Proposal Elements, Q&A and SF424: What You Need to Know about Submitting Grant Proposals

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NMMI/Gordon Center grant policies

- The specific aims and URL for the funding opportunity announcement of all outgoing grant proposals must be submitted to Chris at least **6 weeks prior** to the sponsor deadline. Chris sends them to the appropriate chief (Tom/Georges) for review and comment. She also assigns which administrator will assist the PI with the proposal.

- At this point you also need to identify whether there will be any subcontracts on the proposal (and if so, provide contact info for sub institution), whether there will be any cost sharing, whether the proposal will be above the NIH's $500,000 per year direct cost limit and whether it is a new proposal, a resubmission or a renewal.

- The names of all senior/key personnel must be provided to the NMMI administrator who is assisting you with the proposal **at least 4 weeks** before the sponsor's deadline.

- The administrative components of the grant (everything except the science) is due to the NMMI administrator who is assisting you with the proposal **at least 3 weeks** before the sponsor's deadline.
  - Budget, budget justification and abstract are most vital to have available first.
  - Giving administrators very early drafts is not useful and causes confusion and frustration. *When you submit the admin components of the grant to your NMMI administrator, consider them finalized from your end and not to be changed.* *The budget information has to be entered in several places in the application so making changes once it's been entered is time-consuming.*
  - If after review of the admin components of the proposal, Research Management requests any changes or has any questions that your NMMI administrators can't update or answer on their own, the NMMI administrator will contact you.

- The final version of the Research Plan (i.e. the science) and any changes to the admin components requested by Research Management is due to your NMMI administrator **no less than 7 business days** before the sponsor's deadline. *Once it has been submitted to your NMMI administrator, it is considered final and is not to be changed.*

- Please note that if your project is a subcontract (MGH is the subcontractor), all above deadlines will be moved up by at least one week to enable MGH/Research Management to provide the required paperwork to the prime institution within the prime institution's deadlines.

Tips for a smooth proposal submission:

- Start early

- Stay in contact with the NMMI administrator who is assisting you. If you don't think you can meet the stated internal deadlines for a specific outgoing proposal, talk to your NMMI administrator and discuss what is possible. It is much better for them to receive an actual final version 2 days late than to receive 3 different "final"versions over the course of a week. Communication helps all of us to better manage our workload.

- Sending multiple versions of sections of your grant causes confusion, frustration and wasted effort on the part of your NMMI administrator. *Changing the budget after it's been entered into Adobe and InfoEd is especially time-consuming. If you must send an updated version of any component of your proposal, please track changes in the new version.* Your NMMI administrator may have already made their own changes to the version they have uploaded. *Also give the updated version a slightly different file name than the original.*

- When naming your files, try to follow a consistent format and make the file name relate to the content. (Ex: GEFOncR01_BudgetJustification.doc; GEFOncR01_GEFBio.doc; GEFOncR01_)

- Send your materials (other than budget template) to your NMMI administrator in Word format. This saves time if Research Management requires changes.

- Common First-time PI Questions:
  - Can I list someone as non-key personnel with no effort but still include their biosketch in the proposal?
  - How do I decide whether someone should be a consultant or a subcontractor?
  - What type of expenses are excluded from indirect (F&A costs)?
  - What is the difference between a modular budget and a detailed budget? When do I use each type?
  - Does MGH/Partners take indirects on subcontracts?

InfoEd Record Routing

- The Info Ed system is designed to have a Draft route of the record to our Research Management pre-award grant administrator and then a Final route of the record. *Once the Final route has been initiated, no changes can be made to the record.* *The version in the Final route is what Research Management will upload to the NIH.*

InfoEd Draft Routing

The DRAFT route is configured with the following approval steps once a Department Administrator initiates the routing:

- **Step 1: Department Administrator** (anyone the department has identified as being able to take responsibility for the dept proposals)
- **Step 2: PI**
- **Step 3: Chief/Delegate**
- **Step 4: Pre-Award Administrator**

  Based on the chief code that has been designated in the InfoEd record, the system will automatically assign the correct people for each step included in the route. If there are multiple people associated to the role for a department they will all receive the email requesting they approve the record routing. However, only one person in the step must actually sign off for the route to move on to the next step.

InfoEd Final Routing

- When the Research Management pre-award grant administrator has finished their review of the draft record, they will route the record back to the department. He/she will usually send their comments by email to the Department Administrator (DA).

- Once the DA has uploaded all of the final documents to InfoEd, they will initiate the FINAL routing and the record will be routed directly to the Research Management pre-award grant administrator. While the PI is notified that Final routing has been initiated, they aren't asked to approve the Final routing and do not have an opportunity to make any additional changes to the record.