

## ***Quick Guide for Proposal Preparation and Submission***

### **1. Getting Started**

- [Department staff](#) - Grant Coordinators in your department or college are available to assist in proposal preparation activities, including help identifying funding sources, connecting you with resources on campus, and assisting with creation of the routing and approval form (“PRF”) needed for internal review and approval of your proposal before it is submitted to the sponsor. Most departments also have staff who will assist investigators with the preparation of a proposal (e.g., forms pages completion, budget preparation, acquiring proposals from subrecipients, and proposal assembly.)
- [SPA staff](#) – Every department has two assigned staff members from the central Sponsored Projects Administration office (SPA), one for projects supported by Business and Industry (B&I) sponsors, and one for projects funded from all other sponsors. See who your assigned SPA staff members are by viewing the list at: <http://www.ospa.umn.edu/documents/DepartmentalandUnitAssignments9Nov15.pdf>.
- [Classes](#) - SPA offers a wealth of classes available to both administrators and researchers, including a class on how to submit proposals through the Grants.Gov portal.
- [University Policies and Procedures related to Research](#). Investigators are responsible for knowing and following these policies. Ask your academic unit or SPA for help if you are uncertain how to find information on a specific topic. Information on some common topics are linked in the sections below, and links are also provided in the on-line PRF form.

### **2. Common Topics Needing Special Attention As You Finalize Your Proposal**

- Projects involving Animal Subjects: See [IACUC](#)
- Projects involving Human Subjects: See [IRB](#)
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure Requirements: See [COI](#)
- Use of Fairview Services
- Subawards: See [Subawards](#)
- Indirect Cost Sharing Across Collegiate Units: See [Sharing ICR](#)
- Cost-Sharing: See [Cost Share](#)
- Stem Cell: [See Stem Cell](#)
- Radioactive Materials: See [Radioactive Materials](#)
- Recombinant DNA: [See Recombinant DNA](#)

### 3. Obtain Departmental/Collegiate Review and Approval of Your Proposal

- Working with your departmental or collegiate grant coordinators, [Create a PRF](#). The Proposal Routing Form (PRF) is an internal-to-the-University electronic document that:
  - Provides basic information regarding the project for review by the department head and other central administrators.
  - Acts as a checklist to ensure that all compliance obligations have been addressed or are in the process of being addressed
  - Acts as a routing vehicle collecting the approvals necessary to submit an application for external funding.
  - Provides information for institutional databases on grants and contracts.
  - Please be aware that, with only a few exceptions, you must agree to devote a minimum of 1% of your time to any project for which you are serving as Principal Investigator, and you will be asked to certify your effort semi-annually after the project is funded. Effort should normally be charged to the funded project, but it may also be cost-shared by your department (with their prior approval, granted via the PRF.)
- Electronically route your PRF through the dept/college, checking with your [department staff](#) to include the names of all necessary departments/individuals who are supposed to be involved in the review of the form and/or proposal involved.

### 4. Submit Your Proposal and PRF to [Sponsored Projects Administration \(SPA\)](#) for Review

- [SPA requires](#) that a complete, ready-to-submit proposal and a fully-signed PRF be submitted electronically to SPA at: [proposal@umn.edu](mailto:proposal@umn.edu) no later than 9am, 3 business days before the proposal must be submitted to sponsor (e.g., a proposal that must be submitted on Friday must be submitted to SPA by 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday). The subject line for your email to [proposal@umn.edu](mailto:proposal@umn.edu) must be in the format:

PRF# PILastName SponsoringAgency

Example: 876676 Wiffel NIH

Hard copy proposals and/or PRFs may also be hand-delivered to SPA in Room 450, McNamara Alumni Center.

- SPA submits your proposal to the sponsor, including overnight mailing or local courier (no charge to you) if needed.
- Hints for success:
  - [Access for SPA](#): If using a sponsor's electronic system, make sure SPA has full access to review and submit your proposal (e.g. click the button that says "Allow SRO Access" in NSF's FastLane system.)
  - [Subawards](#): If proposal involves subawards, make sure all required subaward documents are included
  - [Conflict of Interest \(COI\)](#): For NIH and NSF (and other agencies following their rules), you must have a current Conflict of Interest disclosure form (Report of External Professional Activities, or REPA) on file before SPA can submit your proposal. It is not generally necessary for any positive disclosure of significant

financial interests to have been reviewed by the COI Committee prior to proposal submission, but the initial disclosure must be on file.

- [Follow University Policy](#): Make sure and involve SPA in proposal review, as it is a violation of Regents Policy for an investigator or unit staff to submit a proposal directly to a sponsor without first obtaining institutional endorsement by SPA.

### **5. SPA Submits Proposal to Sponsor**

- SPA reviews the proposal for completeness and compliance with agency and university regulations and requirements (non-technical). SPA does not review the science or scholarship contained in your proposal, except to make sure that the agency's required proposal **rules are followed**.
- SPA will contact you and your department if proposal corrections are needed before submission. You will be told both about any mandatory corrections (typically budgetary or missing proposal sections) as well as corrections that SPA considers optional, but that you may wish to consider fixing before the proposal is submitted.
- SPA staff hold institutional delegated authority to submit proposals to funding agencies and they will do so immediately after completing their review and obtaining any needed corrections (normally, within 2 working days of receipt of your complete proposal and PRF).
- SPA aggressively tracks proposals being submitted to standardized federal electronic systems to make sure if any "errors" or "warning" messages are received, you are notified as quickly as possible so that proposal corrections can occur prior to the agency's deadline.

### **6. What Happens After Submission**

- If not already completed, you will be notified that you need to complete the institution's mandatory PI training prior to the University accepting your award.
- SPA will contact you if the agency requires additional paperwork (Just-in-time submissions, revised budgets, etc.)
- SPA will negotiate favorable award terms on behalf of the PI and the University (publication rights, intellectual property rights, rights in data, adequate indemnification, payment terms, etc.) Some terms may require your input before they can be negotiated.
- SPA will accept your award on behalf of the University, send you and your department a synopsis of the most important award terms as well as a copy of the final award documents (called a "Notification of Grant Award" or NOGA for short), and will establish a unique account number in the University's financial system that will allow you to begin spending on your award.
- You may ask special permission to begin spending prior to the University receiving your award if you have a need to begin working early. Consult your academic unit for assistance in obtaining a "pre-award/advance" account.