From Research Question to Project Summary

The “Project Summary” section of the PRD Application asks for a project title, a 250-word project summary, and 3 research keywords. Whether your project is in progress, nearly complete, or just an idea in your mind, this worksheet will help you generate these materials!

1. Getting Started: Try Formulating Your Research Question
This could take the form of a mad lib: I am researching ________________, because I want to know________________, in order to understand how/why ____________.

2. Why this project?: What is the problem or gap your project addresses? Are you engaging with previous research or a particular scholarly conversation?

3. Methods and Data: How are you or will you go about answering your research question? Are you reading short stories, performing experiments, analyzing a particular theoretical lens?

4. Findings: If you’ve already started your project, what is especially illuminating or surprising about your findings? If you are in your project’s early stages, what questions are you hoping to answer or what outcomes are you hoping for?
5. **Consider Your Audience:** Remember that undergrads, grad students, researchers, faculty, and community members all attend PRD. What do you think should make your project exciting for someone who lacks your expertise? What would be the most difficult aspect of your project to explain to a non-specialist? Is there any jargon or technical language in your previous answers that someone outside your field or major wouldn’t understand? If so, how might you convey this in a way that makes your summary legible and compelling?

6. **Keywords:** Based on your research statement, try and generate a list of 3 keywords or concepts for your project.

   1. 
   2. 
   3. 

7. **Title:** Can you distill your project into a clear and interesting title? If you need inspiration, check out examples of other PRD Project Titles on the PRD website (link below).

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**Project Summary:** Try turning the above answers into a 250-word project summary. Think of the answers for 1-4 as providing a basic format (research question, scholarly gap, methods, and preliminary findings)

**Want more help?** Here are some useful campus resources as you work on your application

- The PRD website offers examples of projects: [http://researchday.princeton.edu/prepare](http://researchday.princeton.edu/prepare)
- And remember that you can always make a Writing Center appointment to workshop your application materials: [https://wriapps.princeton.edu/scheduler/appointments/](https://wriapps.princeton.edu/scheduler/appointments/)