TIPS FOR WRITING A WINNING FUSE PROPOSAL IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Note: While this tip sheet was written with the Social Sciences in mind, the advice given by Dr. Reiter-Palmon has been found to be helpful for applicants in all fields.

Based on several years of experience reviewing FUSE and other proposals, here are some things to keep in mind when writing your FUSE proposal (and for mentors, when reviewing the student’s work before submission):

1. This is funding for research. Be sure that your background includes a review of the current research in the area. Be sure to include scholarly sources. Since this is a social science proposal, we will expect to see sources related directly to the social science domain that you focus on.

2. Remember that the committee reviewing the proposal is inter-disciplinary. Explain your terms, and try to avoid using acronyms, jargon, and anything that would make your review less understandable to someone outside of that field.

3. Situate your research question within your review of the current research. How does your research address a gap, a need, or advance the area of research? Your research question or questions should be specific and clear.

4. Describe your methodology in enough detail that the committee understands what you are doing. Even if you do not have all your measures, survey items, or interview questions developed, you should discuss what general concepts and constructs you would like to measure and what kinds of questions you may want to ask. Indicate whether you can use existing (already developed) measures or surveys, or whether you would need to develop them as part of your FUSE research.

5. If the faculty mentor does not have social science training, it is recommended that the mentor and/or student consult with at least one social scientist. Every college on campus has faculty members who identify as social scientists.