1 Structure of a Thesis Proposal

Your thesis proposal should consist of 6-8 pages, and include the following elements in the order listed below.

- Title page
- Abstract
- Table of contents
- Introduction
- Goals and objectives
- State of the art
- Material and methods
- Expected results and discussion
- Potential Conclusions
- Work plan, including time table and milestones
- List of references

The structure is very similar to that of a thesis or a scientific paper. You will be able to use a large part of the material of the thesis proposal in your actual thesis.

1.1 Title Page
- Use a short, descriptive title of the proposed thesis project
- Include information about the author, institution, college, examiner(s) and/or supervisor(s) and date of delivery

1.2 Abstract
- The abstract is a brief summary of your thesis proposal
- Length: 100 - 150 words (in certain circumstances up to 300 words)
- Present a brief introduction to the issue
- Outline the key tasks of your thesis

1.3 Table of Contents
- List all headings and subheadings with page numbers
- Subheadings should be indented

1.4 Introduction
- Set the context for your project and captures the reader's attention
- Explain the background of your study, starting from a broad picture narrowing in on your research question
- Cite pertinent references
1.5 **Goals and Objectives**
- In a few of sentences, state what you want to accomplish
- You may use the form of a project statement, a goal statement, research questions, or even hypotheses
- Capture the essence of your intended project and also set boundaries

1.6 **State of the Art**
- Review the knowledge of the research topic and focus on relevant content
- Cite pertinent references and classify the work

1.7 **Material and Methods**
This section contains an overall description of your approach, materials, and procedures
- What materials will be used?
- Which methods will be used?
- How will data be collected and analyzed (incl. any statistical analysis planned)?
- Do not include results and discussion of results, here

1.8 **Expected Results and Discussion**
- What do you expect to find?
- Present any results you have obtained so far
- Discuss how intermediate results fit into your thesis (if appropriate)

1.9 **Potential Conclusions**
- What new knowledge will the proposed project produce?
- Why is it worth knowing, what are the major implications?

1.10 **Work Plan, Including Time Table and Milestones**
- Describe in detail what you plan to do and when
- List the stages of your project in a table format
- Indicate deadlines you have set for completing each stage of the project, including any work you have already completed
- Discuss any particular challenges that need to be overcome, possible alternatives

1.11 **List of References**
- Cite all ideas, concepts, text, data that are not your own
- If you use material of your own that you have previously published, cite yourself
• If you make a statement, back it up with your own data or with source citations
• In particular, any numbers or trends you state must be supported by sources
• All sources cited in the text must be listed in the list of references
• Separate personally obtained information (data, experts, etc.) from references

2 Some Tricks How to Prepare a Good Proposal
The following section provides you with some hints how to prepare a good proposal. It highlights important aspects that students often get wrong but that are in fact essential for solid scientific work.

2.1 Remark

2.2 Figures and Tables
• Figures serve to illustrate important aspects of the background material, data, and analysis techniques
• Well-chosen and appropriately labeled figures can reduce text length, and improve proposal clarity
• Technology such as scanners and drafting programs can help you create or modify pictures
• Each picture or graph needs to have a label below; all figures have to be numbered
• Each table needs to be numbered and requires a title
• Any sources used should be placed on the left hand, underneath the table
• You must refer to each figure and each table in the text

2.3 Grammar and Spelling
• Poor grammar and spelling distract from the content of the proposal; readers focus on the grammar and spelling problems and miss key points made in the text; word processing software has grammar and spell checkers; use them
• You should have read your proposal several times before handing it in
• Try to keep your language simple and sentences short, but use appropriate technical terms
• Ask a peer or a friend to proof-read your proposal
• If you get comments or questions that seem irrelevant, your paper is not written clearly enough
Technical University of Munich

School of Life Sciences Weihenstephan
Chair of Economics of Horticulture and Landscaping

Thesis Proposal
Submitted to Apply for Supervision in the Preparation of a Thesis in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Academic Degree of M.Sc. [please fill in]

Title

Lisa Exemplary

Examiner: ............................
Second examiner: .........................
Supervisor: ............................
Start Date: ............................
Date Submitted: ............................