Finding Funding, Budget Preparation, and Proposal Submission for Sponsored Research

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Agenda – A Walkthrough of the Proposal Process at MSU

Proposal Preparation Guide

- Overview
- Step 1: Identify Funding Sources
- Step 2: Confirm Eligibility and Study Application Requirements
- Step 3: Working with Administrators and OSP
- Step 4: Budget and Budget Justification
- Step 5: Prepare Necessary Forms
- Step 6: Regulatory Requirements
- Step 7: Send Solicitation and Budget to OSP - 10 days
- Step 8: Send Final Approved Budget and Administratively Complete Proposal to OSP - 6 days
- Step 9: Send Final Proposal for Submission to OSP - 3 days

www.osp.msu.edu
Step 1: Identify Funding Sources

- Federal
- State of Michigan
  - Largely relationship driven
- Foundations/ Non-Profit
  - https://proposalcentral.altum.com
- Industry
  - Business Connect - http://businessconnect.msu.edu/
- OVPRGS
  - http://vprgs.msu.edu/findfunding
- The Funding Center at MSU Libraries
  - http://staff.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/0fdncoll.htm
Step 2: Study Application Requirements

- **Read the Solicitation!**
  - Look for restrictive terms (e.g. Publications)
- **Eligibility Requirements**
  - Special approval for institutionally limited
- **Funding Guidelines**
  - Total cost cap vs. direct cost cap
  - Cost share/matching requirements
  - Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Limitations
- **Dates**
  - Deadline dates
  - Anticipated start dates
- **Application Format**
  - Electronic vs. paper submission
Step 3: Roles & Responsibilities

Principal Investigator

• Responsible for a project’s overall programmatic and financial direction.
• Make decisions on how to allocate the available financial resources to successfully carry out the project objectives.
• Ultimately responsible for resolving any over-expenditures or unallowable costs.
• Report any inventions and/or financial conflicts of interest
• Receive proper compliance approvals – e.g. Animal Subjects, Human Subjects, Export Controls
Step 3: Roles & Responsibilities

Research Administrator

• Maintain current knowledge of sponsor regulations and MSU policies and procedures
• Assist in proposal preparation
• Assist in the fiscal management of sponsored program accounts
• Provide overall assistance to PI’s in successfully managing the proposal and award process
Step 3: Roles & Responsibilities

College / Department

• Assuring adequate facilities and other resources for achieving project objectives
• Assuring faculty time commitments on sponsored activities do not conflict with other departmental or university responsibilities
• Monitoring financial resources
• Monitoring compliance with regulatory requirements
Step 3: Roles & Responsibilities

Office of Sponsored Programs

- Assist PI, department and college staff throughout the pre-award process
- Authorizes all projects to external sponsors
- Accepts awards
- Negotiates agreements and contracts
Step 3: Roles & Responsibilities

- PI
- Research Administrator
- College/Department
- Office of Sponsored Programs
Step 4: Developing a Budget
Direct vs. Facilities & Administrative (F&A)

- **Direct Costs** – Specifically identifiable to your project
  - e.g. PI effort, project specific supplies, necessary travel

- **F&A Costs** (Indirect Costs (IDC), Overhead) — **NOT** specifically identifiable to your project
  - e.g. Buildings, utilities, office furniture
The Budget – Line by Line

• **Salaries/Wages and Fringe Benefits**
  ✓ For University professional and research staff, graduate and undergraduate students, and casual or part-time workers,
  ✓ Salary figures should be based on the percentage of effort by each individual on the project applied to his/her annual salary.
  ✓ Be careful with overload pay
  ✓ Percentages of Effort vs. Person Months calculation
  ✓ Don’t forget to include the associated *Fringe Benefits*
    ▪ Specific Identification
    ▪ Lower rates for Research Associates (Post Docs)
    ▪ Grad Assistant Fringe Chart

Use the OSP Salary Budget Builder
The Budget – Line by Line

• **Equipment**
  - Non-expendable, tangible personal property with an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit
  - Has a useful life of more than one year

• **Travel**
  - Budget foreign travel using U.S. air carrier rates
  - Look for required travel to be budgeted in your RFA
  - Be as detailed as possible with your travel details in the budget justification

• **Materials and Supplies**
  - Specifically for the project
  - Easily identifiable and allocable
  - New rules related to computing devices – must be essential and allocable
The Budget – Line by Line

• Other Direct Costs
  ✓ Subcontracts for collaborative projects with other universities/organizations should be included in this line-item (include subcontractor budget and letter of intent)
  ✓ Consultants – include rate and qualifications in the justification (ex. Advisory Boards)
  ✓ Animal care costs
  ✓ Copying costs
  ✓ Food costs – typically unallowable on federal grants.
  ✓ Subject pay / incentives
  ✓ Patient care costs
  ✓ Grad student tuition and fees
The Budget – Line by Line

Facilities and Administrative Costs (F&A)

- Use the full applicable MSU rate, publicly mandated or statutorily capped rate.
- Types of F&A bases – Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC), Total Direct Costs (TDC), Salaries and Wages (S&W)
- Our federally negotiated rate uses the MTDC base, which excludes grad tuition and fees, equipment, subcontract payments over $25k, and other costs.
- Asking to use a reduced F&A rate requires OVPRGS approval

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The Budget Justification

✓ Used to justify the expenses included in the detailed budget

✓ Stay away from including dollar amounts for categories

✓ Be very detailed when justifying certain categories of expense such as foreign travel and consultants

✓ Watch for agency rules on justifying effort – percentages vs. person months

✓ Don’t include voluntary cost share!
Cost Sharing

- **Include only when required**
  - Many federal agencies that previously required cost sharing have reduced or eliminated the requirement and instead are basing their funding decisions on the technical merit of the proposal.

- **Mandatory vs. Voluntary**
  - Mandatory cost share is a requirement of the solicitation. Voluntary cost share is NOT a requirement of the solicitation, but is a quantifiable amount identified in the proposal that we are not requesting the sponsor to pay for.
  - Mandatory cost share must be quantified and included in the Cost Sharing field on the eTransmittal.
  - Voluntary cost share does not have to be quantified, but must be included as a note on the eTransmittal
Cost Sharing

Mandatory

Other Financials

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<td>*Total Cost Sharing/Matching/In-kind Included:</td>
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Voluntary

Notes

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Budgeting tips

1. Look for requirements in your solicitation
   - Total vs. direct cost cap
   - Limits to F&A
   - Required travel
   - Required cost share (match)

2. Use round numbers

3. Start with salaries

4. Subcontracts? Get budgets early!
Budgeting tips

5. Use caution with the following categories:
   - Administrative support
   - Laptops, printers, scanners, etc.
   - Office Supplies
   - Meals and entertainment
   - Cell phones

6. Participant Support Cost:
   - Sponsor specific definition (e.g. NSF)
   - 0% F&A
   - Agency Approval Required
Step 5: Prepare MSU and Agency Forms

MSU’s Internal Approval Form – The eTransmittal
Step 5: Prepare MSU and Agency Forms

- **eTransmittal – Things to keep in mind**
  - Make sure the appropriate faculty are receiving **F&A credit** and you agree with the split between faculty.
  - **Postaward Unit** – Who is doing the bookkeeping for the project? Impacts the F&A return.
  - **Direct sponsor** = entity giving us funds
  - **Prime sponsor** = entity sponsoring the research
  - Only required cost share is entered in the **cost share field**. Voluntary cost share is included as a note.
  - **Subcontract field** is the dollar amount for total subcontracts we have in our budget. This is not for when MSU is a subcontract.
  - Budget, Budget Justification and Scope of Work should be included as **attachments**.
  - **Start early!**
Step 6: Regulatory Requirements

• **Human Subjects Approvals**
  ✓ Human Research Protection Program (HRPP)
  ✓ Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval must be received prior to account setup, but not necessarily prior to proposal submission

• **Animal Subjects**
  ✓ Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval must be received prior to account setup, but not necessarily prior to proposal submission

• **Export Control Review**
  ✓ The Export Control and Open Research & Review Worksheet (ECORRW) must be approved before award is accepted

• **Conflict of Interest Compliance**
  ✓ Policy for Public Health Service (PHS) Investigators and National Science Foundation (NSF)- August 2012
Step 7, 8 & 9: Timeline for Proposal Deadline Policy

**Ten business days:**
Notification of proposal (including solicitation number when applicable) should be sent to OSP.

**Six business days:**
Final budget should be provided to OSP for review.

**Three business days:**
Final proposal and eTransmittal should be provided to OSP for submission. If not, the proposal is considered to be a “late” proposal.

**One business day:**
“Late” proposal becomes an “at-risk” proposal/ needs Associate Research Dean Approval before OSP review and submission of proposal.

**One business day:**
OSP has committed to submit most “on-time” proposals one day before the deadline.
Step 7, 8 & 9: Timeline for Proposal Deadline Policy

10 business days before:
- Start draft eTransmittal
- Provide solicitation to OSP

8 business days before:
- Draft Budget and related narrative to OSP if review wanted/needed

6 business days before:
- Send Final Budget to OSP  
  Administratively complete proposal
- Route eTransmittal (if concerned about completion prior to three days)

Before 3 business days:
- Final Proposal
- Fully routed eTransmittal (in OSP’s queue)

1 business day before (or earlier):
- OSP submits proposal

Sponsor Deadline
Pitfalls of NOT receiving approval for proposal submissions

- May have to request changes from sponsor
- May have to withdraw proposal if the chair and dean are not supportive
- MSU may not be able to accept the award or contract due to terms of the solicitation.
- Delays award setup or contract negotiation
Activity Log

What is the Activity Log?
The activity log is a new system that tracks pre-award activities associated with proposals and awards. This system is now available for campus viewing. Activity Log was created to track metrics, provide transparency, and is an organization tool for OSP and Business Connect.

Where is the Activity Log located?
www.osp.msu.edu
Additional Opportunities for Trainings Related to Sponsored Programs

• Essentials of Research Administration (ERA), [http://sprout.vprgs.msu.edu/training.html](http://sprout.vprgs.msu.edu/training.html)

• Research Workshops sponsored by OVPRGS and the Office of Research Facilitation and Dissemination, [https://vprgs.msu.edu/events](https://vprgs.msu.edu/events)

• Sign up for the OSP List Serve, [https://www.cga.msu.edu/PL/Portal/DocumentViewer.aspx?cga=aQBkAD0AMQA1ADUA](https://www.cga.msu.edu/PL/Portal/DocumentViewer.aspx?cga=aQBkAD0AMQA1ADUA)

• Research Administrators Network (RAN), [https://sprout.vprgs.msu.edu/spartan-ran/](https://sprout.vprgs.msu.edu/spartan-ran/)
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