Build a Proposal

Research Management Services (RMS) assist in all aspects of building a proposal. Contact your Research Services Coordinator (RSC) to plan your proposal submission.

Note: If you are applying for state, or city and county funding, contact your GBC Contract Specialist.

If you have a multi-disciplinary proposal or large program project, center grant, or other complex project, RDO can assist with drafting scientific content.

Building a proposal includes the following steps:

- Step 5: Prepare all required UCSF and sponsor documents
- Step 6: Prepare the budget and budget justification
- Step 7: Determine if the proposal has special considerations


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Step 5: Prepare all required UCSF and sponsor documents

The RSC will help guide the Principal Investigator (PI) through the process of completing forms, obtaining signatures and collecting required information for submission.

RSC Responsibilities:

- Complete the administrative sections of the proposal based on information provided by the PI
  - COI Forms
  - Face Page
  - Budget
  - Key Personnel List (completed with information from PI)
  - Checklist
- Confirm Regulatory/Compliance requirements
- Coordinate with Subrecipient Sites
  - Confirm Subcontract vs. Vendor Agreement

PI Responsibilities:

- Science Sections
○ Writing your research plan
○ Explore your resources
- Maintaining publications in MyNCBI
- Maintaining biosketches
- Updating biosketches and bibliographies with PMCID as needed
- Complete COI requirements
- Inform and verify of any Regulatory/Compliance requirements
- Indicate if there are subcontracts and facilitate RSCs coordination with the subrecipient sites.
  ○ Determine Subcontract vs. Vendor Agreement

Department Responsibilities:

- Provide project-specific information if it is required by sponsor.
  ○ Example: Tables for NIH T32 applications

Step 6: Prepare the budget and justification

A proposal budget represents the PI's best estimate of the actual costs for conducting the proposed scope of work. Line items may differ but usually include salary, fringe benefits, materials and supplies, computer costs, travel, student support, equipment, subgrants or subcontracts, publications and other allowable miscellaneous costs. Most funding agencies also require a budget justification to highlight, explain, and provide detailed rationale for each requested budget item. The Develop a Budget page explains in detail what is included in the budget.

RSC Responsibilities:

- Develop a draft of the project budget with input from the PI, request all cost details, e.g., animal and patient care costs, etc.
- Confirm/obtain accurate salary/stipend information and appropriate benefit rate
- Verify costs with the department as necessary
- If necessary, contact subcontractors to request sub-awardee application/information and provide budgetary guidelines and review subcontractors? budget forms for consistency with the instructions and sponsor guidelines
- Prepare the budget using appropriate sponsor forms
- Review and finalize the budget for compliance with sponsor requirements and statutory pay limits.
- Provide a budget justification template and include justification for institutional costs

PI Responsibilities:

- Provide personnel, supply, equipment, and any other information needed for budget development.
  ○ For projects with animal or patient care expenses, supplies and procedures will be provided by PI or his/her study coordinator to ensure scientific accuracy.
May serve as main point of contact for subcontractors if requested. This entails collaborating with RSC to provide budgetary guidelines to subcontractors and review form for consistency with the instructions and sponsor guidelines.

Draft and edit the budget justification.

Department Responsibilities:

- Verify budget input as requested; e.g., cost sharing, effort commitments, and salary projections. For budgets involving multiple departments, the lead (administering) department will determine budgetary practices in regards to escalation, CCDSS rates, salary, etc.
- Provide input on the budget justification as needed.

Step 7: Determine if the proposal has special considerations

Additional steps may be required during the proposal preparation process if the project's scope of work proposes the work of human subjects, animal subjects, stem cells, radioactive, or biohazardous materials. For example, projects involving human subjects may require review by the UCSF Committee on Human Research.

The Regulatory/Compliance Requirements page explains in detail the additional steps that may be required.

What's Next? Review a Proposal, Steps 8-9