Texas State University – San Marcos

Proposal Submission Policy and the Three Working Day Rule
Updated April 27, 2011

Due to the high volume of last minute proposal submissions to the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP), it has become necessary for the Associate Vice President for Research and Federal Relations (AVPR) to adopt a new proposal submission deadline policy to ensure timely review and processing by OSP. While it is highly recommended that proposals be submitted to OSP for review several weeks before the agency deadline, "completed proposals" (see definition below) are now due in OSP by 9 a.m. **three working days** prior to the agency's deadline date (see chart below). This provides adequate time to ensure that proposals are complete and prepared in line with sponsor guidelines, budgets are calculated accurately, compliance issues resolved, internal routing approvals obtained, with enough time remaining for necessary revisions and additions. We cannot guarantee that proposals submitted after this internal deadline will be approved for submission to the funding agency.

Definition of "completed proposal": In order for the proposal to meet the 3-day rule, the following must be submitted to OSP 3 days before the sponsor deadline, with all proposal components complete with the exception of the final project narrative (or scope of work equivalent) in final print or entered/uploaded into the sponsor's website or application portal (if electronic submission):
1. budget detail and abstract (scope of work) loaded into GAMS system and routed with appropriate departmental, chair, and dean approvals; to include
2. internal approvals for cost sharing commitment, request to overmatch, and waiving or reduction to facilities and administrative (F&A) rates applied;
3. potential compliance issues addressed, i.e. use of human subjects, conflict of interest
4. completed submission in prescribed format (hard copy or entering/uploading into electronic portal) to include the following components as required by sponsor guidance using prescribed forms, etc.

      Abstract (Project Summary)
      Project Narrative (fairly accurate pending minor revisions is acceptable at this stage)
      Bibliography and References Sited
      Current and Pending Support
      Detailed Budget in Sponsor format (form)
      Detailed Budget Justification (text format)
      Commitment/Support Letters and Other Required Attachments

Sponsor Deadline	OSP Internal Deadline for 3-day rule
Monday	the previous Wednesday at 9 A.M.
Tuesday	the previous Thursday at 9 A.M.
Wednesday	the previous Friday at 9 A.M.
Thursday	Monday of the same week at 9 A.M.
Friday	Tuesday of the same week at 9 A.M.
Saturday	Because Saturday is not a business day, it does not count towards the 3-day rule. You should treat Friday as the deadline, so the internal proposal deadline is Tuesday of the same week at 9 A.M.
Sunday	Because Sunday is not a business day, it does not count towards the 3-day rule. You should treat Friday as the deadline, so the internal proposal deadline is Tuesday

(Please note: The construct of the 3-day rule is necessary so that electronic submissions can be processed early enough on the actual day of the sponsor deadline; otherwise, proposal submissions are jeopardized due to slow or frozen websites. In turn, the 3-day period runs from 9 A.M. three days prior to the day of the sponsor deadline to 9 A.M. on the day of the sponsor deadline).

This policy applies to all proposals to all agencies including situations where we are not the lead institution but are receiving a subaward/subcontract from another lead institution[1]. Regardless of whether a proposal is to be submitted as a hard copy or through electronic submission, all proposals must be submitted to OSP for review prior to submission to the agency. Proposals submitted without OSP review risk being withdrawn from sponsor consideration as well as non-acceptance of awarded funds. Proposals require the signature of an authorized representative or official. The AVPR or one of his delegates are the ONLY individuals authorized to sign agency forms, representations, certifications and other grant or contract documents requiring the signature of an authorized representative, official or signatory. All official signatures must be obtained from OSP. Likewise, no proposal will be approved by OSP without all required Chair and Dean approvals.

Many PIs wish to work on the technical portion of their proposal until the last minute. To accommodate this request, PIs may submit a fairly accurate version of the technical portion of the proposal to meet the three working day rule. In turn, a final version of the technical portion of the proposal will not be due until 9am the day the proposal needs to be submitted, provided that revisions do not significantly impact the internally routed and approved project summary. Other components of the proposal (i.e., detailed budget, budget justification, abstract, proposal transmittal form, agency forms), however, must be submitted to OSP three working days prior to the day of the sponsor's deadline. We encourage PIs to send proposal items piecemeal well before the three working day deadline. For example, if you have a detailed budget and budget justification (a.k.a. budget narrative) two weeks before the deadline but don't have everything else, please go ahead and send it to OSP for review. That will help prevent last minute revisions at a later date. Please note, however, that the PI or someone authorized by the PI needs to be available after submitting the proposal (whether piecemeal or all at once) in order to promptly make corrections, provide more information, etc.

When submitting proposals that require electronic submissions through an agency's web-based system, principal investigators should be aware that some agencies' systems are commonly unstable and become overloaded or frozen due to heavy user access as a deadline approaches. It is strongly recommended that an additional working day be allowed for processing of electronic proposals in order to ensure that sufficient time exists to resolve any technical issues that occur. Likewise, it is recommended that complex proposals (i.e., those with contract documents incorporated, those with multiple consortium or subcontract arrangements, those with cost sharing from third parties, those with complicated budgets) be submitted a day or two before the three working day deadline to offset the extra time needed for approvals and review.

In the event of the university closing (due to inclement weather or another emergency), OSP will be closed. In this situation, faculty or grant administrators with a grant deadline during that period of time who have not received approval from OSP for their proposal should contact the funding agency for an extension to the deadline date. For other university holidays or closings, PIs should treat the last day before the closing or holiday as the submission deadline. In other words, proposals shall be submitted to OSP three working days before the last working day before the holiday or closing.

For the vast majority of PIs who submit their proposals for review early, there should be little change in procedure. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding that our proposal submission policies are necessary to give each and every proposal a proper review. In turn, our proposals will have a better chance of funding. If you have any questions about this policy or other sponsored programs policies, please contact OSP.

[1] In cases where another institution is the lead applicant, our university's deadline is the deadline dictated by the lead institution (often a day or two prior to their actual deadline) and not necessarily the lead institution's deadline to their sponsor