Blueprint for providing pre-award assistance

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Notification of Intent to Submit form

The Notification of Intent to Submit is a pre-award form completed by the principal investigator on the project. It can be found on the Office of Research (OoR) website under the "Forms and Agreements" menu in the left-hand navigation. The OoR asks that this form be completed at least 30 days prior to the deadline but it is important regardless of when it is filled out. It lets the OoR and any applicable Center staff know what assistance is being requested and allows for the submission deadline to be added to the OoR proposal calendar. If information changes from what is included on the form, a new form is not necessary. The changes just need to be communicated to OoR and Center staff.

Solicitation

There are many names for this document including funding opportunity announcement (FOA), request for proposal (RFP), request for application (RFA), and program announcement (PA). This is the document that will contain all of the guidelines and requirements for the proposed project and submission process. In some, less formal, submissions this might be in the form of an email from the sponsor. Regardless, the PI should include the name of the funder and the solicitation # on the Notification of Intent to Submit form. If not, ask the PI to provide these guidelines. Items that you need to make note of in the solicitation include the following:

- What is the deadline date or when is the package due to the funder?

- What type (federal, state, local, or private) of funding is it? If it is a federal award, what is the CFDA number?

- What type (e.g. research, academic support, equipment, public service, fellowship, etc.) of grant is it?

- Are there specific requirements for the title (e.g. Collaborative Research, Eager, RAPID)?

- Are there limitations on who can serve as the PI or limitations on the number of Co-PIs or senior personnel allowed?

- Budget specifics:

  - What is the cap on the award amount?
  - How many years of funding will be provided?

  - Is cost-share or matching required? If so, how much? Is it a percentage of total amount or sponsored amount?
  - Are there requirements or limitations related to travel? For example, does the funder want to see field work broken out from conference travel, etc.?
  - Are there specific items the funder would like to see broken out in the budget justification? For example, some funders want vendor quotes attached, or they will cap the amount a faculty member can request for summer pay, or set a certain stipend amount for students and participants or want a per unit cost amount on all supply items.
  - Is there a specific budget form or preferred budget justification layout the funder requires?
  - Are there requirements or limitations related to types of collaborators? (i.e. must be in US, must have industry partner, etc.)
  - Are participant support costs allowed? Are there limitations on who is considered a participant?
  - Are there requirements or limitations related to indirect costs?
- What support documentation is required?
  - If letters of collaboration are required, is there a specific format to use?
  - Letters of commitment: Do we need a university letter? If so, what is the format?

If you have any questions, contact Jamie Murdock in the Office of Research. She is the Grant Development Manager and will be coordinating the proposal development process on their end. She will be looking at the same guidelines and attempting to get ahead of any potential roadblocks or problems.

Budget Development

1. Ask the OoR Financial Analyst (Amanda Gallop) for the current salary and benefit rates for each participating member of the team. This includes all PI's, Co-PIs, Senior Personnel, R&D engineers, etc. Human Resources can provide this information in Amanda's absence.

2. Send the Grant-Budget Development Worksheet to PI who will provide the answers needed to fill in your spreadsheet and obtain a draft budget.

If you have any questions about budget development, contact Amanda Gallop, who can assist with all budget-related items.

Required Proposal Documents/Forms

Required documents and forms vary depending on proposal type and funder. Instructions and templates for many common proposal documents can be found on the Office of Research website in the research toolkit. A list of commonly required documents can be seen below:

- Proposal summary or abstract
- Proposal narrative or description
- Facilities document
- Data management plan
- Biographical sketch/resume/vitae
- Current and Pending list
- List of Collaborators and Other Affiliations

- Letters of Collaboration
- Letter of Commitment
- Budget and Budget Justification
- SF 424 forms

Essential institutional information, such as organization type and DUNS number, can be found on the Office of Research website and OoR staff are happy to assist with completing all forms and obtaining Dr. Otuonye's signature on the required documents. Contact Jamie Murdock or Amy Hill for assistance in this area.

Proposal Endorsement Form

The purpose of the Proposal Endorsement Form (PEF) is to allow all relevant parties (PIs, Co-PIs, chairs, deans, and center directors (when applicable) to review the proposal budget and narrative and sign off on the items included. A fully signed PEF must be received in the Office of Research at least 24 hours prior to submission of any proposal. The PEF is linked on the Office of Research forms page and is handled through the DocuSign portal. Typically, the individual that assists with budget development also assists with initiation of the PEF. A copy of the final proposal budget, budget justification, and a copy of the fully executed internal cost-share document (if applicable) must be attached along with project narrative documents (if the project is a subaward, only a scope of work is included with the budget and justification; otherwise, the full proposal narrative must be attached with those documents). Once the PEF is released by the initiator, its routing can be tracked through the link automatically sent to the initiator. The initiator completes Page 1 of the PEF, and the subsequent sections are available only to those who are required to complete them. Co-PIs must complete the compliance page, and Senior Personnel will be notified by OoR staff to complete compliance through an online portal. Please contact Amy Hill if you have any trouble with this procedure.

Proposal Submission

The Office of Research asks that complete, ready-to-submit proposals be received in the Office of Research five (5) working days from the Sponsor or Funding Agency deadline to ensure that there is time for an internal review prior to submission. The purpose of this internal deadline is to ensure that the proposal meets all federal, state, funding agency, and TTU guidelines. If this internal deadline is not met, the Office of Research cannot guarantee that all items will be able to be reviewed prior to submission. Specific information regarding the items that are reviewed during the five-day period can be found on our website.

Proposal submission methods vary based on the funder and funding program. While some online systems allow for direct submission by the principal investigator (PI), the majority of systems require submission from a Tennessee Tech account maintained by Office of Research staff. Another common method for submission is via email. Regardless of the submission method, a signed PEF and final proposal documents must be received by the Office of Research at least 24 hours prior to submission. Once a final review is conducted, staff will submit the proposal or give permission for the PI to submit, when applicable. Please contact Amy Hill if you have any questions regarding proposal submission.