

Tips for Writing a Fellowship or Stipend Proposal

While the discussion of a fellowship or stipend proposal is about your research, your project, and you, the focus should be about what the funding agency wants to know in order to advance its funding priorities. Here are some questions the funder generally wants answered:

What will your project produce of value?

How is your project a significant contribution to its area of study? - Stanford

How will your project advance the field of study and make an original contribution? – ACLS

Who will it be of value to?

What is the research's potential to interest scholars in different fields of the humanities? – Stanford

What is the intellectual significance of the proposed project, including its value to humanities scholars, general audiences, or both? – NEH

Why are you uniquely qualified to do this work?

What have you accomplished previously that prepares you to do this work?

What is the quality or promise of quality of the applicant's work as an interpreter of the humanities? - NEH

How clear and feasible is the project; how likely is it to be executed in the proposed timeframe?

What is the quality of the conception, definition, organization, and description of the project and the applicant's clarity of expression? - NEH

What is the feasibility and appropriateness of the proposed plan of work, including, when relevant, the soundness of the dissemination and access plans? - NEH

What is the likelihood that the applicant will complete the project (not necessarily during the award period)? - NEH

In your introduction, capture the reader's attention. Get the reader interested in your research problem or topic. Or, focus on the work to be produced and its value to others. Don't focus on yourself and your research priorities.

See examples of funded fellowship and stipend proposals at <https://www.neh.gov/grants/research/fellowships> and <https://www.neh.gov/grants/research/summer-stipends> .

Consider using headings to organize your proposal, even though it is short. In the interest of space, a heading could be embedded in the first line of a paragraph. Headings are usually suggested by the solicitation and might include: The Problem, The Book, Previous Relevant Work, Research Plan. This will help reviewers navigate the proposal. It will also help reviewers find information quickly when they return to the proposal for discussion or further consideration.

- Janis Raje