Project Proposal Writing

What is a Project Proposal?

A project proposal "outlines the plan of the implementing organization about the project, giving extensive information about the intention, for implementing it, the ways to manage it and the results to be delivered from it" (fundsforngos.org, 2018). It is one of the most important documents that you have to submit during the early stage of your project. A good kind of proposal can be considered as an informal contract about the features, cost and duration of your project/ product. It is very important tool for managing and organizing your resources and time of the project.

Content of a Project Proposal

A project proposal often contains:

- Title (Within the cover page)
- Table of content
- Introduction
- Background (Existing systems)
- preliminary Investigation
- Aims and Objectives
- Proposed solution
- Feasibility study
- Resource Requirements
- Time frame
- References

1. **Title**
   - Based on your selected/ interested area of project you have to select a suitable title which explains the domain of the project.
   - Here use simple straight forward wordings for the title
   - Better to limit you're your title to maximum of 15 words (This is not a rule, but a good practice)
   - Try to narrow down your topic as much as possible.
     Example Title: Cultivation Process Facilitator for selected five crops in Dry Zone Sri Lanka (AgroFriends, 2014)
     Here the proposed system has named as Cultivation Process Facilitator. Name of the system also explained the usability or the application of the System (Here the purpose of the system is to "Facilitate the cultivation process"). Further the title explains that the system has developed only based on selected five crops.

Then it is coming to the explanation of the crops as the crops in Dry Zone, Sri Lanka.

Just reading the title of your project, the audience should have a summarized idea about the project on the aspects such as: what's the purpose of the project, where it can be applied and what are the limitations.

2. Table of content

This should contain the topics of the documents along with the relevant page numbers.

3. Introduction

Under this topic you have to explain what you hope to present through this document (proposal). In here you have to clearly mention the purpose of the submission of the document. Then you also need to give a brief summary of the document content and a guideline for the audience.

- Example statement of purpose of the document:

This project proposal is submitted" to meet the software development requirements of the Group Project module conducted by the" ……………………………………… (Institution Name)
(MoDACA, 2014)

If your project is doing for a client you must include brief introduction about the client as well.

4. Background

Under this sub topic you have to clearly explain the background of the field of your study/ project.

Assume that you have selected to develop a **School management system** for a selected school from a selected educational zone. Under here you have to describe the nature of the current school management system that the selected school is using (But try to avoid going for more details about the problems associated with current system. Remain them for the "statement of problem" phase). Then describe the similar systems or technologies used for school management in other institutes of Sri Lanka and the institutes of other countries.

- Use much as recent literature to grab the information about the similar systems and their technologies.
- Source of Literature:
  - Research papers
  - Journal Articles
  - News papers
  - Blogs
  - Interviews with experts in the field of study

- Always try to use more reliable sources as your source of literature

- Do not forget to appreciate the findings of others by using proper citations/ referencing style. (Eg: Use IEEE as referencing style)
- Meet your supervisor to get the information about accepted referencing style

If you are doing the project to specific client/ organization give the details about their current business process and the existing systems as well.

5. Preliminary Investigation

The purpose of the preliminary investigation is to determine whether the problem or deficiency in the current system really exists.

6. Aims and Objectives

- Aim is a statement which describes the ultimate goal of your project
- State the Aim of your project with the use of 01 or 02 sentences maximumly
- Example:
  "The aim of our project is to develop a system for addressing the problems in the current cultivation process with the use of IT solutions" (AgroFriends, 2014)
- Under the objectives state what you want to accomplish from your project
- Mention the objectives of the project in point form
- Use actionable verbs to state the objectives
- Example objectives:
  - To develop algorithms to prioritize the qualitative skills
  - To analyze the behavior of customers in the market

7. Proposed Solution

Clearly state your proposed solution to the identified problem under the problem in brief section. Prosed solution should be your intended project/ product to be developed. Plan of the project will be discussed under here. This section also needs to include the clear description about the project scope and project feasibility details.

Here you have to explain the solution in detail, what are the features of the proposed system and how they help in resolving identified problem/problems.

- Use detailed descriptions to explain the features of the system
- Use diagrams if necessary. (Example: When you need to explain the arrangement of and communication between the devices)

Describe the methodology that you are willing to use during the implementation of the project. Before deciding the methodology, clearly understand your task and prepare logical time plan.

- Identify the tasks and sub tasks associated with project
- Decide the resources required for each task (Software/Hardware/consultancy)
- Calculate the cost for each task (If you need any buyable devices or software)
- Allocate the time duration for the completion of each task (Use Gantt chart)
- Identify the data needed to be gathered prior to the development (Pilot study, if required/ requirement gathering)

- Distribute the tasks and responsibilities among the team members (Separate the system in to modules. Make sure each member has a responsibility of an independently workable module which can be lately aggregate in to the final system)

8. Feasibility study

- Technical Feasibility
  Resource Requirements
  Under this section you have to list down the resources that are needed to complete the project. The resources can be categorized as Hardware resources and software resources. (If you need, you can do further categorization on your preference)

- Economical feasibility

9. Time frame

10. References
List of references that you have referred for the document needs to list down here.
- Use proper reference style on the approval from your project supervisor
  - Reference Styles: IEEE, Havard, APA,etc
- Can use reference management tools for reference management (if you like)
  - Example: Zotero