National Communication Association

Transforming Lives Through Communication

Funding Assessment Protocol

Individuals and institutions who have received funding from NCA are asked to assess the success of the activity in relation to the goals it was designed to accomplish. Understanding the impact of past funding decisions allows NCA leadership to continue to make thoughtful decisions about its priorities for support over time. In addition, this assessment process allows for helpful self-reflection by those who were funded as they consider the impact of their work and the development of future endeavors.

NCA has developed a protocol that applies to a wide variety of events and projects. Sometimes the most important questions are event or project-specific, and this assessment protocol should not inhibit additional information or assessment—responses should be tailored to the specific project that was funded. Requests for the use of alternative assessment protocols or procedures should be submitted to the NCA National Office at the time of application. If an alternative assessment mechanism was not approved along with the funding of a project, the default assumption will be that the protocol described in this document will apply.

Please determine the proper classification for the funded work (project or event) and refer to the appropriate reporting requirements below accordingly.

Reports should be submitted by their respective due dates as Microsoft Word or PDF documents to Dane Claussen, NCA Director of Research, Publications, and Professional Advancement, at dclaussen@natcom.org. Questions regarding the assessment protocol should be directed to Dane Clausen via email or phone (202-534-1103).

Reporting Requirements for NCA-Funded Projects

Projects are defined as those activities that produce tangible deliverables (e.g., a research paper, a website, a film).

Organizers of NCA-funded projects are required to submit the following three reports to NCA unless a different protocol is approved along with the initial funding approval:

1.   Short-Term Evaluation

Please provide a report *at the midway point of the grant funding period*. For most projects, this will be *month 6.*

- What are the goals of the project?
- Description of the project's development.
- To what extent and how does the project align with NCA's Strategic Plan and the IDEA goals?
- Explain the evaluation plan for this project.
- Has there been any press or social media around this project? If so, please provide copies (can be electronic).
- A financial report that aligns with the proposed budget.

2.   Completion Evaluation

Please provide a report *30 days after the completion of the project* that includes the following information:

Project Overview:
- Provide a summary of the project, its objectives, intended audience, and the grant's purpose in achieving its goals. This includes its alignment with NCA's current Strategic Plan and its IDEA goals.

Project Development and Milestones:
- Provide a description of the project's development, including key activities undertaken, milestones achieved, and other significant project components, events, research phases, etc.
    - List research articles, research books, research papers and/or experts that you consulted and how they were particularly helpful to you.
- To what extent and how did the project align with NCA's Strategic Plan and IDEA goals?
- What didn't go as planned, and why? How were you able to compensate, if you were? What are "lessons learned" for you, the granting committee, and the NCA staff?

Outcomes and Findings:
- Discuss the outcomes of the project. This could involve quantitative data, qualitative assessments, or both, illustrating how the project met its objectives and any unexpected results.

Evaluation & Assessing Impact:
- Evaluate the overall impact of the project on the target audience or community. This could

involve statistics, testimonials, or other measures of change or influence. To what extent did the project advance the discipline as described in NCA's Strategic Plan?
- To whom and how have the project's results been disseminated?

Sustainability and Future Plans:
- Outline how the project's impact will be sustained beyond the grant period, including any future initiatives or plans.
- What plans are in place for a long-term evaluation of the impact of the project after six months and/or another mutually agreed upon evaluation point? (Please note that NCA reserves the right to request revision of this plan up to one month before it is implemented.)

Budget Utilization:
- Provide a financial report on how grant funds were actually used with a breakdown of expenses (and an adjusted timeline if different from proposed budget), demonstrating that the funds were used in line with the proposed budget.

Acknowledgments:
- List out acknowledgments to grant provider, partners, stakeholders, and anyone else who contributed to the project's success.

3. **Long-Term Evaluation**

Please provide a report *6 months after completion of the project* that includes the following information:

- To whom and how have the project's results been disseminated?
- To what extent did the project advance the discipline as described in the NCA's Strategic Plan and IDEA goals?
- What is your long-term evaluation of the impact of the project?

Provide supporting evidence in reports. If the project did not meet its original goals, why not? Has there been some additional impact of the project beyond what had originally been intended?

4. **Only for Research Cultivation Grant Recipients:**

- Prior to receiving the NCA Research Cultivation Grant, had you never applied for any research grant or had you been unsuccessful with previous applications for research grants? Please briefly explain either status.

- In applying for an NCA Research Cultivation Grant, what did you learn, if anything, about writing a research grant application that you did not already know?

- Do you think that receiving an NCA Research Cultivation Grant will help you be more confident and motivated to apply for research grants in the future? Why/why not?

- Overall, are the NCA's Research Cultivation Grants a helpful way for scholars who have not previously received any research grant to learn about the process of applying for grants? If so, how so? If not, why not? How could it be a more educational process?

Reporting Requirements for NCA-Funded Events

Events are defined as those activities that bring scholars/teachers together for some stated purpose and for great exchange (e.g., conferences, meetings, seminars, etc.)

Organizers of NCA-funded events are required to submit the following three reports to NCA unless a different protocol is approved along with the initial funding approval:

1.   Short-Term Report

Please provide a report *at the midway point of the grant funding period*. For most projects, this will be *month 6.*

- What are the goals of the event?
- Description of the event's development, including consulting organizers or and/or reports from previous similar events, consulting relevant research articles/papers/books, and/or consulting relevant experts.
- To what extent and how does the event align with NCA's Strategic Plan and the IDEA goals?
- Explain how the success of the event will be evaluated.
- Has there been any press or social media around this event? If so, please provide copies (can be electronic).
- A financial report that aligns with the proposed budget for the event.

2.   Completion Report

Please provide a report *30 days after the last day of the event* that includes the following information:

- What were the goals of the event and how do they align with NCA's Strategic Plan and IDEA goals?
- What happened at the event? Please include a description of the activities that were undertaken during the event as well as attendance numbers (preferably broken down by relevant categories if possible, e.g., by session, graduate students/ faculty).
    - How would you characterize the diversity of the event organizers, speakers/presenters, and attendees?
- How well did the event meet its short-term goals? What were the results of the on-site post-event participant survey?
    - Please include a description of immediate outcomes of the event and/or longer-term outcomes that are being planned as well as other evaluative data that is appropriate given the specific goals of the event. Please specifically address how the event met NCA Strategic Plan and IDEA goals.
- What didn't go as planned, and why? How were you able to compensate, if you were? What are "lessons learned" for you, the granting committee, and the NCA staff?
- What plans are in place for a long-term review of the event? For events in which there is a clear list of participants, NCA asks for a draft of a survey that will be administered to participants five months after the event ends that will help to identify the long-term impact of the event (e.g.,

publications, working groups, grants, new course design) as well as a list of email addresses to which the survey will be sent.
- A final financial report that aligns actual expenses with the proposed budget.
- An articulation of practical "lessons learned" that NCA can share with organizers of future NCA- sponsored events.

3.   Long-Term Report

Please provide a report *6 months after the last day of the event* that includes the following information:

- If a survey was administered to event participants five months after the event ended, a summary of findings from the survey.
- A description of any additional outcomes of the event that were not reflected in a survey (both those that have already materialized and those that are currently underway or being planned).
- How well did the event meet its long-term goals?
- Additional thoughts about the event that might be useful to people planning similar events in the future.

Note: If your grant funds a series of events, this assessment protocol should be followed for each event. However, you should submit a summary report that assesses all the events in the series together rather than separate reports for each event. If the series extends beyond one-year, annual reports will be due.