

UCLA

Institute of the

Environment & Sustainability



ASPIRE Grant Writing Workshop

Video 6: Methods

In this video we will



- Review expectations and requirements for the Methods section
- Learn how your methods connect to the rest of the grant and your Theory of Change model
- So that you are able to
 1. Use your methods to show that you can achieve your goals
 2. Communicate your expertise in a way that is accessible to nonexperts

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Please provide a detailed description of the proposed project as described below.

Background and Rationale* – *Up to 250 words. Introduce your project and the question you plan to address. Be sure to support your statements with appropriate references. If the work is part of a larger project, please explain how*

Goal and objectives* - *Up to 150 words. Describe the main goals and objectives of the project*

Methods* - *Up to 400 words. What methods will you use to achieve the project goals and objectives? Be thorough and specific. If using a questionnaire, please provide enough details about the questionnaire to allow a reviewer to assess its effectiveness. If educating or raising awareness among communities is your goal, be specific about how that will be done and what will be taught. Remember, the reviewers may not be experts in your field. Describe what data will be collected and what statistics you will use to analyze it. Justify your methods (i.e., why are you using them, how do they address the problem or fill the knowledge gap you have identified, and provide any references).*

Indicators and Outputs* - *Up to 250 words. What will be the tangible outputs of the project (peer-reviewed papers, reports, evidence of changed attitudes, improved sustainability or protection). What will provide evidence of project success?*

Who will benefit? * *Up to 150 words. Who (individuals/communities/agencies) will benefit from this work and how? If your output includes recommendations, to whom will those recommendations be presented? Do you know they are receptive to your recommendations?*

Preliminary results* - *Up to 100 words. If you have some preliminary results, please describe them briefly. Otherwise, please indicate "none."*

Background and Rationale - OCAR



- **Opening:** Introduce your background, characters, and setting. (70-80 words)
- **Challenge:** What is the main problem/question that your research aims to answer? (110-120 words)
- **Action:** This is the work you hope to do to answer the above question. (20-30 words)
- **Resolution:** This describes how the world, you, and your characters will be changed by your action (what happens when the challenge is addressed?) (10-20 words)

Adapted from Schimel, J. (2012). Writing science: how to write papers that get cited and proposals that get funded. Oxford [England] ; New York, Oxford University Press.

Formula for SUCES

- **Simple:** Conveys the core essence of a problem in a clear and compact way.
- **Unexpected:** Surprise and delight your readers. Your background section (and overall proposal) should highlight why your work is novel and an important addition to your field.
- **Concrete:** Your proposed project should be achievable in the budget and timeline you have proposed
- **Credible:** It is important to cite your sources and ground your research questions in existing knowledge.
- **Emotional:** Engage the curiosity of your reader. Show why your work is novel and express your vision for the project!
- **Stories:** Your overall proposal is a standalone story. But equally, stories are modular. Each section of your proposal is a standalone story in and of itself.

Adapted from Schimel, J. (2012). Writing science: how to write papers that get cited and proposals that get funded. Oxford [England] ; New York, Oxford University Press.

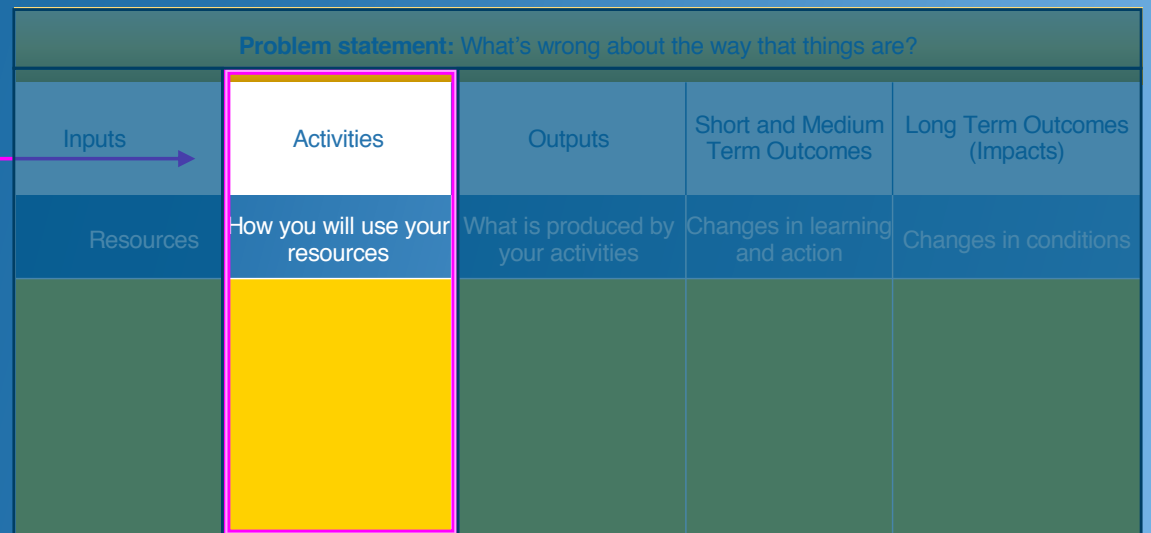
Methods



- **Who** – who is collecting the data, and what are your subjects of study?
- **What/how** – what will you be doing to collect your data? What statistics will you use to analyze it?
- **When** – in what timeframe will you be collecting your data?
- **Where** – where will you collect your data?
- **Why** – why have you chosen these methods? How do they address your problem?
 - Remember reviewers might not be experts in your field – include references to justify your choices

Methods

- ● ● Your methods describe the work you will do to produce your outputs



Problem statement: Over half of central Africa's sea turtles are considered threatened or endangered, yet their biggest threats are unclear. These species are important food sources for locals.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short and Medium Term Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes (Impacts)
Resources	How you will use your resources	What is produced by your activities	Changes in learning and action	Changes in conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASPIRE grant financing Connections with WWF and Cameroon's Ministry of Forestry & Wildlife 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with over 100 fishermen in 8 communities Daily reports of turtle bycatch numbers Community training program planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written report outlining bycatch causes of turtle death (bycatch) Fisherman reporting network Sensitization campaign presented to 200 people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased community skills for removing turtles stuck in nets Better guidance for policy design protecting turtles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer turtle bycatch deaths Turtle decline slows or stops More available food for locals
<p>*Adapted from 2016 awardee Ursula Bénédite Koumbo Tabacum's CARN ASPIRE research https://www.conservationactionresearch.net/articles/a-sheros-journey-to-saving-sea-turtles</p>				

**Example:
Methods**

Methods



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- **Why** – why have you chosen these methods? How do they address your problem?
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Two weeks field research will be conducted during each season from December 2023 to January 2024. Targeted birds will be captured in each cocoa plantation using 10 mist nets (12 m long, 4 shelves, 2.6 m high, 30 mm mesh) set in parallel and perpendicularly with sampling effort of 6 h per day (from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m.). Opened nets will be checked every 15 min, and all captured birds will be identified using standard reference (Borrow and Demey, 2014). Birds will then be weighed using a Pesola scale of 100 and 1000 g; measured using a manual caliper of with precision of 0.05; banded with numbered rings; sampled for blood and then released, after bleeding had stopped. The date, plantation sites, GPS coordinates, common and scientific names of birds, families, band numbers and other related information will be noted at for each targeted birds. Same day recaptures identified through leg bands will not be included in the study. Blood samples from all captured birds will be collected by venipuncture from the brachial vein. Immediately following blood collection, two thin blood films will be quickly prepared, fixed in absolute methanol for at least 1 min, air-dried and packed into slide boxes for subsequent staining in the laboratory. Once in the laboratory, all the blood films will be stained for 1 h with Giemsa diluted in 1/10 with phosphate buffer (obtained by dissolving 1g of Na₂HPO₄ and 0.7g of KH₂PO₄ in 1 liter of distilled water), and rinsed in tap water. After staining, blood films will be air dried and examined at high magnification (X100) under a light microscope using immersion oil. Morphometric features and parasites identification will be made according to Valkiunas (2005).

Statistical analyses: The prevalence of parasite will be determined as the number of infected birds over the total number of sampled birds. Intensity of infections will be estimated as a percentage by actual counting of the number of parasites per 1000 red blood cells for heavy infections (>1 parasites per microscopic field) or per 10 000 red blood cells for light infections (<1 parasites per microscopic field) (Godfrey et al., 1987). Seasonal effect on the prevalence and intensity of parasite will be assessed using chi-square test, while the variation of parasite prevalence among risk factors will be performed using Kruskal-wallis test.

Adapted from 2022 awardee Mélanie Adèle Tchoumbou's project: <https://www.conservationactionresearch.net/projects/which-native-shade-trees-will-attract-pest-eating-birds-to-cameroonian-cocoa-farms>

Methods brainstorming

Who (who is collecting the data, and what are your subjects of study)	
What/how (how will you collect and analyze your data?)	
When (in what timeframe will you collect your data?)	
Where (where will you collect your data?)	
Why (why are these methods best?)	

Methods Drafting (400 words max)



Methods Drafting (400 words max)



Methods Drafting (400 words max)



Methods Drafting (400 words max)



Methods Drafting (400 words max)



Methods Drafting (400 words max)



Methods Drafting (400 words max)



Methods Drafting (400 words max)

