Working with your Research Administration Office to Develop your Budget

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Simplified Proposal Process

1. Positioning
2. Concept
3. Budget
4. Outline & Graphics
5. Complete Draft
6. Final Draft
7. Submission

Roles:
- Research Admin
- Team
- Research Admin
Simplified Proposal Process

- Solicitation Released
- Budget
- Outline & Graphics
- Complete Draft
- Final Draft
- Submission

Positioning

Concept

Research Admin

Team

Research Admin
Let funding level determine the scope of your proposal from the very beginning. Adjust your concept to match the available funding before moving forward.
A Hypothetical Project Concept

Variable 1

Variable 2

Variable 3

Variable 4

Population

Social Model

Intervention

Modifications

Concept

Principal Investigator
Estimated Budget

Major Items
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Social Scientist
- Computer Scientist
- Curriculum Dev Expert
- Multimedia Design Expert
- Project Coordinator
- 4 Graduate Students
- $400K a year
Adjusted Concept

Major Items
Surveys
Interviews
Social Scientist
Computer Scientist
Curriculum Dev Expert
Multimedia Design Expert
Project Coordinator
2 Graduate Students
$300K a year
Adjusted Concept

Major Items

- Surveys
- Interviews
- Social Scientist
- Computer Scientist
- Curriculum Dev Expert
- Multimedia Design Expert
- Project Coordinator
- 2 Graduate Students
- $250K a year

A Hypothetical Project Concept

- Social Model
- Variable 1
- Variable 2
- Variable 3
- Variable 4
- GA
- Computer Scientist
- Multimedia Design Expert
- Project Coordinator

Population
If Cost Share Required*

• Is personnel time allowed for cost share?
• Is use of existing equipment/facilities allowed?
• If not, develop an effective pitch highlighting
  – Significance of the effort
  – Contribution to groups, institutions, regions, nation
  – Provide evidence (data, letters, etc.)

*NSF almost never requires cost share, except for Major Research Instrumentation program. Normally NSF prohibits voluntary cost share.
If Cost Share Required

• Obtain buy-in/support from
  – Peer researchers, department heads, stakeholders, etc.

• Explore possible support from private sources/foundations

• Discuss your plans with your Associate Dean for Research
Proposal Preparation and Submission

Proposals have 3 general areas:

• **Technical section** – your expertise
• **Management section** – answers questions regarding who will do the work, does the university have suitable facilities, are protocols to conduct the work in place, is there a need for Subcontractors, etc.
• **Cost section** – who will pay for what, are the costs reasonable and allocable
Successful Proposal Submissions

• Begin the process early
• Have all bases covered from the start
• Have regular communication with all parties
• Submit the proposal well before deadline
Sponsored Award Costs

There are two ways to charge expenses to a sponsored award:

• Direct costs
• Indirect costs
Direct Costs

OMB Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR 200, definition of Direct Costs:

“Those costs that can be specifically identified to the cost objective with relative ease and a high degree of accuracy.”
Examples of Direct Costs

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Non-office supplies
- Subcontracts
- Project-related travel
Facility & Administrative (F&A) Costs (also called overhead or indirect costs)

OMB Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR 200, definition of F&A:

“Costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore, cannot be identified readily and specifically with a particular sponsored project, an instructional activity, or any other institutional activity.”
Examples of F&A/Indirect Costs

• Operation and maintenance of buildings
• Advertisement costs
• Administrative office supplies
Your NSF Budget

• Adhere to solicitation minimum/maximum
• Make sure expenses are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary for the scope of the project per 2 CFR 200
• Ensure no unallowable expenses per the solicitation i.e. no capitalized equipment OR that required expenses are included i.e. conference travel
Your NSF Budget

• Senior personnel salary cannot be more than 2 months in any one year
• Make sure fringe rates and F&A rates are current
• Ensure expenses are based on actual quotes, past purchases, or per diem
• Budget justification no more than 5 pages
Do’s & Don’ts

Dos

• Communicate early and often with your Grants Office – several months before the deadline
  – Heed internal deadlines for final documents
• Read the solicitation
  – Make sure you and your institution are eligible
  – Letter of intent or pre-proposal required?
  – Limited submission?
Do’s & Don’ts

– Review budget min/max and allowable costs
– Is cost share/matching required? (Almost never and voluntary C/S is prohibited)
– Required documents and their page limits

• Be familiar with the Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) – it covers formatting, page limits, what’s allowable or required for each document, collaboration info, etc.
Do’s & Don’ts

- Don’t Procrastinate:
  - Start 3-4 months in advance of the deadline
- Don’t Give Up!
Questions?