# Laerdal Medical Grant Writing Guide

An engaging manual for the medical education community on how to write and apply for grants.

## INTRODUCTION

Writing grants is not an elusive skill. Anyone in the healthcare industry who understands human patient simulators can navigate the grant writing landscape. Resources are abundant; a quick online search for “grant proposals” or “grant applications” will lead you to numerous valuable materials. So, don’t hesitate to dive into the grant application process. This is, an intro to grant writing for funding related to Laerdal Medical’s Human Patient Simulation. This information is widely accessible and should become an essential part of your skill set.

Grants are essentially funding gifts from external sources designated for specific purposes. These funds do not require repayment, but most grant providers expect to see some measurable outcomes from their contributions. The success of obtaining grant funding hinges on your clarity regarding your objectives and reasoning. You must be prepared to address questions such as:

- Why choose simulation over alternative methods?
- What are the actual costs involved?
- What outcomes do you anticipate from implementing simulation?

A successful grant proposal should align with the values and objectives of the granting body or individual. Take the time to ensure that your simulation project’s beliefs and goals resonate with those of the organization or individual you are seeking funding from.

Conduct thorough research! Understand the objectives of the funding agency. If the agency is focused on enhancing healthcare, demonstrate how simulation training equips healthcare providers with specific skills that lead to improved patient care. If the agency aims to promote technological advancements in healthcare, connect the use of simulation to the broader adoption of technology in patient care or skill transfer.

Familiarize yourself with the personnel at the funding agency. Reach out to technical advisors or grant staff with your inquiries. Share your ideas and explore the types of support they can offer. Asking for tips or advice before submitting a proposal can foster a beneficial relationship.
Be aware of the eligibility criteria and other requirements for each grant application you submit. Ensure you possess the necessary credentials, affiliations, experience, and purpose aligned with the grant you are pursuing.

Most grant providers require applications from organizations rather than individuals. Pay close attention to the available funding amount, allowable purposes, grantee qualifications (i.e., you), award terms, duration, matching funds requirements, and whether indirect funding is permitted.

Indirect funds cover overhead costs and may be treated as a “tax” by your institution’s administration or grant office. Many funding agencies do not cover indirect funds. Accuracy, precision, and completeness in your proposal are crucial—never leave fields blank; if certain requested information does not apply to your application, indicate “N/A”.

Before you start, reflect on your motivation and mission. Approach your grant writing with the belief that someone is eager to fund your project—often for altruistic reasons or personal goals. Regardless of their motivation, they are willing to invest in your vision, so why not you? If your project weren’t significant and valuable, you wouldn’t be pursuing it in the first place. Now, articulate your ideas, goals, and passion effectively.

Shift your focus from the present to the future. Contemplate your organization’s long-term aspirations. Where do you envision yourself in five to ten years? What steps are necessary to reach that point? How will you and your organization contribute to healthcare and the training of healthcare providers? What role will human patient simulation play in this envisioned future, and what resources will you need to bring it to fruition? Begin with your ultimate goal in mind and plan your actions around the sequence of events leading to that outcome. Connect those events to the implementation of human patient simulation; structure your activities and resources to support a tangible end result. If your future includes multiple simulation labs with a dedicated staff and equipment operating continuously, consider the steps required to achieve that vision. What actions will take place in those labs to yield the desired outcomes? This is the primary objective of your effort, and the grant proposal serves as the financial backbone to support this initiative. What resources will be necessary in the coming year?

If you’re seeking immediate funding, you may be starting too late! The grant proposal process can take up to a year for development, approval, submission, review, and award. Establishing a realistic timeline is essential—always anticipate that the process will take longer than expected but be ready to act promptly on any funding received.

A grant proposal typically consists of nine key components. The best advice for crafting your proposal is to KEEP IT SIMPLE. Assume that the reader has limited time and may be unfamiliar with your work. Use clear and direct language. Ensure your writing is precise, accurate, comprehensive, and logically organized. Below is a list of the nine primary components of any grant:

1. **Project Summary:** This should come first in the proposal but write it last. A strong summary of 2-4 paragraphs should create a compelling initial impression.

2. **Introduction to the Organization:** Offer an overview of your organization's structure, mission, and defining characteristics. Establish credibility regarding your expertise in human patient simulation and its relevance to healthcare education and training. Conclude this section with a straightforward statement detailing who you are, what you seek, how much funding you need, and why.

3. **Problem Statement:** This section should thoroughly explain the need for your human patient simulation project. Support your claims with anecdotal and statistical evidence, being precise and citing your sources. Avoid making assumptions about the reader's prior knowledge.

4. **Project Objectives:** List the outcomes you aim to achieve, ensuring they align with your organization's goals and those of the funding agency. Be realistic; grant funders are wary of exaggerated claims. This section is an opportunity to showcase your knowledge and past successes with simulation.

5. **Project Methods and Design:** Detail the specific steps you will take to meet your goals and objectives. Include a realistic timeline presented in a clear graphic format.

6. **Project Evaluation:** Often overlooked, this component can significantly impact how your proposal is perceived. Link each objective to measurable methods. Outline both formative evaluation (how you will track progress) and summative evaluation (measuring the project's impact). Ensure your evaluation plan adheres to scientific rigor and ethical standards.

7. **Sustainability Plan:** Funding agencies want assurance that their contributions will have lasting effects. Project your strategies for securing resources to sustain the human patient simulation project after the grant funds are exhausted.

8. **Budget:** This is often the most challenging part. Seek assistance from someone experienced in budgeting to help create a clear financial outline. Categories typically include personnel, non -personnel expenses, travel, training, maintenance, and indirect costs (if applicable). Ensure transparency and accuracy in your estimates.

9. **Appendices:** These attachments should clarify and enhance the content of your proposal. Include resumes, letters of support, a bibliography, and any definitions of specialized terms. Only include appendices that the funding agency specifically requests.

A thorough review of existing literature on human patient simulation education can bolster your proposal by providing clear statements of expected outcomes that can be applied to your project. Connect with others who have successfully secured funding for similar projects; they are often willing to share their insights.

Common pitfalls in grant proposals for human patient simulation include:

- Vague or unsupported goals
- Inclusion of unrelated expenses
- Unrealistic timelines
- Insufficient training duration

- Logical inconsistencies
- Lack of cost-benefit analysis
- Failure to anticipate potential negative outcomes
- Poor evaluation plans
- Not following the grant preparation guidelines

**Recommendations:**

- Clearly articulate your expected outcomes
- Develop a realistic, actionable plan
- Create a detailed and comprehensive budget
- Align your mission and goals with those of the funding agency
- Ensure clarity concision, and logical flow in your writing

**Your success hinges on:**

- Maintaining a positive outlook
- Having a clear concept and objectives
- Conducting thorough research
- Respecting the values of your grantor
- Designing a robust program evaluation
- Building a relationship with your grantor
- Garnering support from your institution and community stakeholders

**BEST OF LUCK!**