

Yale JACKSON INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Career Services

General Tips for Writing a Fellowship Proposal:

- These are writing samples – the rules of good writing (clarity, conviction, and correctness) apply.
- Proofread, edit, and ask others to read/edit.
- Read guidelines carefully.
- Be as specific as possible without being disingenuous.
- Be concise and clear. Committees are reading hundreds of applications, and confusing ones get tossed out. Be clear up front what about you're doing, why, and how it benefits you, your research, and your professional objectives.
- Learn objectives of the grant and tailor your proposals to the grant without disguising who you are and what you want to do.
- If you apply to do an internship, explain how that internship relates to your research and how you will tie in elements of research to the work.
- If your grant is for research, be clear about the question, why it is important and why it is interesting in both the literature and current events.
- Make it clear that you have the skills and abilities (language, statistical, comfort with difficult situations, etc) to undertake your project.
- Your academic bibliography is not a helpful application (ie I took this class, got interested in this, and then took another class which framed this, and then I decided to do this...). If there are important components of your academic background that support your proposal, include them, but no need to reiterate your transcript.
- Make sure all information is accurate, and be prepared to discuss in some detail anything you mention.

Explain Briefly Where, When, What, Who, How, and Why:¹

WHERE	... do you want to go and why? (be specific about geographic locales, institutions you will visit or be affiliated with, etc. and your rationale for those decisions)
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WHEN	... do you want to go? (be specific as possible about arrival/departure dates and internal travel, e.g. if you are traveling within a country, how long you do intend to spend in each city?)
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WHAT	<p>... do you propose to do in your project?</p> <p>... questions will you seek to address? (provide 2-3 core questions?)</p> <p>... special skills or preparation do you have to undertake the project (e.g., languages, coursework, prior travel experiences, archival research experience, etc.)</p> <p>... challenges or difficulties do you anticipate your project will pose and how will you overcome them?</p>
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¹ Derived from The MacMillan Center Office of Fellowship Programs handout on Writing a Fellowship Proposal.

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WHO	<p>... have you contacted at your destinations and have they agreed to help/host you?</p> <p>... have you consulted on the Yale faculty that might serve as a mentor or advise you on this project?</p>
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HOW	<p>... did you select the project or the specific place where you will carry out the work?</p> <p>... will you find answers to your core questions (be specific as possible about methodology)?</p> <p>... is your approach to this topic different from others who may have worked on similar questions?</p> <p>... will the experience of this project serve to advance your personal, academic, or career goals?</p> <p>... will you document your experience (notes, journals, recordings, photography, drawings, etc.)</p> <p>... might you share the experience once you return to Yale? (publication, public talk, etc.)</p>
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WHY	<p>... is your project important or timely?</p> <p>... is this project important to you?</p> <p>... might this project be important to us?</p>
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