
Funding range:	Seed Project<\$50k Direct Build \$50-\$150k New Project \$50-\$220k National.\$220k		
I have read the appropriate OLT grants program guidelines and I believe this project could be submitted to the priority:			
In the timeframe:		Round 1 Round 2 Year	
Explain how your project meets the nominated priority			
Explain how your project meets your institution's strategic directions in teaching and learning			
Project Leader:			
Title:	Professor	A/Professor	Dr Mr Ms Mrs Miss
First/Other Names:			Last/Family Name:
Position:			
School/Directorate:			Faculty:
Telephone:	()	Mobile:	
Fax:	()	Email:	
Other people from this institution:			
Title	First/Other Names	Last/Family Name	Position/School

External Project Participants				
Potential Major Project Partners (Max 4)				
Institution	Title	Initials	Last Name	Already Contacted?
				Yes No
How will this institution/person add value to your project:				
				Yes No
How will this institution/person add value to your project:				
				Yes No
How will this institution/person add value to your project:				
				Yes No
How will this institution/person add value to your project:				
Other Institutional Involvement (Junior Partners, Institutional Participants etc. List potential))				
Institution/persons already contacted		Role in the project		
Institution/persons not yet contacted		Potential role in the project		
Proposed reference group members (People recognised as experts in the field, experience in similar projects etc.)				
Name	Expertise/experience		Already Contacted?	
			Yes No	
			Yes No	
			Yes No	
			Yes No	
			Yes No	
Any others:				

Project Justification (Why Higher Education in Australia needs this project)

Summarise the problem or issue this project will address. (two to three sentences)	
Why is it important to undertake this project? (two to three sentences)	
Explain how your project contributes to the enhancement of learning and teaching in higher education (two to three sentences)	
Which OLT objective(s) does this project meet? See Program Information	
Explain how your project meets the(se) objective(s) (two to three sentences)	

Project Preparation (Approach)

What projects has OLT/ALTC previously funded that relate to this project, and how is this project different? (two to three examples)	
What key issues have been identified from the literature? (three or four dot points)	
What other preparatory work has already taken place towards this project? e.g. pilot study, related research (two to three sentences)	
What additional work needs to be completed prior to submission? e.g. pilot study, literature review (two to three sentences)	

Project Outcomes (Approach & Project Management)

Outcomes Category	Outcome	Activities that will achieve this outcome (Approach) e.g. survey, resource or website development, training, colloquium, roundtable	Potential usefulness of the outcome (value/need for project) List who will benefit (disciplines, some universities, entire sector) and how they will benefit	Dissemination of this outcome How will you involve or inform those who will benefit?
Project Materials Things you will produce e.g. resources, guidelines, research reports The project evaluator will need to view these				
Immediate benefits Things that will happen within the timeframe of the project, e.g. enhance institutional understanding, inform colleagues of issues etc The project evaluator will measure the success of these				
Long term benefits Things you hope will happen after the project ends, e.g. practices changed across the sector The project evaluator will consider these.				

Project Activities (Approach & Project Management)

[illegible]

Project Resourcing

What additional staff will need to be hired or reassigned to conduct the activities? e.g. project manager, research assistant, admin assistant, programmer etc.			
What other resourcing will be required to conduct the activities? e.g. office space incl desk & computer/phone/internet, travel, specialist software, facilitator for meetings etc.			
Would the university be obliged to continue support for the outcomes at the end of the grant period? If YES, what would be required?	Yes	No	
Are there likely to be any IP issues?	Yes No	If yes, briefly describe	

Outputs Resulting from the APPLICATION,

i.e. prior to the project commencing Applicants are encouraged to consider the types of publications that could arise from preparing the grant application

The team is aiming to publish:		
	Literature review/meta analysis Concept/statement of problem Sector survey Other (please specify)	Pilot study results Research methodology Document analysis
	Publication 1	Publication 2
Publication idea:		
Journal/Conference targeted for publication:		
Estimated timeframe for submission:		
Which collaborators will be co-authors:		

Peer, Colleague or Institutional Committee Feedback	
Project name and contact author:	
Project Outcomes and Rationale	
Approach	
Value/Need for Project	
Project Management	
Budget A detailed budget is not expected at the concept stage, feedback should aid development of the application Any other feedback	
Any other feedback	

This appendix contains templates rather than samples to encourage individuality amongst letter text in applications. Full text is provided for examples of finance paragraphs for letters of support as a standardised approach is acceptable for this section.

In the following appendices, a project has been invented to illustrate a range of project activities, including dissemination, and how these would be reflected in the budget, budget justification, timeline and letters of support. The budget process shows how an initial plan is modified to suit the grant program budget restrictions.

Notes: All names and university acronyms are fictitious. This worked example is provided to demonstrate processes and budgeting of activities. The OLT assesses each project submission on its merits, and the example cannot be interpreted as an ideal approach.

Example project:

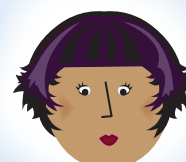
A project to investigate and document examples of good practice in laboratory education in Physics and Chemistry. Led by Dr J Smith from UAA (Melbourne), in conjunction with Dr S Xie from UBB (Sydney) and Associate Professor M Brown from UCC (Regional)

The project team will identify and collect examples of good practice from the literature, by working with their disciplinary scholar(s), and contacting OLT Fellows, Award and Citation winners in Chemistry and Physics. Examples will be collated into a database to be shared via a series of capital city forums, at which participants will select up to 6 to develop more fully as learning resources for the education of laboratory educators, with a particular focus on casual staff.

Planning the project

A: Desktop analysis of examples from literature, desktop identification of OLT/ALTC Fellows, Award and Citation winners, liaison with disciplinary scholars, collecting case study documentation from identified people where it does not exist in the literature, collating examples by themes, documenting examples, designing and producing website, organizing and running team meetings, organizing and running capital city forums, documenting forum feedback and producing recommendation list for full production, collect feedback on list, produce resources, organize test sites, use and evaluate use of resources, update resources as necessary, 1 year project report to OLT, final report to OLT, produce and distribute final report. Project evaluation and conference presentations embedded throughout.

Q: What work is involved?



Letter Template 1: Letter of Support - Lead Institution

[Institutional Letterhead]
[Date – position as per institutional letter format]
Ms Suzie Hewlett
General Manager
Office for Learning and Teaching
Level 10, 255 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Ms Hewlett,

Letter of Support: [Title of Grant Project]

I wish to advise that [Name of Institution] endorses the above project proposed for the OLT [name of grant scheme] [year]. The project will be led by [title/name/position of project leader], with additional team members [titles/names/positions].

This project aims to [insert project aims].

[Additional paragraph/s to include: how the project fits within the institution's aim and priorities, outline of benefits for the institution, names of partner institutions and how they enhance the project, expression of confidence in the project leader/s, mention of any high profile participants or supporting organisations].

[Finance paragraph to specify: agreement with project budget including time release for all staff, summary of budget items to be provided in kind].

[Conclusion: reiteration of why the institution wants to be involved or why the project is important]
Certification:

- I certify that the application: Meets the eligibility criteria as specified in the relevant 2013 program and operational information and application instructions
- Complies with the relevant 2013 program and operational information and application instructions, and if the application is successful [name of lead institution] agrees to abide by the terms of the funding agreement
- [Name of lead institution] will notify OLT if there are any changes in the project leader's circumstances which may impact on his/her eligibility to participate in, or ability to perform, the project subsequent to the submission of this proposal.

Signed:
DVC(A) or equivalent
Project Leader

Letter Template 2: Letter of Support - Partner Institution

[Institutional Letterhead]

[Date – position as per institutional letter format]

Ms Suzie Hewlett

General Manager
Office for Learning and Teaching
Level 10, 255 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Ms Hewlett,

Letter of Support: [Title of Grant Project]

I wish to advise that [Name of Institution] supports the above project proposed for the OLT [name of grant scheme] [year]. This project will be led by [title/name/position of project leader] of [Name of lead institution]. Our institution will be represented by [titles/names/positions].

This project aims to [insert project aims].

[Paragraph outlining benefits for the sector that will arise from the project]

[Additional paragraph/s to include: how the project fits within the institution's aim and priorities, outline of benefits for the institution, expression of confidence in leadership of lead institution and project leader, benefits of the project collaboration, other relevant details]

[Finance paragraph to specify: agreement with project budget including time release for all staff, summary of budget items to be provided in kind, note any items that will definitely not be paid for that are unspecified in the budget at the time of signature].

[Finance paragraph to specify: agreement with project budget including time release for all staff in the School, summary of budget items to be provided in kind by the school].

[Conclusion: reiteration of why the institution wants to be involved or why the project is important]

Certification:

I certify that the application:

- Meets the eligibility criteria as specified in the relevant 2013 program and operational information and application instructions
- Complies with the relevant 2013 program and operational information and application instructions, and if the application is successful [name of partner institution] agrees to abide by the terms of the funding agreement
- [Name of partner institution] will notify OLT if there are any changes in the team member/s' circumstances which may impact on his/her eligibility to participate in, or ability to perform, the project subsequent to the submission of this proposal.

Signed:
DVC(A) or equivalent
Team Member/s

Letter Template 5: Example finance paragraphs

These relate to the budget ([Appendix D](#)) and justification ([Appendix E](#)) for the worked example.

Lead Institution A - Full version

The time required for the project is acknowledged, and as [position], I agree to the time release of 20% of workload for Dr J Smith to undertake their role in the project. The [name of institution] will provide an in-kind contribution as laid out in the attached budget: half of the time release cost (at Academic Level B) for Dr Smith (\$12,240 in year 1/\$12,730 in year 2), office space, computer, internet and phone for the Project Manager/Research Assistant (\$5,160) and Dr Smith (\$1,416), on-costs above 28% for the PM/RA (\$1,375) and instructional designer (\$390), additional administrative support (\$2,072/\$2,155), videoconference meeting costs, software licenses required for the project (\$115), website hosting, web development (\$1,975/\$2,054), graphic art for the project (\$2000), all costs associated with the trial use of the resources at our institution, consumable costs to \$1000 and any conference attendance associated with presenting on the project.

The [name of institution] commits to hosting the project website for at least five years after the conclusion of the project.

Lead Institution A - Short version

The time required for the project is acknowledged, and as [position], I agree to the time release of 20% of workload for Dr J Smith to undertake their role in the project. The [name of institution] will provide an in-kind contribution as laid out in the attached budget.

Partner Institution B - Full version

The time required for the project is acknowledged, and as [position], I agree to the time release of 10% of workload for Dr S Xie to undertake their role in the project. The [name of partner institution] will provide an in-kind contribution as laid out in the attached budget: half of the time release cost (at Academic Level B) for Dr Xie (\$6,120 in year 1/\$6,365 in year 2), office space, computer, internet and phone for Dr Xie (\$708/\$722), videoconference meeting costs, all costs associated with the trial use of the resources at our institution, consumable costs to \$50, and any conference attendance associated with presenting on the project.

Partner Institution C – example where the final budget was not available prior to letter preparation

The time required for the project is acknowledged, and as [position], I agree to the time release of 10% of workload for Associate Professor M Brown to undertake their role in the project. The [Name of School] will provide the following in-kind contribution: half of the time release cost (at Academic Level B) for Associate Professor Brown (\$6,120 in year 1/\$6,365 in year 2), office space, computer, internet and phone for Associate Professor Brown (\$708/\$722), videoconference meeting costs, all costs associated with the trial use of the resources at our institution, consumable costs to \$50, and any conference attendance associated with presenting on the project.

We confirm [name of institution] will receive funds of \$6,120/\$6,365 for half the time release cost for Associate Professor Brown, and that all travel costs including transfers and per diems for face to face meetings and attendance at the forums will be met by the project.

An MS Excel version of this document is available for free – download from <http://dehub.edu.au/publications/books/>

This workbook is to assist you to detail your project expenses.

Click on each tab below to access each of the four worksheets. Some potential budget items are listed on each to prompt you. Add line items as needed. The format of each worksheet indicates the types of information that you need to supply to enable a finance officer to assist you in calculating your budget. Fill in as much information as you can & add further detail in explanatory notes column.

Please use in conjunction with OLT Program information, (Leadership and I&D, Section 9.10; Seed Projects, Section 7.8) and the Grant Application Handbook for Office of Learning and Teaching grants by James and McCormack (201) Part 8 and Sections 10.7 & [10.9.4](#).

Hint: Before you use this workbook

- *Save a copy.*
- *Then use “Save As” to save a new copy with a different name. Edit this new document.*
- *This ensures you will always have an original, unchanged workbook to refer back to for clarification.*



People working on the project	Institution	Position on Project	Employment Level	ALTC1						In kind					
				Year 1			Year 1			Year 1			Year 1		
				days per week	no of week	no of hours	days per week	no of week	no of hours	days per week	no of week	no of hours	days per week	no of week	no of hours
		Project leader													
		Partner Project leader													
		Partner Project leader													
		Partner Project leader													
		Partner Project leader													
		Partner Project leader													
		Project manager													
		Research assistant													
		Project Officer													
		Exerpts													
		Educational Developer													
		Instructional designer													

Operational Support Costs	OLT		In kind		Explanatory Notes
	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	Year 1	
Research assistance (= hrsx\$)					
Editing (= hrsx\$)					
Publication preparation (no of copies =)					
Consumables (postage, photocopying, scanning etc.)					
Computer for Project Manager	IN KIND ONLY				
Software licence on-line survey tool					
Software licence tool for qualitative data analysis					
Bibliographic software licence					
Software licence for quantitative data analysis					
Other software licence (for software specifically needed for this project)					
Teleconferencing/video-conference for monthly team meetings (=numberx\$200)					

	Why	Who	From	To	Flight	Car hire	Train	Month	No of days Accommodation	No of days Perdiem expenses	No of Taxis
YEAR 1: Travel					X to indicate						
YEAR 2: Travel											

In all the appendices, a project has been invented to illustrate a range of project activities, including dissemination, and how these would be reflected in the budget, budget justification, timeline and letters of support. The budget process shows how an initial plan is modified to suit the grant program budget restrictions.

Notes: All names and university acronyms are fictitious. This worked example is provided to demonstrate processes and budgeting of activities. The OLT assesses each project submission on its merits, and the example cannot be interpreted as an ideal approach.

Example project:

A project to investigate and document examples of good practice in laboratory education in Physics and Chemistry. Led by Dr J Smith from UAA (Melbourne), in conjunction with Dr S Xie from UBB (Sydney) and Associate Professor M Brown from UCC (Regional)

The project team will identify and collect examples of good practice from the literature, by working with their disciplinary scholar(s), and contacting OLT Fellows, Award and Citation winners in Chemistry and Physics. Examples will be collated into a database to be shared via a series of capital city forums, at which participants will select up to 6 to develop more fully as learning resources for the education of laboratory educators, with a particular focus on casual staff.

Planning the project



Q: What work is involved?



A: Desktop analysis of examples from literature, desktop identification of OLT/ALTC Fellows, Award and Citation winners, liaison with disciplinary scholars, collecting case study documentation from identified people where it does not exist in the literature, collating examples by themes, documenting examples, designing and producing website, organizing and running team meetings, organizing and running capital city forums, documenting forum feedback and producing recommendation list for full production, collect feedback on list, produce resources, organize test sites, use and evaluate use of resources, update resources as necessary, 1 year project report to OLT, final report to OLT, produce and distribute final report. Project evaluation and conference presentations embedded throughout.

Worked Example

This example should be read in conjunction with the example MS Excel spreadsheets available for free–download from <http://dehub.edu.au/publications/books/>

Step 1 – Researcher Workbook

Using OLT_Grants_Budget_Workbook.xlsx, a budget for the example project was developed. This is saved in: OLT_Grants_Budget_Workbook_Worked_Example.xlsx

This involved analysing the project activities to identify all the tasks to be done and ensure workload and/or specific budget was set aside for each. At this stage no distinction is made between funded and in kind contributions.

Step 2 – Budget draft 1

OLT_Grants_Budget_Worked_Example_v1.xlsx, was created by calculating specific values for each of the items in the Budget_Workbook_Worked_Example.xlsx. ATO values for hotel allowances and per diems were used to minimize the risk of disagreement amongst partner institutions. As is typical for this approach, the TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET (OLT) is over the \$220k limit. With the initial calculated total of \$247,027, about \$27k in savings must be found.

Items to consider for reduction are:

- Workload of Project Team members
- Workload of Project Manager/Research Assistant
- Team member travel to forums
- Workload of Instructional Designer

See the budget chapter in the Handbook for more detailed discussion planning options when the initial budget total is significantly over the program limit.

In the worked example, the single largest budget line is the Project Manager/Research Assistant, making it the first choice for reduction. Reducing the workload to 0.4 and the months in the first year to 11 reduces the Year 1 initial total of \$53,307 to \$39,092 and the Year 2 total of \$55,439 to \$44,351. Over the two years this reduces the calculated total budget to approximately \$216,148 – less than the \$220k maximum.

Step 3 - Double check items for accuracy and reasonableness

With a small amount to spare, and the need to round the total down or up to the nearest \$000, it is important to now consider all the remaining items and consider if they are realistic. In the worked

example, items to consider are:

- Editing and publication of final report
- Web development
- Project collateral
- Resources for capital city forums
- Subsidies for regional participants
- Instructional designer

In this instance the costs were considered reasonable and left as is.

Double check in kind support:

The project leader must check:

- In kind support that would be provided directly by the School/Cost centre for administrative support (1 hour per week); office space, computer, phone and internet for the project manager; and funds to make up the difference in on-costs will be available.
- In kind support that may be provided by other areas of the university such as web design (1 week each year) and graphic design for the final report and project collateral will be available.
- They have contacts at suitable capital city universities to provide a venue for a capital city workshop.

Step 4 – Rounding

The total for OLT grants must be rounded to the nearest \$000 as a result of correct addition of the line items. One (or more) line items must therefore be manually updated to provide a rounded total. In this instance the total could be rounded down by \$148 or up by \$852 (including the institutional levy). As rounding down line items is not feasible, items to realistically round up are required.

The following items were adjusted:

- An additional subsidized place was budgeted for the forums
- Stationery, both in-kind and budgeted was increased

Note that the total must be checked in the **Rounded** spreadsheet.

In all the appendices, a project has been invented to illustrate a range of project activities, including dissemination, and how these would be reflected in the budget, budget justification, timeline and letters of support. The budget process shows how an initial plan is modified to suit the grant program budget restrictions.

Notes: All names and university acronyms are fictitious. This worked example is provided to demonstrate processes and budgeting of activities. The OLT assesses each project submission on its merits, and the example cannot be interpreted as an ideal approach.

Example project:

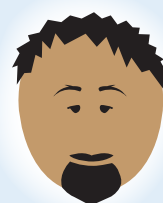
A project to investigate and document examples of good practice in laboratory education in Physics and Chemistry. Led by Dr J Smith from UAA (Melbourne), in conjunction with Dr S Xie from UBB (Sydney) and Associate Professor M Brown from UCC (Regional)

The project team will identify and collect examples of good practice from the literature, by working with their disciplinary scholar(s), and contacting OLT Fellows, Award and Citation winners in Chemistry and Physics. Examples will be collated into a database to be shared via a series of capital city forums, at which participants will select up to 6 to develop more fully as learning resources for the education of laboratory educators, with a particular focus on casual staff.

Planning the project

Q: What work is involved?

A: Desktop analysis of examples from literature, desktop identification of OLT/ALTC Fellows, Award and Citation winners, liaison with disciplinary scholars, collecting case study documentation from identified people where it does not exist in the literature, collating examples by themes, documenting examples, designing and producing website, organizing and running team meetings, organizing and running capital city forums, documenting forum feedback and producing recommendation list for full production, collect feedback on list, produce resources, organize test sites, use and evaluate use of resources, update resources as necessary, 1 year project report to OLT, final report to OLT, produce and distribute final report. Project evaluation and conference presentations embedded throughout.



Worked Example of Budget Justification

This example should be read in conjunction with the example MS Excel spreadsheets available for free download from <http://dehub.edu.au/publications/books/>

Budget Justification

A total of \$304,697 is needed to complete this project. OLT funding is requested for 71% (\$217,000) of the budget, and \$87,697 will be sourced from non-renumerated time contributions and in-kind support from the institutions at which the project team members are based and contributions of hardware and software from the lead and partner institutions.

Personnel: At UAA, as the lead institution, allowance has been made for time release at 20% of a Level B for backfilling for the Project Leader in each year (\$12,240 in the first year and \$12,730 in the second year from OLT and the same in-kind from UAA). Allowance has also been made for 10% time release for two project partners – Xie at UBB and Brown at UCC (\$6,120 in the first year and \$6,365 in the second year) and the same matched in-kind by the institution. These amounts are to be used for replacement of usual duties as appropriate to each individual to enable: consistent leadership within the lead university, supervision of project manager/research assistant as needed, collection and analysis of research data, facilitation of online discussion and the capital city forums, participation in documentation of examples, networking, development and review of the pilot curricula and organizing the associated trial and evaluation, drafting of reports, journal publications and conference papers, managing budget, and participating in the project evaluation as appropriate.

A Project Manager/Research Assistant (PM/RA) at 0.4 of FTE at HEW 7.5 is required for 23 months spread across the two years (\$39,092 in the first year and \$44,352 in the second year) with oncosts over 28% met by UAA. The PM/RA will support the project process by: initiating communications between participating universities, organising video conference meetings, identifying examples of good practice from the literature and other sources, collating and documenting the examples of good practice, updating the project website, disseminating information, and assisting with preparation of publications/reports. The School will provide additional administrative support in kind (\$2,072) for organising face-to-face meetings/travel/accommodation, and assisting with preparation of publications/reports.

Project Support: To ensure the network is built on strong relationships between the partners, a face to face meeting will be held in the first few months for which an allowance of \$1,066 has been made for travel and per diems. Ongoing meetings will be held by videoconference with all costs provide in-kind by the relevant institution. UAA will provide a computer, office space, and phone/internet for the PM/RA (\$5,160), as well as make a significant contribution toward consumables (\$1,000) with an allowance of \$874 requested from OLT. The partner institutions will contribute all costs of office space, computer, internet and phone calls for staff participation in the project as well as software licenses required for the project.

Project Activities: As a significant proportion of dissemination and communication about the project will be conducted online, UAA will contribute 1 week of web programming support each year (\$1,975/\$2,054). Printed material can make a highly effective contribution to dissemination, so UAA will contribute the time of a graphic artist (\$1000 each year) to ensure a professional logo, collateral and final report.

Capital city forums to be held in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth in each year will form a key part of the dissemination process. Costs for members of the project team (2 will attend each east coast forum, and the project leader only in Adelaide in Perth) is requested (\$7,629/\$7,782) for travel, accommodation and per diems. To encourage attendance by representatives of regional universities, an amount to subsidise attendance is requested (\$4,200 for 21 people each year). Catering for 30 people at each forum is also requested (\$3,000 each year). Venues will be provided in kind (\$1000 each year) by either the partner institutions or sourced through a supporting institution.

Development of exemplars into polished and useful learning resources will require additional assistance from an Instructional Designer (0.5 x HEW7.5 for 3 months) for which funds of \$11,088 are requested, with the balance of on-costs (\$390) provided in-kind by UAA.

Finally, all reference group meetings will be via videoconference, provided in-kind by the institutions, funds for an external evaluator (\$15,000) and for preparation of an appealing and engaging final report (\$2,550) are requested.

In all the appendices, a project has been invented to illustrate a range of project activities, including dissemination, and how these would be reflected in the budget, budget justification, timeline and letters of support. The budget process shows how an initial plan is modified to suit the grant program budget restrictions.

Notes: All names and university acronyms are fictitious. This worked example is provided to demonstrate processes and budgeting of activities. The OLT assesses each project submission on its merits, and the example cannot be interpreted as an ideal approach.

Example project:

A project to investigate and document examples of good practice in laboratory education in Physics and Chemistry. Led by Dr J Smith from UAA (Melbourne), in conjunction with Dr S Xie from UBB (Sydney) and Associate Professor M Brown from UCC (Regional)

The project team will identify and collect examples of good practice from the literature, by working with their disciplinary scholar(s), and contacting OLT Fellows, Award and Citation winners in Chemistry and Physics. Examples will be collated into a database to be shared via a series of capital city forums, at which participants will select up to 6 to develop more fully as learning resources for the education of laboratory educators, with a particular focus on casual staff.

Planning the project

Q: What work is involved?



A: Desktop analysis of examples from literature, desktop identification of OLT/ALTC Fellows, Award and Citation winners, liaison with disciplinary scholars, collecting case study documentation from identified people where it does not exist in the literature, collating examples by themes, documenting examples, designing and producing website, organizing and running team meetings, organizing and running capital city forums, documenting forum feedback and producing recommendation list for full production, collect feedback on list, produce resources, organize test sites, use and evaluate use of resources, update resources as necessary, 1 year project report to OLT, final report to OLT, produce and distribute final report. Project evaluation and conference presentations embedded throughout.



Project Timeline Sample 1: Simple Timeline

Time	Activities
Phase 1 – Project startup	
Jul – Sep 2013	Recruit Project Manager/Research Assistant Appoint Evaluator Initial face to face Project Team meeting Develop detailed project plan Develop detailed evaluation plan Initial Reference Group meeting
Phase 2 – Identify all possible case studies	
Sep 2013 – Mar 2014	Build project website Identify case studies Document case studies on website Develop database of stakeholders based on existing networks and websites Reference Group feedback
Apr 2014	Capital city forums to present documented cases and obtain input on final selection, supplementary resources to be developed, format, and preferred ongoing access Add participants to database of stakeholders
May – Jun 2014	Analyse input from forums; document for presentation to reference group and feedback from stakeholders Interim report to OLT
Phase 3 – Create learning resources	
Jul – Dec 2014	Develop selected case studies into sophisticated learning resources Plan ongoing hosting of learning resources and upkeep beyond the end of the project Reference Group feedback
Jan – Mar 2015	Circulate learning resources to stakeholders for use with S1 casual staff Collect feedback on resources
Apr – Jun 2015	Finalise learning resources Prepare printed materials Reference Group feedback Prepare and submit final report to OLT

Project Timeline Sample 2: More Detailed Timeline

Activities	Time
Phase 1 – Project startup	
Project startup	
- Recruit Project Manager/Research Assistant - Appoint Evaluator; develop evaluation plan - Raise all internal contracts - Develop detailed project plan	Jul – Aug 2013
Initial face to face Project Team meeting	Aug 2013
- Confirm project plan - Determine project team communication protocols and schedule team meetings	
Reference Group meeting	Sep 2013
Phase 2 – Case study identification and documentation	
Build project website and post:	Sep 2013
- Project plan - Evaluation plan - Invitation to register as stakeholder - Stakeholder communication plan	
Identify case studies and document on website	Sep 2013 – Mar 2014
Invite contacts from existing networks and people identified from websites to register as stakeholders	Oct 2013
Reference Group meeting	Mar 2014
Capital city forums	Apr 2014
- present documented cases - collect input on selection of exemplars, learning resources to be developed, format, and ongoing access - Add participants to database of stakeholders	
Analyse and document input from forums	May 2014
Present documentation to reference group	Jun 2014
Post revised documentation on website for additional stakeholder input	
Interim report to OLT	Jul 2014

Activities	Time
Phase 3 – Create and evaluate learning resources	
Conference presentation and workshop #1	Jul 2014
Develop selected case studies into sophisticated learning resources	Jul – Dec 2014
Plan ongoing hosting of learning resources and upkeep beyond the end of the project	Aug – Sep 2014
Reference Group meeting	Oct 2014
Conference presentation and workshop #2	Oct 2014
Call for formal test sites for learning resources	Oct – Dec 2014
Develop evaluation protocols for learning resources	Oct – Dec 2014
Make learning resources available	Jan 2015
Evaluate resources	Feb – Mar 2015
Phase 4 – Project finalization	
Finalise learning resources and distribution method	Apr 2015
Prepare printed materials as required	Apr 2015
Conduct summative evaluation	Apr 2015
Prepare evaluation report	May 2015
Reference Group meeting	May 2015
Prepare and submit final report to OLT	Jun 2015
Conference presentation and workshop #3	Jul 2015

Project Timeline Sample 3: Alternative Format

Activities	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15
Phase 1 – Project startup																									
Project startup: recruit PM/RA, appoint Evaluator, raise contracts, detailed project plan	■	■																							
Initial face to face Project Team meeting: confirm project plan, team communication protocols, meeting schedule		■																							
Reference Group meeting			■																						
Phase 2 – Case study identification and documentation																									
Build project website and post: project plan, evaluation plan, stakeholder registration, communication plan			■																						
Identify case studies and document on website			■	■	■	■	■	■																	
Invite contacts from existing networks and people identified from websites to register as stakeholders				■																					
Reference Group meeting									■																
Capital city forums: present cases, collect input on exemplar selection, learning resource types, format and ongoing access										■															
Analyse and document input from forums											■														
Present documentation to reference group											■														
Post revised documentation on website for additional stakeholder input											■														
Interim report to OLT													■												

Activities	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15
Phase 3 – Create and evaluate learning resources																									
Conference presentation and workshop #1																									
Develop selected case studies into sophisticated learning resources																									
Plan ongoing hosting of learning resources and upkeep beyond the end of the project																									
Reference Group meeting																									
Conference presentation and workshop #2																									
Call for formal test sites for learning resources																									
Develop evaluation protocols for learning resources																									
Make learning resources available																									
Evaluate resources																									
Phase 4 – Project finalization																									
Finalise learning resources and distribution method																									
Prepare printed materials if required																									
Conduct summative evaluation																									
Prepare evaluation report																									
Reference Group meeting																									
Prepare and submit final report to OLT																									
Conference presentation and workshop #3																									

1 *Not a new or original idea*

List which of your ideas are new and original.

Check that, in your proposal, you have clearly pointed out all the new and original ideas.

2 *Diffuse, superficial or unfocused research plan*

Have you clearly outlined the central aspects of your research plan?

Have you clearly distinguished the essential aspects from the incidental or secondary aspects?

3 *Insufficient knowledge of published relevant work*

Have you done a comprehensive literature search for this research topic?

Have you included the important findings of researchers other than yourself and co-workers?

Is your literature review critical rather than just descriptive?

4 *Lack of demonstrated experience in the essential methodology*

Does the description of your feasibility studies or your previous research demonstrate that you can carry out all of the proposed scope of work?

5 *Future directions uncertain*

Do you describe what you will do in the later phases if early phases don't work?

Do you describe what applications/developments will stem from the results?

Do you describe how other researchers and educators can use your findings?



6

Reasoning in experimental approach questionable

Have you explicitly stated the hypothesis to be tested or issue/problem to be addressed?

Check for circular logic in your argument.

Is every step of reasoning actually written down in the text, or have you left out some steps in the approach, hoping the reviewer will figure them out?

Have you used a recognised methodology and referenced it?



7

Rationale unacceptable

Have you explicitly stated the fundamental reasons why this research will provide an answer to the hypothesis/research question/problem situation?



8

Amount of work unrealistic

Can the proposed work actually be carried out in the stated time and with the resources listed in the proposal?

Have you made allowances for: inflationary costs, sick leave and holidays for personnel?

Is there sufficient time allowed to present results at meetings and to write papers for publications?



9

Insufficient experimental detail

Could another competent, experienced researcher successfully carry out this work by following the description of the methodology that you have provided in the proposal?



10

Approach uncritical

Have you discussed anticipated problems and your plans for dealing with them?

Have you been fair in your presentation of ideas and studies of other researchers in the field—both those with whom you disagree and those with whom you agree?

[Based on W. A. Tacker Jr. (Research Review, May 1991, Vol 4. No. 5)]

