

NLN Doctoral Research Submission Guidelines

This document provides specific directions for submitting an NLN Doctoral Research proposal. The document includes an overview of the proposal requirements followed by specific directions for each required item.

Overview of Required Materials and Files

An NLN Doctoral Research proposal must be submitted as a blind review file, including a demographic data form. **The file must be submitted in Microsoft Word format using either .doc or .docx as file extension.** All proposal-related documents, such as support letters created in PDF format or budgets created in Excel, must be embedded or inserted into the Microsoft Word format files.

Proposal Formatting

- The proposal narrative must not exceed 15 pages and must be double spaced with one-inch margins on all sides
- The narrative font should be Garamond and no smaller than 12 point.
- References must be presented using the APA 6th edition (American Psychological Association) citation style.
- All files must be submitted in Microsoft Word format (.doc or .docx)

Proposals not conforming to these formatting guidelines will be returned without review.

Blind Review File

All NLN Doctoral Research proposals are submitted for blind review by carefully selected experts in nursing education research. This file is the file that is sent to these experts. **The file name of this file must be labeled: title of your proposal_blind review.** For example, the file name would be: "**The Impact of Simulation Based Learning on Nursing Students_blind review**". Please be sure that **NO IDENTIFYING INFORMATION** appears in the proposal file or file name. Throughout this document, this file is referred to as the *blind review file*.

The order and formatting of the materials included in the Blind Review File should be as follows:

- Title page with researcher's name and affiliation **removed**.
- Proposal Narrative (15 page limit, double spaced, includes abstract) with all identifying information **removed**.
- References
- Appendices with all identifying information **removed**.
- An appendix may state that IRB approval has been requested or obtained but the actual IRB documentation should not be included.
- An appendix **MUST** include documentation of successful completion of proposal defense.

The application **WILL BE DISQUALIFIED** if the NLN is notified by a blind reviewer that the Blind Review File contains identifying information.

All grant applications must be submitted electronically by the date and time included on the call for proposals.

Specific Requirements of Submitted Materials

Title page: The title page for the Blind Review File should include the title of the study, the [NLN Priorities in Nursing Education Research](#) most relevant to the study, and date anticipated for completion of the research.

Proposal Narrative: The proposal should include the following sections (limited to 15 pages; must be typed in double space, Garamond font and no smaller than 12-point type with one-inch margins on all sides):

- Abstract (limited to 1500 characters or approximately 250 words)
- **Advancing the Science of Nursing Education** (30%)
 - Purpose of the study with description of direct linkage to [NLN Research Priorities in Nursing Education](#)
 - Background to support the need for the study to advance nursing education science
 - Review of relevant literature
 - Significance of the study to nursing education (e.g., innovativeness, outcomes proposed, impact anticipated, potential to improve nursing education, advancing the science)
 - Discussion of theoretical, conceptual, or philosophical basis for the study
- **Methodological Soundness** (50%)

- Research design
- Sampling approach: selection, size, recruitment and retention (quantitative, e.g., power analysis; qualitative, e.g., data saturation)
- [Diversity](#) of sample (or lack thereof clearly justified)
- Data collection protocol
 - Describes plans to maintain consistency amount multiple data collection sites, if appropriate
- Instrumentation (quantitative, e.g., reliability and validity; qualitative, e.g., researcher as instrument, trustworthiness). If appropriate, a copy of the instruments or a detailed description with sample questions may be inserted in the appendices.
- Data analysis procedures
 - Appropriateness to study's purpose and research questions
- Protection of human subjects and plan for seeking IRB approval (or lack thereof clearly justified)
- **Presentation (20%)**
 - Plans for dissemination of results
 - Timetable for all project activities, including feasibility of completing the study in two years or less
 - Other
 - Cohesiveness and coherency
 - Clarity of writing

Note: The 15-page proposal narrative limit does NOT include the Title Page, References, and Appendices.

Budget: A budget is not required for NLN Doctoral Research awards.

References: References are not part of the 15-page limit for the body of the proposal. Only list resources cited in the proposal narrative. References must be presented using the [APA citation style](#).

Appendices: Appendices should include the following.

- **Documentation of successful proposal defense.** University-specific dissertation/DNP research approved proposal must be documented with an official document.
- **Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval letter:** see details below.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval: The file should include IRB approval letter, if applicable. Please do not submit the entire IRB approval. If the proposed methodology used in the research excludes the need for IRB approval, this should be clearly stated including the reason such approval is not required. Submit IRB letter as an appendix or include plans to obtain IRB approval in the proposal. Some universities and health care centers require that the dissertation chair be listed on the IRB form as the PI. In these cases, it is acceptable for the dissertation chair to be listed on the IRB form as the PI instead of the graduate student. In this situation, submit the IRB letter with a statement that this is university or health care center policy. **If selected for an NLN Doctoral Research award, funds will be distributed directly to the doctoral student after receipt of IRB approval documentation.**

Demographic Data Form: submit with blind review file.

Identifying Information: The blind review file should not include information that could identify the researcher. Therefore, the PI should describe, rather than name, specific institutions in the proposal. For example, a proposal might state “the study will take place at a large urban university located in an academic medical center.”

Dissertation Research: If the research is a dissertation proposal, the overview or university-specific dissertation approved process must be documented with a letter of support from the dissertation chair. This letter of support should explain the role of the dissertation chair in conducting this research. While the dissertation chair may be listed as the PI on university documents, the doctoral student is listed as the PI on the NLN proposal and related documents.