

**Assignment #2:  
A PROPOSAL**

7-10 pages

**Due: Tues., 3/9**

Constrained layout  
-stick to it

For this assignment, you will develop an idea for either a research or a service project. You will then write a formal proposal for funding to carry out the project. The purpose of this assignment is for you to become familiar with the format, content, and style of a proposal. It can even serve as the basis for an actual proposal that you submit for funding for a real project.

**I. Types of Projects**

real or fake project

**A. A summer research project**

**B. A summer service project**

(see MIT Service Learning Center website for ideas)

**II. Factors to Consider**

**A. Research project**

What is the topic of your study? What are the specific aims of your study? Why are you interested in this project? What qualifications do you have for carrying out this project? Where will you carry out the work? Who (if anyone) will you be working with? What materials will you need? What do you expect to accomplish in the given timeframe? What will you produce by the end of the project? Do you anticipate that the project will continue beyond one summer? How will this project contribute to your own educational, professional, and personal goals?

time frame -  
8-10 weeks

Why interested  
in project

**B. Service Project**

What are the purpose and specific aims of your project? Where will the project take place and why? Who will benefit from your project, and how will they benefit? How will you implement the project? Will you be collaborating with other individuals or organizations? What background and experience do

what qualifications

next Tue; topic workshop

where - specific  
as possible

1 time or ongoing

who w/  
-org  
materials  
end goals

you have that qualify you to carry out this project? What preparations have you done or will you do? What materials will you need? Will there be follow-up after you leave? Do you anticipate the project continuing? How will this project contribute to your own educational, professional, and personal goals?

accountability

### III. Format of the Proposal

- Title page - as proposal title, submitted to by, affiliation
- Abstract (1 paragraph) date
- Table of Contents
- Background & Aims (~2 pages) what you want to
- Proposed Project (a detailed description) (~6 pages) achieve - why significant
- Materials and Budget (1 page)
- Biography (1/2 page) L Detailed description
- Bibliography (optional) what I am going to do
- Appendix (optional) get timeframe right

Short concise  
Overview  
last thing to write  
back ground  
Context  
how where  
budget  
6 sentences

### IV. Developing and Writing the Proposal

- Decide on the type of project you want to do
- Decide on the topic of your project
- Develop a sketch of your preliminary idea
- Conduct background research
- Write up a draft of the Proposed Project section first; then work on the other sections. Write the Abstract last.
- Finally, revise and edit the whole document

reasonable understanding  
of cost

People actually  
read only  
25% of  
articles

bold face separate  
heading

NSF + NIH

- profs on committees
- lots of time to review proposals (75-100)
- for lots of \$
- so just read abstract
- capture attention

## V. Who is Your Audience and What is Your Purpose?

Your audience will depend on the type of project you select and the funding agency to which you submit it. It could be MIT staff (and faculty) associated with the Service Learning Center. It could be a panel associated with some outside agency or foundation (e.g., Ford Foundation, National Science Foundation, UNESCO). Your goal is to convince your reviewers that your proposal is worthy of funding. To accomplish that goal, your idea must be well thought out. Moreover, you must *show* that it's well thought out by communicating very clearly the content, design, and significance of your project, as well as your qualifications for and commitment to carrying it out.

time pressure  
lots of version  
lots of feedback gotten  
turned in at last min

Revision who  
people who know that  
field, but may not  
be specialist  
but enough detail to  
- convince specialists  
you know what you  
are doing  
- and not too simple  
for general audience

persuasive + argumentative  
today, medical - 10-12%  
have to establish a need  
get it selected in a very competitive manner

must be careful w/ learned from failure  
- positive light

tone: formal, but natural  
Some profs hate passive  
- esp. history profs  
but in this class passive is Ok

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Active Joe wrote a novel  
Passive A novel was written by Joe  
[what is acted on is subject]

can obscure subject  
"Mistakes were made."  
"Many proposals were funded."