UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
SPONSORED PROGRAMS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section B: Proposal Preparation  
Policy  B2.3: Proposal Approval, Submission & Signature on Behalf of the University

PURPOSE:

To establish the university’s approval, submission, and signature requirements for academic and research program proposals to federal and nonfederal sponsors.

DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this policy:

Principal Investigator (PI): the individual faculty member who will bear primary responsibility for the conduct and administration of a sponsored project.

Department Chair: the individual faculty member who serves as the head of an academic department, including RSMAS division heads and directors of centers and institutes.

Academic Dean: the deans of the college and schools and heads of nonacademic divisions.

Pre-Award Administration/Research Administration (RA): the office on each campus responsible for coordinating and reviewing proposals.

Authorized University of Miami Official: the individual(s) who has been specifically designated as authorized to sign proposals on behalf of the university.

Proposal Transmittal form: a form used to accompany the proposal that provides general information concerning the proposal and is signed by certain university officials to indicate their review and approval of the proposal for their area of responsibility.

POLICY:

Each Academic Dean has the authority within his/her college or school to establish policies for the approval of proposals in addition to those policies included here.

A proposal transmittal form must accompany every proposal throughout the approval process. The following individuals must approve the proposal before it can be submitted to the sponsor:

- Principal Investigator and any co-Principal Investigators
- Department Chairman and Academic Dean (or their designees) of every faculty member named in the proposal.
- The head(s) of RA or their designee.
- Individuals authorized by the Board of Trustees to sign proposals on behalf of the university (consult with RA personnel).

The following offices are responsible for determining that all appropriate proposal approval procedures have been followed; the required authorized signatures are present; the proposal package is complete; and the proposal is submitted in a timely basis:

- Coral Gables Campus – RA - Coral Gables
- Medical Campus – RA – Medical
- RSMAS – RA – Sponsored Programs Process Team (SPPT)/RSMAS
- South Campus – RA-Medical

REFERENCES:

None

PROCEDURES:

Proposal Approval

1. The PI is responsible for completing the Proposal Transmittal form and for obtaining the necessary signatures. RA will assist in completing the form, if needed. The Transmittal form will be routed for approval from the PI to the department chair(s), dean(s), and RA(s).

2. Each individual who reviews and approves the Transmittal form must give special attention to the following areas:

   - The PI assumes responsibility for the scope and worth of the scientific, technical, or educational effort. The PI is also responsible for ensuring the budget reflects all possible items of expense, and certifies the project will be performed in compliance with university and sponsor policy.
   - The department head certifies the project is appropriate to the department; the responsible staff is available and willing to supervise the project; space is adequate, facilities, and personnel are available; and the technical portion of the proposal has merit.
   - The Academic Dean confirms the appropriate approval has been obtained at the departmental level. The dean also determines the project is consistent with the objectives of the school or college and certifies the source and availability of any university resources required by the project.
   - RA certifies the proposal conforms to the format required by the sponsor, the budget properly reflects items of expense, and the proposal is in compliance with university and sponsor policies.

3. RA is responsible for forwarding the proposal and completed Transmittal form to an authorized signer for the university.

Proposal Submission
1. After the appropriate university official has approved and signed the Proposal Transmittal form, any required agency forms, and other assurances identified in the proposal, the proposal is returned to the PI (or the departmental administrator) for mailing to the sponsor.

2. The proposal package must be duplicated for internal university use and in compliance with sponsor requirements.

The number of copies required by each sponsor varies. Each sponsor’s guidelines should be reviewed for this information.

The number of copies for internal university use will vary with the PI and/or the project requirements, but most situations require five copies. These copies are distributed as follows:

- RA. This copy is used for reference in negotiations, in budget revisions, for administrative references, and for entry into the sponsor system.
- Sponsored Programs (SP) - Financial Administration. This copy becomes the official university file.
- The originating department. This copy is used for reference regarding questions on the management or administration of the project. This copy may also be used as reference for other successful proposals.
- PI.

3. A brief transmittal letter is to be prepared, if necessary, to accompany the proposal. The transmittal letter will address the proposal to the sponsor and will identify the research program it is proposing. It may also identify the appropriate university offices or personnel to contact for specific matters (i.e., scope of work, negotiations, and administrative matters).

4. The sponsor guidelines should be reviewed to ensure the correct address is being used to transmit the proposal. If the proposal is in response to an RFP, it should be sent to the address listed on the cover sheet of the RFP.

5. The letter of transmittal, the original signed proposal, and all required copies are mailed to the sponsor.

6. In accordance with this policy, all proposals will be submitted on a timely basis. It is the PI’s (or his/her designee’s) responsibility to ensure that this occurs.

The PI should allow ample time for obtaining the necessary approvals on the Transmittal form and for having the proposal reviewed. This requires coordination with RA during proposal development and preparation.

Unsolicited proposals must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines set by each sponsor. RA can provide these dates.

7. The PI and department are responsible for ensuring all proposal copies are corrected should an error be noticed subsequent to proposal submission. The PI/department will notify the sponsors and university offices that have copies of the proposal if errors are detected after submission of the proposal. An updated proposal will be routed to sponsors and university offices.
8. In the case of electronic submission of applications, the PI/department must adhere to the proposal approval process shown above PRIOR TO the electronic submission of an application. An electronic application may not be submitted to a sponsor without first obtaining all UM required approvals. The PI/department must work closely with Research Administration on the preparation and submission of electronic applications. In addition, following the electronic submission of the application, a complete copy of the proposal must be routed to the appropriate UM offices as sited in bullet #2 above.