

***INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT***

***2006-2007
RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM
REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS***

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This Request for Research Proposals (RFP) contains three sections:

- Section I Research in Human Performance Technology
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SECTION I: RESEARCH AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE TECHNOLOGY

The practice of performance improvement draws from diverse fields such as social science, psychology, communications and information, organizational design and development, instructional systems, and many others. Performance improvement is oriented toward the application of knowledge, practice, and theory to improve the performance of individuals, organizations, and their external impact. Because performance improvement is so encompassing, we also embrace research from diverse fields as they apply to the systems with which we are working. However, there is much research still to be done within our field.

Topics Appropriate for Funding in the 2006-2007 ISPI Research Grant Program

ISPI is interested in awarding grants for research related to performance improvement. Such research may include, but is not limited to, investigations that contribute to the understanding, discovery, application, and/or validation of performance technology principles, theoretical underpinnings, and/or practices.

To promote the application of sound research, preference will be given to either:

1. Dissertations that are near completion which will extensively elaborate on the application of its findings to real-life performance problems or opportunities. This may take the form of a rigorous, yet practitioner-friendly, report of how the findings were applied in an authentic setting, the results achieved, the obstacles encountered, and recommendations for future practice.
2. Applications of previously conducted research findings (conducted by applicant or other individual). This may take the form of a rigorous, yet practitioner-friendly, report of how the findings were applied in an authentic setting, the results achieved, and the obstacles encountered and further recommendations for future practice.

Those individuals interested in submitting a proposal are strongly encouraged to refer to the case study publication guidelines proposed by Cassidy & Medsker (2004). The criteria outlined in this editorial article will be included in the overall criteria used to judge the appropriateness of proposals, and later, the final reports.

The research used for these applications does not have to be directly related to performance improvement. Research from related fields can also be used, provided they are being applied to solve performance problems or take advantage of performance opportunities.

Consideration will also be given to original research, the importance of which is of great value to the performance improvement field. Of particular interest here would be non-training interventions. Any research approach (e.g. quantitative, qualitative, and/or meta-analytic/integrative research methods) appropriate for the variables being studied are acceptable.

Total funding available is \$12,000 with individual awards typically ranging from \$1,000 to \$4,000. Each award will be funded in two installments. An initial payment of 50% of the funded amount will be made at the start of the project, and the remainder will be paid upon delivery of the final report, which will be in the form

of a manuscript ready for publication in either the *Performance Improvement Journal* or *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, as appropriate.

Responsibilities of Researchers who are Awarded Funding

ISPI Research Grant Award recipients will be expected to complete the following activities:

1. Deliver quarterly status reports until project is complete. These reports will include:
 - a. current status - progress made to date, milestones achieved
 - b. planned activity during next quarter
 - c. changes to research plan
 - d. expense report showing how grant money has been spent to date.
2. Provide a final report to ISPI. The final report will be in the form of a manuscript ready for publication. ISPI will have the right to use the materials included in the final report for a variety of purposes, and will acknowledge the researchers if and when it uses those materials.
3. Disseminate the results of the funded research project at the next ISPI annual conference, ISPI journals, and/or other ISPI publications and conferences. All presentations and publications based on the research should acknowledge that the work was funded, in part or in whole, by ISPI.

Deadlines for Proposal Submission and Grant Announcements

- Proposals Due: July 14, 2006
- Awards Announced: September 4, 2006
- Announcement of awards will be made to proposal first authors and will be reported in official ISPI publications.

SECTION II: GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING RESEARCH PROPOSALS

To evaluate proposals that have the most potential for success and the potential to return valuable information to the field of Human Performance Technology, we require that you submit a plan that describes:

A. Proposals for the Application of Research:

- Description of the Performance Problem or Opportunity. Clearly state the problem and the context for the application of the selected body of research.
- Literature Review Summary. Summarize the relevant research and practices. Describe in more detail the specific studies upon which you will base your application.
- Methods and Timeline. Clearly state the tools, methods, resources and time you will use to conduct this project
- Anticipated Findings and Implications. Clearly state the potential implications of this project. How will this affect future practice and research in the field? Why is it this project important and to whom?
- Proposed Budget. Provide a spreadsheet detailing anticipated expenditures for the project.
- References. List all references cited throughout your proposal, in APA format.

B. Proposals for Original research:

- Research Question. Clearly state the problem you plan to investigate.
- Literature Review Summary. Summarize the state of current knowledge and practice in the field.

- Research Method/Plan and Timeline. Clearly state the tools and methods you will use to conduct the research and the proposed timeline.
- Anticipated Findings and Implications. Clearly state the potential application(s) of the knowledge gained through the proposed research
- Proposed Budget. Provide a spreadsheet detailing anticipated expenditures for the project.
- References. List all references cited throughout your proposal, in APA format.

Proposal Content

Below is a more detailed description of each section of the research proposal. Include only the items that are that are relevant for your type of proposal (either Application or Original Research). Use APA style throughout.

1. Title Page (all proposals)

Include the following: proposal title, running head, author name, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, fax number, and email address.

2. Abstract, maximum 120 words (all proposals)

Provide a brief, comprehensive summary of the content of the proposal. This is the most important paragraph in your proposal. If conducting an application of previously conducted research, summarize the performance problem or opportunity, your planned methods for applying relevant research to address the performance issue(s), anticipating findings and implications. If conducting original research, summarize the research question, the situation (from the literature review), research method, anticipated findings, and anticipated application and/or implication.

3a. Description of the Performance Problem or Opportunity, maximum one page (for research application only)

Clearly describe (a) what is the performance situation that will be the context for the application of previously conducted research; (b) the rationale for why this situation is important to the field, and appropriate for funding through the ISPI Research Grant Program, and (c) the value this project will have on future practice and research in the Performance Improvement field.

3b. Research Question, maximum one page (for original research only)

Clearly label and state the following: (a) the question(s) you propose to research, (b) the rationale for why the research question is appropriate for funding through the ISPI Research Grant Program, and (c) the application value of the anticipated findings to the field of Performance Improvement.

4. Literature Review Summary, maximum five pages (all proposals)

Conduct a diligent review and critical inquiry of professional research and development literature related to the research question or performance issue. In this section, clearly and concisely summarize the results of the literature review, describing what is already known relevant to your research question and what remains unknown or inadequately defined. Use APA style for all references cited.

5a. Application Method/Plan and Timeline, maximum four pages (for research application only)

Begin this section by stating and defining the general approach and specific methods you plan to use in your application. Then briefly justify and described the proposed approach, clarifying the reasons for your selection. Include the following brief sub-steps:

- a. Participants/Stakeholders to be involved
- b. Factors you (a) plan to impact, and (b) will use to impact something else. How will you measure whether these have been (or have not been) impacted as expected?
- c. Instruments, if any, that you will use to collect data and the sources for your data
- d. Methods for data collection (e.g. document reviews, observations, interviews, etc.)
- e. Tools for describing the data observed/collected
- a. Timeline (such as a Gantt chart) showing the estimated duration of each activity of the project. This timeline can be updated in quarterly reports that will be filed by award recipients.

5b. Research Method/Plan and Timeline, maximum four pages (for original research only)

Begin this section by stating and defining the method(s) you plan to use in your research. Then, briefly justify and describe the proposed approach, clarifying the reason(s) why you are using the research method(s) planned. Include the following six brief sub-sections that describe the:

- a. Subjects/participants to be studied (if applicable)
- b. Variables you will measure or study and how you will measure or code those variables
- c. Instruments that you will use to collect data or the sources for your data
- d. Methods for data collection
- e. Methods for data analysis
- d. Timeline (such as a Gantt chart) showing the estimated duration of each activity of the project. This timeline can be updated in quarterly reports that will be filed by award recipients.

6. Anticipated Findings and Implications, maximum one page (all proposals)

Describe the anticipated outcomes and implications of the results of your proposed project.

7. Draft Budget (no page limit)

Prepare a spreadsheet detailing anticipated expenditures for the project.

These types of expenses will be considered:

- Labor (Professional, Clerical, and/or Consultants)
- Materials and Supplies
- Other (equipment rental, printing, search services, etc.)

These types of expenses will not be funded:

- Travel
- Conference Attendance
- Equipment
- Institutional Overhead.

8. References of Literature Cited in the Proposal (no page limit)

Include a reference section that lists all of the references cited in your proposal. Use APA style for the reference section as well as for in-text citations.

SECTION III: SUMMARY REQUIREMENTS FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS**Ensure that your proposal contains the following eight sections:**

1. Title Page
2. Abstract (maximum 120 words)
3. Research Question; or Description of the Performance Problem or Opportunity (maximum one page)
4. Literature Review Summary (maximum five pages)
5. Methods/Plan and Timeline (maximum four pages)
6. Anticipated Findings and Implications (maximum one page)
7. Proposed Budget (maximum one page)
8. References (no page limit).

Additional Formatting Notes

- Use APA style for all page formatting, reference citations, and for further information on the content of each section in the proposal.
- Include running head and page number in heading of all pages.
- Double-space text on all pages.
- Use one-inch margins (or similar dimensions if submitted on A4 sized paper).
- Use Times New Roman font, no smaller than 11pt
- Adhere to the stated maximum lengths for each section in your proposal. The ISPI Research Committee will not review proposals longer than a total of 14 pages, not including the Reference section.

Submission Deadline

Submissions must be received via email no later than **July 14, 2006**.

Send Submissions To

Please save your proposal in Rich Text Format, attach it to an email message and send to iguerra@wayne.edu, with "ISPI Research Grant Proposal" in the subject line.

Questions

Please send all inquiries directly to the Research Committee Chair, Ingrid Guerra-López, PhD, iguerra@wayne.edu

References

Cassidy, J & Medsker, K. (2004). Case Studies. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, 17(4) pp. 3-4.