



Writing a Strong Midwifery Research Grant Proposal

1. Start with a problem that matters to you

Clearly identify the problem your research will address and clearly explain why it matters.

Ask yourself:

- Why does this issue matter to you, your clients, colleagues or the health system?
- What gap in knowledge does this project address?
- Why is research needed and who will benefit?
- How does your research reflect ethical and culturally responsible approaches?

A strong proposal demonstrates the significance of the problem and why it deserves attention now.

2. Develop focused, clear and answerable research questions

Well-defined research questions are essential. Strong research questions are:

- Focused and specific
- Answerable within the project timeline and budget
- Aligned with the proposed methods

Avoid trying to answer too many questions within a single project.

3. Match your methods to your question

Your study design should clearly support your research objectives. Ask yourself:

- Are qualitative methods being used to explore experiences or perspectives? Detail the specific approach you plan to use and reference when applicable.
- Are quantitative methods being used when estimating prevalence, comparing groups, or examining associations? Detail the specific approach you plan to use and reference when applicable.
- Is a mixed-methods approach clearly justified?
- Are the data collection methods clearly described; do I convey what information will be collected, from whom and how?
- Is a clear analysis plan presented; do I specify the analytic approach and/or planned statistical analyses thoroughly?
- Do I demonstrate methodological rigour; how will quality and trustworthiness of findings be ensured? Does your team reflect relevant expertise?

Don't choose methods because they seem more rigorous or sophisticated; choose them because they are the best fit.

4. Be realistic rather than overly ambitious

Show that the project can be successfully completed with the available resources.

Consider:

- Realistic timelines
- Achievable recruitment targets
- Research team expertise
- A project scope that matches the available time and funding

Strong proposals demonstrate a clear plan for completing the work.

5. Build a clear and justified budget

Ensure that all requested expenses are directly connected to project activities.

Reviewers should be able to understand:

- Why each expense is needed
- How it supports the research
- Why the costs are reasonable

Ensure your budget reflects the actual resources required to complete the project, as reviewers often recognize when key costs have been underestimated or overlooked.

6. Write for the reviewer

You know your project well; reviewers do not. Make sure to:

- Use plain language
- Define key terms and acronyms and avoid jargon
- Describe your positionality and/or reflexivity, including how they shape the context of your research question and chosen methodology
- Make it easy for reviewers to follow the logic of the proposal

A reviewer should be able to understand the project's purpose, methods, and significance after a single read.

REMEMBER: Reviewers are looking for proposals that are important, feasible, methodologically sound, and relevant to Ontario midwifery practice.