Effective Proposal Processing is only a chunk away

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So a PI wants to submit a proposal: what do you do?

Unlike Cookie Monster, we have to start somewhere, where do we begin? Let’s “chunk” the steps:

- The First Steps
- Decoding the RFP and creating a checklist
- Researching and setting internal deadlines
- What are the compliance issues.
Getting Started

1. Find out what’s coming up
2. Gather preliminary information
3. Get organized
1. Find out what’s coming up

- Regular emails to PIs
- Keep calendar of standard due dates (ex: NIH standard dates)
- Consider a Proposal Intent Form (ex: Pediatrics form)

SAMPLE EMAIL

Hi all,

I’ve spoken with some of you already, but if not, could you let me know what proposals you plan to submit over the next few months?

Some upcoming deadlines are:

NIH R21 (new): Mon 2/10
NIH R21 (resub): Mon 3/10
NIH R01 (new): Wed 1/29
NIH R01 (resub): Wed 2/26

OVPR Grant-in-Aid: due 2/10
http://www.research.umn.edu/advance/gia.html

MnDRIVE Transdisciplinary Research Program: due 4/21
http://www.research.umn.edu/advance/mndrive-trp.html

Note these are all my internal deadlines - I'd like all materials by midday on the dates listed above.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Codes</th>
<th>Program Description</th>
<th>Cycle I Due Date</th>
<th>Cycle II Due Date</th>
<th>Cycle III Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P Series</td>
<td>Program Project Grants and Center Grants&lt;sup&gt;Note:&lt;/sup&gt; Applicants should check with the relevant Institute or Center (IC), since some do not accept P series applications for all three receipt/review/award cycles.</td>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>September 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R18, U18 R25</td>
<td>Research Demonstration Education Projects</td>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>September 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T Series</td>
<td>Institutional National Research Service Awards Other Training Grants&lt;sup&gt;Note:&lt;/sup&gt; Applicants should check with the relevant Institute or Center (IC), since some do not accept T series applications for all three receipt/review/award cycles. Applicants should refer to the IC Table of Contents for information on each IC.</td>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>September 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Review and Award Cycles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Due Dates</th>
<th>Cycle I</th>
<th>Cycle II</th>
<th>Cycle III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application Due Dates</td>
<td>January 25 - May 7</td>
<td>May 25 - September 7</td>
<td>September 25 - January 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/submissionschedule.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/submissionschedule.htm)
Pre-award staff will contact you (or your assistant), to schedule a short discussion of the proposal including timeline, agency requirements, budget, etc. If you prefer to discuss before submitting this form, please contact Jordan Webb (or call 612-624-7593).

1. Contact Information

- Investigator Name
- x.500 (email)
- Assistant Name

2. Are there at least 8 weeks between today and the proposal due date?

3. Funding Source/Agency (if this is a proposal for a subcontract, indicate the organization that will be providing the subcontract, as well as the prime funding agency)

- Funding Source/Agency (e.g., NIH, etc.)
- Program Name and RFA/RFP# (e.g., Parent R01: PA-13-302, etc.)

Source: http://www.peds.umn.edu/research/research-support-services/index.htm
2. Gather preliminary information

From PI

• RFA
• Key personnel (incl. subawards)
• Human subjects/animal subjects/other regulatory requirements
• Figure out what the important variables in your area are

From other departments involved

• Base salaries/appointment info
• PRF routing chain

SAMPLE EMAIL

Hello,

I understand you are planning to submit an NIH R21 proposals this cycle. Could you send me the following information for this proposal to get us started? It would be helpful to have this by Tues 5/25.

• Will you be using the parent R21 announcement or a specific RFA?
• Title, if available
• Will you be using human and/or animal subjects?
• Names and roles of any key personnel (either at UMN, or a subaward institution)
3. Get organized

Find an organizational method that works for YOU:

- Desk/wall calendar
- Google Calendar reminders
- New folder for each proposal (hard copy, electronic, Google Drive)
- White board
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PI</th>
<th>Agency / Award</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Key Personnel</th>
<th>EGMS</th>
<th>PRF</th>
<th>Budget done</th>
<th>PRF approved</th>
<th>Submitted &amp; logged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sherman/ Gewirtz</td>
<td>Sesame Workshop</td>
<td>Rolling</td>
<td></td>
<td>spreadsheet</td>
<td>836586</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gewirtz</td>
<td>DoD PH/TBI</td>
<td>1/12 9am</td>
<td></td>
<td>445794</td>
<td>838614</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bray</td>
<td>SAMHSA NCTSA Cat III SM 16-005</td>
<td>2/2 Tues</td>
<td></td>
<td>445275</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Cook?</td>
<td>NIH R21</td>
<td>2/4 Thurs</td>
<td></td>
<td>445074</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*August</td>
<td>NIH R23 Read</td>
<td>2/15 9am</td>
<td></td>
<td>446439</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cicchetti</td>
<td>NIH PS0 (Proc: U Rodbard) RFA-HD-16-002</td>
<td>1/14 5pm</td>
<td></td>
<td>446474</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Timelines/Deadlines

• Establishing departmental policies regarding grant deadlines
• Sub-contract deadlines
• Determining non-scientific (biosketches, resources, budgets, human and animal subjects, letters, etc.) timeline with your PI
• Determining scientific timeline with your PI
• SPA deadline
• PRF routing deadline
• Adjusting timelines for students, postdocs and new faculty hires
Deconstruct the RFP

• What does the PI need to know? What do I need to know?
• Deadlines: Preproposal? LOI? Proposal?
• Document specifications: Page limit, margins, fonts, spacing, headers/footers
• Budget: Cap, cost sharing, effort min/max, travel requirements/restrictions, indirect costs, caps on specific categories
• Narrative structure: Required sections, review criteria
• Other documents: Appendices, letters, bios, other support. What is required? What is allowed?
• Questions, ambiguities, contradictions? Contact the program officer.
NSF Checklist — Science of Learning: Collaborative Networks  
SPA deadline: 9 a.m., March 31, 2016  
Maximum Request: $750,000 (including indirect costs) over 3 years  
START DATE: Use September 30, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Deadline: Due to Grant Coordinator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final budget; route PRF</td>
<td>Thursday, March 24, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcontract materials—sub budget, justification, work scope, letter of intent signed by business official, signed sub commitment form</td>
<td>Thursday, March 24, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-page biosketch, conflict of interest info for all senior personnel; current/pending-PI, Co-PIs only</td>
<td>Monday, March 28, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final proposal documents to grant coordinator</td>
<td>Noon, Tuesday, March 29, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Component</td>
<td>Specifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Proposal Summary</td>
<td>1-page single-spaced. Write in 3rd person. P.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Project Description</td>
<td>15 pages, single- or double spaced, 1” margins. Fonts, P.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.a. List of Participants</td>
<td>4-pg limit. Up to 10 participants. P.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.b. Conflicts of Interest List</td>
<td>Alphabetized table P.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some compliance issues that can stop the proposals at the “oven door”

- PI Training Conflict of interest
- REPA must be filed
- Are their Human Subjects/Animals involved
- Using Human Blood and/or infectious materials
- Stem Cells and/or Recombinant DNA
- Radioactive Material and/or chemicals
- Financial Conflict of interest check for all subawards if proposal is to a PHS agency
What to do?

Find the pros...

- PI Training (http://research.umn.edu/reo/education/core.html)
- Conflict of interest (http://www.research.umn.edu/irb/guidance/coi.html)
- Are there Human Subjects involved? (http://www.irb.umn.edu/)
- Are there Animals involved? (http://www.research.umn.edu/iacuc-office/)
- Using Human Blood and/or infectious materials (http://www.research.umn.edu/ibc/about.html)
- Stem Cells and/or Recombinant DNA (http://research.umn.edu/reo/oversight/index.html)
- Financial Conflict of interest (http://www.compliance.umn.edu/conflictHome.htm)

We are here for you: (http://www.research.umn.edu/forresearchers/) or www.ospa.umn.edu
In summary

Remember to...

Keep an eye on the “Big Picture”

Anticipate problems and keep a sense of humor

The door of communication should always be open

Be optimistic and take joy in your work (*especially when the proposal is at the door of SPA*)