Sponsored Research: Pre-Award Overview
The Sponsored Project Life Cycle

- Identify Funding Opportunities
- Proposal Development & Submission
- Award Negotiation & Acceptance
- Award Set-Up
- Award Management
- Award Closeout
What is a Proposal?

The document submitted to a prospective sponsor outlining and requesting support for a specific project and includes a description of the project’s goals, methods, timelines, personnel, and budget. The terms “proposal” and “application” are often used synonymously.

Reasons faculty submit proposals:

- Research (Basic & Applied)
- Instruction
- Training
- Construction
- Public Service
How do sponsors request proposals?

Sponsored Project Solicitation: Request from a sponsor for project proposals that outlines application requirements, submission information, review criteria, and in certain instances award terms and conditions.

Variety of names:
• Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)
• Program Announcement (PA)
• Request for Applications (RFA)
• Request for Proposals (RFP)

The solicitation serves as the roadmap.

For more: SPOT - A Beginner's Guide to Sponsored Project Solicitations
Proposal components

Technical Components

Administrative Components

Proposal
Statement of Work (SOW)
Describes the work being performed; referred to as “abstract” or “summary”

Technical Narrative
- Statement of need/impact
- Objectives/Goals
- Research Plan
- Specific sections vary from sponsor to sponsor

Other Technical Components
- References cited
- Schedule/Milestones
- Appendices
- Compliance Sections

Technical Components

*not an exhaustive list, examples of common items
Biographical Sketches
Details the individual’s professional/education background and research background

Facilities and Other Resources
A description of the resources available to perform the proposed project

Budget and Budget Justification
Itemized list of costs and narrative description justifying those costs

Current and Pending Support
Information pertaining to current and pending support for the individual from other sponsored projects

Administrative Components
Budget

• Itemization of the costs required to complete the proposed project
  – The funding requested must be based on a realistic and reasonable estimate of the cost to complete the work
  – All budgeted costs must be allowable on, and allocable to the project
  – Understanding the SOW is an important piece of budget development

• A large portion of the budget will be devoted to personnel costs (salary and fringe benefits) for most projects

• Other costs might include supplies, services, consulting costs, travel, subcontracts, and indirect or facilities & administrative costs
Direct vs. Indirect Costs

• **Direct costs**: Directly allocable to the project, common examples include personnel costs, materials and supplies, and travel costs
  – Special considerations: Different types of personnel (e.g. faculty, students), fringe costs, and special cost categories (e.g. Subcontracts, equipment, research subjects / participants costs)

• **Indirect or Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs**: Incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be assigned to a specific sponsored project.
  – Facilities: buildings, maintenance/utilities, library
  – Administrative: general university / departmental admin and services
Budgets: The Big Picture

- Personnel
- Subcontracts
- Materials & Supplies
- Travel
- Direct Costs
- Indirect (F&A) Costs

Base Salary + Fringe = Personnel
Subcontracts + Materials & Supplies + Travel = Direct Costs
Indirect (F&A) Costs + Direct Costs = Budget

F&A Rate Calculation
Budget Justification

- A detailed description and explanation of the requested funding by line item
- Use categories developed by agency
- Relate line items to program objectives
- Ensure level of detail meets sponsor requirements
- Follow sponsor formatting guidelines
- Provide any required backup documentation
- **No budget can be adequately reviewed without a justification**
Overview of the Budget Building Process

*Begins and ends with sponsor guidelines/templates*

- Read and evaluate the solicitation
- Identify key budget elements & outline development approach
- Develop the budget and justification components
- Submit the final, formatted budget and budget justification to OSR
Learn More about Budgeting

SPOT & Sponsored Research In-Person training courses available:

**Proposal Budgets 101**
- Define key terminology related to budgeting
- Explain how to calculate salary cost and fringe
- Explain how to chose the correct indirect rate and how to calculate indirect costs correctly
- Outline introductory strategies / process for budgeting

**Proposal Budgets 102**
- Explore in greater detail topics introduce in Proposal Budgets 101, including revising a budget, selecting the correct F&A rate based on project type, and budgeting for special direct cost categories
- Introduce additional key budget terms and concepts
Pre-submission Review Process

• Administrative Proposal Review: Set of standard review criteria and related routing processes for OSR review, endorsement, and submission of competing grant proposals
  – Opportunity for Review: Single opportunity for a thorough review of the required administrative components by Sponsored Research
  – Submission Timing: Execution of all review processes is contingent upon receipt of required administrative components by Sponsored Research sufficiently in advance of a sponsor’s deadline

• What is reviewed? Very generally speaking...
  – Reviewed: Compliance, personnel, budget, justification, subcontracts
  – Not reviewed: Technical components, formatting, other inclusions

• Visit the Sponsored Research for
  – Administrative Proposal Review job aids and complete review criteria
  – More about Proposal Review and Submission
How are Proposals submitted?

Two general submission methods:

- **System to System**: Submitted electronically directly from InfoEd to grants.gov
- **Non-System to System**: Submitted outside of InfoEd to the sponsor (e.g. over email or using an external submission platform like the National Science Foundation’s system FastLane)

ALL proposals require an InfoEd record

**InfoEd**: Electronic Research Administration support software that provides two major functionalities:

- **Proposal Development**: Providing system-to-system proposal submission for many federal programs
- **Proposal Tracking**: Storing proposal and award data

For Additional Information:
InfoEd Training Resources
Best Practices

• Consistent and clear communication is a must: 
  PI ↔ RA ↔ GA/GO ↔ Agency

• START EARLY and establish a timeline to minimize last minute rushes; this will help ensure the best possible proposal goes out the door

• Review proposal guidelines and instructions carefully and thoroughly

• All sponsored projects **must** go through Sponsored Research for review and signature

• Be mindful of all deadlines
Questions?