

## Proposed Plan of Graduate Study and Research

The Proposed Plan of Graduate Study and Research is a two page, double-spaced statement that presents your graduate research plans, explains why your chosen institution is well suited for your proposed research, describes how your research relates to society as a whole, and paints a portrait of your long-range career goals.

The prompt reads as follows:

*Applicants should prepare a document describing the proposed plan of graduate study. In general, the more academic experience the applicant has, the more sophisticated the proposal should be.*

- *Description of the chosen area of study and the **research issue of interest**.*
- *Explanation of **why the chosen institution is especially suited** to the field of study and the type of study to be undertaken.*
- *Explanation of the **relevancy of courses** to be taken and how they relate to the proposed plan of study and research.*
- ***Description of the research to be conducted** including general methods and a timeline.*
- *Explanation of **long-range career goals** and how this fellowship will advance the applicant's career.*
- *Explanation of **how the proposed research relates to a larger community and society as a whole** and why study will be useful.*

## Getting Started

Go to the [Ford Predoctoral Fellowship Example](#) and review how the applicant constructed their Proposed Plan of Graduate Study to address all of the bullet points presented in the statement prompt. Note how the first section of the statement is dedicated to a proposed research plan that includes rationale, research question, study system, and methodology. Note how subsequent sections address the intellectual merit of the research and how the proposed research relates to society as a whole, why the chosen institution is well suited, how the coursework will aid the proposed research, and how the statement ends with a description of future goals and a commitment to scholarship and to serving the diverse needs of all students.

You'll note how the applicant uses a superscript citation format in the text and provides full citations in a single-spaced References section.

## Try it yourself!

Given the tight two-page limit of your Proposed Plan of Graduate Study, it's crucial that you make every word count! To ease into this process, first meet with your research mentor to discuss project ideas that you can build into your proposal. Additionally, rather

than jumping straight into writing, try the similar prewriting strategies that were discussed in the [Personal Statement](#) and [Previous Research](#) modules.

Use the following questions to help guide you in developing your Graduate Research Plan:

- How does your proposed research suggest and explore **creative, original**, or potentially **transformative** concepts?
- How does your proposed research **fill a gap and advance knowledge** and understanding within the field and across fields?
- How will the courses you take **prepare you for your research goals**?
- What are the **benefits and impacts** of your proposed research within the field and across fields?
- How will you **foster collaborations**?
- How will you actively **publish and present** your scholarly findings within and across disciplines?

Ask your research mentor to review drafts of your proposed research plan for substance, clarity, and organization. Work with Fellowship Mentors on the overall flow and impact of this statement as it includes much more than just a proposed plan of research. Even if the Fellowship Mentors are not experts in your field, your reviewers may not be experts in your field as well, they'll give you valuable insights and feedback on the flow and effect of your narrative.