

Here is the description of the format for the PhD proposal (this comes from the Ruth Kirschstein PhD fellowship at the NIH). You only need the research plan section). I cut and paste the research plan section below. This should be a maximum of 15 pages (not including references).

1. Abstract

2. Specific Aims

List the broad, long-term objectives and the goal of the specific research proposed, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology.

3. Background and Significance

Briefly sketch the background leading to the present application, critically evaluate existing knowledge, and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill. State concisely the importance and health relevance of the research described in this application by relating the specific aims to broad, long-term objectives and to the mission of the NIH IC or AHRQ.

4. Preliminary Studies/Progress Report

(a) Preliminary Studies. Use this section to provide an account of preliminary studies, if any, that are pertinent to this application. This information will help reviewers and NIH staff evaluate your PHS 416-1: Part I I-45 experience and determine your competence to pursue the proposed project. It will also help demonstrate the utility of the proposed project as a training experience. When applicable, provide a succinct account of published and unpublished results, indicating progress toward their achievement.

5. Research Design and Methods

Describe the research design conceptual or clinical framework, procedures, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Describe any novel concepts, approaches, tools, or technologies for the proposed studies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. As part of this section, provide a tentative sequence or timetable for the project. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and the precautions to be exercised.