Pre-Award Overview

Office for Sponsored Research
The Sponsored Project Life Cycle

1. Identify Funding Opportunities
2. Proposal Development & Submission
3. Award Negotiation & Acceptance
4. Award Set-Up
5. Award Management
6. Award Closeout
What is a Proposal?

- A **proposal** is the document submitted to a prospective sponsor outlining and requesting support for a specific project. Proposals typically include 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, outlining 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 proposal development, providing the guidelines needed to construct a complete proposal

For Additional Information:
SPOT Mini-Course: [A Beginner's Guide to Sponsored Project Solicitations](#)
Proposal components

Technical Components

Administrative Components

Proposal
**Technical Narrative**
- Statement of need/impact (why is this work important?)
- Objectives/Goals (*what* are the researchers hoping to accomplished?)
- Research Plan (*how* will these goals be accomplished?)
- Specific sections vary from sponsor to sponsor

**Statement of Work (SOW)**
The SOW briefly describes the work being performed, and is often captured in sections referred to as “abstract” or “summary”

**Other Technical Components**
- References cited
- Schedule/Milestones
- Appendices
- Compliance Sections (e.g. human subjects, vertebrate animals)

*not an exhaustive list, examples of common items*
Administrative Components

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

Biographical Sketches
An abbreviated C.V. detailing an individual’s professional/education background as well research background (publications, contributions to science, synergistic activities etc.)

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
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, subawards, 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

- Base Salary
- Fringe
- Personnel
- Subcontracts
- Materials & Supplies
- Travel
- Direct Costs

\[ \text{Direct Costs} + \text{Indirect (F&A) Costs} = \text{Budget} \]

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

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

SPOT & OSR 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 choose 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 introduced 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
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](http://example.com)
Sponsored Proposal Development Process: How the pieces fit together

For Additional Information:
SPOT Mini-course: Anatomy of an Administrative Shell
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 OSR for review and signature

- Be mindful of all deadlines
Working with Industry
## Northwestern vs. Industry Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Northwestern</th>
<th>Industry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Objective</td>
<td>• Expand knowledge through teaching, research, and public service</td>
<td>• Develop and commercialize a product, process, and/or service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge Dissemination</td>
<td>• Ability to publish with only limited time delay for review of patent rights</td>
<td>• Keep information proprietary and away from competitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge Ownership</td>
<td>• Ownership of intellectual property developed by NU*</td>
<td>• Ownership and control of intellectual property developed by NU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>• Full F&amp;A recovery</td>
<td>• Reduce costs wherever possible</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Reasonable payment terms, such as timing and frequency</td>
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*Clinical Trials*
Clinical Trial Agreements (CTA)

- Establish terms & conditions under which corporate research funding is accepted and conducted by NU
- Help protect NU, faculty, staff & subjects from liability
- Resolve intellectual property issues
- Preserve publication rights and NU data access
Key Risk Areas on Industry Projects

- Pre-spending
- Payment
- Budgets
- Unallowable Costs
- Final Report
- Fixed Price Projects
Negotiating with Industry

• Negotiation takes time:
  – Completeness of submission to OSR
  – Negotiating terms of agreements
  – External review when required
  – IRB and budget approval

• Outcome:
  – Contract fully negotiated
  – IRB approval
  – Budget negotiated & approved
  – COI clearance

• Any Updates - Please refer to your InfoEd PD record accessible through the SP Number!
Key Issues Negotiated

- Publication rights
- Intellectual property
  - Ownership
  - Licensing
  - Background IP
- Confidentiality
- Export controls and foreign national restrictions
- FAR flowdowns
Best Practices

• To expedite negotiations:
  – Make sure to set-up your PD record in InfoEd
  – Email draft agreements to your Senior Contract and Grant Officer and cc the Administrative Coordinator
  – Do not pre-spend if any export control or foreign national restrictions apply
  – Ask for a copy of the prime award (if applicable)
  – Don't forget to include the InfoEd PD record accessible through the SP Number!
  – Keep your Contracts Officer informed of budget negotiations and IRB approval

For Additional Information:
http://osr.northwestern.edu/clinical-research/industry
Want to Learn More?

- Contact OSR Corporate Team Administrative Coordinators for one-on-one training

- More information on broad principles applicable to clinical research agreements between NU and industry: [http://osr.northwestern.edu/clinical-research/industry](http://osr.northwestern.edu/clinical-research/industry)

- Watch for OSR Brown Bags announced on OSR listserv

- Find My Grants / Contracts Officer [https://osr.northwestern.edu/contact](https://osr.northwestern.edu/contact)
Questions?