What is a white paper?
Short essay that argues a (policy) position or a solution to a problem

Famous example: 1922 Churchill white paper
White Papers in Science

Usually requested by a granting agency

Help to formulate a new research program

Used as a pre-proposal

An Example

U.S. ARMY RESEARCH OFFICE
BROAD AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT
FOR
QUANTS IN SILICON

Issued by:
U.S. Army Contracting Command Aberdeen Proving Ground, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

W911NF-16-R-0011

1. OVERVIEW OF THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY:
   A. Required Overview Content:
      1. Federal Agency Name(s):
         U.S. Army Research Office
      2. Issuing Acquisition Office:
         U.S. Army Contracting Command Aberdeen Proving Ground, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
      3. Funding Opportunity Title:
         Quants in Silicon
      4. Announcement Type:
         Initial Announcement
      5. Research Opportunity Number:
         W911NF-16-R-0011
      6. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:
         12.41 - Basic Scientific Research
   B. Response Dates:
      White Paper: 4:00 PM Eastern Daylight Savings Time on 09 August 2016
      Proposals: 4:00 PM Eastern Daylight Savings Time on 20 October 2016 See Section II. D. 4 for additional information.
Components of a White Paper

Executive Summary
Write last, 150-250 words

Introduction & Background
Provide basic information
Define problem

Solution: high level

Solution: details
Know your audience!

Conclusion
Summarize: problem, solution, benefits, risk, projected outcomes
Tips

• The Executive Summary is the guide to the reader
  • Punchline / bottom line goes first!
  • State problem, solution
• Know and write for your audience
• For longer papers, use headings to guide the reader
• Follow directions!
• Make an argument
  • Why is your approach or position best?
• Be specific, avoid generalities
  • Use facts, numbers, references to make your argument