Guidance Document: Entering Preproposals into the Grants Management Application Suite (GMAS)

Effective date: February 1, 2017

This guidance document outlines the process for entering preproposals into GMAS. This process will replace the current method of uploading a preproposal to a folder created within a Principal Investigator's (PI) document repository. The reasons for this process change are multi-fold. Mainly, the white papers and brief one-page concept papers historically considered preproposals are now requiring more time and effort by all parties, often requiring certifications and "official" submission by an Authorized Organizational Representative through a sponsor portal like Grants.gov or Fastlane. The Office for Sponsored Programs (OSP) is also encountering a larger volume of preproposals that require acceptance of terms and conditions and/or representations and certifications even at this early stage of the submission process. In addition, some funding initiatives for which a preproposal is required contain strict PI eligibility requirements or limit the number of submissions the University may submit. OSP must ensure all preproposal submissions are in compliance with these often stringent guidelines.

Identifying Letters of Intent, White/Concept Papers, Preproposals

This section will define several forms of preliminary correspondence for the purposes of this guidance document.

Letters of Intent:

- NOT entered into GMAS as a "Request"
- Used by many federal and non-federal sponsors to gauge potential volume for a particular research focus and to help assess funding, staffing, and reviewer needs
- Brief document which helps the reviewers determine PI qualifications, institutional eligibility, and suitability of proposed scope for sponsor program
- Most often submitted directly to the sponsor by the PI

White/Concept Papers:

- Typically NOT entered into GMAS as a preproposal *

- Most frequently requested by Department of Defense agencies in response to a "Broad Agency Announcement" identifying an agency need
- White/Concept paper includes an abstract, problem to be addressed, PI knowledge of and experience with problem, proposed solution, and risk assessment
- Does not require a budget
- Usually submitted directly to the sponsor by the PI*

Preproposals:

- Entered into GMAS as an "Initial Request"
- Regularly used by federal agencies as a screening tool, allowing full proposals to be submitted by invitation only
- Considered an abbreviated version of a "full" proposal, often inclusive of a detailed project budget**, biosketches, other support, facilities, and a robust project narrative
- May also require advance certifications specific to the program guidelines, such as certifying we will provide required cost share amounts or that we are prepared to provide the necessary institutional support for larger scale projects
- Sponsors typically do not allow for extensive deviations from the preproposal budgets, research team, narratives, or even the title in the full proposal, if invited
- Require submission to the sponsor by an AOR, with agency-specific certifications

Entering Preproposals into GMAS

1. Department Administrator enters the preproposal and documents into GMAS and locks/routes as usual, adhering to the title naming convention "PREPROPOSAL: rest of project title."
2. The preproposal should be signed off on in GMAS in accordance with the department's standard "Initial Request" review and signature process.
3. OSP will "Submit to Sponsor" in GMAS to move the preproposal from "Under Internal Review" to "Pending."

If Invited to Submit a Full Propsoal

1. OSP Operations will "Rollback" the request to allow the preproposal to be "Retracted" for editing the following fields as applicable:
   a. Remove "PREPROPOSAL" from title;
   b. Revise deadline;
   c. Revise research team;

        d. Revise budget;

        e. Revise approvals;

        f. Retain preproposal in a designated folder.

  2. The Full Proposal will then be locked and routed per standard practice for full review and submission by Department/School/OSP

If the sponsor declines to accept a full proposal

OSP will close the preproposal in GMAS

Additional Considerations:

1. Finalized preproposals should be locked and routed in GMAS at least three business days prior to the submission deadline date.

2. Preproposals are an important step when required by sponsor, and preproposal development should be undertaken rigorously with the aim of being invited to submit a full proposal for sponsor review.

3. OSP will review the RFP/Program Solicitation, all required elements from those guidelines, budget details, and the scope of work to ensure each is in compliance with the University's mission and applicable policies.

4. For internal purposes, any potential subcontractors should include a short acknowledgment in writing or by email that the subcontractor PI is aware h/she is being included in the preproposal. This can come directly from the subcontractor PI at Preproposal stage.

5. Any approvals generated such as cost share, Participation Agreements, Debarment, Conflicts of Interest, etc. can be left as "Needed" solely for the purposes of the Preproposal submission. Notification to the appropriate COI reviewers that no action is currently needed at preproposal stage should be communicated via email or the GMAS "Additional Comments" section when locking and routing for signatures.

6. Using the naming convention specified in the guided steps above allows for preproposals to be manually scrubbed from any reports generated which compile the number of funding requests submitted.

7. If you are unsure as to whether or not a preproposal should be entered in GMAS, please consult your OSP representative.

*Recent White/Concept Paper trends seems to be moving to AOR submission via a sponsor portal like Grants.gov.   If the BAA requires AOR submission, the PI/department should follow the "preproposal" process steps for GMAS entry, using an estimated budget figure.

**Detailed budgets are not required internally unless they are required by the sponsor.