

# Research proposal template

This research proposal template must be used to provide a clear outline of your proposed project. Before writing your paper, you should ensure that the topic matches one or more of the six research clusters of IHS. The research proposal should achieve the following:

- Define a clear research question and present an approach to answering it.
- Highlight its originality and/or its significance.
- Explain how it adds to, develops (or challenges) existing literature in the field.
- Provide an insight in the proposed methodology to carry out the research

A research proposal should be between 5-10 pages. The PhD research proposal must include the following items, in this order:

## 1. abstract:

The abstract should provide a short summary of your proposed research. Summarize the objectives of your research, the significance and the expected outcomes in a manner which should be clear even to someone who is not trained in your field.

## 2. problem statement:

Please provide a short description of the issue that you intend to focus on in your PhD research. Make sure you also provide an answer to these questions:

- What will you investigate?
- Why is it relevant to do research on this problem?
- What is the relation of this problem with current theoretical discussions and policy debates?

## 3. research objectives and research questions:

Provide an insight in what you wish to achieve with this research (for instance: enlarging knowledge, give policy recommendations, contribution to theory) and formulate adequate research questions that inquire the knowledge you need to obtain your research goal. Usually 1-3 research questions will suffice.

## 4. theoretical framework:

Provide a short overview of the relevant theories you intend to use to guide your research and provide a conceptual framework; a schematic overview of the main concepts in your research question which reflects how these concepts relate.

## 5. methodology & research planning:

Provide an overview of your proposed research strategy and methodologies, culminating in a preliminary time planning. The important thing is to anticipate the methods you will use to

achieve your project aims and prove that your project is feasible within the given time frame. If your proposal is too broad and not feasible within 3-4 years it is likely to be unsuccessful.

**6. link to the IHS specialisation:**

In this section you should indicate which IHS research cluster would fit the content of your PhD research. If you perceive no direct match, then please indicate your preferences concerning the field of study for your potential guidance and further academic development.