Research Proposal Checklist

Use this Research Proposal Checklist as a general guideline to ensure your application’s success.

A title

☐ Does it summarize the main idea of my proposed research in an exciting way in no less than 10-12 words?
☐ Is it a concise statement of my research challenge?
☐ Will the general public understand it?
☐ Can it stand alone? Is it fully explanatory?
☐ Does every word serve a useful purpose?
☐ Do I avoid abbreviations?

Background and Significance

☐ Do I provide a brief description of my proposed research? Is this description based on the period during which I am to hold the funding award?
☐ Do I explain how the results of my research will advance the general understanding of this topic?
☐ Do I explain how the results of my research fill a knowledge gap?

Research challenge and question

☐ Do I have a formal and clear statement of my proposed study’s purpose, particularly my research challenge and its associated research questions?
☐ Do I make a convincing case for why my research challenge and questions?
☐ Are my research challenge and questions developed from relevant peer-reviewed literature?
☐ Do I present and develop my research challenge and questions with enough breadth and clarity so reviewers who are not familiar with it can understand its significance?
☐ Do my research challenge and questions connect? Are they logical, researchable, achievable, and ethical?

Literature review

☐ Does my literature review justify my research challenge and questions?
☐ Does my literature review identify gaps, shortcomings, and limitations in existing research giving context to my study?
☐ Do I demonstrate a thorough and current understanding of the peer-reviewed literature relating to my topic?
☐ Does my literature review provide the most pertinent literature related to my challenge, rather than an exhaustive historical review, while still giving credit to those relevant early works?
☐ Do I avoid substituting one similar term for another and indicate that I intend to use a single term as a proxy?

Theoretical framework/Methodology

☐ Do I identify a theoretical framework and methodology to guide my research?
Do I explain the approach I intend to use to solve the challenge in my study? Is it explicit and well thought out?

Are both my theoretical framework and methods tied to my research challenge and questions?

Does both my theoretical framework and methodology show an understanding of relevant peer-reviewed literature?

Are my procedures well organized and clearly described?

Do I discuss how confidentiality of subjects and their responses will be maintained? (if applicable)

Timeline

Does my timeline name dates for specific achievements? And does it pertain to the goals I have set out to achieve?

Is my timeline manageable and realistic? Do I allow adequate time for completion of each stage?

Is the sequence for completion logical?

Is my timeline appropriate for the funding cycle for which I am requesting funds?

Budget/resources

Is my budget sufficiently detailed to justify funding requests?

Is it realistic and appropriate to fund the tasks described?

Are all anticipated expenses included? Do I provide a complete overview of proposed expenditures and funds?

Did I explore all possible alternatives for purchase of needed equipment?

Do I include all additional funding from other sources? (if applicable)

Conclusion/outcomes

Do I provide a strong conclusion that demonstrates the micro and macro implications of my research and how it will help to fill a knowledge gap?

Dissemination

Do I indicate some type of formal distribution for the findings of my proposed research?

References

Do I provide a list of cited references that are current and relevant?

Am I using the correct citation style?

Do I cite my references appropriately in my literature review, theoretical review, and methodology?