

**University of Iowa  
Graduate and Professional Student Government  
2017-18 Research Grant Evaluation Rubric**

GPSG recognizes that graduate and professional student education is advanced through academic research. Therefore, GPSG strives to support quality graduate and professional student research to continue the University of Iowa’s reputation as a leading research institution. Current graduate and professional students in good academic standing who have a project proposal and a principal investigator (PI) or project advisor may apply for Research Grant funding. The maximum that can be awarded is \$1500 per project to be used within six months from the date the funding is awarded. All applications are evaluated based on the following criteria:

**Total points possible: 50 points**

- 1. Previous Funding:** 5 points
- 2. Research Overview:** 25 points
- 3. Itemized Budget:** 5 points
- 4. Quality of Writing:** 5 points
- 5. Letter of Recommendation:** 5 points
- 6. Funding Recommendation:** 5 points

**Category 1: Previous GPSG Funding**

Has the applicant previously received a GPSG Grant? (*Applicants’ names will be checked against a database of previously funded students in order to verify accuracy of responses.*)

Description	Rating
No, the applicant has not previously received a GPSG.	5
Yes, the applicant has previously received a GPSG grant.	0

**Category 2: Research Overview**

**ABSTRACT**

How clearly is the public abstract written? (Do you understand the objective and think the work is significant, regardless of your discipline?)

Description	Rating
<i>Extremely clear</i> - Abstract accurately, completely, and concisely summarized the proposed research project.	5
<i>Neither clear nor unclear</i> – Abstract reasonably summarized the proposed research project	3
<i>Extremely unclear</i> – Abstract either contains excessive jargon (requiring an expert in the field to understand), or is severely lacking in clarity or completeness.	1
No abstract provided.	0

## BACKGROUND & KNOWLEDGE GAP

Does the research proposal include a thorough literature review and address the gap in knowledge that this research will fill?

Description	Rating
<i>Strongly agree</i> - Exhaustive review of relevant literature is presented, with a clearly demonstrated knowledge gap in the current understanding of concepts and theories related to the project (if action research, the intended improvement in outcomes is clearly stated).	5
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i> - The review of literature and knowledge gap are presented in general terms, and the study appears to be addressing a relevant issue or topic within the field.	3
<i>Strongly disagree</i> - The review of literature and description of knowledge gap is unclear, underdeveloped, or unrelated to the topic under investigation.	1
No review of literature or description of knowledge gap was provided.	0

## RESEARCH DESIGN

Does the applicant clearly explain the research design?

Description	Rating
<i>Strongly agree</i> - The project's research questions, goals, and objectives are very clear, comprehensive, logical, and measurable. Proposed research design and methodology is appropriate, including adequate explanation and rationale for stated objectives/aims/purpose.	5
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i> - The project's research questions, goals, and objectives are clear and measurable.	3
<i>Strongly disagree</i> - The research plan is not evident or is extremely underdeveloped.	1
No research plan was provided.	0

## ANALYSIS

Does the research proposal clearly explain the analysis?

Description	Rating
<i>Strongly agree</i> - There is clear, detailed, and thorough description of the analyses to be performed. Analyses are clearly aligned with the project's purpose and methods.	5
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i> - The analyses to be performed are described in general terms and appear to align with purpose and methods of the project.	3
<i>Strongly disagree</i> - The analysis is not evident or is extremely underdeveloped.	1
No description of analysis was provided.	0

## RESEARCH TIMELINE

Is the timeline feasible, manageable, and appropriate for the proposed research project?

Description	Rating
Strongly agree	5
Somewhat agree	4
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Somewhat disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

## Category 2: Itemized Budget

Is the budget organized, reasonable and follow all funding guidelines? Guidelines found at <https://gpsg.uiowa.edu/grants-for-students/>

Description	Rating
The budget is clear, reasonable, follows the GPSG guidelines, provides detailed explanations for the amount requested, and reflects efforts to minimize costs.	5
The budget is clear, reasonable, follows GPSG guidelines, and provides explanations for the amount requested.	4
The budget is reasonable and follows GPSG guidelines, but lacks clarity or explanations for the amount requested.	3
The budget is either incomplete or significantly lacking in the area of organization, descriptions, or amount requested.	2
The budget is not organized, is not reasonable, and does not specify the items to be covered through the grant.	1
The applicant did not provide a budget.	0

## Category 3: Quality of Writing

Is the writing clear and free of spelling or grammatical errors?

Description	Rating
Writing is professional in presentation and free from errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.	5
Some errors in spelling, grammar or punctuation; however, they do not significantly affect comprehensibility.	3
Application consistently contains errors in spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation that negatively affect comprehensibility.	1

#### **Category 4: Letter of Recommendation**

How supportive is the applicant's Letter of Recommendation?

<b>Description</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<i>Very supportive</i> - the letter is written by a primary mentor and details characteristics and achievements that are directly relevant to the applicant's professional performance, and is emphasizes the merit and significance of the proposed research project.	5
<i>Supportive</i> - The letter is written by a primary mentor and sufficiently outlines the applicant's performance, characteristics, and achievements that are relevant to the project in question	4
<i>Moderately supportive</i> - The letter is encouraging of the applicant to conduct the research; however, it only addresses the applicant's characteristics, record, and achievements in general terms.	3
<i>Somewhat supportive</i> - The letter does not focus on the applicant. The discussion of personal characteristics goes beyond professional etiquette.	2
<i>Not supportive</i> - The letter is not supportive, excessively brief, or written by someone that is not qualified to assess the applicant's performance.	1
There was no letter of recommendation for the applicant.	0

#### **Category 5: Funding Recommendation**

Do you recommend funding this application?

<b>Description</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Definitely yes.	5
Probably yes.	4
Might or might not.	3
Probably not.	2
Definitely not.	1