

A Guide to Writing your Research Proposal Outline (required for Master of Design, Master of Cultural & Creative Practice)

Purpose of the Research Proposal Outline:

The purpose of the research proposal outline is to support you (the student) to assist us (the postgraduate selection panel) in understanding the scope, direction, and focus of your research project. It should situate your topic in a clearly defined territory of inquiry. For example, the territory you are interested in may be discipline specific (textiles, digital media, industrial, fashion, visual communication, spatial), or focused on an interdisciplinary approach, such as that practiced by the research clusters or labs situated in the School of Art and Design (see: DHW Lab, VR Lab, Future Materials Lab).

The research proposal outline is an important factor in a successful application to our programmes.

You can find the MDes/MCCP research proposal outline template [here](#). Please read the guide before submitting your proposal with your application.

THE PROPOSAL OUTLINE INCLUDES THESE SECTIONS:

Research Project Title: (10 words maximum)

This is a working title so it is likely to change several times throughout your research journey. We have provided some examples of *completed* Master degree thesis titles below.

It should say in as few words as possible what your research project is. This can be a statement of purpose, metaphorical/poetic in its description, or a combination of both. Because it is the first thing anyone sees it needs to grab their attention.

Past examples include:

[*The Ark Project: an investigation into interactive environmental narrative*](#), by Chris Andersen

[*Not for me without me: co-designing assistive technology with people affected by dementia*](#), by Rebecca Jury

[*Senses and sensibility: a human-centred branding strategy*](#), by Brenda Louise Saris-Brandon

[*3D machine knitting: composite forms and illumination*](#), by HyunJin Yun

[*Aspire: a creative exploration of the short, lyrical documentary*](#), by Joseph De Guzman

[*Traversing Memory: the last days of the old Mangere bridge*](#), by Hannah Alleyne

[*Evaluating the Perceived Immersion of Procedurally Generated Game Levels*](#), by Taura J. Greig

[*Otea: transmission and transmedia*](#), by Zak Waipara

Research Topic Overview: (150 words maximum)

What are you going to research through your practice?

Here you discuss your practice in relation to your topic. Are you an animator, visual communicator, textile designer, motion graphics artist, product designer, illustrator, photographer, filmmaker, spatial designer, human-centred designer, etc.? Or do you come from another discipline area, but have experience in the design profession that you can demonstrate through your portfolio and research proposal? If so, how will you take your skills to work on a research project? What is it you imagine you will make at the end of your studies?

Thesis Statement: (350 words maximum)

How are you looking at and testing the making procedures of your topic?

What are your methods?

In this section, you will briefly describe some of your practical and theoretical working methods.

What are you looking at?

What is the purpose of your research and what do you hope you might discover?

Address why the project ignites your curiosity. What are your guesses and hunches about what you might reveal through your research?

Where is your research located?

How is your research positioned within its territory of inquiry or paradigm? What direction do you think your research might lead you in?

In relation to relevant practitioners, theorists and other influences, where is your practice and project situated? If you have any theoretical investigations that inform your work you can also state them in this section. A powerful quote that summarises the thinking that informs, underpins, or impacts the way you make and think about your practice is helpful.

And, so what?

Is the research meaningful (in that it produces new ways of looking and being in the world)?

Here you reflect upon the meaning of your work in the context of the above sections. To the above sections, ask “and, so what?”

Ask how you might test the efficacy of your methods, procedures, and critique your iterative research practice. What are the answers to these questions?

Bibliography: (Example below)**Bibliography**

- Akerman, Chantal. "Chantal Akerman: In Her Own Time an Interview with Miriam Rosen." In *The Cinematic*, edited by David Company. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004.
- Allen, Richard and Malcolm Turvey, eds. *Camera Obscura, Camera Lucida: Essays in Honor of Annette Michelson*, Film Culture in Transition. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003.
- Antonioni, Michelangelo. "Deserto Rosso/the Red Desert." Videorecording. Collingwood, Vic.: Madman Entertainment: AV distributor, 2006.
- Aufderheide, Patricia. *Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction*. Very Short Introductions. Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Bresson, Robert. "A Man Escaped." DVD. London: Artificial Eye, 2008.
- Brinkman, Dirk. "Editorial." *Silviculture Magazine* Spring (2012).
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A copy of the Research Proposal Outline Template is available [here](#).