

University of Illinois at Springfield  
Office of Grants, Contracts and Research Administration  
Policy and Procedures Manual for the  
Submission of Proposals to Outside Funders

**Role of the Office of Grants, Contracts and Research Administration**

The Office of Grants, Contracts and Research Administration at the University of Illinois at Springfield resides in the Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. It is staffed by a Coordinator, who oversees all functions of the office, and a part-time administrative assistant. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Education and Research has supervisory authority for this office.

The office is commonly referred to as Pre-award Grants and Contracts in order to distinguish it from the Grants and Contracts Accounting Office, which resides in the Office of Business and Financial Services. The office has primary responsibility for:

- Review and approval of proposals to be submitted to external sponsors (Sponsored Projects)
- Implementation of University of Illinois research-related policies and their related procedures, including
  - Conflict of Commitment and Interest
  - Patents and Copyrights
  - Academic Integrity in Research and Publications
- Review of projects involving human subjects in research
- Review of projects involving animal subjects in research

This policies and procedures manual applies only to the review and approval of proposals to be submitted to external sponsors, commonly referred to as Sponsored Projects. Policies and procedures for the other areas listed can be found at [www.uis.edu/grants](http://www.uis.edu/grants).

**Services Provided**

Pre-award Grants and Contracts provides various services related to proposal development and submission for UIS faculty, staff and students. These services include:

- Identification of external funding sources
- Interpretation of sponsor guidelines and requirements
- Assistance with all stages of proposal development, including budget preparation
- Publication of an annual report distributed to the UIS campus
- Maintenance of a homepage, with links to relevant information and downloadable forms

Please note that the Pre-Award Grants and Contracts Office does not normally review the content of the technical part of the proposal that deals with specific areas of knowledge unique to each department and that would require in-depth knowledge of the field. Pre-Award will review budgets, ensure appropriate approvals have been obtained, and check the proposal to make sure that all necessary forms and information have been included.

## **Requirements for Proposal Submission**

Any UIS faculty member, staff or student may submit a proposal. Student-generated proposals must secure a faculty or staff member's written agreement to oversee the project, as well as a home unit that will take fiscal responsibility for any award received. Further information on the items below can be found in the University General Rules, Article II. Section 6 <http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/rules.cfm#sec26>.

All proposals to external sponsors by UIS faculty, staff and students require internal approval prior to submission. The process follows these general steps:

- Project director prepares proposal narrative and budget (with assistance from Pre-award Grants and Contracts or department staff as needed)
- Project director completes and signs an internal clearance form (available from the grants web page [www.uis.edu/grants/proposals/internal.html](http://www.uis.edu/grants/proposals/internal.html)). By signing the internal clearance form, the project director:
  - 1) certifies that the information submitted is true, complete and accurate to the best of his/her knowledge
  - 2) acknowledges that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject the project director to criminal, civil or administrative penalties
  - 3) agrees to accept responsibility for the scientific conduct of the project and to provide progress reports
  - 4) attests to having submitted a report of non-university activities that accurately lists financial and other relationships (and those of one's spouse and dependent children) that might reasonably appear to be affected by the research being proposed.

All co-investigators/co-directors must also sign the internal clearance form to certify these points.

- The project director routes the internal clearance form and the following items for approval.
  - Project Narrative
  - Budget
  - Budget Narrative
  - A copy of the Request for Proposals (RFP) to which this proposal is responding, or the link where the RFP is available on the web
  - Requests for waivers of any of the policies in this document (e.g. recovery of graduate tuition, waiver of indirect costs)

Routing proceeds as follows:

- For academic departments, first to the Program Chair, then to the Dean
- For non-academic departments, first to the Unit Head, then to the Vice Chancellor or Center Director
- The proposal is then routed to Grants and Contracts Pre-Award
- Proposals involving faculty or staff from multiple units, or faculty with joint appointments, must be routed through all applicable administrative lines
- Grants and Contracts Pre-Award, upon receiving the proposal and signed internal clearance form, obtains final approval from the Provost

- Proposal is submitted to sponsor

Proposals that are submitted to external sponsors without first completing the internal clearance process may be withdrawn at the discretion of the Provost. A minimum of three business days is required by the Pre-award Grants and Contracts Office to review proposals and obtain the necessary approvals.

### **Electronic Proposals**

Many agencies, both private and governmental, require that proposals be submitted electronically. The submission may occur via email (attaching all relevant documents), or through a specialized online proposal submission system. Regardless of the type of submission, the policy and procedures described in the preceding section, “Requirements for Proposal Submission,” apply. Electronic proposals must be routed and approved in the same manner as hard copy paper proposals prior to submission to an external sponsor.

### **Signature Authority for Proposals**

The Provost serves as the Institutional Official authorized to commit the institution to the budget and scope of work described in the proposal. Only the Provost (or his designee) may sign proposals on behalf of UIS. This policy applies to both hard copy and electronic signatures.

The only exception to this policy is for proposals originating from the Provost’s Office, on which the Provost or Provost’s Office staff member serves as the Project Director. In these cases, the Chancellor will serve as the Institutional Official, and must officially approve the proposal prior to submission.

### **Budget Development**

A proposal to an outside funder normally includes a detailed budget. Both the Pre-award Grants and Contracts Office and the Grants Accounting Office are available to assist with budget development. Sponsor Guidelines should always be consulted for specific directives on budget preparation. The following represents general guidance.

The budget is the financial plan for the project or program. It includes both the sponsor and non-sponsor share of the total project cost. Proposed project costs are comprised of allowable direct costs, indirect costs (also known as facilities and administrative or F&A costs), and cost sharing. Allowable costs are those that are reasonable and allocable to the sponsored project and allowable under University and sponsor policy.

The budget should be subdivided into periods of twelve month duration (unless partial year funding is anticipated). If cost sharing is included, each budget period should include columns for both Sponsor and University costs.

A budget narrative (Narrative) should be prepared to explain how the budgeted costs relate to the project. The Narrative should provide sufficient detail to allow the sponsor to determine whether the proposed costs are reasonable and appropriate. Key elements to include in the Narrative are:

- A detailed justification of the expense or service

- How the expense relates to and benefits the project
- The anticipated cost
- The time period in which it will be utilized
- Other information that will aid the sponsor in evaluating the proposed item

## PERSONNEL EXPENSES

### Salaries:

- The salary category should include the names of all individuals who will be involved in the project, if known, otherwise use To Be Named (TBN) and job classification. Dependent upon specific sponsor guidelines, either the percent effort or person months that will be applied to the project should also be shown. Depending upon agency limitations, an appropriate inflation rate (e.g., 3% - 5%) should be used to determine salary requirements beyond the first fiscal year.
- Guidelines should be consulted for agency-specific salary caps.
- The salaries of administrative and clerical support staff are normally classified as indirect costs and are not allowable costs. It may be appropriate to charge these costs to a major project where administrative and clerical services can be explicitly budgeted to a major project, and the time and effort of the staff involved can be specifically identified with the sponsored project. Support for administrative and clerical staff should be detailed in the budget narrative to provide the sponsor with adequate information to evaluate whether these costs are allocable to the project.

### Fringe Benefits:

- Fringe benefits are charged as direct costs to the project. The most current UIS fringe benefit rates should be applied to all UIS faculty, staff and student salaries. See [www.uis.edu/grants/Rate%20index.htm](http://www.uis.edu/grants/Rate%20index.htm)

## NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES

### Consumable Materials and Supplies:

- Consumable supplies (with life expectancy of one year or less) are items used exclusively in support of project objectives.
- It is generally acceptable to sponsors to provide a breakdown of materials and supplies by broad categories as opposed to the detailed listing of individual items.
- When supply items are purchased to support the multiple activities of project personnel, they are considered to be indirect costs and cannot be charged directly to sponsored project funds. Such items often include University stationery, toner, pens, tablets, file folders, staples, paper clips, etc. (office supplies).

### Travel:

- Costs for travel, lodging and subsistence may be charged on, a) an actual cost basis or b) a per diem or mileage basis.
- Charges incurred by employees for travel, lodging and other subsistence should be reasonable and allowable only to the extent of University policy, which may be viewed at [http://www.obfs.uillinois.edu/manual/central\\_p/sec15-1.html](http://www.obfs.uillinois.edu/manual/central_p/sec15-1.html).

- Costs should be calculated using current University travel reimbursement rates, which may be viewed at [www.obfs.uillinois.edu/obfshome.cfm?level=2&path=travel&xmldata=ratesatglance](http://www.obfs.uillinois.edu/obfshome.cfm?level=2&path=travel&xmldata=ratesatglance)
- The Narrative should provide information regarding destination and names of conferences, if known, number of travelers, duration of travel and estimated total cost.
- Foreign and domestic travel should be itemized and justified separately.
- Sponsor guidelines should be consulted to verify the allowability of travel costs.

#### Equipment:

- Major items of equipment proposed for acquisition should be itemized by descriptive name and estimated cost, and an adequate justification should be provided in the budget narrative.
- Items with a useful life of more than one year and costing \$500 or more, but less than \$5,000, normally should be included and justified under "Materials and Supplies."
- Equipment purchases should not be allocated between sponsor-provided and University-provided funds because of potential future points of contention associated with ownership of the equipment. If equipment is wholly pledged as cost sharing, it must be purchased during the project's period of performance.

#### Subawards:

- Need to be clearly identified in the text of the proposal.
- Need to be included as a line item in the budget.
- A formal proposal from the subawardee, including a statement of work, budget, budget justification, and letter of administrative approval from the subawardee's institution should be provided when the proposal is submitted to Pre-Award Grants and Contracts.
- In the event the subawardee's proposal is not available at proposal submission, it must be provided to Grants and Contracts and approved by the sponsor prior to any subaward being issued.
- NOTE: subawards that are not documented and justified in the proposal and approved by the Sponsor may fall under the University's Procurement policy. In such cases, the Purchasing Office will handle the subawards.

#### Services:

##### Computing Services

- Charges for computing services should be budgeted whenever these costs are justified as providing a direct benefit to the project. Network costs, including the hardware, software, personnel services, public access sites, and other related costs required to enable University personnel to share software or data or to communicate electronically with other individuals, are considered to be part of the physical infrastructure of the University and are classified as indirect costs.

##### Professional Services/Consultants

- Consultants may not be current or former University employees performing same or similar duties. If they are, they must be paid through the University payroll system (see

Other Direct Costs:

- Other Direct Costs should be itemized and described in the Narrative.
- Telephone service, including monthly service charges, ISDN, calling cards and cellular phone charges typically should not be included as these are classified as indirect costs.
- Memberships, postage, and food are typically deemed to be unallowable unless they are going to be main elements of the project.

Tuition:

- Unless expressly prohibited by the sponsor, graduate tuition should be included as a direct cost in the budget if the project includes the support of Graduate Assistants.
- Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Education and Research

COST SHARING

- Cost sharing may include only expenses that are allowable on and allocable to the project and incurred during the project period. The establishment of a separate University account (FOP) will be required to record and track University cost sharing commitments. It is the department's responsibility to provide documentation which supports cost sharing commitments.

INDIRECT COSTS

- Proposal budgets are expected to include the maximum indirect cost rate allowed by the sponsor. Any budget that does not include the full recovery allowed must be accompanied by a written request to waive indirect cost recovery. A valid explanation must be given. Only the Provost can approve the waiver of indirect cost recovery.
- If the sponsor prohibits indirect costs, a copy of that statement must be submitted with the proposal.
- The University of Illinois at Springfield maintains federally negotiated indirect cost rates with the federal government for both on campus and off campus activities. The rate that applies to where the majority of the project activity (>50%) will take place should be applied to the entire proposed budget. Please contact the Pre-award Grants and Contracts Office for assistance with the use of the off campus rate.
- Current indirect costs rates are posted to <http://www.uis.edu/grants/proposals/rates.html>
- UIS policies state that colleges and departments receive 30% of the estimated indirect funds to be generated each year. Those funds are distributed as follows:
  - 50% to the administrative unit that generated the indirect cost recovery money. When an institute or support unit generates indirect monies from its grants and/or contracts and provides administrative support to the projects, it will receive funds. When a college or academic program generates the funds, the allocation will be to the dean's office that supervised the project and provided administrative support. When the indirect money is generated by a grant or contract that is not in a free-standing state supported unit, the allocation will be to the administrative unit that directly oversees that unit.

- 50% to the project director who generated the indirect cost recovery. This anticipates that the project director will be a faculty member or permanent university administrative staff member. When the project director is no longer at the university, the funds will go to the administrative unit that generated the funds. When the project director is a staff person paid entirely from a grant or contract that generated the indirect cost recovery money, the project director's proportion of the funds will go to the administrative unit that generated the funds.

### Fiscal Officer

All proposals must designate a fiscal officer, who will be responsible for administering any funds received.

### Award Process

When a sponsor has approved a proposal for funding, the University will receive notice that an award has been made or a contract is being prepared. This notice may come in the format of a contract, grant, email notification, or award letter. The notice may be sent to the Pre-Award office or to the Project Director (PD). If the PD receives such a notice, s/he must forward it to the Pre-Award Office immediately to become part of the formal record of the award. The Pre-Award Office cannot administratively initiate the project without formal sponsor notification. When the Grants and Contracts Pre-Award Office receives notice of an award, it forwards the notice immediately to the PD and unit business administrator, even before the award is formally accepted or a fund established.

No award can be accepted until all sponsor terms and conditions have been reviewed and approved. Legal counsel may be consulted. Pre-Award Grants and Contracts will manage any necessary award negotiations and the preparation of any additional documents requested by the sponsor during the course of those negotiations. All contracts must be routed for appropriate signatures and must be accompanied by a Contract Approval form, located at <http://www.uis.edu/grants/proposals/contracts.html>.

On occasion, a sponsor may award support for an investigator without a formal proposal being submitted through the University. In such cases, the Grants and Contracts Pre-Award Office must complete formal approval of the project, as described in the [General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure \(http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/rules.cfm#sec27\)](http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/rules.cfm#sec27), prior to acceptance of the award.

### Signature Authority for Awards

The Grants and Contracts Pre-Award Office officially notifies all relevant parties when an award has been accepted and fully executed. Many award instruments are received which require both sponsor and University signatures (bilateral agreement) before they become effective. Project Directors, Faculty, Deans, Principal Investigators, or Department Heads **are not authorized** to sign award documents on behalf of the University.

For all contracts, and for grants that require an institutional signature, the following signature authorities apply:

- Contracts must be written in the name of the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, with signature lines for the Comptroller and the Secretary of the Board. Only these individuals, or their designees, can sign contracts on behalf of the University.
- Grants that require signature by an institutional official will be signed by the Provost or his designee.

The only exception to this policy is for awards from proposals originating from the Provost's Office, on which the Provost or Provost's Office staff member serves as the Project Director. In these cases, the Chancellor will serve as the Institutional Official, and must officially approve the award prior to its acceptance by the University.

### **Setting up an Account**

Once the award is formally executed by both the University and the sponsor as required, copies will be distributed to all relevant units, including Grants and Contracts Accounting. The unit managing the award can then request a Banner Account by filling out the form located at [www.uis.edu/grants/accounting/index.html](http://www.uis.edu/grants/accounting/index.html) and submitting it to Grants and Contracts Accounting.

### **Subawards**

Individuals and/or organizations that will be performing work under a sponsored project must be issued a subaward from the University. Subawards may be initiated without further sponsor approval if:

- (1) The University and the subawardee have jointly proposed to the sponsor
- (2) The proposed subawardee was included in the University's proposal, and/or
- (3) The subawardee was approved by the sponsor as a condition of award

If a proposed subawardee was not named in the initial proposal and/or award, further documentation may be required. In all cases, subawards are ultimately governed by the Higher Education Procurement Rules and the Illinois Procurement Code.

Agreements to obtain goods or routine services are purchases, not subawards, and are subject to all relevant University procurement policies. For further information regarding purchase transactions, contact the OBFS Purchasing Division.

For University Policy regarding Research Grants and Contracts,