BLOUSTEIN SCHOOL POLICY

Policy Name: Pre-Award Procedure for Grants and Contracts

Date: April 1, 2022
                        (replaces version from December 4, 2018)

In conformance with standard University policy, the following are the procedures to be followed when applying for funding from outside sponsors:

- Preparation and Submission of Proposals

  o All proposals (including those submitted electronically such as NSF FastLane and Grants.gov) must first be reviewed by the Bloustein School Business Office, then reviewed/signed off by the Associate Dean for Research, and finally submitted to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP). It is highly recommended for PIs to inform their grant managers at least 30 days prior to a proposal due date by sending the link of the funding opportunity announcement. This will give the PIs and grant managers time to review and complete the proposal requirements, especially when there is a collaboration with other institutions and supporting documents that require signature from RU authorized officials. The final version of the proposal is due to ORSP 5 business days before the sponsor deadline. Therefore, it is important that the final draft of the proposal is submitted to the Business Office at least 5 days ahead of the ORSP deadline to provide sufficient time for review, and possible needed revisions/corrections prior to submission to ORSP. Proposals should not be sent to funding agencies without first obtaining these approvals.

  o The first step in the process is the creation of the funding proposal using the University's Research Administration and Proposal Submission System (RAPSS), an electronic gateway for the submission, review, approval, and tracking of funding proposals. At Bloustein, a grant/business manager usually initiates the RAPSS proposal on behalf of the Principal Investigator (PI). A PI can find his/her grant/business person by reaching out to business_admin@ejb.rutgers.edu. This proposal creation process involves providing answers to a series of questions related to the proposal, and is sometimes referred to as the endorsement process in RAPSS. This information includes the Project Title, PI Name, Sponsor Name, Project Timeframe, Sponsor Administrative Contacts, Human Subjects involvement, and Budget details. The written proposal itself, the budget template, and other related documents should be uploaded to RAPSS once final.

  o After the proposal has been created, the PI should review it for completeness and accuracy, and if satisfactory, give their approval by 'Submitting for Department Review' in RAPSS. At Bloustein, if the PI is affiliated with one of the School's Research Centers, there will be two required levels of Departmental Approval in RAPSS. The first level will be that of the Center Director. The second level is the approval of the Associate Dean for Research. Proposals from PIs not affiliated with one of the School's Research Centers typically require one level of Departmental Approval in RAPSS, that of the Dean.

- Preparation and Submission of Proposals (cont'd)

  o Once proposals have been submitted for final Departmental Review in RAPSS, the grant/business manager provides the following material to the Business Office: a printed copy of the RAPSS funding proposal, which provides the endorsement-related information entered into the system, a copy of the PI's written project proposal which outlines the scope of work to be provided, a copy of the completed University Budget Template, and a completed Additional Information Form. If a subcontractor is included in the proposal, a subrecipient commitment form must be completed if the subrecipient is not a participant of the FDP Expanded Clearing house. If the subcontractor is a participant of the clearinghouse, use the Letter of Intent – Rutgers is the PTE form. The Business Office reviews this material for completeness and accuracy, and resolves any issues with the grants/business manager who created the proposal in RAPSS. This package is then forwarded to Clint Andrews, Associate Dean for Research, for his sign-off. Once he has approved, one of the Business Office designees grants 'Departmental Approval' in RAPSS, and the PI (or grants/business manager) gives 'Permission to Submit' in RAPSS. This moves the proposal to 'Specialist Review' status in RAPSS.

  o Budgets should be prepared using the full University Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs rate as detailed in the current Rutgers F&A rate agreement. If the full University F&A Costs rate is not being charged in the budget, ORSP recommends that the budget be prepared using Total Direct Costs as the base for charging F&A Costs, if it makes sense, and if the funder will approve it. A "Request for Reduction or Waiver of Indirect Costs" must be completed with acceptable justification included if a published guidance imposing restrictions on F&A is not available from the sponsor. The link to the budget templates is https://orsp.rutgers.edu/budget-template

  o The Additional Information Form is an internal form which provides information that allows the Dean to review the need for consultants/subcontractors in a given proposal, and informs the Dean's Office of additional space/telephones requirements, provides details of any non-public personal information that will be used/accessed and who will be the registered custodian of that information, and also, a brief abstract of the work to be done should the proposal be funded.

  o This process is to be followed, even if the submission is a "pre-proposal". If the pre-proposal and budget are to be submitted to the potential funder in writing, then the review/approval process above should be followed.

- ORSP Review (after Dean's approval in RAPSS)

  o The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs is responsible for reviewing all proposals prior to their submission to the outside funding agency.

  o The grant specialist at ORSP reviews the information entered in RAPSS, including the uploaded University Budget Template, and alerts the PI to any issues discovered. After the proposal is submitted, the grant specialist moves the proposal to 'Sponsor Review' status in RAPSS.

- Follow-up with ORSP when Contract Arrives

  o The PI should inform their grants/business manager as soon as they become aware of a contract/award being issued for their proposal. Any notice of award received from the sponsor should be forwarded to their business manager.

  o The grants/business manager will need to upload the proposed contract into the 'Document Review' section of RAPSS. This will initiate the contract review and negotiation process between the University and the funder.

- One Final Note - Requests for Proposals
  o If an RFP (Request for Proposal) has been issued, the PI should provide a copy of the RFP to their grants/business manager as soon as a decision is made to apply for the funding. The grants/business manager will review the RFP and send a copy to the appropriate grant specialist in ORSP to alert him/her that a proposal is forthcoming. ORSP will not review or sign any document unless a proposal was entered into RAPSS. Quite often, RFPs contain standard forms that need to be completed, some of which will require the signature of an authorized official of the University. Getting this material in the hands of our contract specialist early on in the process gives us another set of eyes looking at the RFP to determine which forms are required for your proposal, and which of these required forms need the signature of an authorized official of the University. ***Note – Bloustein School faculty and staff are not authorized officials of the University.***