Early Career Research Fellowships

Tips on Developing your Research Proposal

Jacob Seifert
(Hallsworth Fellow)
1. Make it understandable across disciplines
   – Selection panel made up of academics from across Humanities & Social Sciences
   – Balance detail on your specific question with accessibility for people outside your field

2. Your proposal can be individual
   – Following guidelines (like these ones..) and reading successful proposals can be useful
   – Your research is original, and your proposal can reflect this
3. Answer the most important questions clearly
   – What is the idea?
   – Why is it interesting?
   – How will you address it?
   – Can you explain it to non-experts (e.g. family)?

4. Details are good
   – Precise contribution relative to existing work
   – Methodology / Timeline
   – Outputs, Dissemination and Impact
5. Focus on main idea
   – Perhaps you have more than one good research idea
   – (I think..) better to focus on developing one in detail rather than spreading yourself across two questions, even if they are related

6. Why Manchester?
   – Relate it to research in your host department
   – Good to have made contact before
7. Relate it to Fellowship aims
   – How does the question relate to the broad aims of the Fellowship?
   – E.g. for Hallsworth: how does it relate to Political Economy?

8. Make it “easy on the eye”
   – Big enough font / margins, space between paragraphs etc.
   – Keep the reviewers on-side