How to Develop a Successful Educational Program Proposal

Submitting a conference proposal sometimes feels like a daunting task. You may ask yourself, "Where do I even begin?" Below are tips about each proposal component to help you develop a quality educational program proposal.

Successful educational program proposals have clear and concise titles and abstracts, a well-defined purpose, and a detailed outline of your planned content delivery. This helps peer reviewers fully understand the value added to the conference by your educational session.

After choosing your educational program topic, review these tips for each section.

Educational Program Title

Your title should capture, in 10 words or less, for whom your session is intended and the topic that will be covered.

Educational Program Abstract

The abstract should build on your title and be clear and concise. Include what participants will take away from the educational program, the specific content to be delivered, and any other relevant information (50 words maximum).

Intended Audience

Identify the appropriate audience(s) who will benefit from the content you are planning to share. Very few topics are appropriate for all audiences. Most sessions clearly benefit specific audience(s), such as graduate students or seasoned professionals.

Purpose and Practical Applications

This section provides reviewers with context needed to understand your intended goals or outcomes and identify how you intentionally address the practical application of your content. There are five components: purpose, evidence of solid foundation, practical applications, connection to AHEPPP Values, and relevance to conference them.

Purpose
- Explain the purpose of your educational program. Clearly defined goals will set your direction and keep it focused.

Evidence of Solid Foundation

- Evidence-based practices are the standard in our field as we are continually asked to validate the important work that we do.
- Whether you conducted your own research, used existing theoretical models, or have access to program assessment data to support your major points, answer the question, "what relevant research or assessment/outcome data do you have to validate elements of the educational program?"
- Be sure to cite applicable authors and theoretical frameworks.

Practical Applications
- Describe how application at other institution types will be intentionally addressed.
    - Highlight universally applicable ideas or examples, which will help participants connect your content to their institution.
- Participants want to know how to apply theory and research to practice. If you include implications for practice, you are answering the most important question, "Now what?" In other words, how can a particular theory or theories be applied in a program you are describing?

Connection to [AHEPPP Values](#)
- Demonstrate how your content and/or delivery methods connect to the mission and values we strive to uphold as a professional organization.
- AHEPPP's mission is to support professionals in higher education who promote student success through informed parent and family engagement.

Relevance to Conference Theme: "The Magic of Family Engagement"
- Describe how your content is connected to the conference theme, where appropriate, in an effort to create a unified learning experience for all attendees.

Overview and Outline

This is the backbone of your proposal and the reviewers draw most of the information they need from this section.

Address the following aspects of your session:
- Topics and details to be delivered.
- Methods or format used to deliver that content,
- Who will deliver each aspect, if more than one presenter?
- Estimate of time on each aspect of the presentation.

Additional tips for creating your presentation and accurately describing it:
- Summarize content and activities in an outline format, including time estimates.
- Include relevant research or assessment results.
- Explore the underlying implications of the topic.
- Identify opportunities for further improvement/program progression.

- Outline visual aids that will be used (slides, Prezi, handouts, flip chart).
- Include approaches to content delivery (examples below), which maximize participant involvement and learning and accommodate diverse learning styles.

Examples of content delivery methods:
- Case study: Examine a fictitious or true account of something.
- Paired discussion: Requesting pairs of participants to hold a brief conversation.
- Group discussion: Conducting large-scale exchange of ideas.
- Reflection: Enhancing personal learning and its application to participants.
- Role-playing: Trying new skills, stimulating discussion, portraying a challenge.
- Story-telling: Go deep on a specific individual/group's experience with a topic or issue. Best when the story illustrates a broader trend in data.