

Request for Proposals:

Effectiveness and Efficacy of Online Driver Education Programs for Novice Teen Drivers.

Deadline: 5:00 PM Eastern Time Tuesday November 8, 2011.

Objective

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is seeking proposals for research that would measure the effectiveness and efficacy of online driver education programs for novice teen drivers. The purpose of this evaluation would be to examine the relationship between the content and delivery of online driver education programs and their effects on knowledge and licensing outcomes for novice teen drivers. Specifically, we are interested in research that would identify two or more current online programs with different characteristics; randomize study participants into the identified programs, and measure longitudinal changes in safety knowledge and possibly other measures

- Online programs should differ from one another with respect level of interaction with instructor, the time required to complete the course, linkage with on-road training, level of parental involvement, security and identity verification, and exam difficulty/rigor. It is highly recommend that you read a recently released AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety report titled "Basic Driver Education Online Programs" found at <http://69.64.191.54/pdf/2011OnlineBasicDriverEducation.pdf>
- Primary outcome measures should include: performance on state driver's license examination and short term and long term knowledge retention. You may propose additional outcome measures as well; however, all proposals should address those specified here.

In your proposal please describe and justify the method in which you will select the online programs that will be evaluated. Funding should not be used to create or enhance a new or existing online program. Please note that the AAA Foundation's goal is to evaluate the relationship between various program characteristics and safety outcomes, not to evaluate any individual program. Thus, where possible, the programs that you select should be reasonably representative of a broad variety of programs with similar characteristics offered by more than one provider, so that the results are sufficiently robust that the results would not be characterized as an evaluation of a single program, and if possible differentiate between key elements of the different programs.

Specifications

Primary Outcome Measures

Estimate of effectiveness and efficacy as measured in terms of students' performance on their state driver's license examination (e.g., proportion passing on first try, mean number of tries, or obtain actual performance data - not just pass/fail status, and short term and long term knowledge retention. You are highly encouraged to propose additional outcome measures but must address these.

Study population

We are most interested in studies that evaluate the effectiveness and efficacy of online programs among healthy novice teenage drivers. Healthy novice teen drivers are defined as drivers who are 15-17 years old without any medical/pharmaceutical complications or physical limitations that will hinder driving performance during normal driving conditions. Study participants should have a learner's permit, but have not yet enrolled in any driver education class and should not yet have a license that allows independent driving without an adult in the vehicle at the time of enrollment into the study.

Study design

Describe and justify the design of your study, including but not limited to subject recruitment, approximate number of subjects, randomization procedure, source or sources of data, and statistical methods.

Please identify any potential sources of selection bias that your study design entails, and describe how you will attempt to mitigate its effects (e.g., use of a control group). Proposals for study designs that are judged to contain major sources of selection bias that you do not clearly acknowledge and present plans to mitigate will be rejected.

Online Driver's Education Course(s)

Please propose to study online courses that are reasonably representative of what is presently available (from the perspective of a student), so that study results may reasonably be generalized beyond the particular course or courses that you study. The study design should be sufficiently robust that a positive finding would not be construed as an endorsement of a single device or service. Project funds may not be used for the development of a new online driver education course.

Project Scope:

Up to \$250,000 over a 12 – 18 month period.

Please note, we recognize that it would be ideal if a study could be conducted that used safety outcomes, such as changes in violations, citations, incidents and/or crashes; however, we also appreciate the real-world difficulties in doing so. In that context, responders are encouraged, but not required, to propose a follow-on or phase II study that is clearly differentiated from the core (phase I) study, that could be linked to the phase I effort.

Proposal Content

Your proposal should include the following sections.

1. Title page

Include:

- Title of the proposal
- Names and affiliations of all investigators.
- Address, telephone number, and email of the investigator to whom correspondence regarding the proposal is to be addressed
- An abstract, not exceeding 300 words, which addresses:
 - Objectives
 - Methods
 - Expected results
 - “So What” (described below)

2. **Objectives**: State explicitly what this project would accomplish, including the specific research questions that your project would seek to answer.
3. **Methods**: Provide a detailed description of the proposed research, including the device or service(s) that you propose to use, study population, subject recruitment, outcome measures, and statistical methods that you propose to use.
4. **Expected results**: State specifically what will be learned in your study.
5. **“So What”**: Explain clearly the potential for real-world application of the knowledge that would be gained by successful completion of your proposed project, and thoughts about dissemination and implementation of the findings to maximize their impact on traffic safety.
6. **Qualifications of the project team**: Half to one page should suffice. Please include CVs of the principal investigator(s) as a separate file. Please clearly indicate who will design, execute and report on the statistical analysis of the report (We highly recommend you identify and consult with a statistician or biostatistician while writing your proposal). Feel free to mention existing collaboration if applicable.

7. **Budget:** A one-page project budget that includes the total cost of the project, and a breakdown of total cost by major cost item by calendar year, assuming a start date of April 1, 2011. Include the indirect costs charged by your institution as a separate line item and include it in the total cost. Note that the AAA Foundation does not have a maximum indirect rate; however, total project cost is considered in funding decisions.
8. **Timeline:** An overall timeline based on a calendar year is requested. Assume an April 1, 2012 start date.
9. **References:** Please include a reference list at the end of the body of your proposal, not in an appendix. Please use the (author, date) citation format for in-text citations, and do not use footnotes.

Note, if you decide to submit a phase II proposal, you may either submit a separate proposal for it or integrate it into the core proposal, in which case you can utilize another 4 pages beyond the six page limit specified in the next section.

Proposal format

Your proposal must meet the following formatting requirements.

- Use standard letter-sized paper (8.5 x 11 inch), with at least one-inch margins on all sides.
- All text should be single-spaced and left-justified, in 12-point Arial font.
- Please do not use any headers, and do not use any footers except page numbers.
- Please do not use footnotes or endnotes.
- The body of the proposal (excluding title page and appendices) must not exceed six pages.
- Please submit the proposal in Microsoft Word format or Rich Text Format (.doc, .docx, or .rtf). Do not submit as a PDF.

Proposal Submission

Submit your proposal electronically to Jurek Grabowski, Director of Research, at jgrabowski@aaafoundation.org.

Deadline: 5:00 PM Eastern Time Tuesday November 8, 2011.

Notification for clarifications or revision:	November 15, 2011
Final clarification/revision due:	December 15, 2011
Notification of acceptance/rejection:	February 6, 2012
Anticipated project start date:	April 1, 2012

Other tips

The body of the proposal should be self-contained; it should be able to be understood by a reviewer that does not see any appendices that you may attach.

Note that those who will be reviewing your proposal are knowledgeable about most major traffic safety topics. It is important that you demonstrate awareness and understanding of literature and ongoing research most relevant to your proposal; however, it is not necessary to cite statistics to convince reviewers that traffic safety (in general) is important. It is far more important for you to describe in detail what questions your research seeks to answer, how your project will answer those questions, what methods you will use, and how the results of your study will be used to achieve real-world improvements in traffic safety.

When sending your proposal to the AAA Foundation, please give your electronic files names that will help us to recognize them quickly. We prefer file names that include the last name of the principal investigator and a shortened title, such as:

Smith-EvaluatingAntiMobileTech.doc
Smith-CV.doc
Smith-Appendix.doc

Please do not use file names such as *Proposal.doc* or *AAA_Proposal.doc*.

In most cases, electronic proposals that are consistent with these guidelines are expected to be smaller than 1 MB. Please do not include high-resolution images unless the use of high resolution is critical to the understanding of your proposal.

If you have questions, please contact Jurek Grabowski (jgrabowski@aaafoundation.org, 202-638-5944 x7).

About the Sponsor

Founded in 1947 by the American Automobile Association, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is a not-for-profit, publicly supported charitable research and education organization dedicated to saving lives by preventing traffic crashes and reducing injuries when crashes occur. Foundation funding is provided by voluntary contributions from AAA/CAA and their affiliated motor clubs, from individual members, from AAA-affiliated insurance companies, as well as from other organizations and sources.

Additional information about the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety can be obtained from www.aaafoundation.org.