

How to write the research proposal - Guidelines

A research proposal is a document of around 3000-4000 words outlining the research you are going to undertake. A research proposal is intended to convince others that you have a worthwhile research project and that you have the competence and the work-plan to complete it.

Generally, a research proposal should contain all the key elements involved in the research process and include sufficient information for the readers to evaluate the proposed study. Regardless of your research area and the methodology you choose, all research proposals must address the following questions: What you plan to accomplish, why you want to do it and how you are going to do it.

Introduction:

- Topic area
- Research question
- Significance to knowledge

Make sure the proposal starts on a general level with some type of introductory remarks before going into the details of the specific research question you are proposing. This can be accomplished by providing a frame of reference, a definition, or a discussion of the significance of the topic in the field. Make sure the research question is fully stated in one place.

Literature Review:

- Previous research: others & yours
- Interlocking findings and unanswered questions
- Your preliminary work on the topic
- The remaining questions and inter-locking logic
- Reprise of your research question(s) in this context

The literature review demonstrates the applicant's knowledge of the main research achievements in the area of study. Pay attention to provide some of the key references in your area of research which requires doing extensive research on your part. Make sure whether you can easily determine how the proposal is building on earlier studies, as well as exploring a line of research that is new.

Methodology / Theoretical Framework:

- Approach
- Data needs
- Analytic techniques
- Plan for interpreting results
- Expected results

Provide a full description of your general research design, as well as the specific methods and procedures used in your research project. This section discusses what measures the researcher will take in order to test the study's hypothesis.

- i) Describe your theoretical approach or type of analysis, if applicable
- ii) Explain the details of your methods

Objectives:

- i) Give a concise and clear outline of what you intend to find out in your project and what objectives you want to achieve.
- ii) Research questions may take the form of a hypothesis to be tested against a specific set of criteria or a more open-ended inquiry.
- iii) Objectives should establish the relevance and value of the proposed research in the context of current academic thinking.
- iv) Your proposal needs to show why the intended research is important and to justify the reason for doing the research.

References:

Provide a list of all references that you have cited in the proposal.