

# Sponsored Research Handbook for Departmental Research Administrators

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## **Section 1. Introduction to Sponsored Project Administration at UT Austin**

From project inception to project close-out, successful sponsored project administration at The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) involves collaboration among departmental faculty and staff and central administrative officials and offices. Most likely, the primary groups you will deal with in your work as a departmental research administrator (DRA) are faculty members and research scientists (usually referred to as Principal Investigators or PIs) and the professional staff in the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP).

Principal Investigators (PIs) are responsible for preparing project proposal applications for submission to external sponsors and, after funds are awarded, managing their research projects. OSP staff is responsible for reviewing proposal applications for compliance with federal, state and university regulations, accepting and negotiating awards on behalf of UT Austin, and providing administrative support in the financial management of project fund accounts.

Establishing healthy interpersonal relationships and communications with all of the people involved in sponsored project administration early on will make your job much easier. Learning your PI's preferred work style and methods of communication, as well as, the level of support they will require from you, will also allow you to manage your workload more effectively.

This handbook focuses on the university-wide administrative policies and procedures that affect the pre-award phase of sponsored project administration from the departmental research administrator's perspective. The pre-award phase of sponsored project administration at UT Austin begins with your principal investigator's (PI's) research idea and ends with a notice from the sponsor who decides to fund your PI's research project.

In addition to the university-wide administrative policies and procedures described in this handbook, you may find that your college, school or unit (CSU) has their own policies and procedures that must be followed for successful proposal application submission and sponsored project administration. Thus, it will be important for you to learn the individual college or departmental level policies and processes relevant to your department and whom to contact if you have questions about them. If possible, do so as early as you can. It is far better to know the routing chain, internal deadlines, etc., at least a few days before a grant application deadline. Nothing is as stressful as facing departmental hurdles the same day you are attempting to submit a proposal application by the sponsor's deadline.

Section 2 of the Pre-award Handbook begins with an overview of the UT Austin structure for getting started in sponsored project administration, including information on professional development opportunities for departmental research administrators. Sections 3 through 8 go on to provide information and tips on how you might assist your PI during the pre-award phase by:

- searching for external sponsors, (Section 3),
- understanding what sponsors want in their proposal application (Section 4),
- learning how to put the proposal application package together (Section 5),
- understanding federal cost principles and budgets (Section 6),
- estimating budget categories (Section 7), and
- understanding the proposal application routing and submission process (Section 8).

OSP would like to acknowledge the efforts of Kathy Thatcher and thank her for her assistance in pulling this helpful resource together. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this handbook, please email [OSP\\_RIS](mailto:OSP_RIS).

## Section 2: Getting Started - Sponsored Project Administration

### 2.1 Central Administrative Offices

The Vice President for Research (VPR) provides oversight of the central administrative offices supporting sponsored projects at UT Austin, and the website provides a wealth of services and information that will be valuable to you as a departmental research administrator (DRA). Reviewing the [VPR's Web site](#) will give you a good idea about the oversight and services provided under this administrative umbrella.

As a departmental research administrator (DRA), you will work most closely with the PI in your department and with the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP). It will help to have an idea of the responsibilities of both of these parties.

The responsibility of The Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) is to authorize all research proposals to external sponsors, and to assist faculty and department administrative staff in their efforts during the pre- and post-award processes. OSP personnel are assigned to either pre-award or post-award work, with some overlap. You will assist your PI in the preparation of research proposal applications for OSP review and submission to a sponsor, (pre-award) and if funded (post-award), by managing the research project account(s) and providing financial and progress reports to the sponsor. Understanding the overall structure of OSP will aid you in your efforts to assist your PI in the administration of his sponsored research projects.

Helpful information about the structure and staffing of OSP is available at the following links:

- [OSP Web site](#)
- [OSP Organizational Charts](#)
- Each UT Austin department has designated pre- and post-award contacts in OSP. The name and phone number of your department's designated pre-award contact can be found on the OSP Web site under [Proposal Assignments](#).

Consider using or adapting the [Template 2.1 Departmental Research Administrators \(DRA\) Contact List](#) to note important contacts specific to each of your research proposal applications.

#### Template 2.1 Departmental Research Administrators (DRA) Contact List

DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT LIST	
Principal Investigator (PI)	
Name	
Title	
UTEID	
Unit code	
NIH Commons Logon	

Campus Address	
Physical Address	
Office Phone	
Cell Phone	
Fax	
Email Address	
Co-PI	
Name	
Title	
UTEID	
Campus Address	
Physical Address	
Office Phone	
Cell Phone	
Fax	
Email Address	
Key Personnel	
Name	
Title	
UTEID	
Campus Address	
Physical Address	
Office Phone	
Cell Phone	
Fax	
Email Address	
Department Salary and Budgetary Information	
Name	
Title	
NIH Commons Logon	
Campus Address	
Office Phone	
Cell Phone	
Fax	
Email Address	

## 2.2 The Departmental Research Administrator

Participating in professional organizations and training will help you stay informed of new developments in sponsored project administration, and be more effective in your work. Networking with others in the field helps you build a support network. Opportunities for training and professional development are available through UT Austin, private organizations, and professional organizations. This section provides information

to help you get started and to help you stay informed about the exciting field of research administration.

### **2.2.1 Research Administrator Certification**

One of the best ways to become knowledgeable and effective in research administration is to become a certified research administrator. Certification as a Certified Research Administrator (CRA) is awarded through the Research Administrator Certification Council (RACC). UT Austin's Office of Sponsored Projects annually sponsors a study group to assist you in preparing for the CRA exam. If you are interested in obtaining certification, please call (OSP) at 471-6424 or send an e-mail message to [OSP](#). New study sessions are announced in the Research Administrator Network (RAN) listserv.

For more information about research administrator certification go to the [Research Administrator Certification Council \(RACC\)](#).

### **2.2.2 Professional Development Opportunities from OSP**

Many training opportunities on topics of interest to the campus research administrators can be found under the Spotlights and Training Opportunities sections of the [OSP Web page](#), in the VPR's weekly Research Alerts, and via the RAN listserv. For information on how to register for specific class offerings on CAYUSE 424™ training classes, Grant Writing workshops, and Export Control seminars go to [TX Class](#) and search for the "SP" series.

In addition, OSP subscribes to the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) Satellite TV Broadcasts. Most of these quarterly sessions offer continuing education credits. Go here for more information on [NCURA broadcasts](#).

Go to the [NCURA Training](#) page under Training Opportunities on the OSP Web page for a list of DVDs and print resources related to sponsored project activities. The DVDs are available for short term borrowing. Contact [OSP](#) or at 471-6424.

### **2.2.3 Professional Organizations: Membership and Conference Information**

- [National Council of University Research Administrators \(NCURA\)](#)
- [Society of Research Administrators International \(SRA\)](#)

### **2.2.4 Additional Professional Development Resources**

- [CAYUSE 424™ Resources](#)
- [CAYUSE 424™ Training Modules](#)
- [Research Administrators Certification Council \(RACC\) Body of Knowledge](#)
- [NIH Tutorial](#)
- [NIH Workshops](#)
- [The Foundation Center](#)

## 2.3 The Principal Investigator (PI)

A principal investigator (PI) is the lead scientist for a particular well-defined science (or other academic) project who takes direct responsibility for completion of a funded project, directs the research and reports directly to the sponsor. When UT Austin accepts a grant or contract award from an external sponsor, the university assumes responsibility for the proper performance of the stated project, for the fiscal management of the funds received, and for accountability to the sponsor. Since the institutional responsibility for meeting these obligations is vested in the Principal Investigator (PI), only individuals in the categories below are authorized to be Principal Investigators or Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) for sponsored projects. In rare instances others may be authorized, but only with the prior written approval of the Associate Vice President for Research and Director of OSP.

## 2.4 PI Status: Approved Categories of Faculty Positions

- Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor (Tenure or Tenure-track faculty)
- Directors
- Research Scientists/Engineers, including Senior-grades

If your PI is listed in one of the categories listed above, they do not have to request PI status from OSP; their title confers PI status already. They do, however, need to request access to the Research Management System (RMS) and possibly other electronic systems. Please see Sections 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 for more information on obtaining permission to access electronic systems.

## 2.5 How to Request PI Status

If your PI **does not** belong to one of the approved categories of faculty positions for PI status, their unit chair/director must send a request via email (in writing) to [OSP](#). The request should include a curriculum vita, a statement regarding the individual's qualifications to serve as a PI or Co-PI on the project in question, and a signed copy of the [Statement of Administrative Responsibilities for Research Activities \(a.k.a. the PI Memo\)](#). Requests for PI status from the College of Natural Sciences must first be routed through the relevant department chair, then the Office of the Dean prior to forwarding on to OSP.

## 2.6 Unit and PI Codes

Unit codes are assigned to official University of Texas entities, such as an academic department, administrative department, organized research unit, or project director responsible for a sponsored project. The first four digits indicate an official University department or organization. The last three digits divide the official unit into subunits, which may indicate individuals, such as Principal Investigators (PIs), or other programs or projects within the official unit. PIs must be assigned a PI code by OSP in order to

have access to the Research Management System (RMS) and to various other UT Austin electronic and accounting systems used in the management of sponsored research. More information about unit codes can be found in the [Handbook of Business Procedures Common Business and Financial Terminology](#).

## **2.7 Obtaining Access to Electronic Systems for Your PI and/or Yourself**

After PI status and a PI code have been established, you or your PI will need to request access to a number of electronic systems that will enable you (both) to successfully create grant proposal applications and if funded, manage grant awards. You may request access to these systems for your PI by sending an e-mail with their name, UTEID, and PI code to the [OSP Electronic Research Administrator](#). Request all of the electronic systems your PI will need access to in the email; system access will not be provided unless specifically requested.

As a DRA, you may also request access to these same systems in order to track the status of your PI's proposals. Your authorizations will have administrator-level privileges, not PI-level privileges. In your email message to OSP include your UTEID, your PI's name and UTEID, and your PI's code. **Be sure to cc: your PI when making this request.** This lets OSP know that your PI is aware of the request and is authorizing your access to privileges in these electronic systems.

The following are some of the electronic systems most commonly used in sponsored project administration (if you do not see the one that you need, contact [OSP](#)).

### **2.7.1 Research Management System (RMS)**

RMS is UT Austin's sponsored projects research tool where you or your PI will create a Proposal Review Form (PRF). The PRF collects information required by university, state, or federal regulations and/or policies, and also alerts OSP that your PI intends to respond to a sponsor's funding opportunity and submit a proposal application.

### **2.7.2 CAYUSE 424™ and Grants.gov**

Another electronic research tool used in the preparation, validation and electronic submission of Federal grant funding applications to Grants.gov is CAYUSE 424™. Grants.gov is the central storehouse for information on finding and applying for federal government grants. Since UT Austin is a registered user of Grants.gov, you and your PI already have access to apply for grants and to download grant application packages. You may want to subscribe to [Grants.gov](#) and receive notifications of new grant opportunity postings and updates.

If your PI decides to apply for a Grants.gov [funding opportunity supported by CAYUSE 424™](#) and creates the proposal using CAYUSE 424™, they can give you authorization to access the proposal by making you "delegate." If you create the proposal application in [CAYUSE 424™](#), you can make your PI a "delegate."

### 2.7.3 FastLane

[FastLane](#) is the name of the [National Science Foundation's \(NSF\)](#) online website through which researchers and potential researchers, reviewers, and research administrators and their organizations interact electronically to conduct business, such as submitting proposal applications and progress reports.

### 2.7.4 Electronic Research Administration (eRA) Commons

[eRA Commons](#) is a virtual meeting place where NIH grantee organizations, grantees, and the public can exchange research grants administration information and all NIH Grants.gov reporting.

### 2.8 Research Administrator Network (RAN)

One of the best ways to get answers to questions and share information is to communicate with other departmental and OSP research administrators across campus. In order to encourage and accommodate this type of communication the Research Administrator Network (RAN) listserv has been created by OSP. Here are instructions on how to subscribe and unsubscribe to the [RAN listserv](#).

### 2.9 Responsibility Matrix: PI, Departmental Research Administrators, and OSP Research Administrators

Understanding your PI's role (and your role) versus the role of research administrators who work in OSP will help streamline the proposal application process. Departmental research administrators assist their PIs with proposal preparation and other pre-award work (and/or post-award work). Generally, you will be the liaison between the department and OSP, acting as the departmental contact and working directly with the PI to prepare and submit proposal application packages to OSP for their review and submission to sponsors. You may also manage accounts, assist with reporting on grant progress, or anything else that comes up after the funding has been awarded and before the grant is closed out. See Table 2.8 Responsibility Matrix.

**Table 2.9 Responsibility Matrix**

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY		
	DEPT	PI	OSP
Determine if PI already holds PI status	X	X	X
If PI status not conferred, make request for PI status	X	X	
Add PI to RMS database			X
Request Unit Code	X	X	
If PI will have an assistant/postdoc/student preparing forms,	X	X	

**Table 2.9 Responsibility Matrix**

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY		
	DEPT	PI	OSP
authorize that individual for access to electronic systems			
Add assistant/postdoc/student to RMS			X
Determine which sponsor matches funding interest		X	
If the sponsor requires application submission via its own electronic submission system, ensure that PI/UT Austin is authorized to submit via that system.	X	X	
Seek funding opportunity		X	
If funding opportunity limits the number of submissions, check the Limited Submissions website: <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/admin/limited/">http://www.utexas.edu/research/admin/limited/</a> . If the program is not listed, contact the OSP office by sending an email to <a href="mailto:osp@austin.utexas.edu">osp@austin.utexas.edu</a> to enter an internal competition	X	X	
Determine who should be on research team		X	
Contact proposed research team to secure their agreement to participate and obtain supporting documents		X	
Contact Dean for any special departmental commitments and obtain supporting documentation		X	
Contact vendors for quotes	X	X	
Assess research risks (human, animal, biohazard, etc.)	X	X	X
If institutional approval for study is required, submit documentation and secure approval	X	X	
Contact sponsor Program Officer		X	
Prepare OSP's Proposal Review Form in RMS and route to OSP	X	X	
If Letter of Intent is due, send it in a timely fashion	X	X	
PI prepares the proposal narrative		X	
Prepare budget		X	
If cost sharing is associated with project, complete form and obtain all necessary signatures	X	X	
If subcontract involved: inform subcontractor of items needed and obtain said items	X	X	
Obtain letters of support/access to facilities, if necessary	X	X	
Submit required materials to OSP for review	X	X	
OSP authorizes the proposal for submission.	X	X	X
After submission, answer sponsor questions that may arise or prepare additional materials requested by sponsor	X	X	X

**Table 2.9 Responsibility Matrix**

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY		
	DEPT	PI	OSP
Respond to sponsor requests for additional materials such as Representation and Certifications (Reps and Certs), revised budgets, etc, i.e., Information Transmittals (Info-Trans). All Info-Trans back to sponsor must be routed through OSP.	X	X	X
OSP negotiates award, if necessary			X
OSP accepts award on behalf of UT Austin			X

## 2.10 Learn the Lingo

You will probably find it helpful to be knowledgeable about the various terms, definitions and acronyms specific to sponsored research administration and may want to familiarize yourself by reviewing one of the following glossaries:

- [UT Austin Handbook of Business Procedures, Common Business and Financial Terminology](#)
- [NIH Glossary and Acronym List](#)
- [NSF Glossary](#)
- [Foundation Center, Guide to Funding Research Glossary](#)

## **Section 3: Searching for Sponsored Research Funding Opportunities**

### **3.1 What are Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs)?**

FOAs are publicly available documents by which agencies or other sponsor organizations make known their intentions to award funding, usually as a result of a competitive process. Funding opportunities (or solicitations) may be called by a number of names, including: Request for Proposals (RFP); Request for Applications (RFA); Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA); Proposal Announcements (PA); or any other name the sponsor decides to use. It is important to check for new funding opportunities frequently. In addition, you should check periodically to see if a sponsor has revised an existing FOA.

### **3.2 Who Is Responsible For Finding Funding?**

The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for actively seeking funding sources, but you can assist by searching for relevant funding opportunities on behalf of your PI.

### **3.3 Find Funding Opportunities/Notices at UT Austin**

#### **3.3.1 Office of VP for Research: Research Alerts**

This is a weekly e-newsletter published by the [Office of the Vice President for Research](#). The Research Alert usually includes NIH, NSF, DOD, and non-Federal award opportunities. [Subscribe to Research Alerts](#) or send an e-mail to the [VPR](#).

#### **3.3.2 Limited Submission Programs**

Frequently, funding opportunities are designated as “limited submission programs”, meaning that due to restrictions placed by the sponsor the university can only submit a specified number of proposals for consideration for an award. The Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) coordinates the internal screening and review process to determine which proposals can go forward on behalf of UT Austin. Before you begin to develop a proposal, please notify OSP via email [limitedsub@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:limitedsub@austin.utexas.edu) if the sponsor's program guidelines place any limits on the number of proposals that can be submitted by the university. For more information go to the VPR's web page on [Limited Submission Programs](#).

#### **3.3.3 Special Funding for UT Austin Faculty and Students**

The Office of the Vice President for Research administers a variety of [internal competitions for awards, fellowships and grant programs](#). Potential sources of funding include [Graduate School sponsored faculty travel grants](#), [research grants for faculty, students, and others](#), and [undergraduate research opportunities](#).

### **3.3.4 OSP FAQ: “How Do I Find a Sponsor”?**

See this entry under the heading “[How To Submit a Proposal](#)” for an on-line listing of resources.

### **3.3.5 Community of Science (COS)**

All UT Austin employees can access the [Community of Science \(COS\)](#) searchable database. Create a username and password to view funding opportunities or identify potential collaborators for your PI. For information on scheduling one-on-one training sessions or small group classes contact OSP at 471-6424.

### **3.3.6 UT Austin Libraries**

- Use keywords “research funding” at: [UT Libraries](#)

## **3.4 Find Funding Opportunities/Notices at the Federal Level**

Most, if not all, federal sponsors maintain a website that announces and catalogs their active funding opportunities and solicitations. The following is not an exhaustive list of federal sponsor Web sites; but is a sampling of major federal sponsors and will give you a glimpse of their funding sites:

- [Grants.gov](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#)
- [NSF Dissertation Improvement Awards](#)
- [Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency \(DARPA/DOD\)](#)
- [U.S. Department of Energy](#)
- [National Endowment for the Arts](#)

## **3.5 Find Funding Opportunities/Federal Listservs**

If a sponsor maintains an funding listserv, it is advisable to subscribe to it in order to cut down your search time and to stay abreast of current, expiring, or extended funding opportunities. Some commonly used listservs are:

- [Grants Notification Service Subscription Service](#)
- [U.S Department of Education EDInfo Mailing List](#)
- [National Center For Environmental Research Listserver \(NCER\)](#)
- [NASA Acquisition Internet Service \(NAIS\) Email Notification System](#)
- [National Endowment for the Humanities RSS Feed](#)
- [National Institute for Standards and Technology/Advanced Technology Program E-Mail list](#)
- [National Institutes of Health Listserv](#)
- [National Science Foundation E-Mail Subscription service](#)

### **3.6 Find Funding Opportunities/Notices at the State Level**

- [Texas Education Agency \(TEA\) Grant Opportunities](#)
- [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board \(THECB\) Research and Project Grants](#)

### **3.7 Find Research Funding by Corporate Sponsorship**

For-profit corporations may approach or be approached by a PI for research sponsorship. Sponsorship provided by corporations may be in the form of a grant or contract. The terms and conditions of these types of research projects are negotiated by OSP after the PI has made contact with the corporation. As soon as you become aware that the PI is working with a corporate or industry sponsor, provide them with, [A Principles and Policies Guide for Sponsored Activity](#) which is a summary of selected fundamental principles and policies which govern the manner in which sponsored activity is conducted at The University.

Prior to the negotiation of a legally binding agreement, you or your PI should contact OSP for assistance in determining acceptable and appropriate terms and conditions related to non-disclosure of confidential information, intellectual property issues, or other matters that are pertinent to the specific project being considered for funding. Many times the university and the corporate sponsor have conflicting requirements and negotiation is necessary. Questions related to negotiations with corporations may be directed to [Bill Catlett](#), Associate Director, Industry Relations or call 471-6279.

### **3.8 Find Research Funding by Foundations/Non-profits**

Private foundations fund many research projects through Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or through direct contact with PIs. It is important that Foundation Relations (FR) in the University Development Office be kept informed if your PI is planning to submit a proposal to a foundation, or is planning to approach a foundation about funding a special project. Please note: Each foundation proposal is unique and requires different supporting documentation. Please contact the [University Development Office](#) or [Foundation Relations](#) ( 475-9628) for more information.

- [The University of Texas System Foundation, Special Foundation Grants](#)
- [The Regional Foundation Library \(RFL\) in the Division of Diversity & Community Engagement](#) or e-mail [RFL@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:RFL@austin.utexas.edu) for more information or to schedule an appointment.
- A comprehensive Web database of U.S. grant makers and their grants focused especially on non-profits and organized philanthropy can be found at [Foundation Center](#)

### 3.8.1 Research Gifts

Research gifts are donations made for research purposes with no terms or conditions, i.e., no restrictions or deliverables, associated with the funding. The UT Austin Development Office manages these types of gifts, and OSP has no involvement in the proposal review process. Check with your Dean's Office for gift processing policies and procedures in your college, school or unit (CSU) or call the UT Austin [University Development Office](#) 471-5424 for more information.

### 3.9 Research Training Sponsorships for Students and Postdoctoral Fellows

The University of Texas at Austin is committed to providing research training for students. For example, the Office of Undergraduate Research hosts a Web based guide to faculty research and research opportunities for undergraduates called [EUREKA!](#)<sup>TM</sup> Students can use [EUREKA!](#)<sup>TM</sup> to find tips on getting started in research, information on funding and publication, and postings by UT Austin faculty for research positions here on campus.

In addition, the [Office of Research Support \(ORS\)](#) provides information on committee oversight and approval required for [student researchers](#).

The NIH and NSF, as well as other agencies provide fellowship sponsorship or training grants for students and postdoctoral researchers. A few are listed here:

- [American Heart Association \(AHA\)](#) Search on keyword "fellowships"
- [NIH Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award \(NRSA\)](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\), Research Experience for Undergraduates \(REU\)](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\) Specialized Information for Postdoctoral Fellows](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\) Specialized Information for Graduate Students](#)

**Please Note:** Naming the student as the PI on the award document may not be permitted, depending on the sponsor. However, the sponsor's expectation is that the student will conduct the research and perform other grant management duties. And, regardless of who is named as the PI in the award document, for tracking purposes in RMS the student's research project is listed under their PI's name.

## Section 4: Understanding Funding Opportunity Guidelines

### 4.1 Overview of Steps

This section will discuss how to make sense of the sponsor's solicitation and how to help your PI understand and interpret its guidelines and requirements. As mentioned previously, the sponsor may call the funding opportunity announcement by a number of names, including: Request for Proposals (RFP); Request for Applications (RFA); Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA); Proposal Announcements (PA); or Broad Agency Announcements (BAA). The basic steps for understanding the sponsor's proposal submission guidelines and instructions are the exactly the same regardless of what the funding agency calls the announcement.

#### 4.1.1 Download and print **ALL** of the announcement/guidelines/instructions from the appropriate agency's website.

Each funding opportunity has a specific set of instructions, or guidelines associated with it. Be sure to download the most recent version of the sponsor's guidelines and look for any associated updates to the opportunity (i.e., deadline extensions, format changes, etc.) to ensure you have a complete set of instructions before proceeding to the application.

Most federal funding for basic assistance requires that a proposal be prepared using agency specific formats. Therefore, be sure to download the most current application form packets for each submission. This is of particular importance because **all of the sponsoring agencies which submit through Grants.gov also use the basic SF424RR form**. However, each agency can add their own particular form(s) to the basic SF424RR application set, or they can ask that certain information be loaded into sections of the application where it may not seem to fit intuitively.

UT Austin provides a “system2system” interface called [CAYUSE 424™](#) which per [OSP policy](#), should be utilized for Grants.gov submissions. This system greatly simplifies the process for the PI, departmental administrators and OSP. **TIP: Be sure to verify that your [sponsor agency's FOA is supported by CAYUSE 424™](#).**

#### 4.1.2 **READ** the guidelines and documents carefully.

Look for and take notes of important dates, requirements, and other information that are required to be addressed in the RFP.

#### 4.1.3 **Note** the required formatting guidelines, and create key element checklists.

Sample checklist forms are identified below in Section 4.2. Use these as templates, and adapt them to track dates and other key information required by your specific proposal(s).

## 4.2 Key Elements in the FOA Guidelines

### 4.2.1 Submission Deadline date

While most proposals are now submitted electronically to the sponsor for paper submissions you must determine whether this is a “postmark by” or “receive by” date. This can make or break your submission. “Postmark” will allow the application to be mailed in on the day it is due. “Received by” means you have to send the proposal with enough lead time that the sponsor will receive it by the deadline time on the due date.

### 4.2.2 Time of Day Deadline

Some sponsors specify the time a proposal is due, i.e., 3 PM Eastern (ET). Be sure to adjust to Central Standard Time (CST), so you do not miss the deadline.

### 4.2.3 Required Formats

Most agencies will require set margins, fonts, type size, limits on color illustrations, number of pages per section, etc. It is important to pay attention to these requirements as they can determine whether your proposal is reviewed or rejected. [Template 4.2.3](#) provides a format for taking notes of the formatting requirements in your announcement.

### Template 4.2.3 Proposal Formatting Guidelines

(Modify to match the requirements of your funding announcement)

PROPOSAL FORMATTING GUIDELINES	
Proposal Body	
Font Face	
Font Size	
Top Margin	
Bottom Margin	
Left Margin	
Right Margin	
Indentations	
Charts and Figures	
Figure Font	
Figure Font Size	
Dimensions	
Location on page	

#### **4.2.4 Applicant**

The University of Texas at Austin is the Applicant. If the RFP says “only one application per applicant”, this is your cue that this funding opportunity is a “limited submission” and you must contact OSP before proceeding. See Section 3.3.2 for more information regarding limited submission programs.

#### **4.2.5 Submission Method**

Are the applications supposed to be sent electronically, paper, or both?

#### **4.2.6 Appendices**

Are appendices allowed? If so, what can be included? Private foundations require very different supporting documentation from federal sponsors and their formats are generally not uniform like government agency grant proposals. Read the instructions for these proposal applications very carefully to make sure you understand what is required.

#### **4.2.7 Funding Restrictions**

A sponsor may place restrictions on the use of its awarded funds. Be sure to note whether or not restrictions are detailed in the funding opportunity announcement and be sure to follow those restrictions when crafting the budget. Remember, each funding opportunity is unique and each sponsor is unique; a different set of restrictions may be employed by the same sponsor for different opportunities. Some examples of sponsor restrictions are:

- Mandatory cost sharing
- Cap on F&A that a sponsor will pay
- No tuition allowed
- No salaries allowed

#### **4.2.8 Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Cost Rates.**

Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs are sometimes called indirect costs (IDC) or overhead costs. These refer to those costs incurred by the university in support of the project that are not easily allocable as direct costs. These costs are usually associated with facility operation and maintenance, utilities and building and equipment depreciation, etc. Most sponsors recognize that universities that conduct research incur these costs in addition to those direct costs that are that are directly allocable and included in a project's budget. And, they have agreed that the portion of F&A costs identified with organized research is distributed by applying a cost rate(s) which is negotiated between the university and the federal government. This process allows the university to recover some portion of the costs associated with conducting research. Read the opportunity guidelines to determine if the sponsor imposes a limit or restriction on the amount of cost recovery

that is less than the UT Austin negotiated F&A rate of 52%. If so, OSP requires written documentation from the sponsor that confirms a lower rate must apply. **NOTE: Proposals to industry or other “for profit” sponsors must use the full negotiated F&A rate.** See the [OSP memo on F&A negotiated rates](#) for an explanation of the types of negotiated F&A rates at UT Austin and [UT - Austin's Federally Negotiated F&A Rate Agreement](#).

#### **4.2.9 UT Austin Institutional Information**

Standard information about the applicant institution requested by sponsors which is specific to UT Austin is referred to as “[boilerplate](#)”.

#### **4.2.10 Letters of Recommendation and Support**

Some applications require letters of recommendation which become part of the overall application. Letters of recommendation speak to the applicant’s ability and potential to conduct the proposed research. If a sponsor requires letters of recommendation, they are generally due at the time the application is submitted.

Letters of support can also be an important part of an application. These may come from consultants who are agreeing to work on a project, from research sites, from departmental personnel who are committing resources to a project, etc. If allowed by the sponsor, these letters should be submitted to the sponsor at the same time an application is submitted.

Sponsors may dictate 1) if letters are allowed at all; 2) if letters are required; 3) if letters are mandatory at the time of submission; 4) the content of the letters; 5) use of a specific form or the format of the letter; and 6) whether or not letters count against the page limitation. Again, the sponsor’s funding opportunity announcement will provide guidance on all of these issues.

It is important that you and your PI understand the nuances surrounding letters of recommendation and support, because if an error is discovered at the time a proposal is reviewed by OSP, it may be too late to request new letters.

Advise your PI to request these letters four to six weeks in advance of the submission deadline, and to follow up to be sure they are submitted. Emphasize that this time frame allows for the PI to find substitute references should one of the initial requests be refused. Request that the PI provides you with the names and contact information for these individuals to allow you to follow up with them. Many funding organizations will not allow a proposal to be submitted without the required letters, so failing to provide/request these letters within an appropriate time frame could mean that a lot of time is wasted preparing a proposal that cannot be submitted.

If an optional letter arrives after the deadline date, it is sometimes possible to submit non-mandatory letters directly to an agency. This is only possible AFTER the application has been assigned to a Scientific Review Officer (SRO) at the funding agency. The SRO may

accept the letter and provide it to the review panel, but this action is completely discretionary and this is not a request that should be used very often. In today's funding climate, it is imperative to get your application materials in on time and to get them right the first time.

## Section 5: Proposal Application Preparation

### 5.1 Overview of the Pre-Award Cycle

- The researcher has a research idea or concept.
- Funding sources are researched and chosen. Remember to check often to see if whether the sponsor has revised or amended your PI's solicitation over the course of the proposal preparation phase.
- The proposal application is written and formatted according to the guidelines provided by the sponsor agency (Adobe, Text, PDF or CAYUSE424™)
- The Proposal Review Form (PRF) should be completed and submitted electronically through the Research Management System (RMS) to OSP as soon as a decision to submit a proposal application has been made; this action gets the proposal in the OSP queue for review prior to the deadline date. **Please note: OSP no longer accepts paper copies of the PRF.**
- Once you submit the PRF, you will not be able to access it. If you need to make changes or upload additional information, simply request OSP to “release it back” in the Remarks section of the PRF and they will do so.
- The proposal application can be forwarded to OSP electronically as an attachment to the PRF. Proposals prepared with CAYUSE 424™ are accessible to OSP.
- OSP reviews the proposal application and communicates with the departmental administrator or PI about any questions or additional information that may be required.
- The proposal is submitted to the sponsor.
- The sponsor contacts OSP with any questions about the proposal or to request any additional information that is required.
- OSP works with the PI to obtain and submit any information needed by the sponsor including revised budgets, compliance committee protocol approvals and Representations and Certifications (“reps and certs”). Prospective vendors must annually define their business in such areas as size, cost accounting standards, past debarments, and company ownership and these statements are called "reps and certs." Submitting these "reps and certs" is a requirement for funding in most government-issued solicitations.
- The sponsor completes proposal review and informs the PI or OSP of the funding decision.
- If an award is made, the sponsor sends OSP the "notice of grant award" (NGA) document.
- If the PI receives the NGA it should be sent to OSP.
- Here is a the flow diagram of [The Life Cycle of a Sponsored Project](#).

### 5.2 The Faculty Perspective

For the Principal Investigator (PI), proposal application preparation begins with an idea. (S)He develops a research plan, often in conjunction with a liaison at the institution where (s)he works. The PI makes contacts to find consultants and collaborators interested in the project and to find possible funding sources. (S)He may also look at RFPs that

seem to be a good fit for the research idea, or may ask you, the departmental research administrator, to assist in searching for funding opportunities.

### **5.3 The Departmental Research Administrator Perspective**

During the proposal preparation phase, you will work closely with your PI, so it is imperative that you develop a good working relationship with him/her by communicating about the kind of support (s)he would like and the kind of support you can provide in preparing and processing proposals applications. Some of your PIs will require a higher level of support than others. Knowing this information in advance of deadlines will help you balance your workload during the proposal preparation cycle. It is helpful to keep a schedule with the name of the PIs and the deadline dates for their proposals.

Find out if your PI has any travel plans during the proposal preparation and submission timeframe. Try to have the proposal completed prior to the PI's departure date, if (s)he will be unavailable on the deadline date. Although this may not always be possible, be sure to factor in travel, and any other availability issues into the proposal preparation timeline.

Generally, departmental research administrators assist with the following tasks during the proposal application preparation process:

- Create the Proposal Review Form (PRF) in RMS and submit it to OSP
- Collect supporting documentation, letters of recommendation/support, etc.
- Collect biosketches and curriculum vitae (CV) of key personnel. Create a biosketch from a CV when a biosketch is not available.
- Collect letters of commitment from subcontractors, collaborators or consultants. These letters must be authorized and signed by an official with legal authority to commit the resources to the project; not the PI.
- Solicit vendor quotes
- Gather salary information
- Develop the budget
- Assemble proposal in required format or templates

The RFP usually requests a description of UT Austin infrastructure resources available to the PI for use in support of the research project. You should include information on the facilities and equipment that are available from your department at UT Austin or any other special resources necessary to complete the research (i.e., specialized equipment, core facilities, and/or extraordinary computer resources).

UT Austin has many internal store facilities that provide some of the basic supplies needed for conducting research, as well as some other facilities that provide access to large pieces of equipment. These entities usually charge for services on a unit basis or an hourly basis (or other pre-determined method to calculate the cost of use). Some provide supplies and services to the colleges, schools, and departments that house them and others provide service to the entire University. Check the Websites or call the facility

manager for access and pricing information. The list below is by no means inclusive of the resources and facilities various colleges/schools/units (CSU) at UT Austin have to offer in support of research.

- [Animal Resource Center \(ARC\)](#)
- [Copy Centers](#)
- [DIAA Instructional Technologies](#)
- [Imaging Research Center](#)
- [Information Technology Services \(ITS\) Software and Hardware](#)
- [Institute for Cellular and Molecular Biology \(ICMB\) Core Facilities](#)
- [Printing Services](#)
- [Texas Advanced Computing Center \(TACC\) Resources](#)

## **5.4 The Nuts and Bolts of Preparing the Proposal Application**

### **5.4.1 Print the FOA, submission instructions, and application forms from the appropriate funding organization's Web site.**

Always download the most recent opportunity announcement. Remember that announcements can be revised or amended at any time by a sponsor so check for updates frequently.

If you plan on submitting proposals to private foundations, remember to contact Foundation Relations in the University Development Office at 475-9628. The PI may need to contact a program officer at the foundation to get the correct information about what the foundation requires for the proposal application.

### **5.4.2 Create the Proposal Review Form (PRF)**

A proposal review form (PRF) alerts OSP that your proposal is in their queue for review and submission. You should create a PRF in OSP's [Research Management System \(RMS\)](#) as soon as you know your PI is going to submit a proposal.

**The act of creating a proposal application in CAYUSE 424™, FastLane, or any other sponsor submission system DOES NOT alert OSP that a proposal is ready for submission. You MUST create AND submit a PRF in RMS. You will find it helpful to communicate frequently with the OSP staff throughout the application submission process.**

### **5.4.3 Proposals to Grants.gov**

Depending upon the opportunity, CAYUSE 424™ may support your Grants.gov submission. If so, create the proposal in [CAYUSE 424™](#) and be sure to make your PI a "delegate." If your PI creates the proposal in CAYUSE 424™, ask them to add you as a "delegate" so you can access the proposal.

If, however, CAYUSE 424™ does not support your opportunity, you must follow the standard Grants.gov application process (i.e., download and complete an Adobe form set).

#### **5.4.4 Proposals to NSF**

The National Science Foundation increasingly utilizes Grants.gov for submission of NSF proposals. CAYUSE 424™ should be used to create proposal applications whenever possible. Consult your RFP's solicitation instructions for the proper method of submission.

If, however, submission via [FastLane](#) is required in the solicitation, OSP will use that system to submit your application. The PI must create a PIN number for you, if (s)he would like you to be able to view the proposal and follow its status.

#### **5.4.5 Proposals to Limited Submissions Programs**

Follow the instructions on [UT Austin's Limited Submission Programs Web site](#) and in the sponsor's proposal announcement. Be sure to know if your college or department has additional preparation and routing requirements. Here is a [listing of limited submission opportunities](#) at UT Austin. This listing is not exhaustive, as sponsors create and post new opportunities on a frequent basis. As always, read the opportunity announcement to see whether or not the sponsor is limiting the number of allowable applications from an institution.

#### **5.4.6 Proposals to Private Foundations**

Prior to beginning the proposal process, notify Foundation Relations in the University Development Office that you wish to submit a proposal to a foundation. Many foundations require background documentation that includes the total amount of sponsored funding, demographic information, minority representation, and more. Find out if the sponsor wants the information for the whole university, or your college, or school, or department. If they want the information for all of UT Austin, it can be found in the annual [Statistical Handbook](#) produced by the Office of Information Management and Analysis. For college, school, or department information you will work with someone in your college who has access to the needed information. Your college's development officer in your Dean's Office would be a good place to start to find out who can help you gather the necessary documentation.

Some foundations require that their funding be donated through the [University of Texas Foundation](#). In this case, notify Foundation Relations (FR) in the [University Development Office](#) for assistance with the proper letters and backup documentation.

## **5.4.7 Proposals to Corporate Sponsors**

Provide your PI with “[A Principles and Policies Guide for Sponsored Activity](#)” as a guide for discussions with corporate sponsors. Sometimes corporate sponsors have terms and conditions which are at odds with those of UT Austin and negotiation is required. Often negotiations with corporate sponsors involve intellectual property issues and may also require [non-disclosure agreements](#). Questions related to corporate sponsorship should be referred to [Bill Catlett](#), Associate Director, Industry Relations or call 471-6279.

## **5.4.8 Using Proposal Application Checklists**

Use the checklists you developed as you were reading the RFP, as well as [Template 5.5 Proposal Preparation](#) and [Template 5.6 Compliance Checklists](#) to guide you through the process of preparing the proposal. Adapt them to your specific proposal application.

## **5.5 OSP Resources: Preparing Proposal Applications**

The [OSP Handbook](#) on OSP's Web site contains important information which may assist you in preparing the proposal application. The most common tips can be found below.

### **5.5.1 Proposal Preparation**

The [OSP Handbook](#) requests that a copy of the sponsor's guidelines and documentation be sent to the proposal specialist assigned to your PI.

### **5.5.2 Proposal Format**

If the sponsor does not have a specified proposal format you can use the suggested format in the [OSP Handbook](#).

### **5.5.3 UT Austin Institution "Boilerplate" Information**

Find [UT Austin boilerplate information](#) here.

### **5.5.4 Export Control Issues**

The unlicensed export of certain commodities (technologies) or information is prohibited by U.S. federal laws for reasons of national security or trade protection. For example, export control issues can arise because the nature of the export has actual or potential military applications or economic protection issues; there are concerns about the destination country, organization, or individual, or there are government concerns about the declared or suspected end use or the end user of the export.

Most exports do not require government licenses. However, licenses are required for exports that the U. S. government considers "license controlled" under the following: The **Department of Commerce's Export Administration Regulations (EAR)**, The

**Department of State's International Traffic In Arms Regulations (ITAR) or the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).**

PIs should review their research projects to determine whether and, if so how, they might be impacted by US export control regulations. OSP will assist PIs in assessing the application of the regulations, but primary compliance responsibility rests with the principal investigator of the research project. The consequences of violating these regulations can be quite severe, including the loss of research contracts, monetary penalties, and jail time for the individual violating these regulations.

During the proposal application review process, your PI will be contacted by Kay Ellis, the university's [Export Controls](#) Officer if OSP determines that there might be issues relating to export controls. If you have questions you may call Kay at 512-475-7963.

**Template 5.5 Proposal Preparation Checklist**

(Modify to match the requirements of your funding announcement)

PROPOSAL PREPARATION CHECKLIST				
Proposal Component	Responsible Party	Internal Department Deadline	OSP Deadline	Agency Deadline
<a href="#">Proposal Review Form (PRF)</a>	Dept/PI			n/a
Transmittal Letter	OSP			
Title Page	Dept/PI			
Technical Abstract	PI			
Table of Contents	Dept/PI			
Statement of the Proposed Research Project	PI			
Review of Relevant Literature	PI			
Brief Description of Proposed Activities or Objectives	PI			
Project Design or Procedures	PI			
Project Evaluation	PI			
Project Management	PI			
Personnel Resources (Check with your Department and College for internal policies and procedures for gaining access to salary and other confidential personnel information.) *DEFINE <a href="#">UT Job Code &amp; Pay Plan System</a>	PI/ Dept			
Institutional Equipment and	Dept/PI			

Facilities				
Project Budget – Modular or Detailed <a href="#">OSP Handbook Budget Information</a>	PI/ Dept			
Budget Justification	PI/ Dept			
Curricula Vitae (PI, co-PI, all key personnel, consultants)	PI/ Dept			
References (Literature cited)	PI/ Dept			
Appendices Find out if appendices are allowed and, if so, what is the recommended appendix.	PI/ Dept			

## 5.6 Compliance and Oversight Committees: Human Subjects, Animals, recombinant DNA (rDNA), and Biosafety Materials

Prior to issuing an award, funding agencies require oversight committee approval for studies using human subjects, animals, recombinant DNA, or other hazardous materials. When preparing your proposal application, check the sponsor guidelines to verify when exactly your PI needs to have an approved protocol in hand. Determine if the PI already has committee approval or if he has applied for these authorizations. Does s/he have to have the protocol numbers for these approvals prior to submission of the proposal application? Or, will the sponsor allow for “Just in Time” (JIT) approvals? “Just in Time” means a PI can submit his proposal application to sponsors pending the oversight committee approvals. However, these approvals have to be in place prior to the award being issued to the institution.

### 5.6.1 Oversight Committees at UT- Austin

Information related to obtaining approvals from UT – Austin’s oversight committees is available on the Office of Research Support ([ORS](#)) [Web site](#). You can assist your PI by finding out which approvals are required at the proposal application submission point and which, if any, can be provided to the sponsor at a later date, (but prior to the project start).

Review and oversight committees only meet monthly, so it is crucial to know if a proposal protocol requires full committee review. Your paperwork must be submitted by the committee’s deadline in order to be reviewed at a monthly meeting. If your study proposal requires full committee review, the compliance protocol must be submitted in time to be approved before the sponsoring agency’s submission deadline occurs. Check the specific Web sites of the various UT Austin review boards for committee review meeting deadlines.

When a study protocol is submitted to an oversight committee, a unique number is assigned. This number does not represent committee approval. Once a study protocol has been reviewed and approved, a letter will be issued from the oversight committee documenting that the PI is allowed to proceed with the study.

Links to individual entities which support research compliance issues at UT Austin are listed below.

### **5.6.2 Animal Use and Care**

UT Austin has the responsibility to ensure that experimentation with all animals conducted under its auspices (warm/cold-blooded and vertebrates/invertebrates), except human subjects, follows the regulations and guidelines as established by the Animal Welfare Act, the Animal Welfare Regulations (AWRs), and Public Health Service Policy. Copies of these publications are available for review at UT Austin's [Animal Research Center \(ARC\)](#).

Proposals involving the use of animals must be reviewed and given preliminary approval for submission for funding by the ARC Director prior to being brought to the OSP for processing. Researchers and/or teaching faculty who are planning projects involving the use of any animal should contact both the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#) Program Coordinator (512/475-8650) and the ARC Director in the early stages of planning.

### **5.6.3 Human Subjects**

UT Austin faculty, staff, students or employees who propose to engage in any research involving the use of human subjects must have prior review and approval of that activity by their Departmental Review Committee (DRC) and the Institutional Review Board (IRB). It is UT Austin policy that all protocols involving the [use of human subjects](#) be reviewed by the DRC and the IRB. The IRB is responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of subjects who may be at risk through participation in such activities. These requirements apply to both funded and non-funded research regardless of whether the research is performed at UT Austin or other locations and regardless of whether another IRB has reviewed the protocol.

### **5.6.4 recombinant DNA**

Projects involving the use of recombinant DNA (rDNA) molecules require initial and subsequent annual review by the [DNA/Institutional Biosafety Committee \(DNA/IBC\)](#). The ORS website provides helpful information for [researchers using rDNA](#).

### 5.6.5 Radiation/Radioisotopes and Infectious Agents, Human Blood or Extreme Toxins

Researchers who are planning projects involving radiation/radioisotopes and/or infectious agents, human blood or extreme toxins should contact the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) coordinator at 232-9674 or email [ibc@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:ibc@austin.utexas.edu) with questions. See [More IBC Information](#) and [IBC Forms](#).

### 5.6.6 Controlled Substances/DEA Licensing

Items defined as controlled substances require DEA licensing of the PI who intends to use them in his/her research. UT Austin's [Environmental Health and Safety \(EHS\)](#) Web site provides instructions for applying for a DEA license.

### Template 5.6 Compliance Checklist

#### COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

(Modify to match the requirements of your funding announcement)

√	Proposal Component	Responsible Party	Status of Review
	Will recombinant DNA be used? Yes ___ No ___ If yes, submit forms or note authorization number. Protocol Number: <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/ibc/forms.html">http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/ibc/forms.html</a>	PI/Dept	
	Will animals be used? Yes ___ No ___ If yes, submit IACUC forms or note protocol number. Protocol Number: <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/iacuc/">http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/iacuc/</a>	PI/Dept	
	Will human subjects be used? Yes ___ No ___ If yes, submit paperwork for IRB review or note IRB approval number. IRB Protocol Number: <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/humansubjects/forms.html">http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/humansubjects/forms.html</a>	PI/Dept	
	Will controlled substances be used? Yes ___ No ___ If yes, submit forms for Biosafety review and apply for DEA license.	PI/Dept	

DEA License Number:  <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/safety/ehs/lab/dea_substances.html">http://www.utexas.edu/safety/ehs/lab/dea_substances.html</a>		
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### Checklist of Other Compliance Issues

√	Component of Proposal	Responsible Party	Internal Department Deadline	OSP Deadline	Agency Deadline
	<b>Conflict of Interest</b> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/coi/">www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/coi/</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/coi/coiprocedures.php">www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/coi/coiprocedures.php</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/coi/definitions.php">www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/coi/definitions.php</a>	PI/Dept			
	<b>Cost Sharing</b> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/forms/cost_sharing_proc.pdf">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/forms/cost_sharing_proc.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/forms/cost_share_recap_form.pdf">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/forms/cost_share_recap_form.pdf</a>	OSP/PI/Dept			
	<b>Export Controls</b> (OSP will determine if export control issues exist in your proposal, and will notify you if forms are needed.) <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/export_control/index.html">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/export_control/index.html</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/export_control/documents/export_control_regulations_overview.doc">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/export_control/documents/export_control_regulations_overview.doc</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/export_control/export_control_concerns.html">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/export_control/export_control_concerns.html</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/export_control/documents/technology_control_plan_template_10_29_08.doc">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/export_control/documents/technology_control_plan_template_10_29_08.doc</a>	OSP/PI/Dept			
	<b>Intellectual Property</b> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/intellectual.html">www.utexas.edu/faculty/intellectual.html</a>	OSP/PI			
	<b>Nondisclosure Agreements (NDA)</b> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/forms/universal_nda_explanation_and_toc.doc">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/forms/universal_nda_explanation_and_toc.doc</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/nda_faqs.html">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/nda_faqs.html</a>	OSP/PI/Dept			
	<b>Statement of Significant Financial Interest</b> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/policies/hoppm/h0511.html">www.utexas.edu/policies/hoppm/h0511.html</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/policies/hoppm/11.B.02.html">www.utexas.edu/policies/hoppm/11.B.02.html</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/coi/coiprocedures.php">www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/coi/coiprocedures.php</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/">www.utexas.edu/research/resources/policies/</a>	PI			

√	Component of Proposal	Responsible Party	Internal Department Deadline	OSP Deadline	Agency Deadline
	<a href="http://coi/responsibilities.php">coi/responsibilities.php</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/attach/resources/policies/ResearcherResponsibilities092508.doc">www.utexas.edu/research/attach/resources/policies/ResearcherResponsibilities092508.doc</a>				
	<b>Sub-Awards</b> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/cayuse/cayuse_update_opportunities.ppt">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/cayuse/cayuse_update_opportunities.ppt</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/staff.html">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/staff.html</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/business/vp/contracts_agreements/contract_other.html">www.utexas.edu/business/vp/contracts_agreements/contract_other.html</a> <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/research/osp/prin_policy.html">www.utexas.edu/research/osp/prin_policy.html</a> <a href="http://www.beg.utexas.edu/aec/pdf/AEC_RFP_12July08F.pdf">www.beg.utexas.edu/aec/pdf/AEC_RFP_12July08F.pdf</a>	OSP/PI/ Dept			

## 5.7 Additional Proposal Writing and Preparation Resources

- [A Proposal Writing Short Course - The Foundation Center](#)
- [Appendix VI: Developing and Writing Grant Proposals - Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance \(CFDA\)](#)
- [Annotated NIH R01 sample application](#)
- [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\) Guide for Grants and Contracts](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\): Grant Proposal Guide](#)
- [A Guide for Proposal Writing – Division of Undergraduate Education, National Science Foundation](#)
- [NSF Funding - How to Prepare Your Proposal](#)
- [Non-Profit Guides: Grant writing tools for non-profit organizations](#) Extensive information on grant writing for non-profit organizations, including an explanation of private and public grants, how to understand the RFP, components of private and public grants, sample RFPs and full proposals.

## 5.8 Proposal Preparation Timelines

ACTION	WEEK											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Get idea and develop research plan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Look for funding	X	X	X	X								
Download RFP and Sponsor Guidelines/Instructions		X	X	X	X							
Read RFP and Guidelines/Instructions; create checklists		X	X	X	X							

Contact sponsor for clarification of guidelines. This can occur at any time during the process in order to ensure that the application and the research plan are developed according to sponsor needs.					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Create PRF in RMS					X	X							
Create proposal in CAYUSE424™, FastLane, or sponsor required format. Update proposal as you obtain information and materials					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Send requests for letters of support and/or assurance			X	X	X								
Identify key personnel. Request CVs and biosketches and format			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Follow-up on requests for letters of support; certifications; biosketches; CVs, etc.								X	X	X	X		
Receive Word doc from PI for formatting										X			
Format according to sponsor guidelines										X	X		
PI final review											X		
Complete PRF and Upload documents to RMS											X	X	
Submit to OSP for Review by OSP deadline											X	X	
Respond to requests from OSP											X	X	
Proposal is submitted to sponsor													X

## **Section 6: Cost Principles and Budget Preparation Activities**

### **6.1 Overview of Cost Principles**

As a recipient of federal grant dollars, UT Austin is required to comply with the terms and conditions of the awards, as well as with any applicable federal laws, regulations, and cost principles. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issues a set of federal cost principles called Circular A-21 "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions" (05/10/2004) for determining costs applicable to grants, contracts, cooperative and other agreements with educational institutions and which are designed to provide that the Federal Government bear its fair share of total costs, determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, except where restricted or prohibited by law. Thus, determining whether or not a cost incurred by institutions of higher education is allowed to be reimbursed by federal awards (i.e., allowability) is determined in accordance with the provisions of [OMB Circular A-21](#).

In addition, [OMB Circular A-110](#), "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-Profit Organizations" (11/19/1993) (further amended 09/30/1999, [Relocated to 2 CFR, Part 215](#) (32 pages, 243 kb)) sets forth standards for obtaining consistency and uniformity among Federal agencies in the administration of grants to and agreements with institutions of higher education (i.e., the process of documenting and assigning/allocating costs).

You will probably find it very useful to review these applicable OMB Cost Principles circulars for more complete information and further guidance on allowable and allocable costs for grant awards and related sub-awards. These are available electronically on the [OMB Circulars Web site](#).

### **6.2 Allowable Costs vs. Allocable Costs**

#### **6.2.1 Allowable Costs**

All costs charged to grants awarded by federal sponsors must be allowable costs. In general, for a cost to be allowable under a grant award, the cost must be: (1) directly related to and necessary to carry out the approved activities, (2) reasonable, (3) allocable to sponsored agreements under the principles and methods provided in OMB Circulars, i.e., costs must be given consistent treatment through the application of those generally accepted accounting principles appropriate to the circumstances, and (4) not specifically disallowed by the State or local laws or regulations i.e., they must conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth in these principles or in the sponsored agreement as to types or amounts of cost items.

Examples of allowable costs for awards (and subawards) include, but are not limited to: salaries and wages, fringe benefits, consultant fees, travel costs, equipment, supplies and materials, and Facilities & Administrative costs (i.e., indirect costs).

Allowable costs are defined and discussed in full in [OMB Circular A-21](#). It is the definitive document regarding allowable costs.

Departmental Research Administrators (DRAs) should familiarize themselves with the limits on allowable costs for grant funds, and should be aware of the explicit restrictions set out in the OMB Circulars. You should also make sub-grant recipients aware of the limitations on allowable costs for grant funds.

### **6.2.2 Allocable Costs**

Allocation refers to the process of assigning a cost, or a group of costs, to one or more cost objectives in a manner that can be equitably distributed based on the relative benefits received. In this case, a cost objective is the sponsored agreement, contract grant or other activity for which cost data (the cost of processes, products, jobs, capitalized projects, etc.) is needed.

Costs are allocable to a particular federal award if the goods or services involved are necessary and reasonable to advance the work, if they conform to any limitations or exclusion in the award, i.e., (are allowable), and if they are given consistent treatment through the application of generally accepted accounting principles appropriate to the circumstances.

Allocable costs are defined and discussed in full in [OMB Circular A-110](#). It is the definitive document regarding allocable costs.

## **6.3 Direct Costs vs. Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs**

### **6.3.1 Direct Costs**

Budget items such as salaries and wages, fringe benefits, consultant fees, travel costs, equipment, supplies and materials and other that are directly related to and necessary to carry out the approved research activities are called direct costs. Usually these types of direct costs are allowable and allocable under [and OMB Circular A-21](#) and [OMB Circular A-110](#).

### **6.3.2 F&A Costs, or Indirect Costs**

Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs are sometimes called indirect costs (IDC) or overhead costs and refer to those costs incurred by the university in support of the project that are not easily allocable as direct costs. These costs are usually associated with facility operation and maintenance, utilities and building and equipment depreciation, etc. and most sponsors recognize that universities incur these costs in addition to those direct costs that are directly allocable and included in a project's budget. F&A costs that are reasonable, can be equitably distributed based on the relative benefits received, i.e., allocable, and not prohibited by law or regulation are allowable under OMB Circular A-21.

The portion of F&A costs identified with organized research is distributed (allocated) by applying a negotiated F&A cost rate(s) to most budget items. This process allows the university to recover some portion of the costs associated with conducting research activities.

F&A cost rates are negotiated between the University and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and are reviewed periodically and outlined in a legally binding agreement. The agreement is institution-specific, breaks down the research related components and the applicable rate(s), and describes how special items are to be treated i.e. fringe benefits. The agreement also specifies the F&A rate to be applied when the PI or other research staff conducts their research away from the main campus for a specified period of time, i.e., off campus. For example, off campus F&A rates are applicable when research is conducted off campus for a period of no less than one long semester or all three summer months. Costs which are incurred in the field generally qualify for the off campus F&A rate. It is not uncommon for a proposed budget to include both on and off campus budget items. **Please note: There are very few direct budget categories which are exempt from the application of F&A costs.** The current federally negotiated [F&A rate agreement for UT Austin](#) is dated August 15, 2008 and applies to the period 9/1/08 - 8/31/10, until otherwise amended.

### 6.3.3 Reduced or Waived F&A Cost Rates

Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs are real costs and must be included in your budget using [UT Austin's federally-negotiated rates](#) and will only be waived or reduced in rare and justified situations and dependent upon the sponsor type. In general the following guidelines exist:

- Sponsors that are for-profit entities, or are from industry must bear the full cost of conducting the research which includes all applicable F&A costs at the negotiated rate.
- A research project funded by a state agency with "federal pass-through funds" that does not limit the cost of F&A recovery, should apply the full negotiated rate. (OMB [Circular A-133](#), "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations" defines a pass-through entity as a non-federal entity that provides a federal award to a sub recipient to carry out a federal program.)
- The University applies an F&A rate of 25% of Total Direct Costs for clinical research trials.
- Projects that are funded by state or local government agencies and do not include any federal funds, an F&A rate of 15% should apply, unless otherwise allowed.
- When limitations on the recovery of indirect costs are imposed by a not-for-profit entity by statute in their guidelines, the University will generally accept those restrictions. If this is the case, include a copy of the sponsor guidelines expressing the policy which limits the recovery of full facilities and administrative costs with your proposal.

Waivers or reduction of F&A rates beyond those outlined above are subject to administrative approval and must be requested by writing to the Director of the Office of Sponsored Projects. For more information contact the Office of Sponsored Projects, (512) 471-6424.

For additional information, see [OSP's F&A rate memo](#). Since these federally-negotiated F&A cost rates are subject to change periodically, PIs should be prepared to make adjustments in their budgets. See the [OSP Handbook](#) for more information.

## 6.4 Cost Sharing

Some sponsors require UT Austin to provide matching funds (or cost-sharing) as a condition of obtaining an award. Cost sharing can be a cash contribution or a donation of in-kind services, such as contributed time and effort by the PI and research group members. Sometimes UT Austin decides to make a voluntary cost sharing commitment.

The university's policy is to provide cost sharing only when required by sponsor agency guidelines or delineated in specific program announcements or when necessary due to the competitive nature of the RFP. These types of commitments should be held to a minimum as they have a significant financial impact on the department providing the funds and on the university as a whole.

All matching funds or cost sharing commitments based on the faculty member's academic **time and effort must be approved in advance by the faculty member's department chair and dean when the cumulative total of such commitments exceeds the percentage of the faculty member's academic year time allowed by the College as a research allocation.** If the commitment **does not** exceed a faculty member's research allocation, then only the Principal Investigator's signature is required on the Cost Sharing Recap Form.

Federal regulations require that cost sharing be allocable to a specific project and that it be verifiable, therefore, OSP collects and tracks data pertaining to grant-related cost sharing. The amount of cost sharing must be documented on the [Cost Sharing Recap Form](#) which should be attached to the proposal application. Go here for additional information from OSP on [cost sharing](#).

## 6.5 Budget Types: Detailed vs. Modular

Some sponsors require PIs to submit detailed budget category information with their proposal applications to assure that adequate resources are being requested for the proposed research activity.

Other sponsors, most notably NIH, do not require as much budget detail at the time a proposal is submitted and allow the use of a "modular" budget for some proposals. Modular budgets simplify the budget request by requiring less information than standard budgets and by allowing a PI to request funds in \$25,000 modules. The PI determines the

number of modules that will be needed to fund the project each year, and then totals the number of modules to determine the project budget. Modular budgets are used when requesting \$250,000 or less during each year of the proposed study.

The information in the NIH SF424 (R&R) Application Guide provides a good explanation of budget category items, and is recommended reading regardless of the sponsor to which you will be submitting your proposal. To determine which budget component (detailed or modular) to use for NIH and other government proposal applications, read and consult the specific funding opportunity announcement because in general, budget formats will be provided in the RFP. If you are submitting an application to a private foundation, check the Website or talk to a program officer to discuss budget requirements.

**Although OSP or the sponsor may not require a detailed budget in your proposal application, many researchers find it useful to first create a detailed budget on which they base their proposal application's modular budget.**

[Template 6.5](#) is a sample of a departmental budget worksheet that can be adapted and used to guide you in creating your budget detail spreadsheet. If you use the sample provided, modify it to suit your specific needs by adjusting the formulas in the worksheet to accurately calculate your totals. Create a budget for each year of the proposed project and add the annual totals to calculate the budget for the entire project.

For information on selecting the appropriate budget component and a detailed budget format, see the [NIH Application Guide SF424 \(R&R\) – Adobe Forms Version A, Part I, Section 4.6-4.7.](#)

For information on selecting the appropriate budget component and a modular budget format, see the [NIH Application Guide SF424 \(R&R\) – Adobe Forms Version A, Part I, Section 5.4.](#) More information can be found [NIH modular grant application formats.](#)

See [Part II. C.2.g for NSF Budget information.](#)

## Section 7: Estimating Budget Categories

Preparing a budget that accurately reflects the costs of completing the proposed research is very important. In the 2007 version of *The Grant Application Writer's Workbook: Successful Proposals to Any Agency*, David C. Morrison and Stephen W. Russell state:

“You must remember that you can very quickly lose credibility by asking for either too much or too little, and that once any figure becomes suspect, all your budgetary line items will be scrutinized more closely. What you will be striving for is a budget that is so well justified that your reviewers will readily accept it.”

You can assist your PI's efforts in developing a credible budget and budget justification by assessing the project needs, understanding budget (or cost) categories and by preparing the budget and justification in accordance with sponsor guidelines. Generally, sponsors want a justification for direct costs such as salaries, wages, fringe benefits, capital equipment, consultants, subcontracts, publications, and all other expenses mentioned in the research plan.

Remember, some budget categories are exempt from F&A costs. For example, capital equipment, graduate student tuition and required fees, stipends, and a few other items can not be included in the calculation of F&A costs (indirect). Understanding the complexity and the importance of accuracy in estimating the budget will be extremely helpful to your PI and can streamline this part of the proposal application process.

You will need to be able to access salary and other budgetary information quickly in order to complete your proposal budgets. If you have \*DEFINE and UT Austin Pay Plan access, you will be able to access salary figures for each employee yourself. If your department restricts \*DEFINE access and UT Austin Pay Plan access so that you do not have authorization to use this system, work with your department or college to determine a process that will allow you to get this information promptly when you need it. Remember, you will be working with a looming deadline, so be sure to have some redundancy built into your process for getting financial information, i.e., more than one contact to provide this information.

- [\\*DEFINE Information](#)
- [UT Austin Job Code and Pay Plan](#)
- Other budget related resources: your FOA guidelines, [OMB Circular A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions](#) and [OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations](#).

## 7.1 Calculating Direct Costs

### 7.1.1 Salaries and Wages

Include salary estimates based on the amount of effort committed to the project and on the actual salary figures for your PI and other personnel mentioned in the proposal. If personnel are included in the budget on a “to be determined” basis, (not actually employed at the university when the proposal is submitted), be sure they are included and justified in the research plan, and use accurate salary information based on the titles in the UT Austin Pay Plan. Read the RFP to determine the percentage allowed for salary increases from year to year. This is usually 2% to 4%, but you must verify this figure for each proposal being submitted.

To calculate total salaries and wages, list the amount of time to be spent by each person who will be working on the project. Time should normally be shown in terms of person-months and/or as a percent of Full-Time Effort (FTE) and be broken out for faculty as summer and academic year, or in calendar year months.

Some funding agencies require that salary information be calculated in the form of “person months,” which is the actual number of months an individual will be involved in a project. For more information visit the [NIH Person Months FAQs](#).

Because not all of the proposals submitted by a PI are likely to be funded at the same time, effort commitments in excess of 100% may be allowed at submission. However, at the time of award, the PI should verify that the amount of his effort committed in the proposal is actually available for the project, considering all other assigned responsibilities including research, teaching and service.

No employee may commit effort exceeding 100% in any given month. And, sponsored activities may not result in any employees receiving compensation at a rate in excess of their authorized salary or academic rate. For multi-year projects, the budget should take into consideration any possible salary increases.

OMB Circular A-21 restricts the charging of secretarial and other clerical support to federal grants and cooperative agreements, EXCEPT when justified for large centers where such support can be directly allocable to the project. In those instances when clerical and administrative support is included, the PI must justify the need for administrative support to perform the project, and it is the Investigator's judgment that this is the best way to spend the funds. For more information, see the [OSP Handbook](#) and [UT Austin's Administrative Costs Policy](#).

### 7.1.2 Salary Caps

Federal agencies may impose limits on the amount of salary an individual can receive under a grant, i.e., “salary cap”. Check your agencies guidelines to make sure that you are not restricted by a salary cap. For NIH specifically, the amount of the cap is adjusted

annually. [NIH Salary cap information](#) For more information please contact [Tania Tost](#) in OSP- Sponsored Projects Award Administration (SPAA).

### **7.1.3 Student Salary Ranges**

[Salary ranges for students](#) are set by UT Austin's Human Resources (HR) department.

### **7.1.4 Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) Salary Rates**

Regardless of the salary range posted by UT Austin Human Resources for students, College Deans have the authority to set GRA annual salary rates within the minimum and maximum rates posted by the Office of Human Resources. The ranges differ from college to college. Contact your Dean's Office to get the annual rate your college has set for graduate research assistants.

### **7.1.5 Fellowship Stipends**

[OMB Circular A-21](#), section J.45 states "Costs of scholarships, fellowships, and other programs of student aid are allowable only when the purpose of the sponsored agreement is to provide training to selected participants and the charge is approved by the sponsoring agency." Fellowships are normally paid as stipends (not salaries) but sponsor's may allot a separate and limited amount for salary and fringe benefits. Check the solicitation, or award, or the sponsoring agency's Web site and be sure you understand what other costs, if any, in addition to the stipend are allowable in your proposal budget.

### **7.1.6 Tuition Remission**

Tuition remission refers to a departmental (or other source) payment of all (or a portion) of a student's fee bill. The student does not receive any funds directly, but provides services in exchange for the award. Unless limitations are imposed by the sponsor, UT-Austin [tuition remission policy](#) requires the amount to be included in all sponsored project proposal application budgets.

Tuition remission amounts budgeted for federal grant accounts are subject to institutional policy and to the provisions outlined in [OMB Circular A-21](#). After allowability has been established, a Project Director may authorize tuition remission for a student for work performed that benefits a research project provided that the following conditions exist: 1. The student is performing research services that are necessary for the completion of the project being funded, (Clerical staff services do not qualify as allowable charges.) and 2. The total amount of compensation, including tuition, paid to or for the student is reasonable for the services performed.

Although tuition is exempt from F&A costs, per UT-Austin tuition remission policy, sponsored research projects which involve paid graduate students in their budgets must include tuition remission and allowable fees for these graduate students.

As a DRA, be sure to check UT-Austin tuition rates for students at the beginning of every semester, as rates tend to increase on an annual basis. Tuition information is available from the [Office of Accounting](#).

**Please Note:** Scholarship payments are not allowable expenditures on most federal research projects because the purpose of the award is research, not instruction. Tuition remission is not a scholarship. Tuition remission awards on federal grants are treated as student wages for IRS tax purposes.

### 7.1.7 Fringe Benefits

From the [OSP Handbook, Preparing the Budget](#) “Fringe benefits are considered to be a direct cost to a sponsored project. Grant or contract awards are responsible for the applicable fringe benefits incurred by each employee. Fringe benefits costs should be estimated based on historical data. Actual costs for fringe benefits are charged (billed) to the sponsored project at the time the cost is incurred, and is based on salary, the selected benefits package and other variables applicable to the individual employee”.

Fringe benefits are difficult to estimate, and will vary depending on the position title and insurance packages of each employee. See the fringe benefit section of the [OSP memo on Facilities and Administrative Cost Rates, 2008](#) for guidance in calculating fringe rates using the suggested range of 25-35%. If a professor or research scientist plans to charge his/her summer salary to a grant, it is better to calculate fringes at a higher rate. The fringe benefit rates for these titles can exceed 34%.

**NOTE: A sponsor will only pay fringe benefits for an employee—not an employee and his or her family.**

Fringe benefit rate information can be found at [UT Austin Payroll](#) if you scroll down the page to “Payment Processing Information” and open the PDF document that lists fringe benefit rates for the current fiscal year.

### 7.1.8 Consultants

Consultants are individuals or companies who provide services related to the proposed research. If payment is to be made to a consultant on your project, be sure to include funds for consultants in the budget. Consultant fees are subject to F&A costs, and proposal applications require letters of commitment.

Normally, consultants are paid a consulting fee plus travel expenses. Some sponsors do not permit any payments to consultants, and some sponsors restrict or limit daily rates. If in doubt as to the allowability of consultants or the rates paid to consultants, refer to the sponsor's program literature or contact OSP. Whenever possible, identify the proposed consultant by name, indicate the number of days of work, daily rate, and provide the curriculum vitae or resume for the consultant in the proposal application. The participation of paid consultants in a sponsored project for periods longer than two weeks

should be discussed with OSP prior to submission of the proposal application for review. UT Austin employees may be used as consultants on a project if the consultant is from a different department than the PI. Institutional policies related to consulting are contained in [Section 3.19 of the Handbook of Operating Procedures and Policy Memorandum 7.205](#), and the [OSP Handbook](#).

### **7.1.9 Non-Expendable Equipment (Capital and/or Fabricated)**

Capital equipment refers to an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per item. It is important to get several vendor quotes if purchasing equipment costing \$5,000 or more per item. In general, capital equipment is not subject to (i.e., is exempt from) F&A cost recovery (from the [OSP Handbook](#)).

Capital equipment built for a research project which uses on-campus machine-shop labor is referred to as fabricated equipment. Fabricated equipment must be described in the statement of work and the components used to fabricate the item, other than the on-campus machine-shop labor, may also be considered as capital equipment for budgeting purposes. Capital equipment should also be identified for inventory purposes. For more information on inventory control please see the [Handbook of Business Procedures, Part 16. Inventory Control and Property Management](#).

**Please note: The on-campus machine-shop labor component of fabricated equipment is subject to facilities and administrative costs.** And, a separate subaccount is required for each capital equipment item being fabricated.

See also [NIH Equipment FAQs](#).

### **7.1.10 Expendable Equipment and Supplies**

Normally, a research project will consume expendable supplies such as laboratory items, teaching aids, computer software, and office supplies necessary to conduct the day-to-day operation of the project. These items generally cost less than \$5000 per unit and reasonable care should be taken to budget appropriately for these items. Faculty who anticipate the use of a particularly large number of research animals or animals requiring special care should consult with the [Animal Resources Center](#) staff to see whether the funds estimated in the budget will be adequate and whether the Animal Resource Center has adequate facilities to accommodate the animals (from the [OSP Handbook](#)).

UT Austin has many on-campus resources where supplies can be purchased, as well as some facilities that provide access to specialized equipment. Charges for these (recharge or service center) services are billed on a unit or hourly basis, i.e., a pre-determined method to calculate the cost of use. Some facilities provide supplies and service to the colleges, schools, and departments where they reside, and others provide service to the entire university community. Check the Web sites or call the facility for pricing

information. The list below is by no means inclusive of all the UT Austin facilities available in various colleges.

- [Animal Resource Center Rates](#)
- [Copy Centers](#)
- [The Division of Instructional Innovation and Assessment \(DIIA\)/DIAA Instructional Technologies](#)
- [Imaging Research Center](#)
- [Information Technology Services \(ITS\) Software and Hardware](#)
- [Institute for Cellular and Molecular Biology \(ICMB\) Core Facilities](#)
- [Printing Services](#)
- [Texas Advanced Computing Center \(TACC\) Resources](#)

### **7.1.11 Publication Costs**

If the sponsor will pay for publication costs, you may include this item. Use good judgment. For example, do not include publication costs in year one of the project because your PI will not have data to publish during the start up phase. Get price estimates from publishers your PI recommends for any publishing which might result from the projects. “Page charges may vary from journal to journal. Consider both page charges and reprint costs” ([OSP Handbook](#)).

See also [UT Press](#).

### **7.1.12 Travel**

Provide cost estimates for all domestic and foreign travel that is mentioned in the proposal application. If foreign travel is anticipated it must be specified. “Travel costs expected to exceed institutional guidelines must be specified. Federal funds cannot be used to make trips to secure new or additional research support or funds” (from the [OSP Handbook](#)).

- [Travel Management Services](#)
- Current procedures in the [Handbook of Operating Procedures](#):
- Out-of-state rates are located in the GG1 command of \*DEFINE.

### **7.1.13 Computer Time**

“Computer time costs should be included as a budget item, if appropriate. If non-sponsor funded computer time is needed, arrangements must be made in advance with your academic department or research unit. F&A costs apply to all types of computer time, and to all computer supply budgets” (from the [OSP Handbook](#)).

### 7.1.14 Subagreement Budgets

**This section is still in development so check back.** For immediate assistance regarding subagreements, please contact [OSP](#).

Suggested References:

- See [Section 3705 “Subawards”](#) in “Sponsored Research Administration: A Guide to Effective Strategies and Research Practices” by Robert A Killoren, Jr., 2006, published by AIS and NCURA. This document provides a very comprehensive and useful description of subawards.
- [OSP Handbook](#)

### 7.1.15 Direct Costs: Other

“Consider, as appropriate, costs for copying, long-distance telephone calls, postage, reference books and materials, tuition and required fees for participating graduate students, equipment maintenance, and contracted services directly allocable to the project. Revisions to OMB Circular A-21 relevant to office supplies, postage, local telephone costs, and memberships indicate: The PI needs to justify the need for these items in relation to the project, and it is the PI's judgment that this is the best way to spend the funds.” (from the [OSP Handbook](#)).

## 7.2 Estimating F&A Costs for your Project

Step One:

- Identify budget items with direct costs (Are they allowable and allocable?)
- Identify the applicable F&A rate(s) for your project, (On or off campus rates, clinical trial, full negotiated rate or sponsor requires something less than full?)
- Identify the budget items and their costs which are exempt from F&A recovery

Step Two:

If the full F&A rate is applicable to your project, calculate the F&A costs by doing the following:

- a) Calculate the Total Direct Costs (TDC) (The total cost of salaries and wages, office supplies, some equipment, etc.)
- b) Subtract the total cost of the F&A exempt items from the TDC. (Remember: some budget items which are allowable/allocable as direct costs can be exempt from F&A cost recovery, i.e. capital equipment, graduate student tuition and required fees, stipends, and subcontract/subrecipient agreement costs in excess of the first \$25,000 of each subcontract/subrecipient agreement (over the life of the subcontract/subrecipient agreement).
- The result is the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC).

- c) Multiply the MTDC base by the applicable F&A rate. The result is the F&A costs of the project.
- d) Add the TDC + F&A costs. The result is the Total Project Costs.

When a sponsor limits the recovery of F&A costs, the basis for calculating the F&A costs is Total Direct Costs, unless otherwise specified. See the [OSP memo on F&A Rate Agreement](#) for more information.

### **7.3 Other Budget Preparation Resources**

- [NIH Allowability of Costs](#)
- [NIH Proposal Preparation Page](#)
- [NSF Allowability of Costs](#)
- [NSF Special Requirements for NSF Budget Preparation](#)

## **Section 8: Proposal Application and Routing and Submission**

### **8.1 The Proposal Review Form (PRF)**

To start on the path of submitting an application to a sponsor, you should create the Proposal Review Form (PRF) in the Research Management System (RMS) which alerts OSP of your PI's intent to submit a proposal application. The PRF collects a set of federally mandated and descriptive information about the PI's research project and is required by OSP. **Even if you have to prepare a hard copy of the proposal application according to the sponsor instructions, OSP requires submission of the PRF electronically through RMS.**

Once the PRF (and any PDF, text or Adobe attachments) is submitted to OSP, the PI and Departmental Administrator are "locked out" of it. But if you need to work on the proposal or need to upload information (budgets, supporting documentation) in the RMS system, just request "return access" of the proposal from OSP in the "Remarks" section of the PRF. Once you have finished uploading documents and are ready to submit the proposal to OSP for review, click the submit button. Your PRF is forwarded to OSP letting them know that the proposal is ready for review.

### **8.2 OSP Submission Deadlines for Proposal Applications**

Please allow at least four business days for OSP to review the proposal application prior to the sponsor's submission deadline. In the case of busy submission times, OSP may set an early internal deadline to handle the high volume of proposal applications anticipated. These early deadlines will be posted as a Spotlight on the [OSP](#) Web page, and announced in the Research Administrator Network (RAN) listserv, and in the Research Alert.

If your PI submits a proposal application at the last minute, OSP personnel may not have sufficient time to conduct a thorough review. OSP staff will make every effort to submit the proposal application to the sponsor by their deadline, however, in these cases, it will be designated as a "limited review." Submitting a proposal application late will not circumvent a full review by OSP proposal specialists. After submission to the sponsor occurs, OSP will conduct a thorough review of the proposal application and reserves the right to withdraw it from consideration by the sponsor, if necessary.

**Please note: When the sponsor decides to award funding, OSP staff will review the terms and conditions of the award again and reserves the right to reject an award for a non-compliance with federal, state, and university requirements.**

### **8.3 What to Expect After Submission to OSP**

When the proposal application has been submitted to OSP, the assigned proposal specialist will review it for completeness and accuracy. (S)he may contact you or the PI about any missing information or necessary clarifications, budget adjustments, or any other questions that come up during the proposal review process. When the review is

completed and approved, the UT Austin authorized official will submit it to the sponsor agency.

## **8.4 What to Expect After Submission to the Sponsor**

If your PI is fortunate (s)he is notified that the proposed research project has been awarded funding by the sponsor. The PI (and OSP) will receive a notice of grant award (NGA) confirming the terms and conditions and the approved budgeted amount for the research project. Depending upon the source of the funding and the specific legal obligations contained in the terms and conditions, it may be necessary for significant issues to be negotiated and resolved prior to OSP signing off and accepting the award on behalf of the university and prior to the PI being able to spend the funds.

When a research project has been awarded funds by a sponsor, the post-award administrative process begins. This process involves a review of the award document by OSP staff, negotiation of the terms and conditions associated with accepting the funds, establishing accounts, spending the funds in accordance with federal regulations, and tracking, monitoring and reporting on project progress and financial expenditures. More information regarding the post administrative phase is in development and should be available soon.