

## **Institutional Proposal Process**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. How will proposals be distributed throughout the proposal team? Will the proposal team be split by academic unit?**

All new funding proposals will list the Proposal Team Lead as the Specialist when created. Once proposals reach the Specialist queue, the Team Lead will confirm it is received in the appropriate timeframe and then distribute proposals amongst team members evenly. At this time, proposal reviews will not be split by academic unit. OSP will monitor data metrics and workload and see if changes in assignments are needed.

**2. What can college/department level personnel do to pre-scan for potential COI issues?**

College/department level personnel often have unique knowledge of research personnel and their relationships with individuals and companies due to their proximity and work with the PI. Noticing these relationships within proposals and making sure ancillary reviews are set up as early as possible will speed up the review process once in the OSVPRED.

**3. What happens with “Just in Time” responses for NIH and NSF?**

OSP will work with the appropriate college/department level personnel to obtain and submit the requested information to the relevant agency after reviewing the updated materials.

**4. What if the PI is required to submit the proposal?**

In situations where the PI is required to submit through a sponsor’s portal, the full proposal as it appears in the sponsor portal (printed pdf, screenshots, etc.) needs to be routed through Endeavor along with all other applicable documents. Once approved for submission, the OSP Proposal member assigned to the proposal will notify the PI and College/Department through Endeavor.

**5. Where is the checklist OSP will be using?**

The checklist that OSP uses in their review was provided on March 29<sup>th</sup> by Tony Ventimiglia to all CLDs and college representatives.

**6. How are the responsibilities and roles at the college level going to change?**

Responsibilities and roles at the college level have not changed. The only new requirement is that the Endeavor proposal must be in Specialist Review 7 business days before the sponsor deadline. OSP will be “hitting the submit button” but expects to receive a fully reviewed and submission ready proposal from all colleges who have CLDS, just as it is now.

**7. What happens if issues are identified or changes are needed?**

If issues are identified or changes are needed to a funding proposal, the OSP Proposal team member assigned will reach out through Endeavor to the appropriate individual based upon the nature of the issue/change with a signed letter identifying what is needed. Certain changes may only require the CLD or preparer to be notified, while others may require the PI be notified as well.

**8. What about “softer” deadlines if we are a subaward to another entity?**

If another entity is the direct sponsor for a funding proposal, they will have given a deadline for which they require the documents. If the college/department level personnel determine that the deadline is not enough time it is recommended that they work with the sponsor to determine if a new deadline can be set before routing for Auburn’s approval. The deadline can always be updated in the Draft state of Endeavor, but the proposal must still reach Specialist Review 7 business days before the sponsor’s deadline.

**9. What if I am are working on a contract and there is no “firm” deadline?**

If there is no firm deadline, it is recommended that the college/department delay routing until they are confident no more changes will be made. As previously mentioned, OSP expects a fully reviewed submission ready proposal when it reaches Specialist Review. If there is no official deadline provided by the sponsor, colleges/departments should plan appropriately to ensure everything is in place before work is scheduled to begin, to their best ability.

**10. What if the college/department believes they have an exception to the new timeline process?**

If the college/department believes they have an exception to the new timeline process (limited submission, short RFP response time, etc.) this needs to be well documented in Endeavor and specifically mentioned when the proposal moves from Departmental Review to Specialist Review.

**11. How will email submissions be submitted?**

For proposals that are submitted via email, the college/department level personnel will attach all files in Endeavor that need to be submitted as well as contact information for who the proposal needs to be sent to. This can be done when sending for Departmental Review or Specialist Review. The assigned OSP Specialist will submit the proposal via email and copy the PI, Funding Proposal preparer, CLD, and anyone else requested by the college/department. A copy will be added to Endeavor when the Specialist does the final certification and moves the proposal to Sponsor Review.

**12. I just found a request for proposal I'm interested in and the proposal due date is in 3 days, within the 7-business day window. Can I still submit since I only just found the request for proposal?**

Unfortunately, no. Only in very limited [extenuating circumstances](#) can a proposal be accepted by OSP for processing with less than seven business days before the proposal due date. This is different than if the sponsor provides limited turnaround time from RFP release to proposal deadline.

**13. Can changes be made to the proposal once it is in Department Review?**

No, once a Funding Proposal leaves the Draft stage, the fully submission ready proposal should be in Endeavor in order to allow for all relevant reviewers to properly review the proposal.

**14. How will the queue for OSP's review work? How will it work if OSP sends the proposal back for edits and the college/department have to resubmit it to OSP?**

The proposal team will work on proposal based on deadlines. If a proposal is sent back for edits, lack of personnel trainings, etc., it will re-enter OSP's queue in the same "spot" it was before. For example, if a proposal is due on May 15<sup>th</sup>, and it is submitted to OSP by 8am on May 7<sup>th</sup>, but a Co-PI is missing their Research Security (Combined) training, OSP will send it back to the college/department for that issue to be rectified within 2 business days. Say OSP receives that proposal back on May 9<sup>th</sup>, it would be treated like any other proposal due on May 15<sup>th</sup>. It wouldn't get "bumped down" in the queue.

**15. How will the May 1<sup>st</sup> procedure change work?**

Proposals entered into Endeavor prior to May 1 will be submitted using the pre-May 1<sup>st</sup> process (CLD-units can submit their units' proposals, 7-business day deadline does not apply yet, etc.). For example, if a proposal is due May 4<sup>th</sup>, it needs to be entered into Endeavor before May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**16. Do ancillary reviews for intradepartmental proposal have to be complete before it reaches Specialist Review?**

Yes, ancillary reviews by all departments involved on a proposal should be completed before reaching Specialist Review. The Funding Proposal can still move forward in Endeavor without ancillary reviews being completed. However, this would not constitute a submission-ready proposal and would be in violation of the deadline procedure.

**17. How will limited submissions and tight turnaround times work?**

If a timeline provided by a sponsor is tight, we will work with the PI and submitting unit to ensure the proposal can be submitted while still going through all required compliance checks and review processes. For example, if a sponsor releases an

RFP 14 days before the due date, OSP will work with the unit to establish an alternate timeline. For limited submissions that also have a quick turnaround time, OSP will work with Proposal Service and Faculty Support (PSFS) to run a shortened competition and establish an alternate time. If you identify a limited submission (especially with a quick turnaround time) that is not already on the PSFS Funding Focus Newsletter, please alert PSFS and OSP as soon as possible.

**18. At what point should Letters of Commitment, Subrecipient Commitment Forms, etc. be signed and what is that process going to look like?**

Submission documents that require an authorized signature should be attached unsigned to the Funding Proposal in Endeavor. When the last Department Reviewer (CLD for the CLD units) submits the proposal to Specialist Review, please add to the comments what documents need to be signed along with submission information. Once signed by OSP, the specialist will upload the complete documents to Endeavor, the submission portal, etc. If there is a unique submission process, OSP will ensure the final documents get submitted.

**19. What if the sponsor requests changes prior to awarding?**

If a sponsor requests changes like “Just In Time” changes, OSP will need to be notified so they can open the Funding Proposal up for “Post Submission Updates.” Depending on the nature of the updates, OSP may need to review the updated documents being submitted.

**20. If an RFP has terms and conditions, who do we send that to?**

You can send any RFPs with T&Cs to [ospprop@auburn.edu](mailto:ospprop@auburn.edu) in advance of routing in Endeavor.

**21. When will proposals be submitted and will we be notified beforehand?**

Once a proposal has received a full review from the offices within the OSVPRED with no issues, it will be submitted promptly. Endeavor will then notify the preparer and PI that the proposal was submitted. It is imperative that the final proposal is routed in Endeavor so that it can be submitted at any point during the 7-day review window.

**22. How will the College/Dept. notify OSP that a proposal is ready to submit?**

Notification will be sent automatically to OSP when the departmental final approval of the Endeavor Funding Proposal (EFP) is completed, and it moves into the Specialist queue.

**23. Who will be responsible for final copy of submitted proposal being added to the Funding Proposal?**

OSP will add the submitted proposal and confirmation to the Endeavor Funding Proposal before closing it.

**24. How will award modifications work?**

CLDs will still work with their OSP award team to address post-award modifications (i.e. no cost extensions, budget changes, etc.)

**25. Will this process make Auburn University “harder to work with”?**

Similar processes are implemented at all SEC schools and most R1 institutions. These institutions’ processes all have internal deadlines in advance of the sponsor deadline; therefore, we do not see this process to be a limiting factor for institutions or sponsors wanting to partner with Auburn.

**26. If I enter my proposal into Endeavor before May 1, will the new process not apply even if the proposal is due in August?**

No. Entering a proposal into Endeavor before May 1 for the purpose of avoiding the new process is not permitted. Attempts to “game the system” by submitting proposals early to bypass upcoming requirements will be monitored and reviewed. Additionally, access and approval workflows for College-Level Designees (CLDs) will be changing as part of the new process. Submitting a proposal early may result in misaligned approval queues, which could cause delays or complications in routing and approval closer to the sponsor deadline.

**27. Why is this process also required for non-federal awards?**

While federal and federal flow-through awards impose explicit regulatory requirements, Auburn applies this process to non-federal awards as well to maintain a single, auditable, and consistent proposal submission system across all sponsors. A controlled and repeatable process helps ensure proposals meet sponsor, institutional, and legal requirements regardless of funding source.