

Guidelines for the Research Proposal

A research proposal is intended to convince the reviewers in the selection committee 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:

1. What you plan to accomplish in the time you have.
2. Why you want to do it (potential contributions; relation to your short- or long-term research plans (article, paper)).
3. How you are going to do it (specific methodology, theoretical approach, type of archives, contacts on the ground if relevant).

The proposal should be 700-1000 words long. It should have sufficient information to convince the committee's readers that you have an important or relevant research idea, that you have a good grasp of the relevant literature and the major issues, and that your methodology is sound. Please keep in mind that the readers might not be specialists in your field.

The quality of your research proposal depends not only on the quality of your proposed project, but also on the quality of your proposal writing.

Letters of Recommendation from Faculty

Please provide specific information about the applicant based on your first-hand knowledge, such as:

- Examples of what the applicant has done (e.g., if the student wrote a brilliant paper, mention its topic and why it stood out).
- Merits of the proposed research project -- background and rationale, research questions, methodology, plan of work and time schedule, short bibliography.
- Positive impact the opportunity would have on the student's short- or long-term specific research goals (article, paper) and overall educational trajectory.