Office of Sponsored Programs  
Guide to the Preparation, Review, Approval, and Submission of  
Proposals for External Funding  

Assistance in Proposal Preparation:  

Contact with the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP), particularly at the proposal drafting stage,  
will help establish the proper sequence of events and thereby assure meeting the sponsor's  
deadline. The OSP can provide the following assistance: locating funding sources in government  
and private agencies; budget development; information on cost sharing, indirect costs, and  
employee benefits; formatting; developing a justification; completing sponsor forms; clarifying  
agency and institutional policies/guidelines; providing boilerplate information on the institution;  
assisting with the electronic submission process, such as for Fastlane or Grants.gov; and other  
related matters. Remember that assistance with grant development and submission are the  
OSP's primary goals and faculty/staff at all stages of grant development are welcome to contact  
the OSP for discussion. Early contact with the OSP is strongly encouraged to ensure adequate  
lead time for proper review and approval of grant submissions.  

Approval of Proposals:  

As described below, proposals are routed and approved within the University using the OSP  
Approval Form located at [http://www.elon.edu/sponsoredprograms](http://www.elon.edu/sponsoredprograms) (click on “Forms”). The  
University may elect not to honor obligations undertaken by faculty or staff that have not been  
properly reviewed and authorized. The approval process is as follows:  

1. Contact the OSP as soon as you begin thinking of submitting an external grant.  

2. The Principal Investigator/Project Director (PI/PD) submits the proposal and Approval  
Form to the department chair or supervisor for review and signature. Budgetary  
information and statements concerning the availability and use of personnel, space, and  
facilities for the contemplated activity must accompany the proposal. The chair's or  
supervisor’s approval constitutes an endorsement of all aspects of the proposal. When  
more than one department is involved, the proposal must be approved by the chair or  
supervisor of each department.  

3. The proposal, along with the Approval Form, is transmitted to the OSP by the PI/PD a  
minimum of 5 days before the deadline for review to assure it adheres to University and  
agency policies; to resolve any financial, administrative, or legal questions such as those  
related to conflict of interest or intellectual property; and to review commitment of  
University space, facilities, and services. In addition, the budgetary and other  
administrative provisions are closely reviewed. If the proposal involves complex  
administrative or fiscal arrangements, e.g., Grants.gov submissions, interdisciplinary  
programs, collaborations with multiple external agencies or institutions, additional time  
should be allotted for review and approval. Please note, if other institutions are  
participating in the proposal, appropriate institutional approval from those institutions  
should be provided to or will be requested by the OSP.  

4. The OSP will assist faculty/staff by securing approvals from the appropriate dean(s) or  
vice president(s) and academic affairs, and will either mail the appropriate number of  
copies or submit the proposal electronically on behalf of the PI/PD.  

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