



## STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE (SAP)

### 15.01.01.L1.02 Preparation, Approval and Submission of Proposals for Sponsored Agreements

**Approved:** February 24, 2014

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**Next Scheduled Review:** February 24, 2016

#### *Standard Administrative Procedure Statement*

This Standard Administrative Procedure identifies the roles, responsibilities and steps for the preparation, approval and submission of proposals for sponsored agreements.

#### *Definitions*

**Boilerplate:** Any text that is or can be reused in new contexts or applications without being greatly changed from the original.

**Maestro:** An enterprise-wide system that supports researchers and research administration across the Texas A&M University System (System). Through Maestro researchers can route their proposals for internal review and approval and manage their accounts once awarded. Authorized users can add research keywords to their personal profile, search for colleagues with a specific area of interest, and search for funding opportunities. Authorized users can login with their university UIN and Single Sign-on password at [maestro.tamus.edu](http://maestro.tamus.edu).

**Proposal:** An application submitted to a funding agency requesting funding for a specified period of time to carry out a specific project. In this document “proposal” and “application” are used interchangeably.

**Principal Investigator or Project Director (PI/PD):** The person who takes direct responsibility for completion of a funded project, directing the research or program and reporting directly to the funding agency.

#### *Procedures and Responsibilities*

##### **1. GENERAL**

In applying for and accepting sponsored agreements, Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) is obligated to fulfill the purpose and requirements of each sponsored agreement

through its oversight of university personnel, resources and facilities. In order to assure that the work can be performed as described, review and approval of the proposal by the principal investigator and university officials at various levels is necessary to assess feasibility, costs and benefits, as well as identify institutional risks.

All university proposals to perform research, instruction and other activities for external sponsors via sponsored agreements shall adhere to System policies and regulations, University rules, sponsor terms and conditions and other applicable federal and state regulations. See the TAMIU rule [15.01.01.L1 Administration of Sponsored Agreements – Research and Other](#) for a list of relevant state and federal requirements and System policies and regulations.

## **2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR INTERNAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

According to System Regulation 15.01.01 Administration of Sponsored Agreements – Research and Other, the university president or a designee has primary responsibility to initiate sponsored agreements with potential sponsors as well as to ensure the content, scope, quality, facilities, funding and conduct of sponsored agreements. The TAMIU Institutional Official (IO) designated by the university president is the provost and vice president of academic affairs (provost). As the designated IO, the provost will assign responsibility for each project or program to a PI/PD to ensure satisfactory progress in the conduct of the work and compliance with the terms and conditions of the agreement.

- 2.1 The provost has designated the overall responsibility for the initiation, preparation, review and submission of all externally-funded sponsored agreement applications to the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects (ORSP) except as provided in 2.2.
- 2.2 In the case of applications submitted to a private source that are not research related, the director of annual giving within the Office of Institutional Advancement is authorized to prepare, review and submit the applications and the vice president for institutional advancement provides oversight for submission and administration of project compliance based on TAMIU rules and procedures and sponsor guidelines.
- 2.3 Each proposal submitted through ORSP must be reviewed and approved by the following:
  - (a) PI/PD;
  - (b) Department/division chair or unit director;
  - (c) Dean or appropriate vice president; and the
  - (d) Provost.
- 2.4 The PI/PD is ultimately responsible for:
  - 2.4.1 Presenting the project ideas;
  - 2.4.2 Conducting the scope of work;
  - 2.4.3 Adhering to and ensuring the quality of the technical, scientific, and scholarly content;
  - 2.4.4 Coordinating with appropriate compliance committees;
  - 2.4.5 Governing access and retention of data;
  - 2.4.6 Complying with applicable University rules and procedures; System policies and regulations; state and federal regulations; and sponsor requirements; and
  - 2.4.7 Submitting all proposal components to ORSP at least five business days prior to the deadline in order for review, processing, approvals and final formatting to take place with sufficient time for the University to meet the application deadline.

- 2.5 The department/division chair or unit director is responsible for:
  - 2.5.1 Ensuring the soundness of the project in relation to departmental/ divisional goals, objectives and resources;
  - 2.5.2 Ensuring compatibility of the project with the PI/PD's other commitments and current workload;
  - 2.5.3 Ensuring availability of space and facilities;
  - 2.5.4 Authorizing and carrying out departmental/divisional cost-sharing commitments which are limited to space, in-kind personnel commitments and the use of departmental funds; and
  - 2.5.5 Ensuring that the project, if awarded, will be carried out within the department/division or unit in accordance with University rules and procedures; System policies and regulations; state and federal regulations; and sponsor requirements.
- 2.6 The dean of the college or appropriate vice president is responsible for:
  - 2.6.1 Determining the appropriateness of the proposed project within college programs, resources and priorities;
  - 2.6.2 Determining that committed resources will be available;
  - 2.6.3 Determining that compliance requirements can be met; and
  - 2.6.4 Authorizing Cost sharing commitments beyond the departmental level.
- 2.7 The ORSP staff is responsible for:
  - 2.7.1 Ensuring that the proposal has been prepared and formatted according to the applicable rules and procedures of the University and the sponsor;
  - 2.7.2 Ensuring that the budget is in accordance with acceptable cost principles and guidelines (in conjunction with the Office of Grants and Contracts);
  - 2.7.3 Ensuring that matters involving conflicts of interest, human subjects, experimental use of animals, DNA research, hazardous substances, export controls, research data management and other compliance issues have been identified and the appropriate committees and officers are informed;
  - 2.7.4 Providing assistance to deans or appropriate vice presidents on issues that may arise regarding multi-disciplinary or multi-institutional collaborations;
  - 2.7.5 Reviewing the proposal for institutional risks in regard to strategic, financial, reputational, compliance, and personnel risks of the work being proposed and making recommendations to the University administration for mitigation of identified risks;
  - 2.7.6 Reviewing the proposal for scope and institutional commitments such as building and spatial needs and cost sharing;
  - 2.7.7 Ensuring that the institution is recovering its costs of the project, or that the benefits to the University exceed any request for waiver of facilities and administrative costs or cost sharing provision; and
  - 2.7.8 Ensuring that all documentation is in place including documentation for waiver of facilities and administrative costs or cost sharing provision.

### **3. STEPS FOR APPLYING FOR EXTERNAL FUNDING VIA SPONSORED AGREEMENTS**

- 3.1 First the PI/PD consults with the department/division chair or unit director and the dean of the college or appropriate vice president. This consultation will facilitate the process of applying for funding and conducting the proposed project upon award.

- 3.2 The PI/PD then meets with a research administrator in ORSP. To ensure PI/PDs receive comprehensive proposal support services, it is recommended that the meeting take place at least three weeks prior to the sponsor's deadline.
- 3.3 As soon as possible after the initial meeting, the PI/PD must provide ORSP with a one- to two-page white paper of the project idea and a draft of the budget. Meetings will be scheduled to develop the budget details and the project narrative, if needed.
- 3.4 During this process, ORSP research administrators will:
  - 3.4.1 Provide guidance for interpreting the program guidelines;
  - 3.4.2 Provide boilerplate information for University, faculty and student descriptions and area demographics;
  - 3.4.3 Provide guidance in developing the proposal budget considering the following:
    - (a) If cost sharing is included, a description of the type of cost sharing and the account number(s) for any cash donations to the project as well as documentation for commitments from third party sources must be provided to ORSP personnel; and
    - (b) The current TAMIU facilities and administration rate that has been negotiated with the Department of Health and Human Services must be used for all sponsored agreements unless the sponsor or program imposes limits on the rate.
  - 3.4.4 Send the completed budget to the Office of Grants and Contracts for a secondary review and approval;
  - 3.4.5 Provide any institutional fiscal documents required;
  - 3.4.6 Provide support for collaborations with external partners at other universities as well as local schools, businesses, etc.;
  - 3.4.7 Provide support in obtaining letters of commitment and collaboration;
  - 3.4.8 Ensure that all compliance issues are identified and are being properly addressed;
  - 3.4.9 Utilize Maestro for electronic review and approval of proposal documents such as the final budget, cost-sharing documentation, indirect cost reduction or waiver requests and proposal draft. The electronic internal review and approval process is required by System policy prior to the external submission of proposals for sponsored agreements and generally takes at least five business days. The specific steps for this process are as follows
    - (a) ORSP submits the proposal for internal routing once the routing documents are uploaded in Maestro and ready for review.
    - (b) The PI/PD then receives an email requesting approval for the proposal.
    - (c) To approve the proposal for internal routing, the PI/PD will login to [maestro.tamus.edu](http://maestro.tamus.edu) using his or her Single Sign On (SSO) UIN and password.
    - (d) Once the proposal is reviewed and approved by the PI/PD, it will automatically be routed to the department/division chair or unit director, then to the dean of the college or appropriate vice president, and finally to the provost.
    - (e) Cost sharing from TAMIU resources must be approved by the account administrator of those resources, director of budget, payroll and fiscal analysis, department/division chair or unit director, dean of the

- college or appropriate vice president, and the provost during the internal review process.
- (f) When more than one college is involved in a proposal, the proposal must be approved by the department/division chair or unit director and dean of each college.
  - (g) If at any time in this process the department/division chair or unit director, dean of the college or appropriate vice president or the account administrator or provost have objections, the routing will stop until the objection is addressed; and
  - (h) This internal review and approval process is required by System policy prior to the external submission of proposals for sponsored agreements.

3.4.10 Complete the external submission process once all final proposal components and approvals are in place;

3.4.10.1 The PI/PD must submit all final proposal documents to ORSP at least 36 hours before the submission deadline to ensure an on-time, successful submission of the proposal.

3.4.11 Submit proposals to external sponsors according to program guidelines;

3.4.12 Log proposals into the ORSP database for reporting; and finally,

3.4.13 An electronic copy of each submitted proposal will be kept on file in the ORSP office with a copy sent to each PI/PD.

#### 4. EXCEPTION TO THE TAMIU REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

In cases where the routing of the proposal is not complete prior to the submission deadline, the provost, upon review and risk assessment, may approve the submission of the proposal with routing to be completed shortly thereafter. Any amendments or changes to the proposal will be made as soon as reasonably feasible and upon consideration of the reputational risks of making such changes.

#### ***Related Statutes, Policies, Regulations, Rules or Requirements***

Title 2 CFR, Part 220 – [Cost Principles for Educational Institutions](#) also known as OMB Circular A-21 (current as of 12/13/2013)

[System Regulation 15.01.01 Administration of Sponsored Agreements – Research and Other](#)

[15.01.01.L1 Administration of Sponsored Agreements – Research and Other](#)

#### ***Contact Office***

Office of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
956-326-2240