



Interior Design Educators Council Foundation, Inc.

Rubric for IDEC Foundation Special Projects Grant

Track I: Research Initiatives

PURPOSE

This rubric guides the evaluation of proposals submitted to the IDEC Foundation Special Projects Grant. The grant funds creative, goal-oriented activities of a defined scope and duration that benefit interior design education and/or the profession (up to \$3,000). Funded projects must produce tangible results and reinforce the mission, core values, and vision of IDEC.

REVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS

- This is a blind review. If the abstract or budget contains identifying information (researcher name, institution, location, etc.), the application must be disqualified before scoring.
- Score each criterion on a 1–5 scale using the anchored descriptors.
- Each criterion has a fixed weight. The total weighted score is on a 5.00 scale. Do not use any number smaller than x.25 (e.g. 3.25, 4.75, etc.) The companion Excel sheet calculates the total automatically.
- Document specific strengths, concerns, and the basis for the scores in the Reviewer Comments section.
- Note: matching funds are not part of the evaluation. Proposals are judged solely on the merits of the work, not on access to institutional resources.

SCORING SCALE

Score	Meaning
5 — Exemplary	Substantially exceeds expectations; a model response on this criterion.
4 — Strong	Clearly meets expectations with notable strengths.
3 — Adequate	Meets expectations; competent but not distinctive.
2 — Developing	Partially meets expectations; notable gaps.
1 — Insufficient	Does not meet expectations; significant problems.

TRACK A | RESEARCH INITIATIVES

Use this rubric for proposals that investigate, study, or explore an issue using an articulated methodology, hypothesis, or research questions. Methodology and research design carry the heaviest weight on this track.

1. Research Question / Hypothesis & Significance

Weight: 20%

The proposal articulates a focused, well-justified research question or hypothesis with clear significance to interior design education or practice.

5	Question or hypothesis is precise, original, and addresses a clearly significant issue. The avenue of inquiry is well defined and persuasively framed.
4	Question or hypothesis is clear and important; minor refinement could sharpen focus or scope.
3	Question or hypothesis is identifiable and reasonable; significance is somewhat general.
2	Question or hypothesis is vague or weakly justified; significance to the field is unclear.
1	No discernible research question or hypothesis, or significance to the field is absent.

Score for Criterion 1: _____ / 5

2. Methodology & Research Design

Weight: 25%

Methods are appropriate to the research question, well described, and likely to yield credible, defensible findings. Sample, data, instruments, and analysis approach are coherent. (IRB plan included where required.)

5	Methodology is rigorous, fully appropriate to the question, clearly described, and persuasively justified. Data collection and analysis approach are sound and well matched to the inquiry. Where applicable, the IRB plan is addressed.
4	Methodology is appropriate and well described. Minor methodological clarifications would strengthen the design.
3	Methodology is identifiable and reasonable but under-specified or only partially aligned with the research question.
2	Methodology is poorly described, inadequately matched to the question, or contains notable design flaws.
1	Methodology is missing, incoherent, or fundamentally unsuited to the research question.



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Score for Criterion 2: _____ / 5

3. Contribution to the Body of Knowledge	Weight: 20%
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The work will produce findings that meaningfully advance interior design education or the profession's body of knowledge.

5	Outcomes will substantively expand the body of knowledge with original, transferable, or field-shaping insights.
4	Outcomes will meaningfully contribute new knowledge or practical insight to the field.
3	Outcomes will contribute knowledge in a focused, incremental way.
2	Contribution is small, restates existing knowledge, or is loosely tied to interior design.
1	No discernible contribution to the field, or contribution is irrelevant to interior design.

Score for Criterion 3: _____ / 5

4. Alignment with IDEC Mission, Values & Vision	Weight: 15%
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The project clearly reinforces IDEC's mission, core values, and vision.

5	Strong, explicit, and well-reasoned alignment with IDEC's mission, values, and vision throughout the proposal.
4	Clear alignment; minor opportunities to strengthen the connection.
3	Alignment is plausible but stated generally rather than developed.
2	Connection to IDEC is weak or asserted without support.
1	No meaningful alignment with IDEC mission, values, or vision.

Score for Criterion 4: _____ / 5

5. Feasibility — Scope, Timeline & Budget	Weight: 15%
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The project can be completed as described within the funding limit (\$3,000) and a realistic timeline. Budget items are reasonable, justified, and free of disallowed costs (F&A is not allowed).

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5	Scope, timeline, and budget are realistic, internally consistent, and well justified. Costs are appropriate to activities and within program rules.
4	Plan is feasible with minor concerns about scope, pacing, or budget alignment.
3	Generally feasible; some elements under-explained or marginal.
2	Significant feasibility concerns: overly ambitious scope, gaps in the timeline, or budget items poorly justified.
1	Project as described cannot reasonably be completed; budget or timeline is inadequate or non-credible. Disallowed costs included.

Score for Criterion 5: _____ / 5

6. Dissemination of Outcomes	Weight: 5%
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The project will produce tangible results and a credible plan to share findings with the field.

5	Specific, concrete tangible outputs and a clear, well-planned dissemination strategy (publication, conference, workshop, public-facing product).
4	Tangible outcomes and dissemination are described and credible.
3	Dissemination plan exists but is general or under-specified.
2	Limited tangible outputs or vague dissemination plan.
1	No tangible outputs or dissemination identified.

Score for Criterion 6: _____ / 5

TRACK A SCORING SUMMARY

Criterion	Raw Score (1–5)	Weight	Weighted (Raw × Weight)
1. Research Question / Hypothesis & Significance	_____	0.20	_____



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2. Methodology & Research Design	_____	0.25	_____
3. Contribution to the Body of Knowledge	_____	0.20	_____
4. Alignment with IDEC Mission, Values & Vision	_____	0.15	_____
5. Feasibility — Scope, Timeline & Budget	_____	0.15	_____
6. Dissemination & Tangible Outcomes	_____	0.05	_____
TOTAL WEIGHTED SCORE (out of 5.00)			_____

REVIEWER COMMENTS:

Key strengths of the proposal:

Weaknesses, concerns, or gaps:
