

Research & Sponsored Programs Seminar

Proposal Planning: Tips on how to avoid common complications



Objectives

- Understand the common causes of submission failure and how to avoid them.
- Tips on how to be proactive.



Plan Ahead

- One of the best ways to help the Investigators/Faculty in your department is to ask them at the beginning of the semester what they plan to submit this year.
- Put this on your calendar at least a month before the due date of the submission.
- Download/Bookmark the submission requirements of the sponsors to which your faculty plan to submit.
- Create an electronic file of all the documents that are required for the submission.



Proposal Guidelines Not Followed

- It is the PI responsibility to know what is required by the sponsor.
- This is the top reason proposals are rejected
- Returned Without Review
- The departmental support staff can assist by understanding the sponsor's general guidelines.

TIP – Follow the guidelines exactly!

Sponsor and Project Goal Mismatch

- It is the PI responsibility to ensure that the project goals match the sponsor's funding agenda.
- Most sponsors know what they want to fund.
- What is the sponsor's funding history?
- Is this in response to an RFP?
- Does the response to an RFP match the request?

TIP: If it is not clear what the sponsor wants to fund, contact a Research Development Director for assistance.



Deadline Not Met

- Meeting the submission deadline is the responsibility of the PI.
- Most sponsors have little sympathy for late submitters.
- Errors encountered during the submission process must be corrected before the deadline.

TIP: Know the deadline for the submission and ensure there is enough time to review properly for errors.



Budget is Unrealistic

- The PI is responsible for making sure the budget reflects all the costs associated with the project.
- Most sponsors can tell if a project is padded, based on the scope of work or the goals and objectives.
- Most sponsors are not going to object to budgets that are less than expected. The overruns will be the responsibility of the Institution.

TIP: Look for the obvious omissions and additions by comparing the budget to the proposed project goals.

Budget Does not include Required Elements

- Justification is not included
- Justification does not clearly explain the budget item
- Effort is not clearly allocated
- Sponsor's required forms are not completed correctly

TIP: Include all the required items in the budget.



Documents are Missing

- It is the PI responsibility to provide all non-standard documents as required by the proposal guidelines.
- Sponsor requests for special documents should be sent to the Sponsored Programs Administrator for processing.
- Biosketches of staff members assigned to proposed program
- Contact person and information
- Letters of support from collaborators

TIP: Keep documents up to date for immediate use.



Documents in the Wrong Format

- It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure all documents submitted with the proposal package are in the correct format.
- OSP will review for proper formatting.
- But revisions of proposals, due to formatting issues, can be avoided.

TIP: Follow the format requirements



Unusual Clauses

- The PI is responsible for the terms and conditions of the award.
- Unusual clauses need to be reviewed and there needs to be agreement before the proposal is submitted.

TIP: Don't skip the clauses.



Last Minute Response to RFP

- We know that there are often last minute requests from sponsors to submit a proposal in response to an RFP.
- The more prepared the PI is to respond to these requests, the easier it will be for us to help with the submission.

TIP: Keep documents up to date.



Questions?