Welcome Faculty!

Northern Illinois University
Office of Sponsored Projects
Today’s workshop agenda

• Introductions
• Find Funding
• Proposal Development
• Proposal Submission
• Budgeting
• Contracts
• Receiving awards
• Wrap-up
NSF awards $2 million grant to NIU to encourage students to study science, technology, engineering and math

Northern Illinois University Scientists Find Simple Way to Produce Graphene
Division of Research and Graduate Studies

The Division of Research & Graduate Studies promotes faculty, staff and student success by facilitating and celebrating innovative research, scholarship, and creative activities. The Division strives to expand research and economic development, integrate research with instruction and public service, and foster cross-disciplinary collaboration.

- A1 Program
- Faculty Travel Support
- Advanced Research Methodology Services
- Research and Artistry Internal Grant Programs
- PI Academy

http://www.niu.edu/divresearch/researchresources/index.shtml
The mission of the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) is to assist University faculty, graduate students and staff in obtaining external funding for their research, creative artistry, instructional and public service projects, through the media of fellowships, grants, and contracts.
Office of Sponsored Projects

A central university administrative unit within the Division of Research and Graduate Studies, the Office of Sponsored Projects fulfills its mission by working proactively with faculty and staff to develop their external funding interests, identifying appropriate funding opportunities, and providing assistance with all of the elements of proposal development and submission and acceptance for fellowships, grants, and contracts. Where appropriate, OSP also implements University policies pertaining to grant and contract-related research activities.
Our Pre-Award Team

- **Proposal Support Team**
  - Andrea Buford, Sr. Research Development Specialist
  - Kellie Dyslin, Assistant Director: Proposal Support
  - Regina Jahn, Research Development Specialist
  - Donna Martin, Sr. Research Development Specialist
  - Qiang Mei, Research Development Specialist

- **Contracts and Industry**
  - Kristin Duffy, Contracts and Industry Relations Coordinator

- **Award Coordination**
  - Rachael Andel, Award Coordinator
Shared Responsibility

**Investigator’s Responsibility**

- Provide OSP with reasonable notification of a proposal; at least 3 weeks prior to deadline
- Be available & responsive during proposal development
- Read our email messages & return our calls in a timely manner
- Read the guidelines
- Review your proposal prior to submission

**Our Responsibility**

- Provide as much support for your proposal as you ask for
- Be available & responsive during proposal development
- Read your email messages & return your calls in a timely manner
- Tend to your proposal well in advance of the deadline
- Review your proposal to make sure requirements are met
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsored Project</th>
<th>Gift/Donation</th>
<th>Private Consulting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Uses University resources and advances Institutional mission</td>
<td>• Uses University resources and advances Institutional mission</td>
<td>• Rarely uses University resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formal reporting requirements (including financial) or expectation for deliverables</td>
<td>• Minimal reporting requirements, if any at all</td>
<td>• Consulting related to individuals area of expertise and consistent with University mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May be competitively sought and awarded through a peer review process</td>
<td>• No expectation for intellectual property rights</td>
<td>• Prior Approval from home unit and Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intellectual property expectations</td>
<td>• Managed through NIU Foundation or NIU Research Foundation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Managed through Office of Sponsored Projects and Grants Fiscal Administration</td>
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</table>
You’ve answered these questions:

• What is the body of work for which I want to be known?
• What is the next available question in the discipline that is appropriately mine to answer?

We turn now to the burning question.......
Who is going to pay for it?

- Lead with the research, not the call for proposals.
- There is *always* another sponsor.
- The process now becomes very discipline-specific. Talk to your RDS. A lot.
Types of Funding

- Federal
- State
- Corporate Foundations
- Industry Associations
- Charitable and Community Foundations
- Research Institutes
- Professional Associations & Societies
First-Time Principal Investigators

• **Internal, NIU funding**
  – If you still need preliminary data, or proof of concept
  – If you work in an area where external sponsorship is scarce
  – If you need experience managing and administering a grant
Internal Funding

• Research and Artistry Grants
• Great Journeys

– Another way the Division of Research and Graduate Studies supports faculty research
– Links are in your workshop materials
Foundations

• Private foundations support social, educational, religious, or other charitable activities through grant-making
• The donor defines the mission and the program of the foundation. It can be quite specific and targeted.
Corporate Foundations

Corporate foundations, created by businesses and corporations, are separate legal entities that maintain close ties with the parent company. Their giving usually reflects company interests.
Community Foundations

• Committed to local, public benefit
• Established for philanthropic purposes
• Typically fund “things” rather than “ideas”
• Like to fully meet a local need
Faculty with a gap in research

• Is it a gap in research or a gap in research funding?
  – In the first case, your funding trajectory will look more like an early investigator’s path.
  – In the second case, a strong publication record might open some other doors.
  – Talk to your RDS. Mentors and collaborators may also provide advice.
Funding Databases

Donna Martin
Research Development Specialist
OSP Resources - Website

http://www.osp.niu.edu/osp/

• Newsletter
• Grants.gov RSS feeds on homepage
  – browse by category (i.e. Education), or
  – browse by agency (such as Department of Education)
OSP website

For instructions to use the databases, see the OSP website [www.niu.edu/osp](http://www.niu.edu/osp)

Finding Funding

Core Databases

You can select database by type of sponsor or type of project.

The website includes hints on using the filters on each database site for optimum results.
Finding Funding

Find funding by type of sponsor

In this section, we describe how to use the Core Databases to locate funding for the following sources:

- Federal agencies
- State of Illinois agencies
- Foundations

Find funding by type of project

In this section, we describe how to use the Core Databases to locate funding according to the type of project for which you are seeking funding. While we describe the following, as you use the databases, you will discover additional types of project funding available.

- Early Career Investigator
- Research Projects
- Exploratory/High Risk projects
- Equipment
- Instruction
- Public Service and Engagement activities
- Travel Grants
- Collaborative Activities
- Conference proposals
- SBIR/STTR
- International Projects
Grant Forward email Alert Service

• Once you create a User Account, you can save your search or create an alert for this search and receive email announcements of opportunities for your designated interests.

• You select your preferred search frequency (weekly, monthly) and categories.

• The program runs the search profile against the database and delivers the search results automatically via e-mail or the Web.
Grant Forward Email

- You can save multiple searches. One user account, one email, but a separate list for each of your searches.

http://www.grantforward.com/
Agency Guidelines

Use the databases to find direct links to agency guidelines.
Guidelines

• Access the agency guidelines and follow them to the letter.

• May be short, 1 page or so. Or might be 10 pages. (Some federal programs have almost 100 pages).

• Guidelines indicate how the finished proposal should be prepared and submitted.
Guidelines usually include:

- Agency *priorities/themes*—what areas the sponsor is interested in funding
- Review criteria
- Format issues: Page limits, word count limits, margin & font size limitations
- Budget information (more on that later)
- Deadlines (hard copy or email; postmark or receipt; don’t forget time zones)
Writing a grant proposal is like playing a game--

You have to play by the Rules

• Get the (most recent) guidelines
• Read the guidelines
• Follow the guidelines
**Planet 51c3**

**Tales from the Nonprofit Galaxy**

By Miriam Engelberg

**Nonprofit Staff Members Valiantly Try to Finish a Government Grant Proposal...**

...and they're also asking us to provide 5-page biographies of every staff member. It's like they purposely sit around thinking of ways to make this difficult!

Don't be silly! I'm sure there are good reasons behind all of their requests.

**Meanwhile, at a nearby government office...**

Let's require that they answer question 8d, but not put it on the form—ha ha ha!

Here's a good one—let's make them do astrological charts for each employee!

Ways to make proposals difficult:

These are too easy. Come on—I know you can do better!
Proposal Development: Have a Strategic Plan
Strategic Research Plan

• Have an idea
  – innovative
  – creative
  – collaborative
  – “transformative”

• Know your literature
  – The gap in the literature or the research
  – Tell your story
• A Department of Education Program Officer for the Institute of Education Sciences advised to have two things ready at all times:
  – Statement of Purpose
  – Theory of change/logic model/results model/logical framework

1. Statement of Purpose

Statement of Purpose (preferably an “elevator speech” or “research pitch”): [the why/how/what]

• should be short and attention-getting and
• contain the problem statement and your contribution to solving it.

Your colleagues, fellow researchers, friends, and family members should be able to understand it and see its relevance.

• NOTE: It’s not as easy to do as you may think. You have to know a lot about what it is you want to do before you can describe it succinctly.
Begins with the focus on the *why* at the center of your work and your grant proposal—

- *why* do you want to do the work?
- *why* is your work important?
- *why* should this funding agency care?

Build the proposal outward from the *why* and the *how* (methods, activities) and *what* (outputs, outcomes) will flow from the compelling answer to *why*. 

A “big picture” view
2. Logic Model

Logic model (also called theory of change, results model, logical framework),

– This is the model underlying your research.
– It is a roadmap to your grant narrative.
– It is a source for generating program and research questions.
– It is constantly evolving.
The Logic Model, a framework

Program Action - Logic Model

Inputs
- Activities
- Participation

Outcomes - Impact
- Short Term
- Medium Term
- Long Term

Situation
- Needs and assets
- Symptoms versus problems
- Stakeholder engagement

Priorities
- Consider:
  - Mission
  - Vision
  - Values
  - Mandates
  - Resources
  - Local dynamics
  - Collaborators
  - Competitors
  - Intended outcomes

What we invest
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Time
- Money
- Research base
- Materials
- Equipment
- Technology
- Partners

What we do
- Conduct workshops, meetings
- Deliver services
- Develop products, curriculum, resources
- Train
- Provide counseling
- Assess
- Facilitate
- Partner
- Work with media

Who we reach
- Participants
- Clients
- Agencies
- Decision-makers
- Customers
- Satisfaction

What the short term results are
- Learning
- Awareness
- Knowledge
- Attitudes
- Skills
- Opinions
- Aspirations
- Motivations

What the medium term results are
- Action
- Behavior
- Practice
- Decision-making
- Policies
- Social Action

What the ultimate impact(s) is
- Conditions
- Social
- Economic
- Civic
- Environmental

Assumptions

External Factors

Evaluation
- Focus - Collect Data - Analyze and Interpret - Report
Logic Model instructions

• Introduction to Logic model
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IiLCNfDsdi9I&NR=1&feature=endscreen

• Logic model analogy (great 3 minute video)
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFYQoHvNLQ

• If you have not worked with Logic Models, refer to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Logic Model Development Guide.
Strategic Research Plan

- Know key sources for funding—others, conferences, journal articles
- Establish timelines for your research program (1 year, 5 years)
- Know what the agency is interested in funding (white papers, strategic plans, budget requests)
- Understand the structure of your key agencies
Have a Strategic Research Plan (cont.)

- Stick to what you know: Don’t chase after funding opportunities
- Keep in touch with contacts at funding agencies
- Obtain and read the grant program guidelines. If you are not sure your idea fits, contact OSP or an agency Program Officer before starting work.
- Participate in agency review panels
Your proposal should:

- Advance you along your career path (be a stepping stone to the next milestone)
- Represent a contribution to society at large
- Align, as much as possible, with the funding agency’s goals and priorities
Proposal Development: Working with your RDS
Research Development Specialists

• Your Research Development Specialist (RDS) will help you:
  – identify funders, collaborators, find resources, etc.
  – edit and refine narratives
  – develop budgets
  – ensure compliance with applicable university, sponsor, and legal requirements
  – navigate internal processes
  – respond to reviewer comments
Life Cycle of a Proposal

Idea/RFP

Contact OSP
RDS

Narrative, draft, get feedback, revise

Draft budget, get permissions if needed

5 days before a deadline, OSP should start the routing process for university approvals

Narrative finalized and budget finalized

OSP submits proposal to the agency

Days before agency submission deadline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>90+</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>0</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proposal Development: Proposal Basics
Types of Proposals

• **Pre-proposal**
  – 5 pages (varies by agency)
  – reviewed
  – invited to submit

• **Full proposal**
  – from 10-50 pages (or word count)
  – Forms
  – Attachments
  – Specific format

• **Letter of Intent/Inquiry**
  – May be a proposal for some foundations
  – May/may not be **required**

• **Concept paper or White Paper**
  – 2-4 pages
  – highlights

Page limits vary widely by agency and program. The above pages may be typical, but some agencies have word count limits, line limits, or even character limits, for example.
## Components of a Typical Proposal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Heading</th>
<th>Who Completes</th>
<th>Answers the Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cover Sheet</td>
<td>OSP</td>
<td>Who are we?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>OSP/PI</td>
<td>What’s in the proposal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>What’s the big picture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Statement</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Why should we do this now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals/Aims</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>What are we trying to accomplish?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable Objectives</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>What will be different?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>What exactly are we going to do and when?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>How will we know if our idea works?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Who else will benefit? How will we share data?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Do we have the necessary tools/resources/capacity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Who will do the work? Are they qualified?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>OSP/PI</td>
<td>How much will it cost?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biographical Sketch</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Who are the players?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Whose work are you building on?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>What else do the funders need to make a decision?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing a Proposal

**Process for Developing a Proposal**

- Getting Started
- Finding a Call for Proposals
- Developing Collaborations
- Developing the Narrative and Supporting Documents
- Submitting a Proposal: The Internal NIU review process
- After Submitting a Proposal: What happens after your proposal is submitted

**Proposal Components**

- Abstract
- Project Description
  - Begin to Write
  - Background & Significance
  - Aims and Objectives
  - Research Design
  - Management Plan
  - Evaluation
  - Sustainability
- Budget
- Budget justification
- Biosketches & Vitae
- Facilities statement
- Data Management Plan
- Post-doctoral Mentoring Plan
- Letters of Support and/or Commitment
- Developing a Timeline
- Logic Models
- Current & Pending Support

**Agency Guidance**

- NSF
- NIH
And back to those guidelines...

• You must follow the guidelines exactly.
• Old guidelines can be used for reference, but be sure to access new competition guidelines.
• Adhere to any format restrictions.
• Most often, sections are covered in order presented in the guidelines.
• Respond to all sections (increase points, better scores).
• Use headings that correspond to the guidelines. (Example: “significance”)
The Proposal Narrative

• Agencies offer proposal writing guides
• Federal agencies vs. foundations
• Project vs. Fellowships
• Some solicitations indicate literature in which their Request for Proposals (RFP) is based. (Research Council priorities, for example). Be familiar with those—quote when appropriate.
• Read successful proposals
Draft a narrative: Create a template

- Copy/paste the agency’s heading into your Word doc to guide your work.
- Start with describing your need, the significance of the problem, issue, project
  - A project is significant if it, for example:
    - Solves a problem
    - Creates new and important knowledge
    - Creates a model
    - Improves the human condition
    - Improves a scientific technique
Suggested Sequence for Proposal Development

- Needs, significance
- Problem statement/Hypotheses
- Objectives
- Methods, work plan, activities
- Evaluation
- Dissemination
- Budget, then budget narrative
- Introduction
- Literature cited
- Forms
- Summary/Abstract
- Attachments, Biosketch/Vita – if allowed
Academic vs. Grant writing

**Academic writing**
- Scholarly pursuit: Individual passion
- Past oriented: Work that has been done
- Theme-centered: Theory and thesis
- Expository rhetoric: Explaining to reader

**Grant writing**
- Sponsor goals: Service Attitude
- Future oriented: Work that should be done
- Project-centered: Objectives and activities
- Persuasive rhetoric: "selling the reader"

Academic vs. Grant writing

**Academic writing**
- **Impersonal tone:**
  - Objective, dispassionate
- **Individualistic:**
  - Primarily a solo activity
- **Few length constraints**
  - Verbosity rewarded
- **Specialized terminology**
  - “insider jargon”

**Grant writing**
- **Personal tone:**
  - Conveys excitement
- **Team-focused:**
  - Feedback needed
- **Strict length constraints:**
  - Brevity rewarded
- **Accessible language:**
  - Easily understood
  - (who are reviewers?)

7 Best Practices for Proposal Development
1. Do the Background Work

- Your proposed project matches the agency’s interest
- You called the program officer (PO), if appropriate
- Know what’s been funded
- Review successful proposals, if possible
- You notified OSP that you’re planning to write a proposal (or that you’re even thinking about writing a proposal)
What’s been funded?

• USA Spending.gov
  http://usaspending.gov/

• NIH RePORT
  http://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm

• Research.Gov (NASA & NSF Funding)
  http://www.research.gov/

• NIH Commons “Like This”
  www.nihcommons.gov
2. Familiarize Yourself with the Agency

- Know the agency’s strategic plans and funding goals
- Know the eligibility requirements
- Understand the funding announcement and program thoroughly
- Understand the review criteria and stated performance measures
- Know what the agency will and will not fund
3. Sharpen Your Narrative

• **Start Writing Early**
  – Use the agency requirements, selection criteria, evaluation criteria, etc as your template to get started
  – Although a Table of Contents may not be required, consider their requirements or selection criteria as a Table of Contents

• **Search the Funding Announcement for key words**
  – The “Must, Should, Require, Limit” strategy
3. Sharpen Your Narrative Continued...

• **Language Usage**
  – Avoid the use of “weak words”
    • We “hope” to obtain Y by doing...
    • We “might” be able to develop an evaluation instrument that would...
    • We “may” be able to extend our understanding...
  – Keep acronyms and abbreviations to a minimum
  – Avoid clichés and empty generalities – Be Specific!
4. Pay Special Attention to Your Collaborators

- Develop networks and build collaborations early
  (http://www.nordp.org/funding-opportunities)
- Define the role of your collaborator(s)
  • Cooperation = Vendor, professional service, consultant
  • Collaboration = Key personnel, subawardee, consultant
- Allow for extra time when collaborating with colleagues at other institutions (additional paperwork will be necessary)
- Identify internal expertise and services
5. Don’t Overlook Your Appendices/Letters of Support

– Does the funding announcement allow
– Recognize that obtaining support letters will take time
– Differentiate between letters of support and letters of commitment
– Strive for strong letters of support, make sure the letter speaks directly to the project and appears genuine and unique
Letters: (IF allowed by the agency)

**Letters of Commitment**
- Letter writer advocates for your project
- Referred to in the text, put in appendix
- How does the project fit with the mission/goals of the organization
- Presents type of support

**Letters of Support**
- Evidence of interest in the project from participants
- If the project is funded, they are ready with their contribution
- What they will contribute
- They will participate at the time you need them
6. Don’t Ignore the Basics – *Image Counts*

- Does your biosketch follow agency guidelines, choose content carefully.
- Does your facilities & resources statement match the narrative and highlight institutional capacity?
- Is a timeline required? Is it realistic?
- Does your current & pending support accurately reflect existing time and program commitments?
7. Align the Budget with the Narrative

– Does your project reasonably fit within agency funding limits?

– Will the agency support all of the cost your project requires?

– Will you need to consider institutional cost-sharing?

– Are institutional commitments accurately classified in the proposal?
Timeframe

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Days before agency submission deadline

Business Days

0
Abstract Activity
The Abstract

- *It may be short, but it packs a punch...*
  - Reviewers read it first. You need to grab their attention
  - Should be brief—usually 1 page, single-spaced
  - It appears first, but it should be written LAST
  - Some agencies are very specific on sections to include in an abstract
The Abstract should answer the basic questions:

• **What:**
  – Topic of project, goals, objectives.
  – What do you intend to do?

• **Why:**
  – Problem/Issue to be addressed.
  – Why is the work important?

• **How:**
  – Methods, procedures.
  – How are you going to do the work?
The Abstract should answer the basic questions, cont’d

• **Who:**
  – Target population, group served or studied

• **When:**
  – Project dates, duration

• **So what:**
  – Significance, outcomes expected
Review Criteria
"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."
Review Criteria

• Review Criteria (sometimes called Selection Criteria) varies greatly by agency

• Some guidelines offer a point value system for their Selection Criteria

• The Review Criteria may become your Table of Contents—when a TOC is allowed or required.
Review Criteria

• National Science Foundation –
  [link: www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/merit_review/]

• National Institutes of Health -
  [link: grants.nih.gov/grants/peer/reviewer_guidelines.htm]

• Dept. of Ed’s Institute for Education Sciences -
  [link: ies.ed.gov/]
**NSF – Merit Review criteria**

- **Intellectual Merit:** The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge; and

- **Broader Impacts:** The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.
Department of Education/Institute of Education Sciences Review Criteria

• Review Criteria for Scientific Merit

  A. **Significance**: Does the applicant provide a compelling rationale for the significance of the project?

  B. **Research Plan**: Tell the reviewer what you’re going to do and how you’re going to do it.

    • May include research aims; theoretical and empirical rationale; research design; sample; data sources; data analysis; description of interventions; description of the assessment; and/or methodological requirements.
C. **Personnel**: Does the description make it apparent that the PI and other key personnel possess appropriate training and experience and will commit sufficient time to competently implement the proposed research?

D. **Resources**: Does the applicant have the facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources required to support the proposed activities? Do the commitments of each partner show support for the implementation and success of the project?
Review—Know who your reviewers are

Agency guidelines contain Review Criteria

• Proposals may be:
  – Peer reviewed
  – Panel reviewed
  – Staff review
  – Board review

• When an agency permits, it’s OK to ask them not to send a proposal to a particular person (must be carefully justified)

• It’s okay to recommend reviewers, if the agency permits.
As you write -- keep your reviewer in mind

• Don’t assume readers/reviewers know the subject as well as you do, but don’t go overboard.

• It’s important to not annoy the reviewers – think of the review criteria as a grading rubric, for example, and provide the information requested with the organization appropriate to the type of project (program, research, instruction, etc.)
Avoid automatic rejection

Examples include:

- Formatting issues (going over page, word, or line limits)
- Submitting a proposal over the budget ceiling
- Deadline issues (Online? Do time zones matter? Postmark/receipt?)
- Submitting a proposal outside agency interests (for example, a health-related proposal to NSF)
When planning a proposal submission:

• Notify us early.
• Plan a phone call with the PO?
• *At least one month* before the deadline, you should:
  – Contact OSP to discuss the budget and the proposal narrative.
  – Begin to line up any necessary project commitments, and document these in writing.
As the deadline nears...

• Two to three weeks before deadline:
  – You and OSP should be finalizing the budget.
  – Your narrative should be nearing a final draft (sooner, if you plan to ask colleagues to review the draft before finalizing).
  – You should have signed commitments in place with all collaborating partners and anyone providing resources or cost-sharing to the project.
Preparing for submission

• Check with OSP ahead of deadline to be sure all required elements are complete and properly formatted.

• Check with subcontractors, collaborating researchers, and other outside parties to ensure all their documents are in process and will arrive at your institution before the start of the review process.
Overall Proposal checklist

• **Budget:**
  – the budget should match the described project
  – the budget justification should match the project
  – All figures should match (avoid last minute budget changes)

• **Standard bibliography** format appropriate to your discipline

• **Complete all forms**

• **Deadline?** (online/hard copy/receipt/postmark?)

• **Check duplication process** (takes time)

• **Formatting:** Use margins, type size and spacing as requested in the guidelines. Adhere to page, line or word limits

• **Proofread/spell check**

• **Address all sections of the guidelines and review criteria**
Institutional Review

NIU
Institutional review process

• Except in very rare cases, proposals must normally be reviewed by OSP before submission to the funding agency.
  – When a proposal is submitted to a funding agency, a legal agreement is created between the agency and the submitting institution.
  – Consequently, institutional review is required to ensure that the proposed research activity is in line with the institution’s mission and abilities.
Institutional review process

• Funding agencies normally require proposals to be endorsed by someone who has the legal authority to commit the institution to carry out the proposed work.
  – They also normally require the individual approving the proposal to make a number of representations and/or certifications as part of the submission process.
  – Authorizing signatory: Director of Sponsored Projects, VP of Research & Graduate Studies, and other upper administration (including the President on rare occasions when the agency specifies).
Institutional review process

• If your project involves ...
  – Human or animal subjects
  – Recombinant DNA, biohazards/select agents, stem cells, radioactive materials
  – Conflict of interest (potential)
  – Export control questions/concerns
  – Intellectual property or technology commercialization questions/concerns

... there are additional steps to take
Institutional review process

- Failure to follow the institution’s review policies may result in:
  - Withdrawal of the proposal
  - Refusal of any award, even if already made
After submitting a Proposal
After submitting the Proposal:

• Let us know about any communications you receive from the sponsoring agency regarding your proposal.

• If changes have to be made to a proposal or a budget after submission, OSP handles these. Internal approvals may be needed for the revisions if there is any change in the budget or scope.
If your proposal is declined. . .

• Don’t give up!
  – Get reviews (if the agency provides them)
  – Talk to agency contact
  – Re-evaluate, revise and resubmit
  – Look for other potential funders
  – A1 Review (Division of Research & Graduate Studies)

• OSP can help with all of these steps

• Look at funded projects—abstracts are often available online

*On average, a PI submits 2.1 proposals to the National Science Foundation for each one that gets funded...*
Respond Carefully to Reviewers

- Some agencies allow you to respond to Review Comments. The following is advice from an NIH Program Officer:
  - Restate each (significant/major) criticism and how you revised the application in response—make it easy for the reviewer to find your “answers.”
  - Be diplomatic and positive. Don’t argue with reviewers.
  - Avoid an angry tone.
  - Avoid overstating your data.
Budget Strategy

• Ask for what you need to do the work
• Justify requests that are significant or out of the ordinary
• Reviewers emphasize project quality over budget
• Follow sponsor and institutional guidelines and policies
• When in doubt, ask
I need a budget estimate for my project, but I don't have a scope or a design for it yet.

Okay, my estimate is $3,583,729.

You don't know anything about my project. That makes two of us.
Know the rules!

“And if you submit a budget that contradicts any of these carefully described guidelines, we will have reason to think of you as a careless reader and thoughtless applicant. This will inevitably be reflected in our estimation of the potential of your scholarship.”

—Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation
WHO DOES WHAT?

• PI should:
  – Know the resources required to complete the project
  – Know costs for project or discipline-specific items
  – Have basic familiarity with sponsor and institutional regulations and guidelines
  – Justify the budget request
  – Obtain any necessary approvals for cost share, waivers, course release, or unusual circumstances prior to routing internal forms
  – Provide a link to or budget information for collaborators (sub-recipient institution(s), consultants, service providers, equipment vendors)
Who does what?

• **OSP will:**
  – Know rates (salary, fringe, tuition, F&A)
  – Have in-depth knowledge of sponsor and institutional regulations and guidelines
  – Provide budget and budget justification templates
  – Calculate the actual budget
  – Assist with/facilitate internal approvals (e.g., course release, cost share, waivers, unusual circumstances)
  – Gather sub-recipient budgets and associated materials
Cost Principles

Costs must be:

1. **Reasonable**
2. **Allowable**: permitted by sponsor and NIU regulations
3. **Allocable**: incurred solely to support the specific project being proposed, and necessary for its completion
4. **Consistent**: applied the same way on sponsored vs. non-sponsored projects
4 Core Components of a Budget

1. Direct costs
   - Personnel, fringe benefits, equipment, travel, materials & supplies, consultant services, publication/communication costs, subcontracts, other costs

2. Indirect (Facilities and Administrative) costs
   - 47% on-campus research, instruction
   - 34% on-campus, other sponsored programs
   - 26% off-campus, all programs

3. Cost-sharing
   - The portion of project costs not borne by the sponsor
     - Mandatory
     - Voluntary-committed
     - Voluntary-uncommitted

4. Budget justification
Examples of Allowable Costs

- **Personnel costs** *in proportion to performance of the scope of work*
  - Sr./Key Personnel. Project staff, technicians, graduate students, undergraduate students
- **Supplies**
- **Equipment**
  - An item of property with an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more and an expected service life of at least one year
- **Project related travel** (domestic and foreign)
- **Services** for the performance of the scope of work
  - Subawards, Vendors, Consultants
- **Participant payments**
- **Animal purchase/per diem**
Examples of Generally Unallowable Costs

– Memberships to social clubs
– Alcohol
– First class airfare
– Clerical Support
– Transportation to and from work in an institution owned vehicle
– Entertainment costs
Budgeting NIU Personnel

- **Individual(s) employed and paid by NIU** who have some level of responsibility for the direction/performance of the project.

- **Time** expressed in budget as percentage of effort based upon appointment period and when work will be completed (academic, summer, calendar)

- **Effort** may be translated into person-months depending on sponsor

- **Fringe benefits**
  - Release Time: Full benefit rate
  - Summer Time/Extra Comp: Reduced benefit rate – 14.5%
  - Graduate Research Assistants: No Fringe
  - Undergraduate Students: Reduced benefit rate – 7.65%
Budgeting Equipment & Supplies

• **Equipment**
  – An item of property with an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more and an expected service life of at least one year

• **Supplies**
  – Must be allowable and allocable
Budgeting Collaborators

• **Consultant**
  - A member of a particular profession or possessing a special skill, but not an officer or employee of the performing organization; typically with limited participation on the project (i.e., a few days a year)

• **Subrecipients**
  - An external organization that conducts a significant portion of the project, using their personnel and facilities

• **Vendors**
  - An organization that provides a specific and narrow service or product
Participant Support

- Participant Support
  - Support for participants in conferences, workshops, summer camps, or other training experiences—not usually used for research grants.
  - Not for budgeting stipends or other incentives for human subjects’ participation in research projects (for completion of study visits, surveys, etc.)
Industry & Contracts

• **Contracts/Agreements:**
  – Contracts are procurement actions that directly benefit the sponsor. They often have terms and conditions that must be negotiated. The terms and conditions are dependent upon the contract type, work performed, and sponsor.
    • Research contracts
    • Cooperative agreements
    • Subaward/Subcontracts
    • Technical testing/consulting agreements
    • Material Transfer Agreements (incoming & outgoing)

**REMEMBER:** Do not negotiate terms and conditions without OSP.
Industry & Contracts

• Key elements of a contract for a sponsored project will define:
  – Who are the contracting parties?
  – What is the nature of the work (Statement of Work)?
  – Who is performing the work, and where?
  – Effective period
  – Intellectual Property Rights
  – Cost/payment terms
    • Cost reimbursable
    • Fixed Price
Industry & Contracts

• Potential Red Flags
  – Arbitration
  – Dissemination (e.g., publishing)
  – Governing Law
  – Hold Harmless
  – Indemnification
  – Insurance
  – **Scope of work**— DO NOT agree to best efforts/satisfactory performance
  – Termination
  – Warranty of Results
Industry & Contracts

• NIU enters into contractual agreements with a variety of sponsors:
  – Federal
  – State
  – Non-profit agencies
  – Academic institutions
  – Municipalities
  – Corporate entities
    • SBIR/STTR
## Industry & Contracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIVERSITY</th>
<th>INDUSTRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit</td>
<td>For-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching, research, outreach</td>
<td>Create value for investors/generate economic benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect IP rights/freedom to publish</td>
<td>Retain “Freedom to Operate”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open environment/share knowledge</td>
<td>Preserve confidentiality/protect competitive advantage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tip! Read the University-Industry Demonstration Partnership’s Researcher Guidebook.**

[www.uidp.org](http://www.uidp.org)

**REMEMBER:** Do not share cost information until budget has been vetted by OSP!
Managing Your Grants:
Award Acceptance & Post Award Administration

Rachael Andel
Award Coordinator
Award Acceptance

• **Key points to remember:**
  
  – Awards are made to the institution, not the individual
  
  – Awards must be signed by either the Director of OSP or the Vice President for Research (VPR)
  
  – If you receive an award, please forward it to Rachael Andel in OSP right away
Award Acceptance

Just-in-Time

• Some sponsors use a just-in-time process to secure additional information about the proposal prior to issuing the award. Information often requested includes:
  – Current & Pending or Other Support
  – Proof of approved compliance protocols (IRB, IACUC, IBC)
  – Proof of specific training (i.e. human subjects, animals, Financial Conflict of Interest)
  – Informal negotiation of scope and budget
OSP Award Review

Is the award amount the same as what was requested in the proposal?

Yes: Congratulations! OSP will continue to move the award forward for account set up
No: You’ll work with your RDS to revise the budget and if necessary, scope of work

Compliance Review - Are all necessary protocols in place?

IRB, IACUC, or IBC

Subawards

Institutional Endorsement, SOW, Budget & Justification
OSP Award Review

Grants/Cooperative Agreements:

• Terms and conditions associated with a grant are generally not negotiable. The goal is to highlight any unusual terms in order to ensure proper compliance

• NSF Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Requirement

• NIH Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI)

• Fly America Act

• Special Terms and Conditions (i.e. no foreign travel can be made without State Dept. approval)

• Specific Reporting Requirements
Time to Spend!

Getting Your Grant Account

OSP will send a Notice of Award to:

- PI/Co-PIs
- Grants Fiscal Administration (GFA)
- Department/Unit Chair/Director(s)
- College Dean(s)
- OSP Staff

The notice will include the following:

- Sponsor award notification
- Budget
- Basic award information
- (Separate GFA Notice of Award packet)
Project Director’s Responsibilities

• Review your award, budget and any and all documents OSP & GFA may send to you.
• Initiate the required Payroll paperwork
• Start all procurement paperwork – Purchases, Consultant Agreements, Subawards
• Review expense reports on a regular basis
• Prepare and submit required technical progress reports as required by the sponsor
• Notify Technology Transfer Office (TTO) of any inventions conceived under the grant or award
Navigating the Intersection of OSP & GFA

Award Coordination – Where Pre meets Post

• Pre-award Spending & Advance Accounts
  – Award has been approved but not yet accepted
  – Purchases needed to begin project activities, i.e. Equipment needed to perform experiments, Hiring Research Assistants
  – Majority of federal awards allow 90 days of pre-award spending
Navigating the Intersection of OSP & GFA

Award Coordination – Where Pre meets Post

• Making Changes to your original proposed project
  – Contact OSP/GFA alerting them of proposed changes BEFORE contacting the sponsor officer
  – Institutional Process includes Departmental, Grants Fiscal and OSP Review and Approval
  – You are responsible to initiate requests via Institutional Prior Approval System
Managing Project Changes: Best Practices

Changes are inevitable...It’s Knowing How to Manage the Changes That is Important.

• The Federal Government dictates what project changes will require prior agency approval

• Federal grant-making agencies transfer the approval of certain project changes to the grantee (informally referred to as “expanded authorities”)

• It is NIU’s responsibility, as the grantee, to ensure project changes are managed in accordance with the award.
Managing Project Changes: Best Practices

Why Does it Matter?

• Changes that do not receive appropriate agency or institutional approval can result in:
  • Disallowed costs
  • Termination of the award
  • A-133 or agency-specific audit findings
# Managing Project Changes: Best Practices

## Project Changes that Routinely Require Agency Approval

- Change of Principal Investigator (PI) or other key persons specified in award document
- Change of Grantee
- Change of Scope of Work (SOW) or Program Objectives
- PI absence for more than three continuous months or a >25% reduction in effort
- Need for additional funding
- Need to incur pre-award costs > 90 days prior to award
- 2nd No Cost Extension

## Project Changes that NIU can Routinely Approve

- Initial 12 month no cost extension beyond the original project end date
- Ability to incur pre-award costs <90 days of award
- Rebudgeting of allowable project costs (except for funds allotted to training allowances – e.g. stipends)
- Purchase project related equipment

OSP and GFA will help you determine whether agency approval is necessary.
All Things Must End....
Navigating the Intersection of OSP & GFA
continued...

• Award Close-Out
• Final Progress Reports – OSP
• Final Financial Reports – GFA

Email: rachael_andel@niu.edu
Call: 753-6493