

Overview of Proposal Writing

Why should I apply?

Successful applications demonstrate that your research potential has been validated on a national or international level.

The process itself aids in defining and refining your research agenda.

It also provides valuable feedback and networking experience.

Successful grant and fellowship applications tend to result in other successful applications.

When should I apply?

When you are in a position to make a good application and can accept the award.

Begin the process at least two months in advance of deadlines.

October, November, and January are the most common deadline months.

What are the typical components of an application?

Letters of recommendation, CV, transcripts, GRE scores, TOEFL scores, etc.

Personal statement

Project proposal

These statements should answer the questions:

What now?

What is the thesis or central claim of your research project?

What is the greater significance of your project?

Where does this project fit within your discipline?

What exact steps will you take to execute this project?

Why now?

Why is right now the perfect time for you to undertake this project?

What skills, training, and experience do you have that make you qualified to complete this project?

How will this help you realize your future career goals?

These statements should also directly address your audience.

Understand the granting institution's mission and goals and speak to them.

Keep in mind the make-up of the review committee.

Realize readers will likely spend only ten minutes or less on your application.

Basic steps to a complete application:

Review the program announcement.

Familiarize yourself with the application process.

Study the scoring or evaluation criteria.

Project proposal:

Create a research plan outline and review it with a faculty mentor.

Write a draft of your project proposal.

Read your proposal and make improvements.

Visit the Writing Center and/or English for Academic Purposes program fellows.

Give the draft to your faculty advisor for feedback.

Revise based on feedback. Repeat as necessary.

Personal Statement:

Think of the relevant elements of your background and experience.

Write a draft of your personal statement.

Read your statement and make improvements.

Visit the Writing Center and/or English for Academic Purposes program fellows.

Revise based on feedback. Repeat as necessary.

Give your project proposal and personal statement to your referees.

Edit and proofread your drafts.

Prepare the final drafts and complete application.

You should plan to meet with the Grants and Fellowships adviser at least once during this process.

Letters of reference:

Ask prospective referees for their support well in advance of the application deadline, and provide all the necessary information in good time, i.e. *at least* three weeks in advance.

Provide your referees with a copy of your project and personal statements and a copy of the guidelines.

Please keep in mind that a recommendation letter should address:

The student's intellectual merit and strength of character

The significance of the project within the student's field and beyond

The student's preparedness to undertake the project

The feasibility of the project's completion within the grant year