



What makes a good research proposal?

To fit our definition of research your proposal must...

- define a series of research questions, issues or problems that will be addressed through your proposed project.
- specify a research context for those questions.
- specify the research methods for addressing those questions.

What makes a good proposal?

- Quality of proposed research
- Significance and importance of the project and the contribution it will make
- Appropriateness, effectiveness and feasibility of the proposed research methods
- A realistic timetable
- Ability of researcher to bring the project to completion
- Dissemination methods
- Will the outputs and outcomes be highly valued and widely exploited?

Understand what is expected & how it will be assessed.

- Choose the right programme for your research. To ensure that your proposal has an appropriate fit to the Beyond Text Programme, please refer to the *Beyond Text Programme Specification* which is available on our website.
- Ensure the aims and criteria of the scheme are met. Scheme specific guidance for *Beyond Text Small Research Grants* is available on our website.
- PI response – this can be very useful for the Commissioning Panel and is a valuable opportunity that should not be missed or underestimated.

Recognise that:

- your proposal must be transparent
- success is about communicating efficiently

Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria can vary according to the aims for each scheme – see the Beyond Text Small Research Grants guidance for information specific to the scheme.

Some common criteria are:

- **Quality and importance**
 - We are looking for well-framed proposals that will produce high quality research, and will make a significant contribution to their relevant field/s.
 - Research questions that are clear and focussed
 - Research methods that will provide enough detail to answer RQs e.g. for interviews, how many people, why those people, what process?
 - Research context that explains why the work is important and shows an awareness of related work
- **People**
 - Are they the right people to carry out the work proposed?
 - Participants have appropriate expertise/experience; if interdisciplinary is there a sufficiently broad range of participants; balance of staffing appropriate – would it be better to have an RA rather than a Co-I or a technician rather than an RA?

- **Management**
 - Is the management appropriate to the complexity and scope of the project?
 - Need to demonstrate that the PI has sufficient time to manage project; clearly explain the responsibilities of team members; how will the PI co-ordinate and monitor the workloads of those involved; how will the timetable be met?
- **Outputs and dissemination**
 - Outputs must be realistic within timescale and show consideration of potential audiences. What are the plans for publication and dissemination? Are they clearly explained and are they appropriate?
- **Value for money and appropriateness of resources requested**
 - Not an examination of individual salaries or indirect or estates costs but do need to justify that the balance and level of staffing is appropriate. Will a PhD student add value? Are 2 RAs really needed? Is the amount of travel necessary for research?
 - Also assessing the return on the investment. Does the potential impact on research community justify sum sought?

Useful information can be found here

- Read the Beyond Text Small Research Grants guidance
- Read the Beyond Text Programme specification document
- Read the Je-S helptext
- Contact the Je-S helpdesk for technical problems, not the AHRC

Other activities that may be useful

- Internal peer review of your proposal
- Use your research office. They are best placed to advise you on how to cost your project and queries regarding fEC
- Regular meetings with mentors
- Know your contact at the AHRC and ask them for advice

Contact Us

For procedural enquiries about eligibility and the proposal process, please contact:

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Full details of the Beyond Text Programme are available on our website at www.ahrc.ac.uk

Full helptext is available in JeS. For any JeS related queries, please contact the JeS helpdesk at JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk or on 01793 444164.

Enquires about the academic content of the Beyond Text Programme, its aims and themes, should be directed to the Programme Director, Professor Evelyn Welch.

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