UNIVERSITY OF MAINE  
Office of Research & Sponsored Programs  
Proposal Submission Policy & Timeline

The University of Maine requires all full proposals be reviewed and approved by the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs prior to submission to the sponsor. This policy applies regardless of whether UM is the lead agency submitting directly to the sponsor, or whether UM will be a subcontractor or collaborator under another institution/organization’s submission. It also applies regardless of the method of submission, e.g. paper copy, email, or electronic submission portal.

Given the growing complexity of the proposal submission process, it is critical that principal investigators adhere to the internal deadlines below so that staff members in the Departments, Labs, Centers, and ORA have time to work through the many issues that arise before submitting a proposal by the sponsor’s deadline.

Additional time requirements: Proposals including sub-awards, cost share, or requests of $2 million or more require additional coordination, documentation, and approvals. Additional time for both review and approval should be allocated.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Timeline for Proposal Review &amp; Submission</th>
<th>Minimum Full Business Days Prior to Sponsor Deadline Required for Processing &amp; Submission</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Notice to ORA of Pending Submission</strong></td>
<td>When PI commits to proposal submission - ASAP</td>
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<td>– UM’s lead PI must sign into PARS, fill out the Notice of Intent form, and submit to ORA as soon as possible. ORA will contact the PI regarding timeline and staff assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1st draft of budget, justification, and abstract emailed to ORA for review.</strong></td>
<td>15 Full Business Days</td>
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| – Use of the ORA budget template is required for all proposals.  
[http://www.pars.umesp.maine.edu/ORAWeb/ORABudget.xlsx](http://www.pars.umesp.maine.edu/ORAWeb/ORABudget.xlsx) |  |
| – *Please note that uploading budget documents into PARS is not considered “sending” the documents to ORA and will not constitute meeting this deadline. |  |
| **PARS routing initiated with ORA approved budget and justification** – Full PARS approval is required prior to submission of all proposals. Approvers need adequate time to review and ask questions. Proposals with cost-sharing or total project costs > $2 million need to begin PARS routing 10 business days prior to the sponsor deadline. Proposals over $2 million require Provost approval. Proposals that do NOT include any cost-sharing need to start routing 5 business days before the sponsor deadline. *Proposals will not be submitted to the sponsor unless all PARS approvals have been completed. | 10 with cost-share or over $2mill  
5 without cost-share & < $2mill Full Business Days |
| **Solid working draft of full application sent to ORA for review** - A version of the sponsor proposal application package that includes all complete required forms, attachments, and boilerplate documents (ex. biosketch). The project narrative/description can be a work in progress at this stage. | 5 Full Business Days |

Last revised: February 10, 2017
Final version of full application sent to ORA for review & submission;  
Approved PARS;  
Completed/signed Sub-recipient commitment forms and required documents (if applicable)

*Note on Electronic Submissions: In some cases, systems like grants.gov and ASSIST can take up to 48 hours to validate a proposal before it is forwarded to the sponsor. This means that it may take up to an additional 48 hours before the proposal is considered received on time. Any proposals receiving validation errors must be revised and re-submitted and must go through the same validation process again prior to the proposal due date. Any corrections submitted after the official sponsor due date are considered LATE and will not be accepted by the sponsor.

**Note on Hardcopy (paper) proposals, original signatures, and flash drives:** ORA requires the PI to make their own arrangements for photocopying and submitting hardcopy proposals, so allow a few extra days to accommodate this process. If the proposal requires a signed form or letter from ORA, an electronic or hardcopy will be sent to or picked up by the PI for inclusion in the proposal package. PIs are also responsible for correctly uploading their proposals to a flash drive if one is required by the sponsor.

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**New Late Submission Policy**

**Scenarios Requiring Approval from the Associate Vice President for Research**:  

1. If ORA has not received a draft budget at least 15 full business days prior to the sponsor’s due date, it will not be reviewed or submitted unless approved by the Associate Vice President for Research (AVPR), David Neivandt.

2. Final full proposals received for submission 3 business days or less prior to the sponsor deadline will not be reviewed or submitted unless approved by the Associate Vice President for Research (AVPR), David Neivandt.  
   2a) If a final proposal is received for initial review by ORA after 3:30 pm on the sponsor deadline date, it will NOT be submitted.

*Note that ORA and the Office of the VPR are tracking all proposals and PIs that do not adhere to the ORA timeline.

**Approval Process:** Approval from the AVPR should be sought as soon as possible for either scenario above, and will require a justification explaining the reason for noncompliance with the ORA timeline and why an exception should be granted. The Principal Investigator should send their justification and request for approval via email to David Neivandt at david.neivandt@maine.edu with a copy to proposals@maine.edu, unless the PI is already working with ORA staff, in which case, please copy the ORA Pre-Award Proposal Supervisor, Laura Ward at lauraw@maine.edu. The AVPR will then determine if there is adequate time and personnel capacity within ORA to allow for appropriate review and submission. Please note that if approval for submission is granted, it will be processed by ORA in the order it was received.

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ORA will make every effort to submit late proposals, but cannot guarantee that such proposals will be adequately reviewed, or submitted by the sponsor deadline. If ORA determines that a proposal does not meet the minimum University and sponsor policies, the proposal will be returned without submission. In certain instances, a proposal may be submitted to the sponsor but later withdrawn or declined if issues arise due to the lack of time to properly review proposal materials. Proposals that have met the ORA timeline dates take priority over late proposals.

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Last revised: February 10, 2017
**Pre-Proposals**

The submission process for pre-proposals, pre-applications, concept papers, and letters or notices of intent, hereinafter referred to collectively as “pre-proposals,” is slightly different from full proposal submissions.

1) A pre-proposal that does not require a detailed budget does NOT need to be seen by ORA.
   
   *The exception to this is when Fastlane, grants.gov, or another electronic system requires an authorized institutional endorsement for submission. In this case, ORA must be notified of intent to submit 3 business days prior to the sponsor deadline.

2) A pre-proposal submitted to an external sponsor requiring a detailed budget, but no cost share, must be reviewed by ORA but does not need to be routed through PARS.

3) A pre-proposal submitted to an external sponsor requiring a detailed budget with UM cost share must be reviewed by ORA and must also be routed through PARS.

4) A pre-proposal submitted to an internal UM competition requiring a detailed budget (ex. Sea Grant, Faculty Research Fund) will not be required to go through PARS; however, it is recommended that ORA review the budget.