

For instructions to upload your completed workbook to the DPDF Workspace, click [here](#).

Name of Fellow:**Introduction**

Proposal writing—whether as a prospectus to submit to your department or a proposal to a funding agency—is a particular form of writing which requires an understanding of its distinct components and how they interact with one another. This workbook is designed to help you through the proposal writing process by focusing your attention on these components prior to writing a full dissertation proposal. Later this summer, your task will be to use your completed workbook to help you draft a proposal for discussion at the fall workshop.

To get the most out of the workbook we ask that you write as succinct a summary as possible within each component section rather than simply cut and paste excerpts from draft proposals that you might already have written.

Here are a few points to consider when completing the workbook:

- Both within and outside of the DPDF Program, your work will be reviewed and critiqued by scholars coming from a range of different disciplines, regional foci, and topics of expertise. Describe your proposed project in terms accessible to this broad academic audience.
- If you are unsure about any component addressed in this workbook, this is a good place to bring these issues to the forefront. Your peers and faculty facilitators can help you figure out how to evaluate and test your options and to decide upon a resolution that best suits your goals.
- Although we recommend that you complete this workbook section-by-section in numerical order, you may prefer to do so in a non-linear manner, beginning where you feel comfortable. Whichever way you choose, we cannot stress enough the importance of reflecting upon how the research goals you identify in the first section are supported by the other sections.

Sections in this workbook:

[Section 1: Defining Your Issue](#)

[Section 2: Situating Your Project within a Scholarly Context](#)

[Section 3: Explaining Your Choice of Focus, Sources, and Methods](#)

[Section 4: Implementing Your Research Plan](#)

[Section 5: Analyzing Your Compiled Evidence](#)

[Section 6: Emphasizing your Qualifications](#)

[Section 7: Summing It Up: The Abstract](#)

[Section 8: Describing your Summer Research](#)

Section 1. Defining Your Issue

As succinctly as possible, introduce the topic of your dissertation and the problem you want to solve or question that you want to answer through your research. Depending on your disciplinary background, you may characterize this as solving a puzzle, testing a hypothesis, introducing new modes of interpretation, or something else. Regardless of how you characterize your research goals, be sure to explain what your project will do in a way that can be understood by scholars both within and outside of your discipline who may not be familiar with your topic.

Please limit your response to approximately 300 words.

Section 2. Situating Your Project within a Scholarly Context

Describe how your dissertation seeks to interact with previous literature relevant to the problem or question you introduced in Section 1. What scholarly works in your discipline and perhaps in others have provided key information on your topic, as well as theoretical understandings and approaches that will help you to carry out your research? Equally important, how will your research contribute to the existing literature on your topic?

Please limit your response to approximately 750 words.

Section 3. Explaining Your Choice of Focus, Sources, and Methods

Describe what you need to learn from your research in order to solve the problem or answer the question you posed in Section 1. In what ways have you chosen to focus your research (be it to study specific groups of people, places, time periods, literary genres, performances, or other subjects of your investigations) and why are these choices appropriate given your research question or problem? Also, what sources and methods of investigation you will employ to collect and record the information that you will need to complete your research? How will the particular method or combination of approaches that you have chosen for your research enable you to accomplish your research goals?

Please limit your response to 750 words.

Section 4. Implementing Your Research Plan

Describe here how you will organize and carry out your investigations. What is your timeline for your long-term dissertation research? How much time must you be in each of your research locations? What research and/or writing activities will you perform and when?

Please limit your response to approximately 300 words.

Section 5: Analyzing Your Compiled Evidence

Assuming that your research methods will enable you to obtain the information or data that you identified in Section 3 as necessary to address your problem or question, how will you examine and analyze this collected evidence to solve the research problem, answer the question you originally proposed? Here is where you explain how and why you expect to be able to complete your research project successfully in meeting your goals. In addition, explain what you think the significance or contribution of your research findings will be for existing scholarship related to your research.

Please limit your response to approximately 300 words.

Section 6. Emphasizing Your Qualifications

Describe here why you are well-suited to conduct your dissertation research successfully. From your graduate school training, past research, or other career experiences, do you have the language, investigative, and analytic skills that will be required to carry out your proposed research? Are you already familiar with your research sites or data? Do you have the contacts and permissions required to carry out your plans? Describe any information or insights from previous or exploratory research (including what you expect to learn from this summer's DPDF-supported research) which affects your selection of sources, methods of investigation, approach to analysis or interpretation, and your overall research plan.

Please limit your response to approximately 200 words.

Section 7: Summing It Up: The Abstract

Now that you have completed the previous sections of your workbook, review what you have written and select the most important points that you think a reviewer or committee member should know about this project. The abstract in most instances is the first element of your proposal that your reviewers will read. Therefore, be mindful of accessibility in your description, and take care that your summary accurately reflects the substance of your project. How will you represent the different components in this workbook within this abstract?

Please limit your response to 150 words.

Section 8: Describing your Summer Research

To assist your core and methods group members in helping you think through the logic and feasibility of your summer research plans, describe not only what you will do and where during the summer, but also how you intend these activities will contribute to your future research proposal.

Please limit your response to approximately 300 words.

Posting your completed workbook to the DPDF Workspace

1. Save the document file in the following format:

“Last Name_First Name.Workbook” (e.g. Smith_Sam.Workbook)

2. Navigate to the documents area of your core/methods group sections of the DPDF Workspace by clicking the “Documents” icon within each group page.

3. Click the “Upload a New Document” button at the bottom of the “Documents List” page.

4. Click “Choose File” and select your document file.

5. In the “Document Name” field, type the same name you used for your document file name.

6. In the “Category” field, select “workbooks” as your tag for this document.

7. Finally, click the “Save” button. Your document will now be saved to the documents section of the group, so your peers and group facilitator may view your workbook.

Note: Be sure to upload the file to the documents area within both your core and methods group sections on the DPDF Workspace by May 24th.