Quick Guide to Dissemination for Prospective Applicants

This summary — arising from the D-Cubed Project — provides a quick guide to dissemination for those considering applying for an ALTC-funded grant. Dissemination is the planned process of understanding potential adopters and engaging with them throughout the life of the project, to facilitate commitment to sustained change.

Top 3 Findings

There are twelve findings in the D-Cubed Final Report and the Guide. Here are the top 3 for prospective applicants:

1. Dissemination is commonly described as a collection of atomistic activities, rather than as a clearly planned strategy designed to achieve a particular purpose. (Finding 6)
2. Project leaders grapple with identifying, articulating, and responding to or developing a climate of readiness for change. (Finding 10)
3. Successful dissemination strategies have multiple layers of change enablers who facilitate dissemination. (Finding 12)

To read the findings in their entirety, go to The D-Cubed Guide: Planning for Effective Dissemination.

Assess climate of readiness for change

People and systems need to be ready to change, or at least able to be convinced that change is worthwhile. This means that you need to be clear about who it is who will benefit from your project (end-users) and who would be likely to take them up (targeted potential adopters). Your assessment of the climate of readiness for change is an underpinning feature of your project rationale. Addressing climate will also help you argue the value of and need for the project. If you determine that the climate isn’t ready, then consider reshaping your project to build readiness. Remember to think about change enablers for your project because they are vital for sustainability.

Engage throughout the project

Effective dissemination can’t be an afterthought, and it needs to occur throughout the project. Think about the junctures during your project when you can usefully connect with your targeted potential adopters. Also think of how you will ensure that you can respond to opportunities to engage that arise unexpectedly during the life of the project. Other reasons to engage include further cultivating the climate of readiness for change, and building credibility, familiarity, empowerment and ownership. Use the resources in The D-Cubed Guide to develop a dissemination strategy and select appropriate dissemination activities.

Enable transfer of project outcomes

The impact of the project needs to continue after the money runs out. Top priorities for you include considering how the outcomes will be both findable and adaptable – the better you do this, the more likely it will be that people can benefit from your work. Be aware that the end of the project may not mean the end of your involvement and make sure that senior management is aware of potential ongoing involvement and workload implications.

For more information, go to The D-Cubed Guide: Planning for Effective Dissemination and the D-Cubed Project Final Report. This resource is available from http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/dissemination

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Things to consider when you apply for an ALTC grant

Dissemination Framework
Dissemination is the planned process of understanding potential adopters and engaging with them throughout the life of the project, to facilitate commitment to sustained change.

Assess climate of readiness for change
- Understand the intended impacts and perceived benefits
- Address an evident need
- Consider the feasibility of project implementation
- Ensure the project is grounded in existing knowledge
- Identify targeted potential adopters
- Identify potential change enablers
- Understand the culture and structures of institutions
- Ascertain a willingness and ability to change including readiness of leadership to bear resourcing costs.

Enable transfer of project outcomes
- Make the outcomes adaptable
- Make the outcomes findable
- Determine the capacity of the project to provide ongoing support
- Articulate the value of the project outcomes
- Nurture ongoing commitment, ownership and capacity to adopt

Engage throughout the project
- Interact with targeted potential adopters on an ongoing basis
- Plan for interaction and respond to changes and opportunities
- Build credibility and familiarity
- Cultivate readiness for change
- Build empowerment and ownership in adopters and institutions

Dissemination is most effective when all three elements are in place, resulting in the greatest possibility of embedding, upscaling and sustainability.