

Guide to PhD Proposal Writing (for the Purpose of Application)

The proposal should be around 2000-2500 words

Title

The title should be able to convey and focus the area of the proposed research. For the purpose of application, it can be a tentative title.

Problem Statement

This would include the problem that you would like to focus in your research. You need to identify the agencies which faces the problem and the benefits the solutions can bring in. It should also mention the discipline or disciplines within which it falls.

Literature Review

In this a student is expected to give some key references – articles and books, on the topic of the research. It is also expected that the student is able to demonstrate that her/his proposed area of research will meet the gaps found through the literature review.

Rationale of the Study

This should state why the student wants to do research in the proposed area. In other words it will give an idea about the significance of the study, including the newness in knowledge, method of analysis, etc.

Key Research Questions

Some key research questions are expected from the student at this stage, which can be further modified after extensive literature review and pilot study (if required) during the course of the research work.

Objectives of Your Research

The student is expected to give one broad objective and a few specific objectives of the study, primarily stating what they would like to do in the proposed area of research. Limit the specific objectives to not more than two to three.

Conceptual Framework and Methodological Tools

This should contain the concepts and theoretical underpinnings of the proposed area of research. Methodological tools should be linked to objectives of the study. It explains how you are going to do the research, including the sources of data, sampling technique to be used, methods of data collection and data analysis.

Time Frame

It will contain the list of major activities of research, time and resources required for each activity. You may present in the form of a Gantt chart.

Bibliography

This should include a list of references – key articles and books that you have referred for the purpose of the application.