



## The Statement of Grant Purpose or Research Proposal

In general, a statement of grant purpose or proposal is about a specific project or opportunity in the future: it explains what you *propose to do*. This can be a research project, course of study, or professional experience.

A proposal is a kind of persuasive writing. You must persuade the committee that what you propose is important, and that you can do it. The selection committee will want to know you can carry out what you're proposing within the allotted amount of time with the given amount of funding, so what you propose must be feasible. While all proposals have features in common, **always address the specific guidelines provided by the fellowship program.**

**Research proposals** are written to address a clearly-stated problem or issue that motivates your research. The research proposal provides *essential* background information and/or the scholarship necessary for an understanding of the project. It explains the importance of your research to the field and outlines your research plan, showing the steps involved (the "methodology"). Research proposals should be written under the guidance of a faculty mentor who can help you address the research plan and the significance of the project.

**Study proposals** must convince the committee that there's a compelling reason why you should study a particular subject in a particular program. Typically, a problem or issue motivates the course of study. Thus the question that must be answered directly and persuasively is, *Why must I absolutely study there?*

**Professional Experience/Internship proposals** prove that you can undertake a specific job by showing what you bring to the table. In this sense, the proposal is very much like a cover letter. It highlights the essential skills and experiences necessary for doing the job. To do this, address each point in the program's 'job description' to show that you are the perfect candidate.

### Tips for Getting Started:

Write a paragraph or two for each of the following questions:

1. What *exactly* do you intend to do during the fellowship tenure? Be very detailed!
2. How *exactly* will you do it? Be very detailed!
3. Why is this fellowship *necessary* for you to get it done? Provide specific details.