JAMES MCCUNE SMITH SCHOLARSHIPS RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDANCE

The research proposal should be a detailed description of the intended research topic. It will form the basis for assessing the application, along with the Personal Statement and academic qualifications. The proposal should be written in a clear and concise manner. The main body of the research proposal (excluding the bibliography) should be a maximum of 1,500 words.

Reviewers of this proposal will include those beyond your discipline in the respective Colleges so the overview should be accessible to those from different subject areas.

The Research Proposal should include the following sections:

- Title
- Overview – a general introduction that succinctly sets out exactly what the project seeks to explore. This should also include the research question(s) to be addressed and the overall aim of the project.
- Context – situate the research within the relevant literature/s. Why is the research important? This should include a brief summary of research already taken in the field, addressing key works and researchers/scholars. Specific attention should be paid to problems in the existing literature and ways in which your proposed research challenges/addresses these problems. You should also give an account of the theoretical issues relevant to your research, and whether you intend to test existing theories or develop new ones.
- Methodology – provide a detailed account of the methodology and/or methods that will be used. Specific attention should be paid, where relevant, to any innovative aspects of the proposed methodology.
- [Where relevant] An indication of ethical issues associated with this proposal (including those that may impact on formal ethics committee approval and those requiring ongoing consideration in the field/during analysis) and proposed actions to mitigate these.
- Impact – a brief discussion of the implications of the proposed research for the broader discipline, any practical applications, and/or any policy relevance.

* A research proposal is not required for applicants to the College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences or in the Schools of Chemistry, Mathematics and Statistics and Physics and Astronomy. Applicants should, however, provide a short overview of their proposed research area in their Personal Statement.

How your Application will be Assessed

The academic supervisor will review your proposal and personal statement and confirm if they wish to support your application. Applications will then be reviewed and ranked to shortlist for interview in each College on the following categories: candidate capabilities (academic achievements), and professional and life experiences. Both areas are given equal weighting. They will also review the quality of the research proposal where this is required and/ or personal statement. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited to interview.