

HARVARD UNIVERSITY



Proposal Submission Deadlines

Responsible Office: Office for Sponsored Programs

Policy Statement

The complete and final proposal, accompanied by the necessary School-level approvals, as well as any other attachments or approvals required by the sponsor or the University, must be received by the submitting office **at least five (5) full business days prior to the sponsor's due date** (or, for electronic submission, due time). The sponsor's due date is defined as the date and time after which the sponsor will no longer accept proposals. In cases in which Harvard is a subcontractor, the sponsor's due date will be determined by the submitting institution.

Schools may impose additional requirements regarding review and approval by School-specific committees of sponsored programs proposals, including international proposals.

If Harvard internal deadlines are not met and the submitting office does not have sufficient time for a thorough review, the proposal will not be submitted.

In cases of serious extenuating circumstances, a [request for exception to this policy](#) must be made by the submitting office to the University Director, Sponsored Research. Exceptions are not anticipated.

Reason for Policy

The timely submission of proposals ensures sufficient time for the thoughtful consideration and review of sponsored project descriptions and budgets for compliance with University and sponsor policies.

Faculty members and researchers across the University engage sponsors and co-investigators as collaborators through sponsored programs to invigorate discovery and to participate in the intellectual communities of their disciplines. The University is committed to facilitating and enabling this engagement while providing responsible stewardship of University commitments and resources.

Review of outgoing proposals by responsible officials within the School and at the University level allows for the identification of potential administrative, financial, or programmatic challenges to the success of the proposal or program. The sponsored programs professionals in research administration analyze the responsiveness of the proposal to the requirements of the sponsor's announcement, including the adequacy of budgets and budget justifications. Engagement of these professionals allows University investigators to submit proposals of the highest quality and with the highest probability of success.

The timely submission of proposals for review allows for the identification of any elements of a proposal that are at variance with University policy, practice, or priorities. Occasionally, faculty or investigators envision projects that present programmatic, administrative, or financial challenges to a School or to the University. In these cases, adequate time for review allows School or University officials to understand the proposal and thoughtfully consider the ability of the University or School to participate in the program.

Only certain University officials within the three submitting offices have the legal authority, delegated to specific individuals by the Corporation, to submit proposals on behalf of the President and Fellows of Harvard College. The University reserves the right to retract any proposal submitted by individuals who lack this institutional authority.

Who Must Comply

All Harvard units submitting sponsored proposals through the University's three sponsored programs submitting offices must comply. The three offices are the Harvard University Office for Sponsored Programs, the Harvard Medical School Sponsored Programs Administration office, and the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, Office of Financial Services.

Responsibilities

Principal investigators are responsible for knowing and understanding the five (5) day submission deadline under this policy. They are responsible for engaging research administrators in their Schools as early in the process as possible and for preparing proposal narratives in sufficient detail and sufficiently in advance to allow adequate review. Principal investigators are responsible for understanding that proposals require their collaboration with departmental personnel for the development of project

budgets and administrative elements of proposals, such as curricula vitae, reports of other commitments of the investigator, and the documentation of commitments from co-investigators or collaborators at other institutions. Principal investigators also are responsible for knowing the elements of proposals that could necessitate review and approval by the Office of the Provost and/or the University Committee on International Projects and Sites (UCIPS) and for consulting with School sponsored program administrators to determine if a proposal under development will require such review.

Departmental staff or School research administration staff, as applicable, are responsible for knowing and understanding this policy. Departmental staff members are responsible for knowing the elements of proposals that could necessitate review and approval by the Office of the Provost and/or UCIPS and for consulting with School sponsored program administrators to determine whether a proposal under development will require such review. They are expected to know the UCIPS meeting schedule in order to advise investigators regarding proposal submission to UCIPS. They are responsible for knowing whether their School requires internal review separate or in addition to review by the Provost and for leaving additional time for such a review, if applicable. They are also responsible for communicating to investigators that these reviews are required. In cases in which investigators are unresponsive to deadlines, the departmental staff is responsible for notifying School sponsored programs administrators of this problem.

Schools or Department Officials, including School financial and administrative officers, along with department chairs or equivalents, are responsible for ensuring that local units abide by this policy.

The submitting offices are responsible for developing and communicating this policy regarding timely submissions to ensure that the research community understands that continued productive engagement with our sponsors requires the broad administrative coordination of multiple School and University offices and oversight committees. The submitting offices are responsible for presenting to the Office of the Provost proposals requiring Provost approval at least five (5) days before the sponsor due date.

Related Policies

- [Provost Review Criteria](#)
- [University Committee on International Projects and Sites](#)

Contacts and Subject Matter Experts

- [The Office for Sponsored Programs: Grants and Contracts Specialists, Sponsored Program Officers, & Team Managers](#)
- [Harvard Medical School Office of Research Administration](#)
- [Harvard Chan School Research Administration](#)

Tub/Department Sponsored Offices

- [FAS](#)
- [SEAS](#)
- [HKS](#)
- [HGSE](#) (Login required)
- [Office of the Provost](#)

Development of the Policy

Key subject matter experts who provided input in the development of this policy were the University's three submitting offices, as well as the Sponsored Administration Leadership Committee, including the Vice Provost for Research and the University Director of Sponsored Research.

Frequently Asked Questions

- [University Area FAQ](#)