

Guidance on writing a proposal for the PhD in Literary Practice (Creative Writing)

There is no single “right way” to present a research proposal but the following tips are indicative of good practice. Proposals should be **a succinct 500 words** and include a list of works cited (which may be brief and make use of any referencing style). It is advisable to draft a proposal and share it with your prospective supervisor and the Warwick Writing Programme’s Director of Graduate Studies before submitting your formal application to the University. A promising proposal is not, however, a guarantee that an applicant will be admitted to the programme; it will be considered alongside the other elements of the application, including your academic credentials and your writing sample.

Please note that the funding bodies, e.g. M4C, generally have their own proposal templates and will require you to structure your funding proposal and other supporting statements according to these templates. You are advised to identify potential funders and familiarise yourself with their application requirements at an early stage in the PhD application process. If you are admitted to the PhD programme and move on to the funding application stage, then you will need to restructure and augment your Warwick proposal as necessary and appropriate when it comes to filling out your funding application.

Information about the M4C scheme can be found here:

<https://www.midlands4cities.ac.uk/>

Applicants are strongly advised to attend one of the M4C preparatory workshops offered in the autumn.

Warwick’s Doctoral College offers advice about other funding opportunities here:

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/dc/schols_fund/

Proposal Guidance

Initial summary:

The first sentence or two of the proposal should clearly summarise the project and tell the reader what it is you are intending to do. You will undoubtedly need to repeat and expand on some of this information in the rest of the proposal, but it is problematic if the reader is not immediately given a clear sense of what the project is about. This initial information should include the proposed outcome of the thesis (novel, novella, screenplay, collection of poems, work of literary non-fiction etc.) and an indication of the focus or foci of the accompanying critical reflection.

Research questions and methodology:

What do you intend to write? Please give a brief synopsis or conceptual outline, as appropriate to the genre/project.

Which research questions does the project intend to explore? What is your conceptual framework and methodology?

What is the relationship of your work to current literary practice?

How will the critical component of your thesis relate to the practice element? Which issues will it address, e.g. will it address the research objectives of the creative work?; the intellectual contexts in which the creative work occurs?; other factors concerning the conception and development of the creative work?

Person and preparedness:

Please say something about your preparedness to carry out this project: your academic background; any relevant professional or other experience; any published work (please note that publications are not necessary or essential, however). You should also mention why you are applying to Warwick. This section will likely be shorter than the previous sections.

Guidance compiled by Ian Sansom and Chantal Wright

Ian.Sansom@warwick.ac.uk

C.M.Wright@warwick.ac.uk

October 2020