

# Medical Student Research Tips

## **WRITING A RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL**

The project proposal is a 3-5 page document ( $\leq 1500$  words) describing what you plan to study and how you will conduct your investigation. The same overall proposal format can be used for quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method projects.

*Title of Project* – Clearly identifies the content and what you are studying in an engaging manner.

*Background and Significance* (2-3 paragraphs) – Identifies the context/topic of your research, knowledge gaps, and why this missing knowledge is important and who will benefit from the knowledge your study will generate. This section establishes your argument for your research.

*Specific Aims* (1 paragraph) – the general purpose of your research.

*Hypothesis and Rationale* (1 paragraph) – Specific statements about the relationship between specific variables in your study you expect to find. For medical education research projects, this section can also include a conceptual framework to justify your hypothesis and rationale.

*Methods* – May be quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods (2-3 paragraphs). Describe the sampling, data collection, and statistical analysis plan for your project. Qualitative and medical education projects should begin this section with a theoretical framework justifying the chosen research methods.

*Role of Medical Student* (1 paragraph) – What you will be responsible for doing.

*Resources needed to complete project* (1 paragraph) – Will vary greatly by project. Common resources include lab reagents, access to specific equipment, access to patient data, cell lines or animal models, statistics software or statistician, training modules, etc.

*References* – 4-10 in AMA style, APA style, or comparable standard format.