

Guidelines for a Book Proposal for an Academic Book

General notes:

- ✓ Electronic submission is preferred, but paper proposals are acceptable.
- ✓ Do not send a complete book manuscript instead of a book proposal.
- ✓ Please understand that it can take two months or more to evaluate your book proposal.
- ✓ If you are sending the proposal to other publishers, please indicate that.
- ✓ WJK does not publish dissertations or festschriften.
- ✓ If this is an unsolicited paper proposal, you must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope to receive a reply.

Your book proposal should include the following ten elements:

1. **Title of the book.** Include the tentative title and subtitle for your book.
2. **Author contact information.** Please include your name, mailing address, email address, and phone numbers. Attach a current CV that details your present position, educational background, and previous publications, with special emphasis on how you are qualified to write the book you are proposing.
3. **Book description.** In 200-250 words, describe the book you are proposing. What is its nature, focus, purpose, or argument? What is its central thesis? Imagine that you are writing the jacket copy for the back cover of your book, or a description that would go into our catalog. What would you say to convince a potential reader to buy this particular book?
4. **Annotated Table of Contents.** Provide the working Table of Contents for your book, chapter by chapter. (If there are several parts or sections, group the chapters into those parts.) Beneath each chapter, include a brief (100-word) description of the chapter's contents. This summary should explain the focus and development of the chapter and indicate how it advances the argument of the whole book.
5. **Audience.** This section will give your insights into two basic questions: 1) Why is your *general topic* important to readers, and what signs exist that there is a market for another book on this topic? 2) For what level of audience is *this specific book* written? Is it accessible enough for an undergraduate readership, or more specialized? Does the book have potential for course adoption? If so, for which courses? What journals are read by academics who might buy this book?

6. **Author involvement.** Please detail the ways in which you plan to promote the book to potential buyers. In what academic organizations do you exercise leadership? Will you pursue getting your book to be the topic of discussion for a conference session at AAR or SBL? In what places have your previous books been reviewed? What colleagues might provide endorsements or a foreword for your book? Do you have media contacts that will be helpful in promoting this book?
7. **Competition:** Please describe a handful of competing and complementary titles on this topic, giving publisher and year. What does your book offer that these others do not? How will your book be superior to or different from them?
8. **Manuscript length:** What is the estimated word count for the proposed book?
9. **Date of completion:** Indicate the date by which you expect to submit a completed manuscript.
10. **Sample pages.** Enclose a sample of 15-25 pages, perhaps of the introduction and a sample chapter, which shows your writing style in the book. These should be pages that are typical of the book as a whole, especially critical to your argument, or that give a good overview of the book.

Send your proposal to:

submissions@wjkbooks.com

or Editorial Department, Westminster John Knox Press, 100 Witherspoon Street,
Louisville, KY 40202-1396