



CCRF: Liew Family College Research Fellows Fund

Research Proposal Guidance

Research Proposal: maximum 1000 words, single spaced, 12-point font (.pdf). Please include the title of your project and name in the header of your essay.

1. In your research proposal, please describe in your own words the project - its **general aims, structure, and what you and your mentor hope to accomplish** through the research project. You may include citations and an additional page of supplementary information, as relevant, which will not be included in your word count. Please treat this as a formal research proposal; it should be written clearly and carefully. It functions as the core of your application and its quality will determine the success of your application.
2. In addition to detailing your research aims and objectives, please also address your motivations for pursuing the research experience and how this experience will contribute to your education at UChicago and the development of your future plans.

[Section 1]: Research Project Overview: introduction and aims/objectives

- This section should lay the groundwork for your research topic, explicitly introduce your research topic and/or question(s), and explain the salience or relevance of the research. You should also specify the goal of your proposed research project. If you are continuing work with a faculty on a larger project, you should use this section to introduce the broader goals of the research and what portion of the work you will support/advance.

[Section 2]: Research Context: background and significance

- In this section, please address the following: what do we already know about this research topic? Your response to this question is often referred to as a “literature review” and affirms that you are aware of previous scholarship on the topic. You should also address what we don’t know, why knowing the answers would be important, and how your research project will contribute to our broader understanding of the subject or topic of the project. Answers to these questions help to establish the significance of your research topic or questions.

[Section 3]: The “HOW”: research plan, methodology, and potential outcomes

- This section *should* be the longest portion of your proposal. It must detail “how” you will undertake your research, including a detailed explanation of the work and justification for why this timeline/location/activity/research mentor is appropriate. Please include a timeline, major phases, and the location(s) of your research. This will alert the reader to the feasibility of your work. Lay out in clear, lucid text the tasks you propose to undertake and justify those activities. Explain how you will analyze/interpret your data and/or sources. Clearly indicate the anticipated end results or hoped for outcomes of your project (e.g., publication, thesis chapter, presentation



or poster, etc.). Close this section with an indication of the significance of your findings, including the broader impacts.

[Section 4]: Preparation for research (could be imbedded in above sections)

- Use this section to explain in detail how you are prepared to undertake this research. Explain how your academic background, research training and/or experience and any other relevant experiences have prepared you to carry out your proposed project successfully.

[Section 5]: Motivation for research experience and benefit of the grant

- Use this concluding section to underscore your personal motivations for pursuing a scholarly undergraduate research experience and how the grant program will advance your academic and post-graduate goals.

Tip: Use clear, jargon-free language throughout your proposal. Abstract, overly theoretical language will not serve you well. Your reader will not re-read your proposal in an effort to understand what you are trying to say.