

RESEARCH PROSPECTUS

Goal

- To effectively demonstrate how research will be conducted and why it is important.

Exercise

1. The research prospectus takes the research plan and fleshes it out into a complete written work. Remember that proposals are used as a means to evaluate whether a project should be allowed to go forward or whether it should be funded. Thus the proposal is not a collection of facts about a topic, but an argument that you are making about the utility and validity of the research, as well as your competence as the project director. Why should a company/municipality/advisor/funding agency put time and money into this research project and into you as the project director?
2. The introduction should be well-honed by now. The relevance and context of the problem, the question and the topic should be clearly stated. It should be well-written and well-laid out so that the reader is eager to read the details of your proposed study. If you lose the reader's interest in this section, it is an uphill battle to regain it through the rest of the prospectus.
3. The background or literature review section should provide information about the history and context of your research question. How have other people addressed this question? How do they compare to your research? This section sets up why and how your research will add to the current base of knowledge. This is where you need to demonstrate your breadth and depth of knowledge on the problem. A poorly written background section will affect your credibility as a researcher. Use Krathwohl and Smith's Worksheet 4.3 to evaluate your writing in this section.
4. The methodology section is the heart of the proposal. You should clearly lay out exactly what you will be collecting data on, how the data will be analyzed and why. Use Krathwohl and Smith's Worksheet 5.1 to evaluate your writing in this section. Also see the grading rubric.
5. The proposal should end with a conclusions section that summarizes what the research will do and why it is important to do this research.
6. In text citations and the references cited section (bibliography) should be in AAG format. All appropriate text should be referenced.
7. Tables and figures should be used to summarize and illustrate information within your proposal. For example, you may want to produce a flow chart to illustrate how the different parts of the research are connected. Or you may have a table that lists the datasets you will be using, how large the samples are, what their sources are, etc. Visual aids can greatly enhance the reader's comprehension of the topic and creating visual aids forces you to think about how the parts fit together.
8. The prospectus should be 10 - 20 pages, double-spaced, one inch margins, 12 point font. You must also submit drafts to turnitin.com to check for wording that may be flagged as too similar.

Prospectus Grading Rubric

	Excellent	Very Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Topic, Question, Problem	Topic, question, and problem are clear and well-focused.	The TPQ is clear, but could be refined or narrowed down.	The TPQ is somewhat clear and could be better refined.	The TPQ is not clear and too broad.
Significance	A clear and well-written exposition of the significance & the importance is present.	A reasonable exposition of the significance & the importance is present.	Some description of the significance & importance is present but it is not well-written.	The significance and importance of your topic is either not present or very poorly described.
Introduction	Well-written and interesting, making the reader eager to continue reading	Adequately written , but does not completely hold the reader's interest	Adequately written, but does not hold the reader's interest	Is poorly written and does not entice the reader to continue
Background	Demonstrates the researcher has a substantial breadth and depth of knowledge on the subject	Demonstrates the researcher's breadth and depth of knowledge is good	Suggests the researcher's breadth and depth of knowledge is the bare minimum	Suggests the researcher's breadth and depth of knowledge is poor
Method: Sampling	Well-defined and clearly explained population, sample and sampling strategy	Population, sample and sampling strategy mostly well-explained	Population, sample and sampling strategy are described minimally	Population, sample and sampling strategy are poorly laid out
Method: Measures	Choice of measures clearly explained	Choices mostly explained well	Choices explained minimally	Choices are not explained well
Method: Analyses	Choices clearly explained and details of how analyses will be conducted are clearly laid out	Choices mostly explained well and how analyses will be conducted are sufficiently clear	Choices explained adequately and how analyses will be conducted are adequately described	Choices not explained well and how analyses will be conducted are poorly laid out
Method: Alternatives	Alternative explanations evaluated and addressed well	Alternative explanations generally evaluated and addressed well	Alternative explanations evaluated and addressed minimally	Alternative explanations evaluated and addressed poorly
Conclusions	Summarize the research and its importance well	Generally summarize the research and its importance well	Summarize the research and its importance adequately	Summarize the research and its importance poorly
In-Text Citations	All non-original ideas are well-referenced.	Most non-original ideas are well-referenced.	Many statements are unsubstantiated.	References are seldom cited to support statements.
Bibliography	All references cited are in the bibliography, which follows the style guide.	Most references cited are in the bibliography, which follows the style guide.	References are cited in the bibliography, but few follow the style guide.	References did not follow style guide.

	Excellent	Very Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Structure	All paragraphs within a section flow well from one to the next	All paragraphs within a section generally flow well from one to the next	All paragraphs within a section flow somewhat from one to the next	All paragraphs within a section flow poorly
Paragraph Construction	All paragraphs include introductory sentence, explanations or details, and concluding sentence.	Most paragraphs include introductory sentence, explanations or details, and concluding sentence.	Paragraphs included related information but were typically not constructed well.	Paragraphing structure was not clear and sentences were not typically related within the paragraphs.
Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors	A few grammatical spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical spelling, or punctuation errors.
Overall	This project should be given priority for funding	This project should be funded ,but is in the second tier for funding priority	This project should rewrite and resubmit the proposal for the next funding round	This project should not be funded