PI QUICK GUIDE

How to Submit a Proposal Notification to OSR Proposals and Grants

A step-by-step guide for PIs

WHAT CHANGED — AND WHY DO I NEED TO DO THIS?

Previously, you could email your usual “Grants person” directly when you had a proposal or progress report coming up. We are changing that process: all proposals and progress reports/RPPRs must now be entered through the central Proposal Notification Form.

Why? The central notification gives OSR one consistent way to see upcoming work, assign the right person, manage workload across teams, and make sure requests are received early enough for the level of review and support required.

This does NOT mean you lose your OSR Grants person. Once your request is assigned, you will work with the assigned research administrator as usual. The form replaces the informal email as the way OSR receives and routes the request.

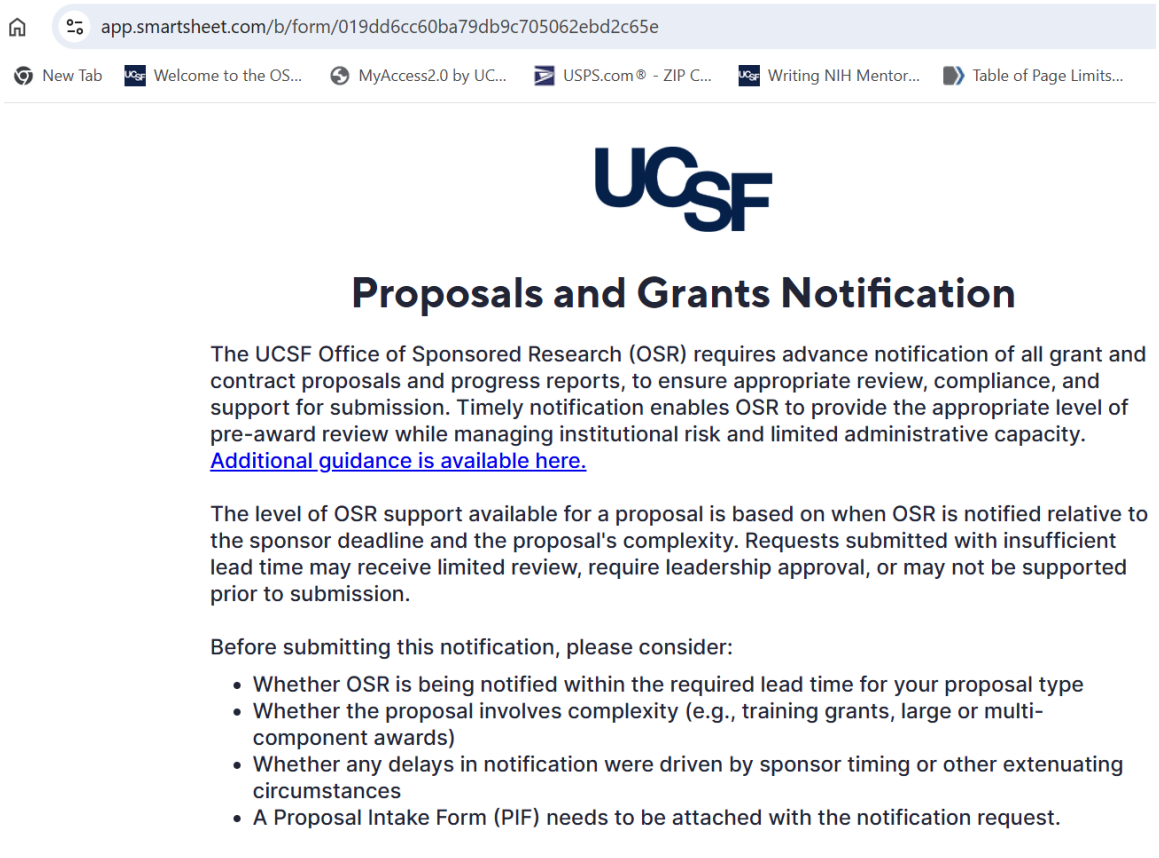
What do I need to do?

Submit the central Proposal Notification Form. Your request will be assigned to an OSR research administrator who will then work with you on the request. This person will be your assigned OSR grants person unless they are not available during that due date or they do not have bandwidth to assist this round.

Before You Start

Use the Smartsheet Proposal Notification Intake Form whenever you are planning to submit a proposal to a sponsor. The centralized process helps Office of Sponsored Research Proposals and Grants (OSR P&G) manage workload, identify late requests, and connect you with the appropriate pre-award research administrator.

Start here: https://tiny.ucsf.edu/NotifyProposalForm



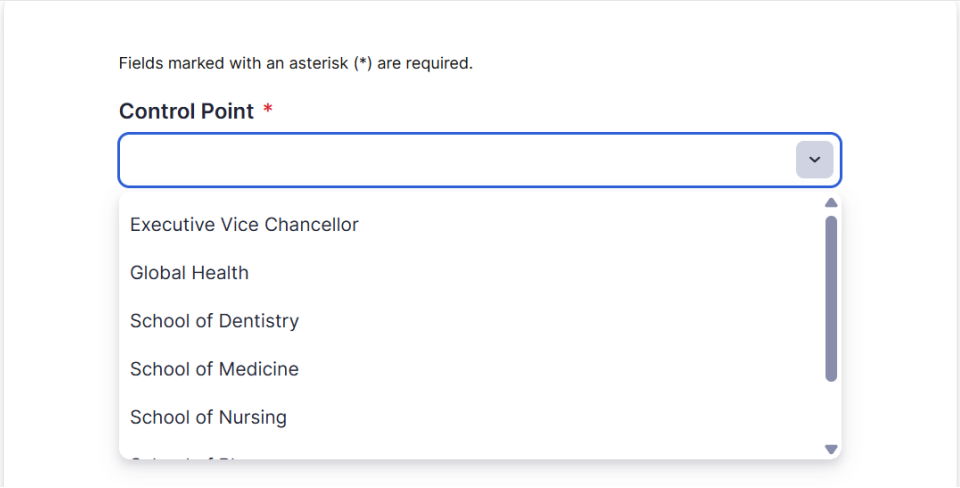
1. Complete the Smartsheet Proposal Notification Intake Form

Complete each section as accurately and completely as you can. Providing more information up front helps OSR P&G determine the appropriate support and timeline.

Control Point

Select the department that will administer the award if the proposal is funded. This is the department responsible for post-award management and reporting.

Example: If you are affiliated with both Epi-Bio and IGHS, but IGHS will administer the award, select IGHS.



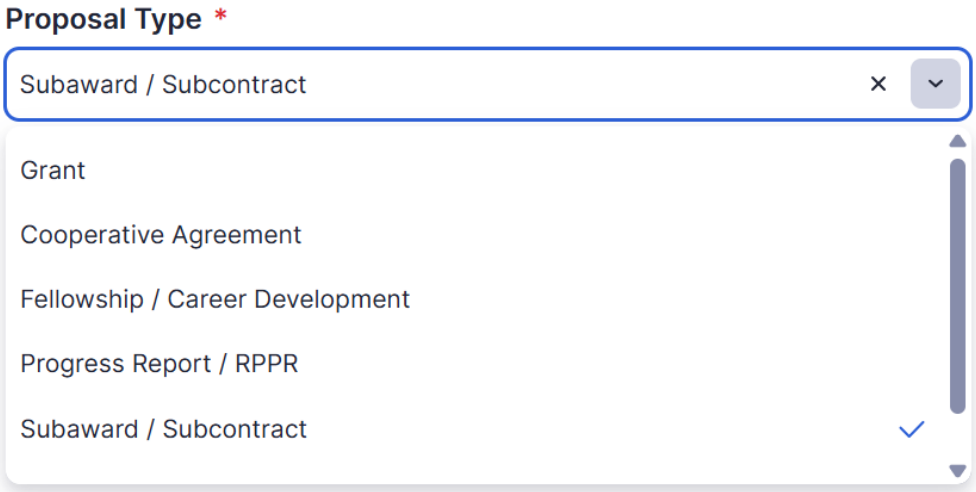
Contact Principal Investigators (PI)

Enter the name and email address of the researcher who will be the main PI on the proposal. If a postdoc or predoc will be the PI, enter that person's name.



2. Select the Correct Proposal Type

Choose the option that best describes what you are submitting to the sponsor. Different proposal types require different information and review.

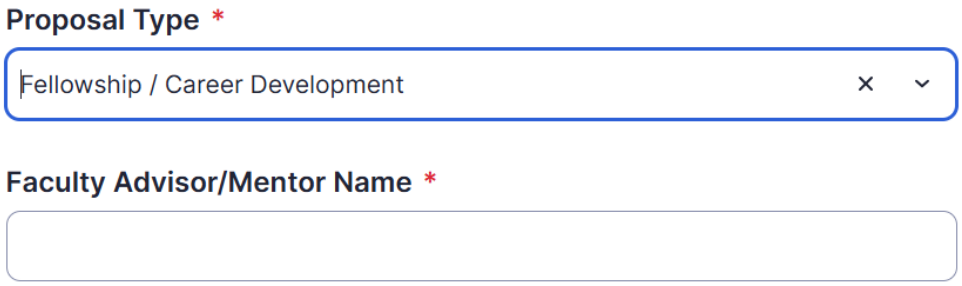


Proposal Type	Choose this when...
Grant	You are applying for funding for your own UCSF research or project.
Subaward / Subcontract	Another organization is submitting the main proposal and UCSF will perform part of the project as a subrecipient.
Cooperative Agreement	The funding opportunity specifically identifies the award as a cooperative agreement.
Fellowship / Career Development	The primary purpose is to support an individual researcher's fellowship, training, or career development.

Progress Report / RPPR	You already have an award and are reporting progress or other required information to the sponsor.

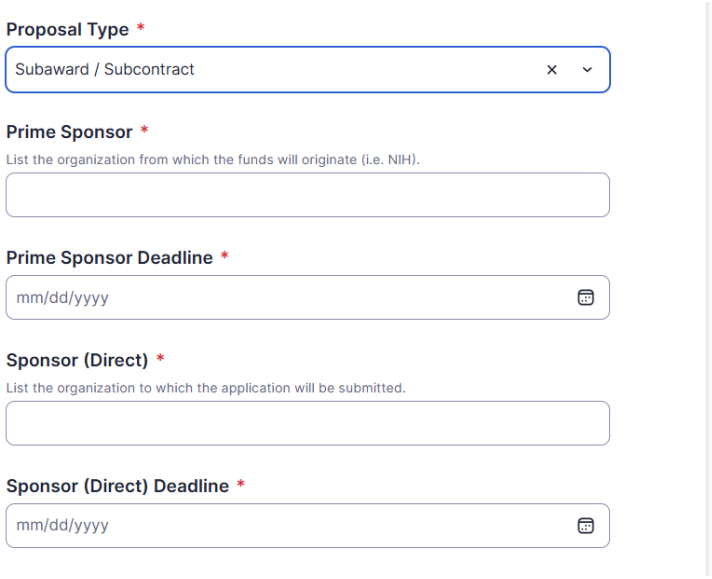
Quick test: If you already have the award and are reporting on it → Progress Report/RPPR. If another organization is submitting the main proposal and includes UCSF → Subaward/Subcontract. If the opportunity specifically says cooperative agreement → Cooperative Agreement. If it supports an individual fellowship/career development → Fellowship/Career Development. Otherwise → Grant.

If you are applying for a fellowship, also enter your faculty advisor or mentor.



2a. If This Is a Subaward/Subcontract

A subaward (also called a subcontract) means UCSF is doing part of a larger project that is being funded through another organization.



Simple example: NIH → Stanford → UCSF

- NIH = the sponsor providing the funding, the "Prime Sponsor" in the form.
- Stanford = the "Sponsor (Direct)" in the form (also called the prime recipient or flow-through institution or **pass-through entity (PTE)**).
- UCSF = the subrecipient receiving funding to perform its portion of the work.

In this example, UCSF is not applying directly to NIH. Stanford is submitting the application to NIH and including UCSF as a subrecipient.

Prime Sponsor Deadline vs. Sponsor (Direct) Deadline

The Prime Sponsor deadline is the date by which the flow-through institution's complete application is due to the originating funding agency. The Sponsor (Direct) Deadline is the earlier date by which UCSF must provide its materials to the organization submitting the application.

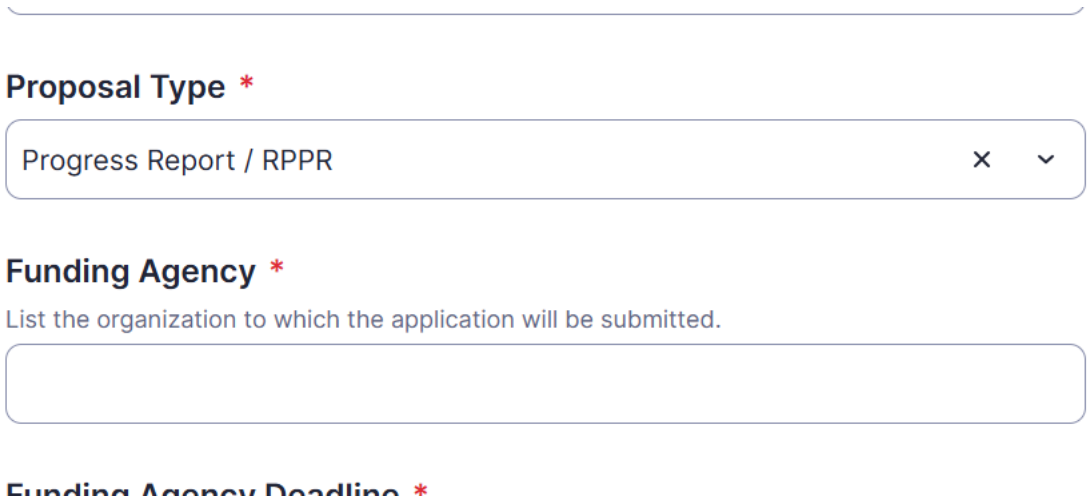
Deadline	Meaning
September 25 — Sponsor (Direct) Deadline	UCSF materials due to Stanford.
October 5 — Prime Sponsor Deadline	Stanford's complete application due to NIH.

For UCSF planning purposes, the earlier Sponsor (Direct) deadline is the deadline you need to meet. Do not use the Prime Sponsor deadline as your UCSF deadline.

2b. If this is a Progress Report/RPPR— Follow these steps

A Progress Report or RPPR is NOT a new proposal. It is a required report on an award you already have, such as an NIH Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR).

1. Select “Progress Report / RPPR.”
2. Enter the sponsor due date.
3. Upload the *sponsor notification/reminder email in the file upload section*
4. Do *NOT* complete or upload a PIF.



3. Enter the Proposal Details

- Funding Agency/Sponsor Deadline: Enter the sponsor's stated due date.
- Institutional Signature Requirement: Check the funding opportunity for AOR (Authorized Organizational Representative) /BO (Business Official)/SO (Signing Official) or other institutional signature requirements.
- Proposal Title: A draft title is preferred; TBD may be used if necessary.

Funding Agency Deadline *

mm/dd/yyyy

Does the sponsor require institutional signature at submission? *

Proposal Title *

4. Identify Proposal Elements

Some proposals require additional coordination, review, approvals, or specialized expertise. Select all that apply.

- Training Grant — supports training or development for students, postdocs, fellows, or early-career researchers.
- Multi-Component Proposal — includes multiple projects, cores, programs, or components submitted together as one application.
- Proposal with 3 or More Subcontracts — three or more external organizations will receive funding through subawards/subcontracts.
- Clinical Research — involves human participants, patient data, human specimens, or clinical research activities.
- International Partnerships / Components / NIH PF5 (Collaborative International Research Project) — involves foreign collaborators, organizations, sites, funding, data collection, or research outside the U.S.

Proposal Elements *

To ensure timely internal review and routing, please submit this survey according to the following lead times before your sponsor's submission deadline:

- Standard Applications (e.g., R03, R21, R01 with 2 or less subawards) — 30 calendar days in advance
- Large Proposals (e.g., proposals with 3 or more subawards, or subs to SBIRs/STTRs) — 60 calendar days in advance
- Complex Proposals (e.g., program projects or center grants, international partnerships/components/PF5's, institutional training grants, cooperative agreements — P, T, U mechanisms) — 4–6 months in advance

Select all that apply.

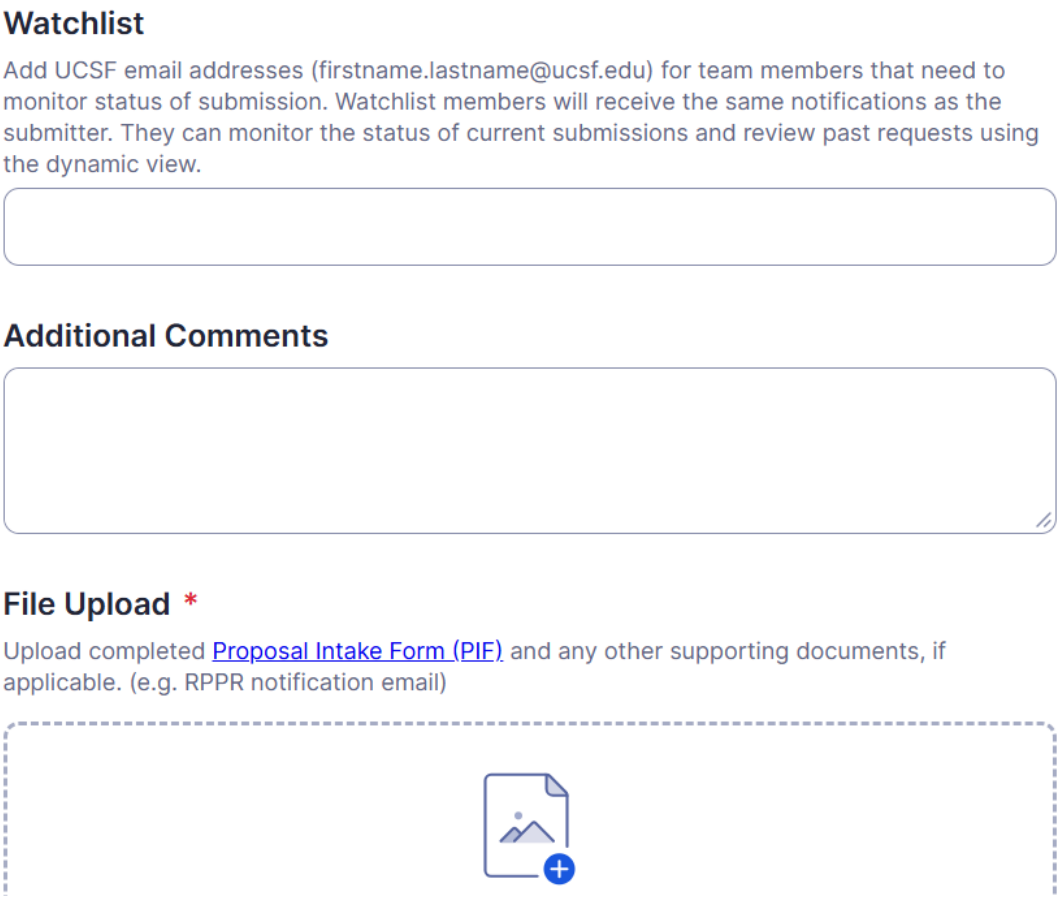
- [ ] Training Grant
- [ ] Multi-Component Proposal (P's, U's, etc.)
- [ ] Proposal with 3 or more subcontracts
- [ ] Clinical Research
- [ ] International Partnerships/Components/PF5's
- [ ] None of the above

5. Add Your Watchlist and Upload the Required Document

Use the Watchlist to add people who should be kept informed, such as a department chair, MSO, post-award contact, or administrative assistant.

FOR NEW PROPOSALS: Complete and upload the Proposal Intake Form (PIF).

FOR PROGRESS REPORTS/RPPRs: DO NOT complete a PIF. Upload the sponsor notification/reminder email instead.



6. What Happens After You Submit?

You will receive an email confirming that OSR has received your notification. It will include the request ID, PI, sponsor, sponsor deadline, and proposal title.

> *Thank you for notifying the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR) Proposals and Grants unit that you plan to submit an application. Our team has received the request.*

7. When Your Proposal Is Assigned

Once an OSR pre-award research administrator is assigned, you will receive an email identifying your assigned administrator and explaining what to expect next.

The assigned administrator will contact you within 3 days for next steps.

TIMING OF NOTIFICATION IMPACTS SERVICE LEVEL

OSR may not be able to provide the full level of proposal development support for requests submitted within 30 days of the sponsor deadline. Depending on timing and available resources, OSR may provide limited review and partner with your lab, department, or school on selected application materials.

If you submit 30+ Days

Our team has received the proposal request along with your Proposal Intake Form (PIF), and we have assigned your request to a pre-award research administrator: {{Assigned RA}}.

Your pre-award research administrator will review the PIF. You will receive the application timeline from the assigned research administrator within three (3) business days.

Additionally, you can track the status of your proposal at the following link:

https://app.smartsheet.com/dynamicview/views/5140770c-2e2f-49dc-890a-abd3c2cb50ee

If you submit less than 30 days (29 to 12 days)

Thank you for notifying the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR) Proposals and Grants (P&G) unit of your planned application. The Office of Research and OSR deeply value your work and are committed to supporting your future submissions.

Because this request was submitted within 30 days of the sponsor deadline, we may not be able to provide the full level of support for your application.

We may, however, be able to support your submission through a limited review process. In this case, we would partner with your lab, department, or school to develop select application materials, such as the abstract or budget justification. A member of OSR P&G will still ensure that your application is submitted to the sponsor by the deadline.

Additional lead time in future cycles will allow OSR to offer the thorough review and assistance described in the published guidance for faculty regarding the requested notification timelines.

We have assigned your request to a pre-award research administrator: {{Assigned RA}}. They will review the PIF and follow up with next steps within one to two (1–2) business days.

You can track the status of your proposal at the following link:

https://app.smartsheet.com/dynamicview/views/5140770c-2e2f-49dc-890a-abd3c2cb50ee

Less than 12 days/Exception Period email

Thank you for notifying the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR) Proposals and Grants (P&G) unit that you plan to submit an application to a sponsor within the next 11 days.

We will not be able to provide the full level of support for your application development due to the shortened notice period, but the request has been submitted to the Assistant Director of the OSR Proposals & Grants division for consideration. They will review available resources and follow up with you within one to two (1–2) business days.

We may not be able to submit your proposal by the deadline if we cannot identify the required resources. The Office of Research and OSR deeply value your work and are committed to supporting you in future

submissions. More lead time in the next cycle will allow OSR to provide the thorough review and assistance your proposals require.

We have published guidance for faculty regarding the requested notification timelines:

https://osr.ucsf.edu/plan-project

8. Important Reminders

- Submit the notification as early as possible. More lead time allows OSR P&G to provide more thorough review and assistance.
- Choose the proposal type carefully; each type requires different information.
- For subawards, use the prime institution's earlier deadline—not the sponsor deadline—as your UCSF deadline.
- Provide a draft proposal title whenever possible.
- Complete the PIF and attach relevant sponsor documentation.
- For RPPRs upload the notification email (i.e. reminder email from NIH)
- Use the Watchlist for people who need to know about the proposal.
- If information is incorrect or incomplete, OSR may decline the request and ask you to submit a revised notification.
- Once assigned, your research administrator will contact you about next steps and the proposal timeline.

9. Support

- If you are having technical difficulties with submitting the form please reach out to **eproposal.support@ucsf.edu** which will initiate an **eProposal support ticket** so the issue can be reviewed and addressed.