

From Research Paper to Fundable Proposal

E-book summary

From Research Paper to Fundable Proposal is a practical e-book that helps researchers, academics, and research centers turn their knowledge into a project a donor can understand, value, and fund.

The e-book starts with a challenging truth:

Knowing how to conduct research does not mean knowing how to develop a fundable proposal.

A research paper addresses academic peers. A fundable proposal addresses someone who controls a budget, may not work in your discipline, and needs to understand the problem, the intended change, and why the project deserves investment.

1. The problem this e-book addresses

Many strong research projects fail to secure funding because they are written as academic papers rather than project proposals.

The problem is usually not a lack of rigor, evidence, or knowledge. The proposal often:

- Starts with a topic rather than a clearly defined problem that a donor could support.
- Promises to “analyze,” “characterize,” or “generate knowledge” without explaining what will change.
- Devotes too much space to the theoretical framework and too little to beneficiaries, uptake, or results.
- Presents academic outputs as if they were outcomes.
- Does not identify who will use the knowledge or how.
- Uses specialist language the donor does not understand.
- Does not connect activities, indicators, the budget, and sustainability.
- Does not translate academic rigor into a verifiable explanation of how change will happen.

The e-book addresses this gap. It helps readers turn academic knowledge into a Fundable Project Dossier, with a clear problem, evidence, a Theory of Change, a Logical Framework, indicators, a budget, sustainability, and a pitch.

2. What you will build

By the end of the process, readers will have a Fundable Project Dossier assembled across eight modules, ready to adapt to an actual call for proposals.

The main deliverables are:

Deliverable	Status
Initial assessment and commitment to the project	☐ Complete
Clearly defined problem suitable for donor support and documented situation analysis	☐ Complete
Project Theory of Change and Logical Framework	☐ Complete
Proposal outline review — Individual Session 1	☐ Complete
Practical implementation plan covering activities, methodology, stakeholders, and indicators	☐ Complete
Proposal expressed in language that addresses donor needs	☐ Complete
Project budget, sustainability plan, and pitch	☐ Complete
Reviewed Fundable Project Dossier — Individual Session 2	☐ Complete

The outcome is a complete, coherent proposal expressed in language the donor can understand.

3. How IGROW guides the process

IGROW structures the entire e-book. It helps researchers move beyond academic-paper conventions and build a fundable proposal step by step.

IGROW stage	How it applies in this e-book
I — Intention	Clarifies your purpose and the academic habits to reconsider. The e-book starts with a challenging reality: you know how to conduct research but may not have been taught to turn that knowledge into something a donor wants to fund. This stage builds awareness of the problem.
G — Goal	Defines what to achieve by the end of each section. Every part produces a specific component of the dossier: a problem statement suitable for donor support, situation analysis, Theory of Change, Logical Framework, indicators, budget, sustainability plan, or pitch. Learning becomes practical work.
R — Reality	Examines the current situation and academic habits that weaken the proposal. Readers identify pitfalls such as presenting a topic as a problem, treating a gap in literature as sufficient justification, confusing outputs with outcomes, or using inaccessible specialist language.
O — Options	Provides practical tools to turn weak components into a stronger case for funding. It includes formulas, templates, verb guides, before-and-after examples, and checklists to improve writing without sacrificing academic rigor.
W — Way Forward	Ends each section with a clear next step, a practical exercise, and a completed milestone. Every exercise produces a component that informs the next. The e-book becomes a connected implementation process rather than a collection of tips.

4. What this e-book promises

This e-book does not promise that readers will win funding. It promises that, by the end of the process, they will have a proposal a donor can understand, trust, and assess with confidence.

In summary:

The e-book turns an academic idea into a Fundable Project Dossier, built with rigor, evidence, clear logic of change, indicators, a budget, sustainability, and language that addresses donor needs.

This helps readers move from saying:

“I want to research this topic.”

To say:

“This problem affects these people in this location. This evidence shows it exists. We propose this solution, expect this measurable change, and need these resources to achieve it.”