

Sample Cover Letter for a Position on a Funded Research Project

Candidate's Address

Date

Dr. Name

Director

Educational Project

Address

Dear Dr. Name:

I am writing to apply for the position of Classroom Ethnographer. I am a doctoral candidate at the University of X, and I plan to defend my dissertation in June.

I have done extensive classroom observation in multiethnic, high-poverty, and urban public schools of Philadelphia in order to document educational reform interventions. My most recent project was working with a team of researchers from Research Consultants, Inc. and the Center for Research at the University of X, in which we documented a math and science initiative (XYZ Science Initiatives). The research involved observing cooperative learning techniques, the use of manipulatives, and critical thinking opportunities in primary, middle, and high school classrooms. As a research team, we engaged in numerous discussions about what these instructional practices looked like, in order to code our field notes in a useful, consistent way. From this and my other experiences of observing classroom instruction, I feel confident about documenting an intervention using cooperative learning in a substance abuse curriculum.

I am also comfortable working as part of a team and in sharing data with those closely involved in the implementation of an intervention. As part of XYZ Science Initiatives, I also served in the delicate task of the bridge between the research team and the program staff in the Philadelphia School District. I shared summaries of my observations from school visits, classrooms, and professional development workshops with the program staff, which they very much appreciated. I also helped the research team understand the situation at the School District of Philadelphia.

Please let me know if you would like to see artifacts of my work, such as field notes from classroom observations (perhaps of a lesson using cooperative learning techniques), or a completed report. As you will see from my resume, I have been involved in dissemination of findings through reports to funders as well as through presentations at academic conferences; much of that work has been collaborative.

Thank you for considering me for the position, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Sherrie Candidate

Source: Heiberger, Mary Morris, and Julia Miller Vick. *The Academic Job Search Handbook*, 3rd edition. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.