



Proposal Guidelines For the Qualitative Research Methods Series (QRMS) A.K.A. “The Little Blue Books”

The following guidelines provide direction for writing and submitting your proposal for reviewing and publishing purposes. The ideal proposal presents a convincing rationale for your volume. It clearly delineates the book’s objectives and, more importantly, explains the benefits and advantages it provides to readers, vis-à-vis what is currently available.

A well-developed prospectus should be brief (approximately 4-6 pages) and cover the points listed below, preferably in the order presented. To further evaluate the viability of publishing your volume in the series, we also request that you submit details of a tentative table of contents, sample chapters (if available), and biographical information. Please label each section of your proposal using the headings below.

Please prepare the material carefully. Because your prospectus is the first effort on your part to convince the publisher and the academic community of your abilities as an author, please carefully check the spelling, grammar, and punctuation in all items you submit.

The Prospectus

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Provide one to two introductory paragraphs describing the proposed book, the fields or subfields it covers, its approach, and your purpose and goals in writing it. Highlight aspects of your book that will distinguish it from others currently available that deal with the same or similar topics—that is, what makes your proposed volume unique? Where relevant, explain how your proposed monograph fits in with existing titles in the QRMS series.

II. MARKET & COURSE BACKGROUND

A. Primary Market and Courses

- Please describe the main disciplines and courses where your book would be of interest.
- Will your monograph be of interest to researchers outside of university classes?
- What are the major instructor problems in teaching the content of these courses? What are the major student obstacles/misperceptions in learning this content?
- In terms of content coverage, orientation, and teaching practice, how has teaching in this area changed in the recent past? What additional changes do you expect in the next two to five years? Specifically, how will your work address these future developments?
- What is the average class size for the course, and how often is this course taught?
- What associations or specific divisions of professional organizations or professional journals could provide highly targeted mailing lists for

promoting your book?

B. Secondary Markets and Courses

- In what other disciplines/courses could the book be considered for adoption? How and why would it be appropriate?

III. THE BOOK

The following questions help to ascertain the market need for your book and how it will differ from others currently available:

A. Approach/Style of Presentation

- Rationale: What is the book's purpose? What are your goals for the book?
- What distinctive approaches to topic coverage will your work have? Are there topics that other people in the field might expect to find that you do not plan to include? If so, why?

B. Features & Benefits

- How does your proposed volume answer the major teaching and research challenges discussed in II.A, above?

C. Artwork/Design

- Explain any planned use of figures, tables, graphics, etc.
- What is the estimated number of line drawings, and of tables in total (or per chapter)?

D. Format

- What will be the book's length in **printed** pages (including figures, bibliography, and index)? Titles in the QRMS series are generally 100-200 typeset printed pages, or approximately 22,500 – 44,000 words.

[Double-spaced, typewritten pages normally reduce by approximately 1/3 when set in type. For example, 200 typed manuscript pages equal approximately 135 printed pages.]

IV. COMPETITION

Pick three (3) of the top competitors for your proposed volume. This information is written for reviewers to provide them with a comparative framework for your work. Focus on comparing topical coverage, organization, level, and any other relevant similarities and differences between your project and the competing books. If there are no existing books that you consider to be direct competitors, please list books of a similar nature and note how your book would fit within the spectrum of complementary books currently on the market.

Please discuss each competing book in its own paragraph. For each book, please provide:

- Author, title/edition, publisher, copyright year, and page length (Amazon.com and the respective publishers' websites have this information).
- List two major strengths and two major weakness of each competing title.
- For each title listed, why and how does your book offer a better alternative?

Table of Contents

The preparation of an annotated table of contents will help you to refine your plans for the overall structure and the features of the book. In addition, it will enable reviewers and the publisher to evaluate the organizational logic and pedagogic strategy. Please provide a detailed table of contents, in outline form, incorporating headings and subheadings and including a brief description of each chapter.

Chapter 1: Chapter Title

Following the chapter title, include a paragraph, similar in format to this, describing the chapter, its structure, and its purpose. You might indicate how the chapter fits in with the rest of the book and what readers should have learned upon finishing the chapter.

A. First Heading

1. First subheading
2. Second subheading

B. Second Heading, etc., until the chapter is described as fully as possible.

Sample Chapters

Although the prospectus and tentative table of contents are often ample for preliminary discussions about publishing the work, providing sample chapters allows reviewers and the publisher to better evaluate the work, since this material shows how well you have accomplished the goals of the prospectus for the intended reader. Sample chapters should illustrate the strongest and most distinctive aspects of your work. Please submit one or two chapters, if these are available. Authors who haven't previously written a book are particularly encouraged to submit sample chapters.

Biographical and Other Information

With the exception of your vitae, the following information is for SAGE's internal consideration only and will not be sent out for review.

I. **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

- What experience, background, or other qualifications do you bring to the project?
How are you qualified to undertake it?
- What other books have you written or contributed to?
- Do you have any other writing plans after this work is completed? If yes, on what topic?
- Please attach a copy of your vitae.

II. **SCHEDULE**

- When do you expect to have the first draft completed and ready for outside reviewing?
- When do you expect to deliver the complete and final manuscript? Please be very realistic in planning your schedule.

III. **REVIEWERS**

- Please recommend names (with academic affiliations) of potential reviewers qualified to assess the work.
- Where relevant, please list names of people who would **not** be appropriate as reviewers given that their approach, methodology, and/or philosophical perspective differs greatly from yours.