



## Factsheet – Research Proposal

A well-conceived research proposal is a key element of every application in any scientific setting. This factsheet intends to give you a general idea of what to focus on when writing your research proposal.

### What is a research proposal?

A research proposal is aimed at convincing others of the important contribution your project will make to the scientific debate. In addition, it should include evidence that you will be able to successfully carry out your dissertation project within the given time frame and budget.

What makes a good proposal? As a general rule, a research proposal should address the following questions:

- What is the research project about?
- Why is the project relevant to the area of research?
- How does the candidate propose to carry out the project?
- What is the proposed time scale for the project?

A well-structured research proposal answers these questions step by step and in a transparent manner. The length of a research proposal typically varies between 3 and 10 pages.

Please find below an example of a research proposal as a general structural guideline.



## Research Proposal

### Name of the doctoral candidate

Surname	First name
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### Working title

Working title

### Company (external candidates only)

Company name and contact person within the company

### Supervisor

Contact person from the Diesel Medal Postgraduate Programme

### Time scale

From month/year to month/year

### Management summary (please keep it brief and generic)

### Version of

Month/year



## Research Proposal

### Table of contents

1. Research problem
2. Present state of research
3. Research question
4. Research approach and methodology
5. Provisional time schedule
6. Publication
7. Literature



## Research Proposal

### 1. Research problem

- The title should explain as clearly as possible what the proposed research project is about
- Broader context
- Definition and delimitation of the research object
- Why is your project relevant?



## Research Proposal

### 2. Present state of research

- What is the present state of research?
- Why is your project relevant?
- Which work by other scientists are you referring to?
- What is the question you intend to answer?



## Research Proposal

### 3. Research question

- What are you aiming to find out?
- Formulation of the key questions
- What could your research outcome look like?
- Working hypotheses



## Research Proposal

### 4. Research approach and methodology

- How do you intend to answer your research question?
- What theoretical framework is your project based on?
- How do you intend to collect the data for your project (experiments, randomised controlled studies, surveys, etc.)?
- How do you intend to evaluate the data?



## Research Proposal

### 5. Provisional time schedule

- Work steps, milestones, etc.
- Approximately how much time will each phase and step require?





## Research Proposal

### 6. Publication

- Will your findings be published as a book or as a series of articles?
- Will there be additional publications?



## Research Proposal

### 7. Literature

- List of publications on relevant theories, etc.
- List of references used in your research proposal