

# Proposal Guidelines

Your proposal aims to communicate your thesis's intended focus and reflect on alternative approaches to the idea before making any binding decisions. It enables us, the potential supervisors, to determine whether methods and content fall in our area of expertise and decide whether we feel you can address the topic in the given amount of time. This way, we can avoid early mismatches in the supervision and suboptimal topic/method choices.

If written well and accepted, the proposal marks an essential cornerstone of your thesis and provides a clear guideline for the next steps in writing your thesis.

A proposal of about 2-3 pages should comprise these elements (this should be seen as a checklist):

- ❑ Topic of the thesis: What is the idea about? The topic should sound interesting per-se and relevant. Relevant means that practitioners will gain some valuable insights from your work.
- ❑ Objective: what do you seek to accomplish with the thesis?
- ❑ Theoretical background/rough literature review: building on at least five recent academic sources, you should describe the status quo of knowledge, including a gap that you seek to close. This should motivate the necessity of your thesis. The critical literature should be chosen from well-ranked peer-reviewed journals (as a reference, you can use the Financial Times 50 list).
- ❑ Research questions: about three novel questions you seek to answer in your thesis. Novel means new within the context.
- ❑ Intended method: how do you want to answer these questions? This part should also be based on academic literature and explain why the intended process fits your research question. How do you seek to gather data if you choose an empirical method? Which approach do you desire to use if you decide on a theoretical way? Although indeed not the final word on the research method, this part should already be clear enough for us to evaluate whether your suggested approach seems appropriate.

Please note that submitting a proposal does not automatically lead to us agreeing to supervision. Submitting a proposal that we consider convincing, realistic, and relevant leads to supervision.