

# Cornell University

## **Proposal Review Guidelines**

### Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) including CALS Office of Sponsored Research and CVM Research Office<sup>1</sup>

#### A. **Introduction**

Effective immediately, OSP will provide a full review of the administrative content of a proposal submitted 5 full business days in advance of the sponsor deadline while allowing additional time for the research content to be finalized and submitted to OSP.

Administrative content (Form 10, application forms, budget, CVs etc.) must be submitted to OSP at least 5 full business days in advance of the sponsor deadline if a full review is desired. The research narrative and other research content may be submitted either in draft form in advance, or in final form up to one full business day in advance of the deadline, depending on the level of review desired.

OSP recommends that a substantially complete draft of the research content be submitted in advance with the administrative content for a thorough review of all required proposal components to be completed prior to submission to the sponsor. However, the Principal Investigator (PI) may choose not to submit a draft at this time, with the understanding that these sections will not be reviewed prior to submission. OSP will make every reasonable effort to submit a complete and final application to the sponsor in all cases. Please keep in mind that proposals submitted in full or in part less than 2 full business days before the sponsor deadline are at a greater risk of missed deadlines, submission failure, sponsor rejection or errors that could impact award negotiation.

Departments/Units may require additional time to prepare budgets, assemble application materials and review proposals prior to OSP submission but should not impose stricter internal requirements for the final research content than those outlined below.

#### B. **Administrative Content Includes** (depending on sponsor/proposal requirements):

- Form 10
- Application forms
- CV(s)/Biosketch(es)
- Current and Pending/Other Support
- Budget & Budget Justification
- Cost share commitments (these should not be included in the research content)
- Appendices/Supplemental Documents – (Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan, Resource Plan, Data Management Plan, Vertebrate Animals plan, Human Subjects plan etc.)
- Subaward documents (letter of commitment, scope of work, budget)
- Letters of support

#### C. **Research Content Includes** (precise section label may vary by sponsor):

- Project Summary/Abstract
- Narrative/Research Strategy/Project Description
- Specific Aims

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of these guidelines, OSP includes the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) Office of Sponsored Research (OSR) and College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) Research Office and the Grant and Contract Officers (GCO) in each.

- References cited

#### **D. Timing of submission and review**

The type of review and feedback provided depends on when the components of the proposal are received by OSP. Three review scenarios are outlined below.

Proposals are reviewed in order of receipt. It is strongly recommended that the PI or their Research Administrator/Unit provide OSP with advance notice of upcoming proposal submissions. This helps the GCO to plan ahead and anticipate submission so they can respond to the greatest degree possible in the case of last minute submissions. Advance notice also allows the GCO to become familiar with the required proposal components so they are prepared to provide PIs with an effective review and Units with guidance on proposal requirements. This is especially important in the case of complex proposals (ex.: center grants, program project grants, proposals with multiple subawards or foreign components, proposals responding to RFPs that include problematic terms and conditions, complicated online submission systems etc.), where it is important for PIs or their research administrator to work with GCOs well in advance of the sponsor deadline. If you have questions, please contact your [GCO](#).

#### **Scenario 1. Full Review with or without draft research content (when received by OSP at least 5 full business days in advance of deadline; see p.4 for definition of full review)**

- Complete and final version of administrative content
- Indication of when final research content will be provided
- OSP will make best efforts to review and provide feedback within 2 business days
- OSP will not submit until advised by PI or their administrative representative that package is ready for submission

#### **Scenario 2. Limited review with or without draft research content (when received by OSP 3-4 full business days in advance – see p.4 for definition of limited review)**

- Complete and final version of administrative content
- Indication of when final research content will be provided
- OSP will provide limited review within 2 business days
- OSP will not submit until advised by PI or their administrative representative that package is ready for submission

#### **Scenario 3. No Review (when final package is received by OSP 2 or fewer business days in advance – see p.4 for definition of no review)**

- Complete and final version of proposal package (administrative and research content)
- OSP review limited to ensure Cornell's submission requirements (see below) are met
- Proposal is submitted as is (unless issues with Cornell requirements); no further follow up with PI or their administrative representative.
- Proposal may be withdrawn or award may not be accepted if significant issues with Cornell requirements, eligibility, budget and/or cost-share commitments are discovered post-submission

#### **E. OSP Review**

Following proposal review, the GCO will provide comments that will be grouped according to whether or not the comment must be addressed prior to submission. For example:

1. **Cornell Submission Requirements:** Proposals will not be submitted until they meet Cornell submission requirements
  - Form 10 complete and signed by PI, Co-PI(s), fellowship mentor(s), and department chair(s)

- Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI) disclosure for all key personnel on file with Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (ORIA)
  - Subawardee Letter(s) of Commitment (if applicable)
2. **To Be Resolved:** The GCO will work with the PI/delegate and department or college to determine how the issue(s) flagged must be resolved. Proposals will be submitted based on the decision of the department, unit, or PI as applicable, and subsequent PI authorization.
- Budget (F&A rate, fringe benefit rate, unallowable costs, errors)
  - Cost share requirements and authorization of commitments
  - PI eligibility
  - Elements that would prevent submission or system acceptance, such as missing documents, incorrect institutional ID #s (DUNS #), page limits exceeded, file names and types etc.
3. **Recommendation:** It is at the PI's sole discretion as to whether or not to act upon the recommendation. Proposals will be submitted based on the PI's decision and authorization.
- Inclusion of supplementary/optional documents
  - Responsiveness to selection criteria
  - Deviations from sponsor guidelines
  - Appropriate budget justification
  - Sponsor instructions that do not prevent submission (e.g. PMCID #, order of publications in CV, letters of support, full subawardee documentation, quotes, inclusion of base salary etc.)

OSP will make every effort to provide concise feedback on proposals. Reviews will:

- be provided in bulleted or numbered form
- reference the applicable section or page number of the proposal
- provide relevant information within the text of the email as well as a link to find the information (e.g. DUNS number, Animal Welfare Assurance Number, etc.)
- indicate the comment type (Cornell Submission Requirement, To be Resolved or Recommendation).

OSP continually strives to provide exemplary service to researchers. Feedback on OSP's review process, or any other aspect of our services, is encouraged and should be sent to [osp\\_help@cornell.edu](mailto:osp_help@cornell.edu).

GCOs have in depth knowledge and expertise with specific sponsors and can work with researchers and departmental representatives or units to guide them through the proposal process. Please consult OSP at any time with questions or feedback directly or using the following contact information:

OSP Staff Directory	<a href="https://www.osp.cornell.edu/Contacts/staff-dir.htm">https://www.osp.cornell.edu/Contacts/staff-dir.htm</a>
Who is my GCO	<a href="https://www.osp.cornell.edu/Contacts/whoismygco.html">https://www.osp.cornell.edu/Contacts/whoismygco.html</a>
CALS OSR	<a href="https://cals.cornell.edu/about/leadership/sad/grants-contracts-mous">https://cals.cornell.edu/about/leadership/sad/grants-contracts-mous</a>
CVM Research Office	<a href="http://www.vet.cornell.edu/Research/ContactUs.cfm">http://www.vet.cornell.edu/Research/ContactUs.cfm</a>

**See next page for information on Full Review, Limited Review, No Review**

F. **OSP Review elements (see Proposal Review Guidelines for details)**

<b>REVIEW ELEMENTS</b> Legend: y = OSP will Review	<b>FULL REVIEW</b> provided to OSP > 5 business days in advance	<b>LIMITED REVIEW</b> provided to OSP 3 or 4 business days in advance	<b>NO REVIEW</b> provided to OSP < 2 business days in advance
<b>A. Sponsor Analysis/Review</b>	y	y	
<b>B. Consultation with Other Admin Offices</b>	y	y	
<b>C. Sponsor's Guidelines*</b>			
1. Terms and conditions	y	y	
2. Limitations on number of applicants	y	y	
3. Submission method and deadline	y	y	
4. Certifications and assurances	y	y	
<b>D. Form 10</b>			
1. Form complete	y	y	y
2. Signatures present and correct	y	y	y
3. Data consistent with proposal	y	y	
<b>E. PI Eligibility</b>			
1. Form 5 for non-eligible PIs	y	y	y
<b>F. Institutional, Federal, State Compliances</b>			
1. Conflict of Interest/Commitment	y	y	y
2. Human Participants	y		
3. Animals	y		
4. Genetically Modified Organisms	y		
5. Radiation	y		
6. Biological Agents and Toxins	y		
7. Hazardous Materials	y		
8. International Activities	y		
9. Board of Trustees Approval	y	y	y
10. Renovation/Facilities	y		
11. Stem Cells	y		
12. Export Controls	y		
13. Background Intellectual Property	y	y	
<b>G. Proposal</b>			
1. Application package/form is correct	y		
2. Cover/Face Page	y		
3. Abstract or Project Summary	y		
4. Narrative/Research Plan/Scope of Work	y		
5. Bibliography/References	y		
6. Curriculum Vitae/Biosketch	y		
7. Other Support	y		
8. Budget & Budget Narrative/Justification	y	y	
9. Inclusion of appropriate F&A and benefits rate	y	y	y
10. Resources & Facilities	y		
11. Current and Pending Support	y		
12. Appendices/Supplemental Documents	y		
13. Subcontract Plan/MBE/WBE	y		
<b>H. Subaward Proposal</b>			
1. Letter of Commitment	y	y	y
2. Scope of Work	y	y	
3. Subaward Budget	y		
4. Negotiated Rate Agreement	y		
5. Subrecipient and Contractor determination	y		
<b>I. Data Security Plan (if applicable)</b>	y		
<b>J. IP Management Plan (if applicable)</b>	y		
<b>K. Technology Control Plan (if applicable)</b>	y		
<b>L. Related Agreements Review (if applicable)</b>	y		

\*Adherence to Sponsor Guidelines includes; among other things, page length, margins, line spacing, font size, file name and type, required info provided (e.g. Broader Impacts Statement, Data Management Plan); eligibility criteria; etc.