Sponsored Programs Reference Guide

The purpose of the Office of Sponsored Programs is to assist Taylor faculty with funding for scholarly projects, curriculum development and research. The office assists with the proposal and award process (internal and external), budget development and compliance with agency requirements. Additionally, the office oversees the University’s compliance with regulations governing the expenditures and work performed using restricted funding. Electronic copies of our forms and policies can be found on our website at http://int.taylor.edu/osp/.

The office is under Academic Affairs and the director reports to the Provost. Additionally, the Staff Accountant in the Business office works with the Sponsored Programs office to maintain financial records and make timely requests for payments.

To assist faculty in Taylor’s process, the components and steps to submitting and administering an award are outlined below.

Funding Searches
Taylor University’s offices of University Advancement, the Zondervan Library, and the Office of Sponsored Programs desire to equip our community with the resources and tools necessary to conduct research on grants and other funding sources.

- http://library.taylor.edu/grants/index.shtml

Combining resources from the Foundation Center Collection co-sponsored by TU’s University Advancement and the Zondervan Library and SPINPlus provided through University’s Office of Sponsored Programs, this page offers a great range of opportunities for discovering funding for your project.

In considering solicitations and agencies there are several questions that need to be asked and answered:

- What are the agency objectives and how well do the agency objectives or interests match the university and the investigator’s focus?
- What other proposals has the agency funded?
- What are the financial and time constraints for this solicitation? Can you complete a reasonable amount of work with those constraints?
- Does the agency have needs that are met by your project? How closely does your project align with the agency’s needs?
- Is the university required to match the award amount with financial or in kind funds? Are there limitations placed on what can be used as matching?
- Is there enough time to complete the application and write a well thought-out proposal?
- Does the agency have a program officer or contact person that you can talk with about your project?

Depending on the agency, it may be helpful to send an email to the program officer with a summary of your proposed work. Ask if the work aligns well with the solicitation and if they officer can provide any comments or criticisms. Other solicitations ask for a letter of intent to be sent (either required or requested) prior to submitting the proposal. Be aware of what is needed by the agency – some things that seem unimportant to you can make the difference between consideration and rejection. Agencies
are looking at how well investigators complete the proposal package. Those who submit proposals without following directions are finding their proposals returned without review.

Developing the Proposal
Developing a strong proposal that has the potential of receiving funding involves discussions with colleagues, program officers and the university. Today’s funding environment is collaborative, interdisciplinary, and includes undergraduates as well as peers. Questions that need to be asked include:

- What is the current literature?
- Is anyone doing something similar?
- If a similar project exists, how is your work different? (If your work is similar it may be perceived as duplication of effort and not be funded. If sufficiently different or an improvement can be clearly shown, it may receive funding)
- How will your work add to the existing body of knowledge?
- Do you know anyone that may be interested in collaborating?
- Is there anyone from another institution, from NGOs, or from industry who would be a valuable asset on the project? (Think beyond letters of support and think letters of commitment & collaboration)
- How might this be beneficial to students (especially undergraduates)?
- Is the scope of the project manageable? Larger projects may need to be broken down into several smaller projects.
- What is the amount of time needed to complete the project? (Academic and summer) Can some of the work be done as a class - senior capstone or directed research? If the work is limited to off-site during the summer can analysis be done during the academic year?
- What are the resources needed to complete the project? Do you need release time? Will students work during the academic year or only during the summer? Is travel involved - to collaborators, to resource sites, to conference presentations? Do you need supplies specifically for this project? It may be helpful to use a budget template to capture what is needed.

As part of the proposal development Taylor University has 3 forms that assist the university in supporting your work. Along with internal documents, external discussions and forms should be completed in a timely manner. The table below explains when and what should be completed to contribute to your success.

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<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>External</th>
<th>Internal</th>
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<td>As soon as possible – at least one month prior to submitting proposal (depending on the size of the project this may be up to 3 months before submitting proposal)</td>
<td>Talk with a program officer</td>
<td>Complete the Proposal Advisory Form (Step 1) Talk with your chair &amp; OSP if you have not done so already</td>
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<td>Two weeks (ten business days) prior to submitting the proposal (depending on the time of the year may need more time if President’s signature is needed)</td>
<td>Complete Required Documents – budget, CV, supporting documents, cover letter, letters of commitment, review specific guidelines (what is and is not allowed?)</td>
<td>Submit Pre-Approval Form (step 2) any cover letters or forms that need signatures should be done, rough draft of proposal to OSP with preapproval form</td>
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<tr>
<td>One day (24 hours) prior to submitting proposal</td>
<td>If uploading documents to a website, have everything loaded and check for errors</td>
<td>Submit Cover Sheet (step 3) along with final or almost final version of proposal to OSP.</td>
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Pre-Award Role of Sponsored Programs:
OSP can assist in the proposal stage (pre-award) as well as the administration of the award (post-award).

Pre-award assistance:
- **Step 1: Discussion of Advisory Form**
  - Establish timelines (Documents to OSP, budget, unusual requirements)
  - Letters/certificates from university officials requested
  - Identify matching if necessary (PI, Dept Chair, Dean, Business Office, Provost, Advancement)
- **Budget Development**
  - Compliance with agency and federal policies
    - Wages, reassignment (release) time, allowable expenses
  - Discussions with external collaborators
    - Contact Information - University Sponsored Programs or Industry / Non-profit finance personnel
    - Gather information from collaborators (cv’s, letters, unique requirements for proposal submission)
  - Planning for post grant maintenance costs for instruments / equipment
- **Step 2: Pre-approval Form**
  - Sub-Award Documents received by OSP – 10 days prior to submission of proposal
  - Pre-approval form received by OSP – 10 days prior to submission of proposal
  - Check required forms for accuracy and compliance with agency requirements
- **Step 3: Cover sheet – review proposal and supporting documents**
  - Signatures
  - Submit proposal to granting agency
  - Complete submission process

Role of OSP in Post Award:
- Review the award check list (Step 4) for details on award acceptance. Before work can begin, several steps must be reviewed to ensure compliance with university and federal policies.
  - Acceptance of Award – Unless the proposal is to a fellowship or an individual, all awards are given to Taylor University. **Taylor’s authorized agent is Stephen Olson.** He is the only person who can accept an award.
  - Between the submission of the proposal and the award, the budget may have changed. At times, an agency will notify the PI of a need to reduce (or in rare instances expand!) the budget or that only a portion of the work will be funded due to funding issues. Please forward the final budget with any changes to OSP.
  - The following may or may not be needed. OSP will assess prior to creating the award in Banner.
    - IRB or IACUC approval
    - Financial Conflict of Interest forms completed
    - Responsible Conduct of Research training for students
    - Subaward agreements signed
- OSP will review Banner for allowable and allocable expenses. Unallowable expenditures will be moved from the restricted funding account to the department budget within 30 days unless the PI provides sufficient documentation following notification by OSP.
- OSP will work with the PI to complete financial reports in a timely manner. Revisions to the budget may be allowed if the awarding agency allows changes. Approved revisions will be sent to the business office using the Internal Budget Revision form.
- Progress and final reports are the responsibility of the PI. OSP’s responsibility includes being familiar with agency reporting requirements and sending timely reminders to the PI.