

How to write a high-quality department research grant

The most important questions to answer:

1. Clearly state your research question.
2. Clearly describe how you seek to answer it and why you will answer it in the way that you have chosen.
3. Explain why you chose your method. How/why does that method best let you answer your question?
4. Explain how and why you chose the case(s) you are studying. What does that selection help us learn?
5. Articulate a clear theoretical framework and explain your project's contribution to the political science literature.

Other questions to address:

1. Why is your topic important (Briefly!) Which members of society—apart from researchers in your field—might benefit from your work? (To answer this question, you might address how your research informs policy or contributes to the policy community.)
2. How does your study add to understanding on the topic beyond what has previously been done. What is your original contribution to the field? And what contributions could your research make to related fields that are outside of your main field of study?
3. How will this project help you advance through the program?

Criteria used by the Graduate Committee to evaluate fellowship applications:

- 1) How prepared is the student to undertake independent research? Do they know their field, and do they have the requisite methodological skills and background knowledge required?
- 2) Does the student present a clear plan about how they will conduct research?
- 3) How well-articulated is their proposal?
- 4) How significant is the student's contribution to the literature, and what is the importance of their research question?

See Graduate Division's application website for additional advice and criteria.