

**Research & Sponsored Programs Procedure  
Pre-Proposal Submission Policy  
(Letters of Intent, White Papers, Concept Papers, Pre-Applications)**

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## 1. Overview

Sponsors occasionally require that applicants submit a pre-proposal (aka, Letters of Intent, White Papers, Concept Papers and Pre-Applications) for review prior to a full proposal. The pre-proposal typically includes a brief summary of the project, list of personnel and budget amount.

## 2. Purpose

Outline expectations and requirements for pre-proposal submissions and to provide guidance to faculty and staff regarding the submission of pre-proposals (aka, Letters of Intent, White Papers, Concept Papers and Pre-Applications) to sponsoring agencies. This procedure allows faculty/project directors to submit pre-proposals as expeditiously as possible to solicit interest in their respective programs. This procedure identifies when pre-proposals require review and approval by Research and Sponsored Programs.

## 3. Who Must Comply

Principal Investigators  
Project Personnel/Staff  
Deans Directors, Chairs and Department Heads  
Department Personnel  
Business Managers  
Research and Sponsored Programs  
Office for Research

## 4. Definitions

**Pre-proposal:** Summary application that is submitted for sponsor approval prior to being invited to submit full proposal. Pre-proposal designation listed in the program announcement.

## 5. Procedure

When a sponsor requires the submission of a pre-proposal, the Principal Investigator (PI) may need to submit the pre-proposal through the University Research Administration Proposal Submission System (RAPSS) for review and approval by Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP).

### A. Pre-Proposals Routed for Review and Approval through Sponsored Programs:

Pre-proposals must be submitted to Research and Sponsored Programs via RAPSS, for review and approval when **any** of the following are required:

- a. The pre-proposal includes a detailed line-item budget that cannot be altered when submitting the full proposal, **or**
- b. The pre-proposal includes Rutgers cost-sharing/matching and requires a firm commitment be included in the pre-proposal.
- c. When Authorized Organizational Representative signature is required.

## Pre-Proposal Submission Deadline:

Pre-proposals will follow the RSP Proposal Submission Deadline Policy which states:

All proposals must be received by RSP via RAPSS no later than two (2) business days before the sponsor's deadline. Note: The RAPSS pre-proposal process does not include departmental approval and is automatically routed directly to the appropriate RSP Grant Specialist for review.

### B. **Pre-Proposals Submitted to Sponsor *without* Review and Approval by Sponsored Programs:**

Pre-proposals that do **not** require **any** of the items listed under number 1 above, may be submitted directly to the sponsor without going through RSP or RAPSS when an institutional official signature is not required. When submitting the pre-proposal to the sponsor via e-mail, the PI should copy the appropriate RSP Grants Specialist. If submission is not through email, a copy of the pre-proposal should be emailed to the RSP Grants Specialist after it has been submitted to the sponsor.

For the pre-proposals submitted without Sponsored Programs review and approval, it is recommended that the PI check with their department/unit to verify their process prior to submitting the pre-proposal to the sponsor.

### C. **F&A (Indirect Costs):**

- It is the PI's responsibility to ensure that the pre-proposal budget includes the appropriate F&A. PI's must include the Rutgers Federal Negotiated Rate in pre-proposals unless the solicitation states differently. Any deviation from charging the appropriate rate must have prior approval.
- If the appropriate F&A rate is not included in the pre-proposal budget, Research and Sponsored Programs will require that the F&A be included upon full proposal submission, even if it affects and lowers the total direct costs for the project.
- Principal Investigators are not authorized to negotiate the F&A rate. Any negotiations done by the PI or anyone besides those authorized will not be honored and may result in the full proposal not being submitted to the sponsor.

### **Limited Number of Pre-Proposals**

If the Program Announcement (PA) or Request for Proposal (RFP) limits the number of pre - proposal submissions from an institution, the PI is required to contact the Research Development team at [res-dev@research.rutgers.edu](mailto:res-dev@research.rutgers.edu) and indicate their interest.

Research Development will review the guidelines and arrange an appropriate internal review process, as applicable. This selection process could take several weeks. Submit early and allow ample time for this process.

**If you have any questions/concerns regarding any of the information included herein, please contact your RSP Grant Specialist for further assistance.**

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

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<b>Department Personnel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support the current PI with the request for Pre-proposal submission.</li><li>• Provide guidance on Department/School policy for pre-proposal review.</li></ul>
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**Principal Investigators**

- Submit via RAPSS for RSP review and approval if detailed budget and/or cost share are required.
- Make sure the RAPSS Funding Proposal is noted as Pre-proposal prior to submitting for review in section 4.0.11.
- Make sure to include the full negotiated F&A rate.

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**Research and Sponsored Programs**

- Support the PI through review and submission of the pre-proposal
  - Assist in determining if Pre-proposal requires RAPSS or can be submitted directly to sponsor.
  - Review Pre-Proposal and budget if necessary to make sure it conforms to University and Sponsor guidelines.
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**7. Resources**

- a. [Research Administration Proposal Submission Systems \(RAPSS\)](#)
- b. [Rutgers Facilities and Administrative Negotiated Rate Agreement \(F&A\)](#)
- c. [Rutgers Budget Template](#)