What is the purpose of research proposals?

The research proposal is the document that finally establishes that there is a niche for your chosen area of study and that the research design is feasible.

What should the proposal include?

1. An outline of the research objectives/hypotheses
2. A brief account of prior research in the topic area
3. Some detail of the proposed research design and methods
4. A time schedule
5. An outline of chapter headings, for example:
   - introduction
   - literature review
   - description of methodology
   - research results
   - analysis
   - summary & conclusions

How much should you write?

This may be specified by your department, but in general a proposal should not exceed two sides of A4.

How can writing a research proposal help YOU?

You have to:
- Pin down exactly what it is you plan to do
- Begin to read key texts/papers on the subject
- Determine whether your ideas are practical/achievable
- Think about planning and time management
- Get started!