Writing a Learning and Teaching Investment Fund (LTIF) Project Proposal

*Tips from Past Recipients*
Acknowledgements

The Learning and Teaching Unit acknowledges with thanks the advice and assistance of the following 2009 LTIF grant recipients:

Ms Kyla Brettle
Dr Esther Charlesworth
Mr Keith Cowlishaw
Dr Mandy Kienhuis
Dr Tom Palaskas
Ms Dallas Wingrove
Considerations and suggestions when approaching the writing phase

• Align with RMIT University strategic objectives and plans, as well as LTIF criteria

• Contact, consult and discuss your ideas with relevant staff – “the more people invested in your concept, the better”

• Seek the support of staff who have been successful with this or other grants in the past, as well as other ‘expert’ advisers eg. LTU, EduTag

• Look at possible areas of teaching innovation

• Build on other successful grant applications (your own, possibly others)

• Be aware of dual sector objectives

• Consider involving students and staff beyond your own School

• Try and express your ideas in dynamic way

• Write as clearly and simply as you can – keep it brief and to the point

• Have your proposal peer reviewed
Common problems

The following were commonly experienced as potential or actual problems during the writing phase:

- Lack of clarity in the project idea/objectives and expression of the idea
- Lack of tailoring the concept to the priorities of the fund
- Budget – some found it ‘tricky’, others found it was questioned
- Time constraints
- Delays experienced in communicating with partner institutions
Overcoming obstacles/problems

- Clarify what the project will deliver
- Be clear about outcomes and deliverables before you write the application
- Confirm your budget. Seek the advice of the School or Unit Finance Manager
- Ensure you have the support of the Head of School/Unit and PVC
- Allow sufficient time to seek feedback and peer review of your application
- Have a small team of colleagues review and critique your application
- Develop a writing plan with clear timelines and deadlines – stick to it
Tips for developing the Evaluation Framework

• Consult successful Australian Research Council (ARC) researchers in your School/College or those who have received category 1 grants that require a coherent evaluation methodology

• Make sure the evaluation framework is logical and links back to:
  ➢ LTIF Criteria
  ➢ School/Unit context
  ➢ Project objectives and deliverables

• Consider using more than one instrument/technique/method to strengthen the validity of outcomes

• Use formative and summative evaluation strategies – don’t just evaluate the project at the end point
Tips for developing the Dissemination Strategy

• If possible, ensure your outcomes have a public dissemination focus and not just a School/University audience

• Have a clear view and good understanding of project outcomes when writing the dissemination strategy – they have to be ‘value add’

• Dissemination is both formative and summative – an ongoing discussion with stakeholders
Top tips!

- Write in the present tense and keep it moving
- Write for an audience who has no idea what your field of expertise is – explain everything!
- Set clear achievable parameters on what you will do and what you intend to achieve
- Know what the LTIF is looking for and write to that
- Stick to word limits
- Make sure there are tangible research outcomes for all stakeholders in the project beyond just an exhibition or conference
- Consult with other groups who will have a role the project, or who could usefully provide support
- Consult widely and work iteratively in developing the application
Top tips continued

• Research all costs and try to anticipate even the smallest items of expenditure
• Prepare a budget that is realistic
• Flexibility is essential – be prepared to adjust the application as circumstances change
• For team applicants make sure you have a strong working relationship with people who can deliver under pressure. Be prepared to do more than your share of work and expect your partner to reciprocate when the need dictates.