

# Mini-Proposal Challenge Template

## Section 1 — Mini-Proposal

Write a plain-language mini-proposal that is understandable to non-scientists. Address all four questions below.

### ★ Tips from slide 21

#### Goal, aims & rationale

- Overall goal and aims, supporting evidence and rationale, and guiding theoretical framework (if applicable).  
Why is this work important?

#### Study design, methods & analysis

- How the research will be conducted, evaluated, and analysed.
- Be specific about your questions & methods. Name the data source, approach, and analytic method “we will use statistics” is not methodology. Reviewers need to assess whether your plan is feasible within the project timeline.

#### Meaningful stakeholder involvement

- Describe how the people impacted by your research (patients, survivors, caregivers, or other relevant community members) will be engaged as partners and/or participants.
- Prioritize community engagement. Be specific about the impact of the research on the people or field of what you’re studying and how you will engage them in your work.

#### Risks & mitigation strategies

- What could go wrong, and how will you address it?
- Anticipate what could go wrong. Reviewers reward honesty about risks. A proposal that acknowledges challenges and has a plan is stronger than one that pretends everything will go smoothly.

**\*Use the rating scales on the last page to make sure your meeting all the criteria**

**1. Introduction: Why is this work important? Why is it needed? (Rationale and background — and how will it impact people affected by your research topic?)**

*Write 2–3 sentences:*

**2. What is the goal or purpose of the project? (Objective/Aims)**

*Write 3–4 sentences:*

**3. What is the research plan? (Methods — in plain language)**

*Write 2–4 sentences:*

**4. How will community members / stakeholders be involved as partners?**

*(Describe how people or communities impacted by your work will be meaningfully engaged as partners throughout your research. This may be based on real or hypothetical partnerships. Consider how they will contribute to shaping the project, not just participating in it. One accessible way to involve partners is through co-developing your knowledge sharing plan.)*

*Write 1-2 sentences:*

**5. What are the potential risks and mitigation strategies?**

*(What could go wrong, and how will you address it? This includes the impact on patients/affected communities working on your project and/or participating in your project)*

*Write 1-3 sentences:*

**6. What are the anticipated results & impact?**

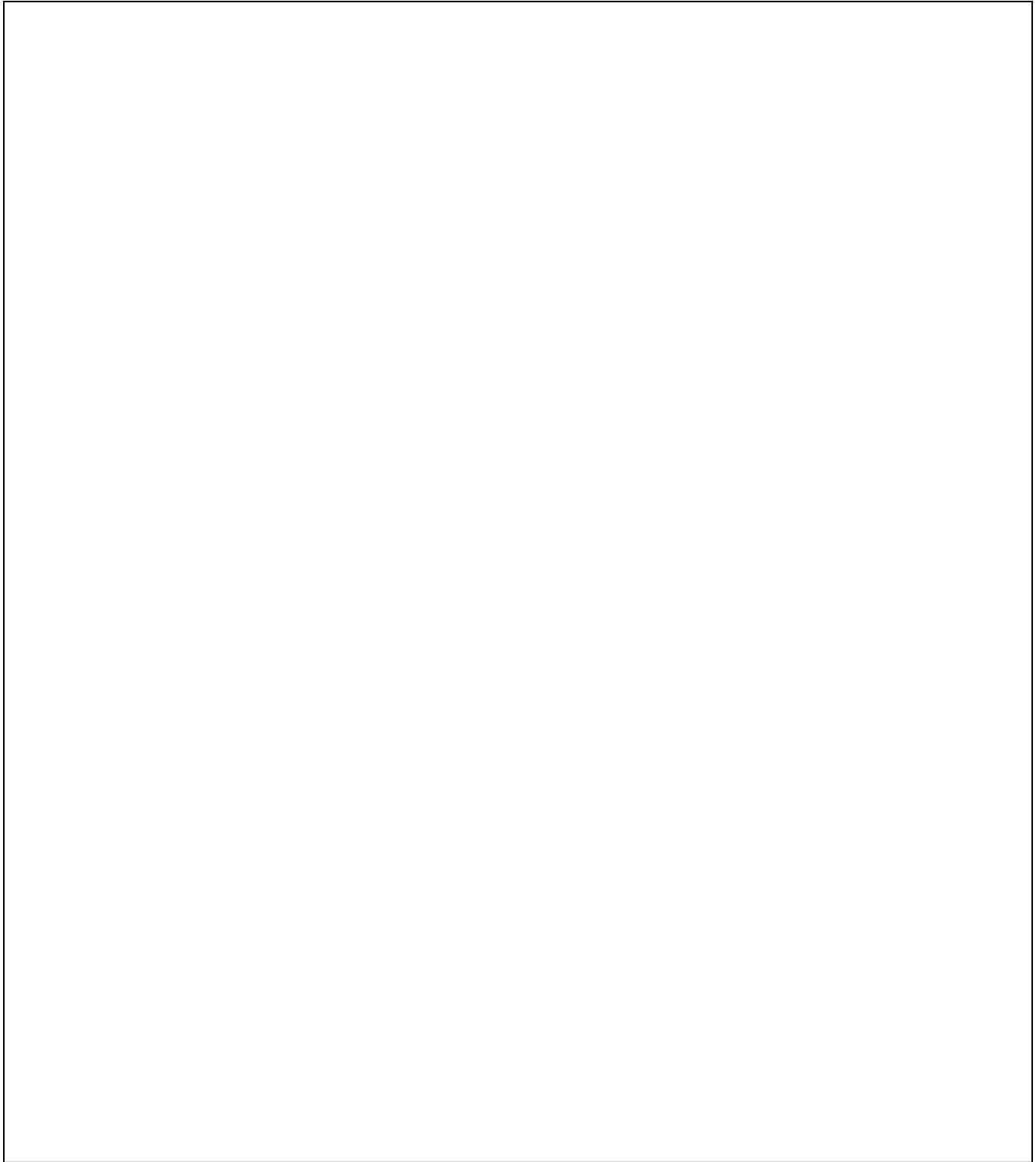
*In other words, the applicant has thought about how the research would progress beyond this project. (Potential impact (short- or long-term) of the proposed research on the field of research and intended population. This may include parts of your knowledge sharing plan)*

*Write 1-3 sentences:*

**Draft your final mini-proposal**

*Combine the above sections into a mini-proposal to submit to AHASlides*

Maximum 25 sentences or 1500 characters:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to draft their final mini-proposal. The box is currently blank.

## Section 2 – Knowledge Sharing Plan

Describe how you will share your findings in culturally and contextually relevant ways. Scholarly publications are valued, but non-traditional avenues are preferred and required. Conferences or publications alone are NOT sufficient.

### ★ Tips from slide 23

- Lead with community-first sharing: name a feast, talking circle, workshop, arts-based production, or community newsletter BEFORE academic outputs.
- Be specific: name the event, the audience, and explain why that format is culturally appropriate for your community.
- Is the sharing knowledge sharing opportunity relevant, accessible, feasible, and culturally appropriate for the community?
- Think about accessibility: will findings reach people who cannot attend academic conferences?
- You can include journals and conferences – but they must NOT be your only avenue. challenges and has a plan is stronger than one that pretends everything will go smoothly.

### 1. Non-traditional, community-appropriate knowledge sharing

*Describe your primary non-traditional avenue(s) (e.g. learning/sharing circle, feast, workshop, arts-based production, community newsletter, gathering, gifting, presentations)*

*Write 2-3 sentences:*

### 2. Why is this method culturally appropriate for your community?

*Write 1-2 sentences:*

### 3. How will sharing impact communities? Are there any risks or mitigating strategies?

*(Will they be compensated, will you co-build the knowledge sharing opportunity?)*

*Write 1-2 sentences:*

#### 4. Academic dissemination (journals, conferences)

Describe any academic outlets you plan to use (Optional – if included, explain how this complements, not replaces, community sharing)

Write 1-3 sentences:

#### **Draft your final knowledge sharing plan**

Combine the above sections into a knowledge sharing plan to submit to AHAslides

<https://survey.ahaslides.com/s/9u1s7kn>

Maximum 10 sentences or 600 characters:

## Scientific Merit (SM) Rating Scale

Scientific Merit (SM) rating scale is to be used by reviewers to assess the scientific merit of the application. This rating comprises two sections: **proposal merit** and **relevance and potential impact**. The lists below show the criteria to be evaluated, and reviewers are asked to use these criteria to help them holistically assess each application.

Proposal Merit		Yes/No
Rationale and evidence for the proposed work are thorough and compelling.		
The proposal clearly identifies the need and goal of the project.		
Aims (and/or research questions, when relevant) are clearly articulated.		
Scientific approach, including methodologies, theories, and frameworks, are well-described.		
There is evidence people or communities impacted by your work have been and will be engaged throughout the life of the research project.		
There is thoughtful consideration of barriers to project success, and alternatives are proposed.		
The research project is feasible within the timeline of a master's program.		
The proposal clearly identifies the expected outcomes of the project.		
Relevance and potential impact		
The potential impact (short- or long-term) of the proposed research on the field of research and intended population is clearly described and compelling.		
The proposal indicates how knowledge will be shared with <b>and</b> beyond academia (with the affected community) in a relevant, accessible, feasible, and culturally appropriate way.		
Impact on patients/affected communities has been appropriately considered, and the project will not exacerbate or place undue hardship on these communities (and/or mitigating strategies have been clearly described).		

## Score Descriptions:

Descriptor	Score range	Definition	Outcome
Outstanding	4.5 - 5.0	All 11 scoring criteria have been met and some exceeded. Each item has been appropriately and thoroughly addressed.	Priority for funding
Excellent	4.0 - 4.5	The majority or 9-10 (>80%) of scoring criteria have been met and some exceeded. The majority of items have been appropriately addressed.	
Good	3.5 - 4.0	7-8 (60-80%) scoring criteria have been met. Most items have been appropriately addressed.	Fundable
Fair	3.0 - 3.5	5-6 (40-60%) scoring criteria have been met. Some items have been addressed but there are notable gaps.	Not fundable
Poor	2.0 - 3.0	3-4 (20-40%) scoring criteria have been met. Some items have been addressed but there are notable gaps.	
Incomplete	Below 2.0	0-2(<20%) scoring criteria have been met. Multiple major weaknesses. The proposal needs significant development before being competitive in this program.	