



Proposal Development and Submission Policy

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BACKGROUND

Fiscal Affairs (FA), a division of Administration and Finance, is responsible for the maintenance of a comprehensive record of all financial transactions in the Financial Management System (FMS). San Francisco State University's policy and management practices include monthly review and reconciliation of financial reports. The Campus Controller is in charge of financial accounting and reporting. Access to information about the status of individual projects or awards is available through queries and pre-defined reports. The Expenditure and Revenue Analysis Report, Detailed General Ledger Activity Report and Labor Cost Distribution Report are distributed monthly to all Principal Investigators (PI's). Detailed General Ledger Activity Reports showing all transactions individually for each month are emailed to all PI's on a monthly basis.

POLICY

Authority to submit

Proposals for externally sponsored projects (e.g., grants or contracts) must be submitted by SFSU's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) on behalf of an eligible Principal Investigator. Neither individual PI's nor other campus units may submit a proposal to an external sponsor. A proposal that is not submitted by ORSP cannot form the basis for an award as it will lack the necessary approvals.

Required Lead-Times Prior to Sponsor's Deadline

Because ORSP has the sole authority to submit proposals for externally sponsored projects PI's must initiate the proposal development process sufficiently ahead of the sponsor's deadline. In the proposal development process there are three internal deadlines:

1. The online PI Checklist must be submitted AT LEAST 3 weeks before the agency deadline
2. The final budget (including budgets for any subcontracts), the abstract, any required forms, and all supporting documentation must be completed one week before the agency deadline.
3. The FINAL version of ALL materials must be submitted to ORSP at least 3 days before the agency deadline.

Meeting this lead-time requirement enables ORSP and the PI to compile the documentation required for submission; to review the proposal for compliance with SFSU, CSU, and sponsor policies; and to obtain the required approvals. If the lead-time deadline is missed, ORSP will make every reasonable effort to meet the sponsor's deadline without putting at risk those proposals already in the queue that have met the lead-time requirement. Thus, missing the lead-time requirement will jeopardize the timely submission of the proposal.

Online PI Checklist

The proposal development process is officially initiated when a faculty member completes the online PI Checklist. The form is found on the ORSP website at:

http://www.sfsu.edu/%7Eorspwww/_preaward/_submit/pichecklist.html

PI eligibility

Faculty members who hold a Tenured, or a Tenure Track Position, emeritus professors, or employees who hold a MPP Position are eligible for Principal Investigator status. A new hire in a tenure-track position is considered eligible as soon as she/he has indicated acceptance of the letter of offer. Other individuals may attain PI eligibility by following the steps outlined in the PI eligibility procedure document that culminates with the approval of the Provost:

http://www.sfsu.edu/~orspwww/_preaward/_submit/eligibility.html

Failure to follow the policies and procedures for the conduct of a sponsored project or its administration can result in the loss of PI eligibility.

Proposal Development

During the three weeks between the completion of the PI Checklist and the submission deadline, the PI and Proposal Specialist will work collaboratively to finalize the administrative and financial sections of the proposal. The PI has sole responsibility for finalizing the technical component of the application and to acquire the necessary University approvals for the proposal.

The PI is responsible for completing the following during the development of a proposal:

1. Online PI Checklist (submitted three weeks prior to the submission deadline)
2. Draft budget
3. Final budget (Submitted one week prior to the submission deadline)
4. Budget justification
5. Curriculum Vitae for personnel in the sponsor's format (e.g. NIH Bio-sketches)
6. Description of resources to support the project
7. Technical Sections – Abstract and Project Narrative
8. Obtaining Dean and Department Chair Approval for cost sharing (if necessary)
9. Obtaining Provost approval for additional space (if necessary)
10. Obtaining Human / Animal Subject Protocol Approval (if necessary)
11. Occasionally, other approvals may be necessary, special requirements may be listed on the RFP, or may simply be part of the PI's proposed scope. The PI needs to ensure that any such requirement is met when submitting a proposal.

Approvals required on all proposals

Various components of a developing proposal need to be approved by a variety of individuals. At a minimum, all proposals require the following approvals before they are submitted.

1. Budget: AVP for Fiscal Affairs
2. Budget & abstract: Department Chair (or Director) and Dean

3. Complete proposal: PI and AVP for ORSP

Additional approvals

Note: Some approvals may be noted only via the signature of the relevant official on the PI Checklist form. Other approvals require the use of special forms designed to provide specific information about the issue. The PI must make sure that all appropriate forms are used.

1. If cost-sharing or matching costs are involved

Any proposal that includes cost-sharing requires additional approvals by each individual who provides a cost-shared resource. The most common sources of cost-sharing are the department chair (or director), dean, and AVP for ORSP. Any cost-sharing must be reviewed and approved by the ORSP Compliance Officer. Requests for applications or proposals sometimes state that institutional support will be a review criteria without specifying a required amount. If institution support is committed as a cost-share or match in the proposal budget, then it is treated the same as required cost-sharing and requires the approvals specified above.

2. If sponsor requires a 501(c)3 organization

If the sponsor requires the recipient of funds to be a 501(c)3 organization the award will be made to the University Corporation, SFSU. ORSP will develop the proposal, but the proposal will be reviewed and approved by the University Corporation, SFSU prior to submission. ORSP will submit the proposal to the sponsor only after gaining approval from the University Corporation, SFSU.

3. If additional space is required

At the time of proposal development a PI must declare the need for space, such as laboratory, office, interview, and any other space that is not already available to the PI. Most sponsored projects are conducted in the existing space of the academic department, responsible unit, program, or RSO. If either the Department Chair (or Director) or the Dean can provide the additional space, then the provider must approve the space request. If neither the Chair nor the Dean can provide the additional space, then the PI must submit a request to the AVP for Academic Resources; ultimately, the Provost must approve the request for space before the proposal is submitted. As many proposals do not lead to awards it is not necessary for the AVP for Academic Resources to specify the location of the additional space at the time of submission. Rather, this approval commits Academic Resources to finding appropriate space if the proposal is funded.

4. Applicable Indirect Cost (F & A) rate

SFSU periodically negotiates with the U. S. Department of Health & Human Services an IDC agreement that covers the categories of organized research, instruction, and other sponsored activities. Each of these categories has two rates depending upon whether the project takes place on-campus or off-campus:

- the current rate for on-campus, organized research is 53.0%
- the current rate for off-campus projects is 26%

http://www.sfsu.edu/~orspwww/_postaward/_grantspolicies/sfsu_idcagreement.pdf

If the agency limits Indirect Cost (F & A) to a rate lower than the SFSU negotiated rate
Consistent with the agreement and various OMB circulars, it is the policy of SFSU to charge the appropriate negotiated rate to all external sponsors. Reductions are typically approved if the sponsor's request for applications/proposals includes a written statement that indirect costs are capped at a specified level. Any reduction or waiver of the appropriate negotiated rate must be approved by the AVP for ORSP.

5. Use of Animal Subjects or Human Participants in research

Some sponsors require that the PI obtain approval for the protocol to use animal subjects or human participants at the time of proposal submission. Other sponsors require an approved protocol prior to the granting of an award or the award's start date. It is the PI's responsibility to submit the protocol to the Office for the Protection of Human and Animal Subjects sufficiently in advance of the sponsor's deadline for protocol approval. The ORSP Proposal Specialist assists the PI in determining the sponsor's requirement.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic Department or Responsible Unit

- **Principal Investigator (PI)**
 - Submits the proposal by the three internal deadlines described above in the section on "Required Lead-Times Prior to Sponsor's Deadline."
 - Submits the technical sections of the proposal.
 - Assists the Proposal Specialist, as needed, with the completion of the administrative and financial sections.
 - Acquires the appropriate approval signatures if there are cost sharing, salary overload, and/or the proposal requires additional physical space. Submits protocol to IRB and IACUC and fulfills training requirements if the proposal includes human or animal subjects.
 - Contacts the Proposal Editor for assistance in writing the proposal as needed.
- **Department Chair**
 - Reviews the abstract and final budget and approves the proposed effort of the PI and other department personnel.
 - Approves cost sharing in the proposal and identifies the accounts from which the cost sharing will be expensed.
 - Approves any request for additional space by faculty in the department.
- **Dean**
 - Approves the abstract and final budget, proposed effort, and the use of department or college funds for cost sharing or matching funds in the proposal.
 - Approves any request for additional space made in a proposal by faculty in the college.

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP)

- **Proposal Editor**
 - Assists PI's with writing and editing the technical portions of the proposal.
 - Assists with collecting and formatting the institutional and demographic data required on Training Proposals.

- **Proposal Specialist**
 - Meets with the PI to develop a budget for the proposal.
 - In collaboration with the PI, ensures that all necessary financial, administrative, and technical information is included in the proposal.
 - Verifies the proposal meets formatting requirements outlined in the submission guidelines.
 - Coordinates the proposal generation with a representative from the University Corporation, SFSU if a 501(c)3 status is required.
- **Pre-Award Manager**
 - Reviews each proposal and discusses any issues associated with the proposal with the Proposal Specialist.
 - Submits all electronic proposals.
- **Associate Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs**
 - Performs the final review of the proposal and signs the proposal on behalf of the university.
 - Approves any proposed cost sharing and any indirect cost rate (F&A) that is less than SFSU's negotiated rate in the appropriate category (e.g., research, instructional, other).

Fiscal Affairs

- **Associate Vice President for Fiscal Affairs**
 - Approves the final budget before a proposal is submitted.
- **VP for Administration and Finance**
 - Approves the final budget before a proposal is submitted.

Academic Resources

- **Associate Vice President for Academic Resources**
 - If necessary, the PI makes a formal request to the Academic Resources Office for additional space after the Department Chair and Dean have given their approvals. The AVP for Academic Resources obtains the Provost's approval for the requested space.

University Corporation, SFSU

If a sponsor requires the recipient of its funds to be a 501(c)3 entity, the University Corporation, SFSU will review and approve the proposal. When a PI submits such a proposal, the Proposal Specialist provides a copy of the proposal for review by the Corporation and requests their review and approval. The Corporation checks the proposal budget for accuracy and verifies that the Corporation's fringe benefit and Indirect Cost rates are used. Subsequently, having obtained the approval, ORSP submits the proposal to the funding agency.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [ORSP Website – Section on finding funding opportunities](#)
- [ORSP Website – Online PI Checklist](#)
- [ORSP Website – Section on Conflict of Interest](#)
- [ORSP Website – Support to edit the technical sections of a proposal](#)
- [Office of Protection for Human and Animal Subjects](#)