

Guidelines for Research Proposals

Title Page:

Personal data (name, academic title, your position at your own university, date of birth, nationality, your contact information, institutional contact).

Title of your planned research.

Words in the title should be chosen with great care, and their association with one another must be carefully considered. While the title should be brief, it should be accurate, descriptive and comprehensive, clearly indicating the subject of the investigation.

In order to develop a clear title, you must also be clear about the focus of your research!

Strive for the title to be ten words or 60 characters: focus on or incorporate keywords that reference the classification of the research subject

Indicate a realistic time frame toward project completion, followed by the name(s) of your supervisor(s), the department where you hope to do your research and, if applicable, information about other academics with whom you plan to collaborate.

Abstract/summary statement of the research project:

This one page summary focuses on the introduction, Material and Methods of the research topic its new, current and relevant aspects, Results and conclusions drawn from the study. Strive for clarity; your greatest challenge might be narrowing the topic.

Review of research literature

A short and precise overview about the current state of research that is immediately connected with your research project. Reference the most important contributions of other scientists.

Discuss the theoretical scope or the framework of ideas that will be used to back the research.

Demonstrate that you are fully conversant with the ideas you are dealing with and that you grasp their methodological implications.

Indicate the open problem which then will be the motive for your project. State clearly how your research will contribute to the existing research.

Objective of the research project

Give a concise and clear outline of the academic (possibly also non-academic, e.g. social and political) objectives that you want to achieve through your project. Your proposal needs to show why the intended research is important and justifies the search effort. Here you outline the significance (theoretical or practical) or relevance of the topic.

Such justification may either be of an empirical nature (you hope to add to, or extend an existing body of knowledge) or of a theoretical nature (you hope to elucidate contentious areas in a body of knowledge or to provide new conceptual insights into such knowledge). All research is part of a larger scholarly enterprise and candidates should be able to argue for the value and positioning of their work.

Depending on the topic, suitable research strategies should be defined to ensure that enough and adequate empirical data will be gathered for a successful research project.

Describe the intended methods of data gathering, the controls you will introduce, the statistical methods to be used, the type of literature or documentary analysis to be followed, etc.

Timetable

Develop a time table (if possible in table form), indicating the sequence of research phases and the time that you will probably need for each phase. Take into account that at this stage, it can only be estimated, but make clear that you have an idea about the time span that will be needed for each step.

Selective research bibliography

List academic works mentioned in your research outline as well as other important works to which you will refer during your research

Attachments:

List other documents attached to your proposal.

References, CV, etc.

Once you have finished the conceptual work on your proposal, go through a careful editing stage

- Verify that the title, the abstract and the content of your proposal clearly correspond to each other!
- Maintain a clear structure, with headings and summaries, enabling the reader to quickly reference where they are for future commenting;
- Summarize significant issues and make no assumptions where possible.
- Keep a reasonable, clear, declarative writing style (active verbs!) throughout the document;

- Breakup the narrative with bulleted lists, visuals, etc. demonstrating a command of abstract concepts and relationships
- Make sure your proposal does not contain any grammatical/spelling mistakes
- Request an experienced colleague to proofread your proposal in order to ensure the proposal conforms to institutional and national / international academic standards.

Budget

- Details of the proposed budget along with the expense schedule may please be sent for the financial grant.