HOW TO WRITE A RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP PROPOSAL

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The role of the proposal is where you prove:

1. You understand the steps involved in a research project

2. There is a gap in current knowledge and that gap needs filling

3. The question is solvable within the timeframe of a masters program (i.e. appropriate scope)

4. You are the right person to do this research

5. What impact/outcomes it might have (this is the "So What" factor)

THIS IS THE STANDARD FRAMEWORK:

…EVEN USE THESE AS HEADINGS TO HELP GUIDE THE READER

- 1. Introduction / Research Question
- 2. Purpose
- 3. Objectives
- 4. Theoretical Framework
- 5. Literature Review
- 6. Methodology
- 7. Methods – Data Collection
- 8. Data Analysis
- 9. Knowledge Mobilization/Dissemination

1. INTRODUCTION / RESEARCH QUESTION

- Be brief but precise

- Provide the overarching context of what your research is about and why it's worthwhile

- What makes a "good" question?
  - Specific, targeted
  - Not a 'yes/no' question
  - Understandable to general audience

Here's an excellent video on How to Create A Research Question
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BObOQHvvFQ

2. PURPOSE

- Purpose statement – what you seek to contribute in the broader sense

- May consider those contributions at various levels
  - Individual, organizational, community, national, international, environmental, social, cultural, economic, political, scholarly

- Why should anyone care – make the case for the need for this project

- How are you qualified to conduct this research?

3. OBJECTIVES

- Specific and concrete – what you are going to do?

- Should lead directly to outcomes that support your overall purpose

- Need to be consistent throughout the proposal

- Need to be doable/realistic in terms of timeframe, abilities, resources, etc.

Video on the Difference Between Objectives and Goals
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGOQSSIDZaQ

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Be explicit about the theoretical approach(es) and/or framework(s) you are using

- Explain WHY these are appropriate theoretical approaches/frameworks

- When you are done – TIE YOUR RESULTS BACK TO THE FRAMEWORKS/APPROACHES

I like this explanation of what a theoretical framework is
http://www.trentu.ca/history/workbook/theoreticalframeworks.php

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Identify what's been done in this field

- Ensure that you know the 'seminal' works, authors, findings

- Identify the gap in the research

- Identify WHY the gap should be addressed

- Situate the project within your overall record
  - why are you the right person to do this?
  - what's your background
  - is this a logical progression from previous work and research?

6. METHODOLOGY

- Explain the methodology you are going to use.

- Examples:
  - case study
  - institutional ethnography
  - systematic analysis
  - phenomenology
  - meta-synthesis
  - More http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Research_methods

- State WHY it is the right one to use

7. METHODS

- Explain WHAT you will do
  - Data collection
    - What are you going to gather and how will you gather it?
      - Documents
      - Interviews
      - Published pieces
  - Provide a timeline if there's space in your proposal

8. DATA ANALYSIS

- Explain what you're going to do with the data once you have it
  - Coding
  - Themes
  - Memoing

  Not good enough …… what method of analysis will you use?

 Here's a great list of analysis methods
http://www2.uvawise.edu/pww8y/Resources/Methods/TypesAnalysis/00TypesAnalysis.html

9. KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION/DISSEMINATION

- Identify the stakeholders of the results – who might be interested in your results

- Identify how you're going to get the results to those people/groups, and others – presentations?, reports?, journal articles?, media?

- Make sure the activities flow logically from the progression of the project