

SPORTING INJURIES COMMITTEE



RESEARCH & INJURY PREVENTION SCHEME

GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH GRANTS



Purpose of the grant proposal

The purpose of a grant proposal is to convince the Committee that:

- *You have a promising area of investigation, the outcome of which will be of benefit to the sporting community.*
- *The research has not been done before or at least extends what has been done before and you are cognisant of the literature in the field.*

The writing of the proposal

Aims and Objectives

(approximately half a page)

Briefly summarise the main aims of the research – what you are measuring and why. If there is a specific hypothesis give it here. Otherwise state what aspect of sports injuries you are investigating. For example, it may be an investigation of the conditions under which injuries occur, an investigation of epidemiological factors (incidences of outcomes or practices in specified groups such as age groups, genders or nationalities) or an investigation of the effectiveness of redemption or avoidance strategies. State why your data is expected to be important in understanding and/or its significance for sport in general or significance mainly for a particular sport.

Background

(approximately two pages)

Give the reasoning or preliminary observations which led you to consider doing this piece of research. Give the major factual material which provides a rationale for your investigation. Describe other studies in the area which provide a background to yours. This should include overseas studies on the same topic. It is always a matter of judgment to decide what to include here. It is critical to show that you know what has been done and are building on that or

investigating it in an Australian context and not just “reinventing the wheel”. Apart from putting what you are doing into context the literature is important in providing you with good ideas and alerting you to possible factors which may be confounded with the factors you think you are investigating. Such confounding may make interpretation difficult if you do not eliminate or control for them. The literature also suggests methods of measurement and of analysis. For all these reasons it is critical in a grant proposal that you demonstrate familiarity with the literature. However, the literature cited must be to the point. Do not discuss previous work that is not at least reasonably directly related to your topic or methods. A review of the entire literature in the field is not required.

It may be that there is very little literature relevant to what you propose to do. If that is the case say so but give some evidence that that is the case.

References

List any references cited in your proposal with author, date, title, journal, volume and page numbers.

Methods and Procedures

(approximately two pages to three pages);

Here you should give the details of the overall strategy and particular techniques to be employed. The following is a guideline of what should be in this section although it is not necessarily exhaustive.

Subjects of the study

What group or groups will you be studying? What characteristics must they have or not have? How will you select them?

Measurement

What are you going to do? What factors will be varied? What outcomes will be measured and how?

If a survey is to be carried out what will its basic format be and what form will the questions take? (eg Likert scale; check-list) How will questions be selected and trialled? How will the survey be administered? What will you do to maximise the response rate. To what group do you want to generalise the results and how will you ensure sampling from that group? How will you deal with possible biases in the kind of people who choose to respond?

- *The methods you propose to use are scientifically appropriate for the investigation and will allow you to interpret the results in a non-ambiguous way.*
- *You have enough training and experience in research to make you aware of the factors which must be controlled and the precautions which must be taken in the day to day conduct of the research and in its analysis.*

NOTE: Committee members cannot be expected to take any of these requirements on faith. The onus is on the applicant to convince them.

If the data to be collected is epidemiological (incidences of outcomes among various groups) what other factors have you measured to look at possible interactions (joint causality of more than one factor)? eg sex or age or weight.

Control

If you are comparing two groups or the same group on different occasions how will you ensure that they are not different on some irrelevant factor which may be having an effect on your outcome measurements? If you are looking at prevention or redemption techniques how can you be sure that it is the factor you are investigating that is producing any effect you observe rather than something else that goes along with it (is “confounded” with it) such as the venue, time of day weather conditions etc? Do you plan to use a control group?

Results

How will the data be analysed? What statistical techniques will be used?

Investigators

List the major investigators and provide details of their current position and their role in the project. Include a one page curriculum vitae for each investigator giving highlights of career, relevant experience (especially research experience) and major publications (no more than ten). There should preferably not be more than three investigators. Indicate who will manage the project as a whole and each aspect of it.

NOTE: *It is a strict requirement of the Sporting Injuries Committee that all investigators must sign off the application for a grant.*

Associate Investigators

These are people who are not responsible for the project but who have agreed to give specialist advice. Briefly describe their qualifications and role.

Co-operation with relevant bodies

Indicate which sporting or other organisations from which you will need co-operation and how you propose to get that co-operation.

Budget

Provide a list of budget items with costs. Separately list personnel and supplies. Personnel should be listed by position. The supplies category also includes stationery, postage and other small miscellaneous items which should be listed.

Budget Justification

Personnel

Provide details as to duties associated with each position and state why the position is necessary for the project. State whether full-time or part-time. Give proposed duration of employment. If the person to be employed is already known provide name and qualifications.

Equipment

As a matter of Committee policy, grants will not be provided to purchase equipment. Rental costs may be considered and should be listed under supplies.

Supplies

Briefly justify any supplies listed.

Overheads

Find out from your institution whether any overhead costs are charged on external grants. (Some institutions charge to defray any costs of the research borne by the institution). List these and attach your institution's guidelines with respect to such matters.

Ethical Approval

Normally some form of ethical approval is required by an institution for any research which uses human subjects. Indicate what procedures you will go through to obtain such approval if you are part of an institution which has such procedures. If you are not part of an institution you will have to satisfy the Sporting Injuries Committee that:

- people participating in your research have given informed consent as to what they will be required to do as well as consent to the use of any information about them; and
- that you will observe confidentiality by not identifying specific individuals and organisations in reporting your results and in making them available to other agencies or individuals. You should also make this clear to those participating.

Time frame of the Research

You should provide the Committee with both the total time the research will take and a plan of the research. You should say what sequence you will follow in carrying out the various stages of the research and estimate as closely as possible the time you expect each stage to take. (eg organising venues and subjects, preparing materials, taking measurements or making observations, analysing results, writing up results).

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