Background

Sponsored Project Administration, on behalf of the University of Vermont, has an institutional responsibility to review and approve all new sponsored project proposals, resubmissions, competing renewals, supplemental proposals, and pre-proposals requiring detailed budgets, before submitting proposals to a sponsor.

Purpose

This document outlines the Proposal Preparation, Review, and Submission process, provides a best-practice timeline to ensure successful proposal submission, provides suggestions for avoiding common problems, and sets forth roles and responsibilities of the parties involved.

Roles and Responsibilities

For a detailed list of roles and responsibilities of each party listed below, see Appendix A.

Principal Investigator (PI):

PIs have the responsibility for all aspects of a proposal and are expected to submit a submission-ready proposal to SPA no later than 2 business days prior to sponsor’s published deadline.

A submission-ready proposal means a complete, accurate proposal that meets all sponsor programmatic and administrative guidelines and UVM requirements.

PIs may coordinate and delegate certain components of the proposal preparation to designated department or college support staff, where available.

Unit Administrator (UA):

Department, Center, College or School Unit Administrators who are delegated responsibility for various aspects of the proposal process and assist in coordinating the review and submission to SPA.
Department Chair or Designee:
In coordination with the College, assign department staff to assist Principal Investigators with preparing a submission ready proposal meaning a complete, accurate proposal that meets all sponsor programmatic and administrative guidelines, and UVM requirements. This includes completing all required proposal forms.

Reviews and approves proposals for consistency with department policies and procedures and University requirements.

Department reviews typically include an assessment and approval of the following:

- Budget is accurate; costs are allowable, reasonable and allocable to the project; personnel listed are available and qualified to participate in the project; Institutional Base Salary (IBS) is accurate; any proposed cost-share is accurate and documented; F&A is accurate, facilities are available; PI meets UVM’s PI Eligibility requirements.

College Dean or Designee:
Provide direction, resources, and oversight to ensure that the college and department administrators provide PIs support towards preparing, reviewing, routing and approving proposals for submission.

Reviews and approves proposals for consistency with college policies and procedures as well as various institutional requirements.

College reviews typically include an assessment and approval of the following:

- Personnel listed are available and qualified to participate in the project; Institutional Base Salary (IBS) is accurate; any proposed cost-share is accurate and approvals documented; F&A is accurate, facilities are available; PI meets UVM’s PI Eligibility requirements.

Sponsored Project Administration Research Administrator (RA):
Performs a final review of the proposal prior to submission to the sponsor. As time allows and in keeping with the best practices timeline in Appendix B of this document, the RA will review the proposal according to the roles and responsibilities outlined in Appendix A.

Acts as university signing official to provide institutional endorsement and certifications on all proposals. Submits proposals directly to sponsor using electronic submission systems where required.

Provides ongoing consultation and assistance in interpreting sponsor and university guidelines as related to proposal submissions.

Sponsored Project Administration (SPA):
SPA is responsible for developing institutional policies, procedures, and systems to ensure efficient and effective proposal preparation and submission practices; developing and maintaining training materials on proposal preparation and submission to assist department administrators and PIs; provide and maintain a UVM electronic research administration systems used for creating, routing and submitting proposals and provide guidance for using these systems.

Procedures

Note: PI and UA are interchangeably in this document, since many aspects of the proposal process detailed below can be delegated to a department or college unit administrator.
Proposal Development Team

1. PI coordinates and may delegate certain components of the proposal preparation to designated department or college support staff where such resources are available.

Initiates Proposal in InfoEd

1. PI initiates InfoEd record for new proposals, resubmissions, competing renewals, supplemental proposals, or pre-proposals requiring a detailed budget. For supplements, PI contacts SPA RA to release the supplement functionality in InfoEd.

2. PI contacts the assigned SPA RA as early as possible once the proposal has been initiated in InfoEd.

3. PI coordinates communication and escalates proposal development questions, concerns, and issues well in advance of the deadline to allow sufficient time for appropriate University offices to respond.

Proposal Development

1. PI is responsible for the development of the proposal's statement of work that can be accomplished within the amount funding being requested.

2. PI coordinates and assembles programmatic and administrative components of the proposal.

3. PI coordinates with subrecipients to ensure timely availability of all subaward materials, including budget, budget justification, and scope of work for all subrecipients.

Prepare Budget

1. PI provides Unit Administrator and SPA RA with sponsor guidelines and preliminary budget information well in advance of the deadline to allow for appropriate review.

2. PI develops proposal budget and budget narrative needed to accomplish the project. This budget must follow sponsor limitations and University procedures. PI ensures accurate salaries, fringe, and F&A rates are used.

3. PI provides a draft budget to SPA RA, using the SPA Budget Worksheet, whenever possible.

4. The SPA RA reviews the budgets for compliance with sponsor and UVM guidelines, including allowable costs, effort requirements, and F&A.

5. If cost sharing is included, SPA RA will confirm cost sharing meets UVM cost sharing policy. SPA RA will confirm the proposed cost sharing is allowable and that it is accurately reflected in the budget worksheet and proposal budget.

6. For multiple PI proposals, SPA RA will complete the F&A allocation section of Budget Worksheet.

Finalize Budget

1. PI, Unit Administrator and SPA RA agree on a final budget.
2. For all system-to-system proposals (Grants.gov), the SPA RA will complete the InfoEd proposal budget.

3. For all non-system-to-system proposals, PI uploads completed sponsor budget forms and budget justification into InfoEd.

4. SPA RA will upload finalized SPA Budget Worksheet into InfoEd.

**Route for Approval**

1. The PI is responsible for uploading all completed proposal files into InfoEd as follows;
   a. For Grants.gov system-to-system submissions (NIH, USDA, e.g.) the PI should upload all required documents into the appropriate fields (less the budget which the SPA RA is completing).
   b. For non-system-to-system proposals, the PI should combine all proposal documents into a single PDF and upload this to InfoEd as the proposal.
   c. For proposals submitted via other electronic submission systems (i.e.: AHA, proposal Central, NSF Fastlane) the PI should download a PDF of the completed proposal as it appears in the proposal submission system, and upload this in its entirety to InfoEd.

2. Once the proposal is submission-ready, the PI can start the electronic route to collect Department, College, and SPA approval prior to submission to the sponsor.

**Internal Deadlines**

**On Time Proposals**

A submission-ready proposal should be received in SPA 2 business days before the sponsor’s published deadline. This gives department, college and SPA time to provide a review, fix issues and ensure a successful submission.

**Late Proposals**

Proposals are considered late if they arrive in SPA with less than two business days before the sponsor’s published deadline. SPA’s responsibility with regard to late proposals is to make every attempt to meet the submission deadline. This may mean SPA cannot provide the customary review of the proposal and may not be able to resolve technical issues that may prohibit submission of the proposal to the sponsor.

Proposals submitted without review will be reviewed post-submission. If considered to be in non-compliance with University standards, SPA may take the following actions:

- Administratively withdraw the proposal.
- Submit a revision if allowed.
- Wait until the time of award to correct any issues.

If any issues cannot be corrected or resolved, this may preclude UVM from accepting the award.

**FAQs**

N/A
## Helpful Links

- **Appendix A: Roles and Responsibilities**
- **Appendix B: Best Practices for Proposal Submission**
- **Appendix C: Avoiding Common Problems**

## Document Change Record

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