2024 IDEAS Grant Competition

Designing a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for your IDEAS Grant Proposal

#LaunchIDEASabroad
Presenter

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Agenda

• Monitoring and Evaluation Topics
  • Theory of Change
  • Design Principles
  • Indicators
  • Logic Model
• Q&A Session
• Additional Resources
• Timeline reminders
Key Features of a Theory of Change

• What is it?
  An approach to the design of social programs, structured to clarify the causal logic and causal pathways by which change will occur

• Details ideas and beliefs about HOW and WHY change will happen
  From the perspective of the activity, project, or organization
  Based on existing evidence
  Based on a deep understanding of the context and series of analyses

• Demonstrates/describes the pathways of change
  If x [activity], then y [expected change], because z [rationale - why do you think this change will happen?]

• Identifies assumptions behind the expected change
  Programmatic assumptions (addressed by the project/Activity)
  Contextual Assumptions (beyond the control of the project/Activity)
Theory of Change: IDEAS Program Example

- If x [activity], then y [expected change], because z [rationale - why do you think this change will happen?]

- IDEAS Program Theory of Change

**IF**

- If we provide the study abroad community at large with funding to support institutional capacity building...

**THEN**

- ...then U.S. institutions will increase and diversify the U.S. students studying and interning abroad and the destinations to which they travel
Theory of Change Grantee Examples

IF
• Community college faculty in multiple programs of study and trained and supported to create interculturally competent virtual exchange and hybrid, short-term study abroad programs

THEN
• …faculty will form peer relationships to share ideas and practices, overcome obstacles to implementation, and refine their programs

IF
• More students are able to participate in high-quality study abroad programs…

THEN
• …interest in participation in study abroad will grow, with concomitant improvement in students’ global and intercultural competencies.
Suggested MERL Design Principle

• **KISS** is an acronym started by the U.S. Navy in 1960. It stands for “Keep it simple, sailor.”

• The idea is most systems work best if they are kept simple rather than made more complicated.

• Simplicity should be a key goal in design and unnecessary complexity should be avoided.

Ex. from the U.S. Navy: When designing an airplane, it must be repairable by the average U.S. Navy mechanic under stressful conditions, using only a handful of tools.
Indicators

**Indicators**: Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable used to demonstrate change in a situation, or the progress in, or results of, an activity, project, or program.

Indicators tell us what change is occurring but not necessarily why.

Indicators should be SMART(A) ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>Describe exactly what is expected</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Quantify success by articulating how much or how many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Attainable</td>
<td>Realistically achievable, neither over nor under ambitious</td>
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<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>Directly linked to the overall project objectives</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>Time-framed</td>
<td>Defined by a specific time, due date, or milestone</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>Actionable</td>
<td>Can be used to improve performance, learn more about implementation strategy, and/or make decisions</td>
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Indicator Type Examples: IDEAS Program

**Input:**
Experience managing capacity building and cultural exchanges

**Output:**
Colleges and university receive capacity building support to strengthen their study abroad programs

**Outcomes:**
Short term: colleges and universities expand their capacity to administer study abroad programs
Long-term: Increased and more diverse U.S. students study and intern abroad
Indicator Type Examples: IDEAS Grantee

Input:
Staff time: 2 faculty, 1 international engineering staff, 1 domestic engineering program staff

Output:
International Engineering course syllabus developed

Outcome:
Short term: first faculty-led study abroad program to South Korea
Long term: Increased research collaboration for faculty and students with partners in South Korea
If a success framework is a “bucket,” which indicators might go in it?

- Logistics were near perfect?
- Participants said the program greatly changed their perspectives?
- Participants considerably modified their behaviors after participating in the program?
A logic model is like a road map. It is an organized and visual way to display your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities you plan, and the changes or results you hope to achieve.

Some of the best reasons to create a logic model are that it:

- Makes your assumptions explicit; allowing you to challenge and examine them.
- Helps to build shared understanding and expectations of your program among staff and other stakeholders.
- Helps you identify the data you need to collect so that you can monitor and improve programming.
- Tells stakeholders the problem the program focuses on and how the program is qualified to address it.
- Helps to identify what evaluation questions should be asked and why.
**IDEAS Program – Sample Logic Model**

**Program Goal:** Increase and diversify the mobility of U.S. students to study and intern abroad

- **Inputs**
  - Collaborative process
  - World Learning Experience managing capacity building and cultural exchanges
  - HEI study abroad experience and/or resources
  - Global presence
  - Diverse HEI student population

- **Activities**
  - Administer a national open grant competition for HEIs
  - Identify subjects and themes for workshops from needs assessments
  - Plan and design capacity building activities for grantees and the larger U.S. study abroad community
  - Implement in-person and virtual capacity building activities for U.S. study abroad community
  - Establish CB for Study Abroad Community of Practice

- **Outputs**
  - Diverse group of HEIs participate in program

- **Short-term Outcomes**
  - HEIs receive capacity building support to strengthen their study abroad programs
  - HEIs and professional organizations connected

- **Long-term Outcomes**
  - Larger and more diverse pool of potential U.S. study abroad applicants
  - HEIs expand their capacity to administer study abroad programs
  - Best practices on expanding and diversifying US students abroad shared among U.S. HEIs
  - HEIs, professional organizations, and study abroad community continue collaborating in an active and strong network

**Assumptions:** The administration of the HEI supports study abroad programming as part of the institution’s internationalization goals; larger and more diverse pool of potential study abroad applicants apply for study abroad programs.
MERL Proposal Requirements

Must include a monitoring and evaluation plan that:

• tracks key data points,
• establishes benchmarks, and
• has measurable objectives.

Evaluation Criteria

• Proposal includes a Logic Model which indicates the problems or issues to be addressed by the proposed project, the activities designed to address them, outputs, outcomes, and assumptions.

• Monitoring and evaluation plan tracks key data points relevant to the proposed project activities through established benchmarks.
MERL Proposal Requirements

• Description of
  • Monitoring systems and mechanisms to be used
  • Institutional capacity to monitor and evaluate project performance
  • Data collection methods, sources, collectors, timeline, analysis method
  • How data will be used to monitor implementation and outcomes

• Baseline and target statistics

• How indicators relate to the “if” and “then” components of theory of change

• Where relevant and appropriate to your project and institution, disaggregate your data by factors such as country of study and student groups such as field(s) of study, disability status, financial aid status, gender, ethnic background, race, first generation college students, and/or other identified underrepresented student groups
Additional Resources

- **Assessment Resources Hyperdoc**
- Program and Partner Evaluation and Assessment session recording: [https://youtu.be/LZzcd2FKwGE](https://youtu.be/LZzcd2FKwGE)
- **Student Assessment session** recording: [https://youtu.be/Z5kUUqYAM8U](https://youtu.be/Z5kUUqYAM8U)
- **Assessment for Faculty-led Programming** session recording: [https://youtu.be/hBfSolmP2KY](https://youtu.be/hBfSolmP2KY)
- Additional resources: [https://www.studyabroadcapacitybuilding.org/resources/](https://www.studyabroadcapacitybuilding.org/resources/)
Questions?

Please enter your questions in the Q&A box.
April 4, 2024
• Phase 2 Closes at 11:59pm EST

April-May 2024
• Phase 2 Review

June 2024
• Finalists Announced

September 1, 2024-February 28, 2026
• Grant period of performance
The IDEAS (Increase and Diversify Education Abroad for U.S. Students) Program is a program of the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and supported in its implementation by World Learning.