External Funding Submission Guidelines & Procedures

CEHHS Proposal Processing
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Overview of Procedures

IMPORTANT NOTE: To submit a grant through UT, the Principal Investigator (PI) must be a faculty member, Postdoctoral Researcher or Center Director, unless otherwise required in the RFP and/or approved by the Associate Dean of Research in advance. If a student or Postdoctoral researcher is the PI, a CEHHS faculty member must be included as a Co-PI on the application and in Cayuse. Graduate students are only allowed to submit as lead PI for training opportunities.

- The PI must complete the CEHHS “Submitting a Proposal” form located here: https://tinyurl.com/plantosubmit, as soon as possible, but absolutely no later than:
  - 14 business days prior to the sponsor due date of the proposal that does not include subawards
  - 30 business days prior to the sponsor due for proposals with multiple investigators and/or multiple institutions.
  - PLEASE NOTE: Preferred notification of proposal submissions is well in advance of 14 business days for single investigator submissions and 30 business days for multiple investigator and/or multiple institution submissions to receive full office support. Support may be limited if notification is not received via the procedures above.

- Preliminary proposals, letters of intent, projects where other UTK departments are the lead, and subcontracts with other institutions need to follow this procedure. Delay or non-notification of such projects may mean projects will not be submitted.

- Once the sponsor guidelines have been reviewed for the submission, the Research Administration Manager will contact the PI to setup a meeting to establish a timeline for submission.

- Once the timeline is approved by the PI, an email will be sent to the faculty member(s), department head(s) and business manager with this statement:

  *Please reply to this email acknowledging this mutually agreed upon timeline with target dates for a submission. I acknowledge that if I deviate from these dates or make changes to proposal items within the last 14 business days prior to the due date that I may receive little to no support from the Office of External Funding with these changes and my proposal may not be submitted."

- DRA (Division of Research Administration) will conduct the final review of the proposal to ensure that it follows Federal, State, and University regulations before submitting it to the sponsor.

DRA Deadline and PI’s Responsibility

Proposal Submission Deadlines: All proposals must be approved by departments(s) and college(s) in Cayuse SP and ALL FINAL proposal documents and application package materials received by DRA, five (5) business days before the sponsor deadline that is entered on the proposal form in Cayuse.

- No changes will be allowed for any documents that are initiated by key personnel on the proposal. At this time only changes identified by DRA to meet institutional, or sponsor requirements will be accepted. To allow the proposal to be submitted, final revisions to all changes requested by DRA must be provided to them no less than two days before submission. If not received by this time, the proposal will not be allowed to be submitted.

To assist faculty in meeting the deadline above, DRA and CEHHS’s OREF are requesting the following at least ten (10) Business Days Prior to Submission:

- All non-technical, financial, and supplemental documents submitted to DRA fully routed and approved via Cayuse. Routing should also include a draft of the technical documents that describe the project being proposed.
  - This deadline allows DRA to begin the review, while also allowing investigators to continue to edit technical documents, such as the proposal narrative/research strategy, project summary/specific aims and references cited. It also builds in some buffer in case required materials are accidently missed by the faculty member or Research Administration Manager.

- It is the PI’s responsibility to take ownership of understanding and following the Sponsor and University guidelines/policies and completing all required forms in a timely manner to make internal deadlines. At any point during the submission the Research Administration Manager believes our processes are not being
followed, the PI, department head, and Associate Dean of Research will be notified to find a solution. In some cases, the PI may not be allowed to submit.

**Budget and Documentation Submission**

1. **TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST CREATION** – Within 2 days of receiving the “Submitting a Proposal” Request Form, a Research Administration Manager will contact you to schedule a meeting to discuss your submission. During that meeting, an agreed upon timeline will be created. This will be emailed to you along with any existing templates we have to support your submission to that sponsor.

2. **RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION SERVICES SUPPORT** - A draft proposal and all remaining sponsor required documents should be in final form and sent to the Research Administration Manager at least **12-14 business days** before the proposal deadline. This ensures routing and approval in Cayuse within the 5-day deadline set by DRA. The budget must be final before routing begins in Cayuse. This includes projects where other UT departments (outside CEHHS) are the lead and when PIs are working with other institutions on subrecipient arrangement submissions.

3. **ABSTRACT/SUMMARY/AIMS REVIEW** – Upon request by the PI, CEHHS Research Administration Services will include review and feedback on the lead PI’s abstract, project summary, or specific aims if provided 21 days or earlier, prior to submission. This review is designed to assist faculty with submitting an application that fits the proposed mechanism, has a strong premise, and has appropriate methodology. We strongly encourage EARLIER and multiple rounds of review by this office and your colleagues.

4. **BUDGET** - As soon as the PI knows the scope of the project *(in correlation with the Aims/abstract/summary page)* the Research Administration Manager will work collaboratively with the PI to create a budget using CEHHS standard budget form. You can also reference tools by DRA [here](#).

5. **BUDGET JUSTIFICATION** - The PI must provide a budget justification with the final budget. DRA requires a detailed budget; all items in the budget must be included in the budget justification. Resources and sample budget justification templates are available at: [https://cehhs.utk.edu/office-of-research/proposals/proposal-budgets/](https://cehhs.utk.edu/office-of-research/proposals/proposal-budgets/)

6. **OUTSIDE INTEREST DISCLOSURE** -- All outside interests must be fully and accurately disclosed in the university’s [outside interests disclosure system](#).

7. **SUBAGREEMENTS WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS** - If there are subrecipients from other institutions, the CEHHS Principal Investigator (PI) must get a **very early** start (30 days ahead of deadline) obtaining budgets and approvals from each subcontractor. For each subcontracting PI, the subrecipient form must be completed and signed by an Authorized Representative from the collaborating institution. The Research Administration Manager will assist with determining the appropriate form found [here](#) to be used.

8. **CONSULTANTS** - The PI needs to obtain a signed and complete [consultant commitment form](#) from each named consultant (not required for advisory board members) prior to the submission to DRA. The form requires the consultant’s rate of compensation per hour or per day and number of hours or days of service in each year of the project. It also requires a detailed description of the services to be provided. The total costs should include travel for the consultant, if applicable.

9. **BIOSKETCHES** - Biosketches have very specific sponsor formats and are required by most sponsors for all key personnel. The Research Administration Manager will identify the required format for the PI and provide an example and/or instructions if needed.

10. **CEHHS AND DEPARTMENTAL RESOURCE NEEDS** – The PI must specify what CEHHS and/or Departmental resources he/she will need in order to conduct this project (e.g., CEHHS/Dept. office space, CEHHS IT needs, indirect expenses such as advertising, printing, in-house equipment rental, etc.)

11. **REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS** – CEHHS requires the final version of all files, application package, and proposal review checklist before routing in Cayuse can begin. See Deadline policy on 1st page for reference.

12. **CAYUSE** – The Research Administration Manager will initiate the Cayuse SP proposal and will ask the PI to complete the compliance related sections (i.e. Conflict of Interest, Regulatory Compliance, Export Control, Intellectual Property, Project Location and Community Benefits), and certify as PI **10-14 days prior** to the sponsor deadline to allow adequate department and DRA review of the proposal.

13. **PROPOSAL REVIEW CHECKLIST/ROUTING SOON EMAIL** – The Research Administration Manager will create a simplified review checklist and include it in the Cayuse submission to aid in the review by the department head. A “ROUTING SOON” email to all CEHHS involved units will be compiled and sent 10-14 days prior to the sponsor deadline. It is highly recommended that the faculty member discusses the proposal, and their department needs (i.e. space for new students or staff, technology, course release, cost sharing, expectations, etc.) with their DH as early as possible to expedite the review and approval of the proposal in Cayuse. If the DH
does not approve of the proposal or requires additional information before approval, the proposal may not meet the DRA deadlines and/or be allowed to be submitted.

14. **ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION TO SPONSOR** – The Research Administration Manager will assist the PI in completing the electronic application (i.e. FastLane, grants.gov workspace, Cayuse 424, ASSIST, etc.) and will give access to DRA for their review before routing of the proposal in Cayuse. This package will also be required to be in final form 5 business days prior the sponsor deadline.

**Proposal Submission to Sponsor**

- Often DRA recommends corrections to proposals. The PI should leave sufficient time to work collaboratively on making the required changes in order to finalize the proposal before the deadline as well as be highly responsive and available in the last 3-5 business days prior to sponsor deadline to make requested changes. **No changes will be allowed from any interested party besides DRA in the last 5 business days prior to the sponsor deadline.**
- It is the PI’s responsibility to originate, prepare, and finalize the proposal. The CEHHS Research Administration Manager will assist with and support this process, but ultimately the PI is responsible for creating a completed proposal package that meets all the sponsor requirements.
- Prior to submission, the PI must respond to the proposal coordinator in DRA via email that they approve the final proposal and it is ready for submission.

**University Closing and Sponsor Deadlines**

- Sponsored Program Services closes its offices at 5:00 pm EST, Monday through Friday. Therefore, if DRA is submitting a PI’s proposal electronically, DRA must submit it by 5:00 pm, even if the sponsor deadline is midnight.
- In the event of a University closing (due to inclement weather, power outage or another emergency), DRA will be closed. In this situation, the PI with a grant deadline during that period of time, is responsible for contacting the funding agency for an extension of the deadline date.
- If an extension was granted, DRA will work with the PI to get the proposal submitted prior to the new deadline.
- Business days are categorized as any working day the University is fully open and operational for business. Holidays, inclement weather days, and administrative closings and not consider working business days.

**Internal Proposal Note**

- Please note that all **INTERNAL** University of Tennessee grant proposals should be submitted and managed by academic departments. Only external grant proposals are submitted and managed by CEHHS Office of Research and External Funding.