



LONGER LIFE  
FOUNDATION



# Tips for Writing the Optimal Letter of Intent: 3 Steps

## Step 1: High-level View

- Introduce your proposal with key, necessary context to help reviewers immediately understand the significance and relevance of your study. Establish the background of your research, highlight existing gaps, and demonstrate the importance and potential impact of your proposed work.
- By clearly and effectively outlining the problem and how your proposal will address it, you make a compelling case for why your research deserves funding. This initial framing can be pivotal in engaging the upfront interest of reviewers and laying a strong foundation for the rest of your proposal.

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## Step 2: The Proposal

### Before composing:

- Try to attend the Foundation's in-person, informational session held in January to ask questions and pitch proposals to gain immediate and informal feedback.
- Review the Foundation's website to see the types of proposals previously funded.

### LOI components:

- Project title
- Lay summary: not all reviewers will be an expert in your area of research, thus the lay summary allows all reviewers to contribute to a rapid review and assessment.
- Aims: limit to a maximum of three – need to be realistically completed within the one-year award period
- Methodology and research approach: include potential barriers, confounders, or issues with subject recruitment or sample size
- Scope, significance, and impact of proposal
- Relevance to the mission of The Longer Life Foundation and/or alignment with general or specific research interests of the Foundation as outlined in the CFA
- Anticipate challenging questions potentially posed by reviewers and address those upfront

### Additional key elements to include:

- An NIH-format biographical sketch
- Personal differentiators or other reasons which increase the probability that the proposal will be successful
- Academic peer letters of support or professional references, if available

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## Step 3: Finalizing the LOI

- Don't underestimate the importance of proofreading and revising your proposal. Avoid "copy and paste" errors from other LOI's and applications. Clarity, coherence, and logical flow are crucial, along with ensuring that you've included all of the required elements and information. Have a trusted, neutral-party review the proposal and provide feedback.