



Tips for Writing an ISTE Research Paper Proposal

Thinking of submitting a research paper proposal for ISTE 2023? Awesome!! Here's the link where you can submit: https://conference.iste.org/2023/presenters/submit_proposal.php

But before you submit your proposal, take a look at this list of tips, curated by the current and past ISTE Research Paper chairs (Torrey Trust, Terri Cullen, Natalie Milman, & Neal Strudler), to guide your writing and submission process:

Writing Style

- **Use clear and concise language.** It's likely that at least one of your reviewers will not be familiar with your research topic. Make it as easy as possible for them to read your proposal and understand your research study.
 - My doctoral students often think they need fancy academic language (e.g., lots of big, complex words) to get a proposal accepted. They spend far too much time using a thesaurus to make their work sound more Academic-y...and that ends up making their papers too hard to read and understand. Take it from me, the more straightforward you write, the better! ~Torrey
- **Conduct a spelling and grammar check.** Papers with spelling and/or grammar errors negatively impact the reviewing experience. Take 5-10 minutes before you submit and run a check on Google, Microsoft Word, Grammarly, or use another tool.
- **Craft a catchy title.** Test your title with your colleagues, students, and other educators. Does the title and the abstract clearly explain your project? Remember that attendees will first see your title - so make sure it includes relevant information and keywords.
 - Hint: Look at blog posts and news articles related to your topic - what headlines and titles do they use to capture attention?
 - Here are some titles from the most popular sessions at ISTE Live 2022:
 - ESportU Presents: Culturally Relevant Computing Technologies for Living Learning Communities
 - What We Really Need: Educators in Indigenous Communities on Raising STEM Achievement
 - Improve Failures, Completion and Grades with Gamification

Purpose

- **Tell me why I should care about your research.** Oftentimes, as researchers, we are so immersed in our research topic that it is obvious to us why it's important, but not as obvious to other people. Make sure you make that clear. Why is your research valuable - what does it add to the field of education? Why should ISTE members go to your session to learn about your research? What are the implications of your results for scholars and educators?
- **Consider the diversity of your audience.** ISTE brings together educators from all over the world, including those working in early childhood, K-12, and higher education, and individuals from education technology related organizations and companies. Demonstrate that your research has broad appeal to a variety of audiences (this can also increase the turnout at your session when you present!).
- ISTE is one of the few conferences where research papers are regularly attended by practitioners who are trying to take your research and apply it immediately. Remember that in your proposal and **include implications for practice.** Remember that audience.

Topic Selection

- Whether you are presenting this year or not, **look at previous papers and attend other research sessions.** It not only builds the ISTE research community but also helps you to learn more about what kinds of papers are accepted to ISTE.
 - Hint: Explore the [ISTE 2022 program](#) (on the left side under "Formats" you can select "research paper") to examine the previous research papers that were selected.
- **Submit Your Important Research:** Sometimes researchers think practitioner-oriented conferences are not a good fit for research presentations. This could be farther from the truth! There are so many ISTE attendees interested in learning about educational technology research, particularly its implications for P-12 and teacher education. So, give it a try!

Submitting the Proposal

- **Pay close attention to the proposal requirements** and respond to each of the questions in the research paper sections. For example, the Purpose and Objectives section, features the following questions: What are the objectives or purposes of your research? How is your topic relevant to the education technology field and ISTE audience? Respond to **both** of these!
- **Provide a Thorough Study Description:** Clearly describe your study, including the major parts of most research studies and use sub-headings to make it clear. For instance:
 - What is the research design?
 - What type of research methods were used?

- What data and how much were collected? How were these analyzed?
- Who were the participants? (How many)?
- **Remember that it is a blind review**, do not include links or attachments that identify yourself. Make sure your name is not on the paper.
- **Be clear about your data collection and when the paper will be finished.** With the ISTE deadline being in September, you might have data but only preliminary findings, so be clear about what data you have collected and when it will be fully analyzed.
- **Substantiate Findings with Data:** This is very important! We understand sometimes research is in-progress when proposals are due or you lose steam when writing up your proposal. However, this is what ISTE attendees are really interested in! Back up your findings with data, whether it's qualitative, quantitative, or both (i.e., mixed methods)!
- **Include Citations/References:** Be sure to provide a concise, thorough literature review about the problem, as well as cite your methods. For instance, for data analysis, what established methods were used? Ensure you reference these!

Additional Tips for Success

- **Ask a colleague/mentor to review your proposal.** The more feedback you get, the better it will be. If you can't find anyone to provide feedback, consider posting in the [ISTE Commons](#) to see if 1-2 members might review your proposal and offer advice.
- **Review Proposals.** The Research papers are a blind review process. Sign up to review 5 or more papers to help increase the quality of proposals and to help your ability to write competitive papers in the future. Encourage your doctoral students and alumni to get involved too. If you submit a research paper proposal, there is a checkbox to be willing to review, that you can select. Or you can email the research chair (torrey@umass.edu).