

NLN Research Grant Submission Guidelines

This document provides specific directions for submitting an NLN Research in Nursing Education Grant 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 Research in Nursing Education Grant proposal must be submitted as two complete files (a *comprehensive file* and a *blind review file*). **The two files must be uploaded as PDF files.** The budget must be upload using the [NLN Research Grant Budget Template and Modification Form](#) (XLSX). It should not be within either PDF file. All proposal-related documents, such as support letters, must be converted into PDF files.

Proposal Formatting

- The proposal narrative **must not exceed 20 pages** and must be double spaced with one-inch margins on all sides (does not include references, appendices, IRB approval)
- The narrative font should be Garamond and no smaller than 12 point.
- References must be formatted using the APA 7th edition (American Psychological Association) citation style.
- All files must be uploaded in PDF format.

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

Comprehensive Review File

The comprehensive review file includes all application materials including the biosketch for the Principal Investigator (PI), letters of support, and the full proposal narrative. **The file name for this file must be labeled: PI's last name and first initial_comprehensive.** For example, a proposal submitted by a researcher named Jane Smith would be: “**SmithJ_ comprehensive**”. Throughout this document, this file is referred to as the *comprehensive file*.

The order of the materials included in the Comprehensive Review File should be as follows:

1. Title page
2. Proposal Narrative (20-page limit, double-spaced, including abstract)
3. References cited
4. Appendices
5. Support letters
6. Consultants' letters
7. IRB approval and informed consent (See page 6)
8. Instruments/Tools
9. [Qualifications of the principal investigator](#)
10. [Bio sketches](#) of PI, co-PI, and consultants

Blind Review File

All NLN Research in Nursing Education Grant 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**". Throughout this document, this file is referred to as the *blind review file*.

*** Please be sure that **NO identifying information** appears in the proposal file or file name.

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

1. Title page with investigator's name and affiliation **removed**.
2. Proposal Narrative (20-page limit, double spaced, includes abstract) with any identifying information **removed**.
3. References – **please note that these should be identical to the references submitted with the Comprehensive Review File.** The only exception being if you are citing your own work within the narrative, for example, (Anonymous, 2022), then you should blind the publication in the reference list as well.
4. An appendix may state that support letters have been obtained but the actual support letters should not be included.

The grant application **WILL BE DISQUALIFIED** if the NLN is notified by a reviewer that the Blind Review File contains identifying information (more details on page 6).

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

Specific Requirements of Submitted Materials

Title page: The title page for both the Comprehensive and Blind Review Files should include the title of the study, the NLN Priorities in Nursing Education Research most relevant to the study, dates on which the study will begin and end, and the total amount of funding requested. In addition, the Comprehensive Review File should include the name, credentials, and affiliation of the PI.

Proposal Narrative: The proposal should include the following sections (limited to 20 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** (40% of final score)
 - 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 with clear linkage and relevance to research (include visual diagram if applicable)
- **Methodological Soundness** (50% of final score)
 - Research design
 - Sampling approach: selection, size, recruitment and retention (quantitative, e.g., power analysis; qualitative, e.g., data saturation)
 - Diversity of sample including statistics and inclusion (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, interview guide, trustworthiness). A copy of the instruments or a detailed description with sample questions should be inserted in the appendices.
 - Data analysis procedures
 - Appropriateness to study's purpose and research questions
 - If simulation, add a clear description of the intervention and debriefing.
 - Address sustainability of study
 - Protection of human subjects and plan for seeking IRB approval (or lack thereof clearly justified)
 - Project Diagram/Work Plan – visual diagram of the protocol
 - Timetable for all project activities, including feasibility of completing the study in two years or less
- **Budget** (more details below)
- **Presentation** (10% of final score)
 - Cohesiveness and coherency
 - Clarity of writing
 - Depth and breadth of thought
 - Logical Flow
 - Format – proper APA format

Note: The 20-page proposal narrative limit does NOT include the Title Page, Budget, References, and Appendices.

Budget: The budget is NOT part of the 20-page body of the proposal. You must download and use the [NLN Research Grant Budget Template and Modification Form](#) available on the [NLN website](#). Allowable maximum grant is **\$30,000**.

- **Allowable Expenses include:**
 - Staff to assist with data collection, data processing, and/or data analysis. List the responsibilities for each individual during the project, indicate the total hours to be worked, and note the per-hour rate. If applicable for the university, fringe benefits should be included in the budget.
 - *Investigator payment:* The Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator(s) have the option to either 1) request **instructional release time up to a maximum of \$5,000** for one semester OR 2) request a **stipend up to a maximum of \$5,000** for the grant period (if there is a co-investigator, the \$5,000 may be split between the PI and the co-investigator, e.g., \$2,500 for PI and \$2,500 for Co-I).
 - The *stipend* is not to be used as a replacement for any part of the PI's salary at the institution. It can be processed in your financial system as salary, but the researcher must receive the full stipend in addition to their full university salary. Many financial systems require that fringe benefits be paid on ALL compensation. If that is the case, the fringe benefits incurred because of the stipend must be paid from the stipend. On your submitted budget, the \$5,000 should be listed as a stipend and the amount paid as fringe benefits should be noted and subtracted from the \$5,000 total.
 - The intent of the *instructional release monies* is to acknowledge the time that is involved in conducting the research as well as some universities policies on stipends.
 - Cost of copyright permission for instruments.
 - Printing of required documents.
 - Travel to data collection sites.
 - *Dissemination of findings:* **Up to a maximum of \$4,000** may be included to cover registration fees or other costs related to presenting the study findings at an appropriate conference (specify the conference) and **up to a maximum of \$2,000** for peer-reviewed open access journal publication (specify the journal).
 - Other similar costs associated with the research.
 - 10% overhead or indirect costs.
- **Non-allowable expenses include:**
 - The NLN research grants are intended to promote and support the development of evidence for nursing education, and not to endorse specific products and/or services. The NLN will not consider grant applications that have the effect of verifying the effectiveness of specific products or to promote specific products.
 - Durable equipment (e.g., computers, patient simulators). An exception can be made if the budget justification demonstrates that the purchase of innovative durable equipment is germane to completing the research.
 - Salary for the PI or co-investigators.
 - Office or space rental, utilities, maintenance, taxes, or other similar costs.

References: References are not part of the 20-page limit for the body of the proposal. List all resources cited in the proposal narrative and, if appropriate, additional resources used to develop the proposal and plan the study. References must be presented using the [APA citation style](#).

Appendices: Appendices should include the following.

- **Instruments and data collection tools:** a copy of each instrument/tool or a detailed description with sample questions should be inserted in the appendices.
- **Description of partnerships:** When appropriate, the appendix should include a brief description of partnerships required to complete the research. These include any partnership arrangements with a novice researcher, as well as partnership arrangements with transdisciplinary, international, multi-site studies.
- **Letter(s) of support:** A letter of support from the dean (or chairperson) of the PI's school must be included to demonstrate that the institution is supporting the research. If the dean or chairperson is the PI or co-PI, the letter of support could be from the next level in the administrative structure. Signed letters of support from official representatives on official stationery of all cooperating agencies, if appropriate, should also be included.
- **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 application. 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 the IRB letter as an appendix or include plans to obtain IRB approval in the proposal narrative. If the research is a student's dissertation, 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. Please note, if IRB status will not be determined until after the proposal deadline, grant applicants must still include a statement with plans to notify NLN staff of IRB status before funding is received.

NLN Membership Number: One of the benefits of NLN institutional membership for educational institutions is individual membership for all faculty members. Grant applicants must use their individual membership numbers, **not** the member number for their institution. To find your individual member ID number, visit: <https://www.nln.org/membership/community/find-your-nln-id>. If you cannot find your ID number, email membership@nln.org. Faculty who are not members as a benefit of their institution can apply for *individual membership* at: <https://www.nln.org/membership/community/membershipcategories-and-benefits/individual>. Doctoral students, who are not covered through agency membership, please contact research@nln.org.

Bio sketches of PI, Co-PI, and consultants: Each individual [biosketch form](#) is limited to four pages. Available on the [NLN website](#).

Identifying Information: The blind review file should not include information that could identify the researcher. Therefore, the PI should describe, rather than name, a specific institution(s) 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 proposal and other required documents.