Early Career Research Fellowships

Tips on Developing your Research Proposal

Helen Holmes
(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
   – Consider the language you use

2. Make your proposal individual
   – Following guidelines (like these ones..) and reading successful proposals can be useful
   – Show how your research is original
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. Provide specific details
   – Clear methodology/ timeline
   – Perceived outputs, dissemination and impact
5. Focus on main idea
   – Better to focus on developing one idea in detail rather than spreading yourself across two questions, even if they are related

6. 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?
7. Why Manchester?
   - Good to have made contact before
   - Relate it to research in your host department/school
   - Say how you will develop networks across Manchester (multi-disciplinary if possible)
   - What can you bring to Manchester? E.g. Existing contacts/networks

8. Try to show a trajectory
   - How does it build on your existing/previous research?
   - How will this Fellowship develop you as an academic?
Finally....

9. Make it easy to read
   – Clear structure
   – Big enough font / margins, space between paragraphs etc.
   – Keep the reviewers on-side

Thank you