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# PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

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## College of Liberal Arts Proposal Development Guide

This guide introduces the Texas A&M College of Liberal Arts (CLLA) faculty to developing research proposals. This includes information about university- and college-wide administrative policies, procedures, logistics, as well as useful information for the pre-award phase of sponsored project administration. This handbook is created by CLLA Research Strategy and Development (RSD) and is located on the CLLA Research Support & Services website: <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/>.

The CLLA RSD office supports CLLA faculty in pre-award proposal development efforts and offers services to make your proposals more competitive. The CLLA RSD office helps faculty strategize on research or fellowship plans in order to attain career goals, consults on all stages of proposal development, and conducts workshops and panels. Services include assistance to locate funding matches, align collaborative partnerships, and proposals reviews prior to the final draft. CLLA RSD supports complex, multidisciplinary, and multi-PI efforts and also serves as the liaison with the Texas A&M University and System offices to solve problems that arise in the proposal development process. Visit the CLLA Research Support & Services website (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/>) for comprehensive resources on all aspects of proposal development plus agency-specific information.

### **The Proposal Cycle**

The proposal cycle has two stages: pre-award and post-award. The *pre-award* phase of sponsored project administration begins with the research idea, through proposal development and submission, and ends with the sponsor's notification as to whether or not the proposed project will be funded. Once the contract is negotiated and funds received, the proposal is *post-award*. In the pre-award stage, PIs refine an idea, match potential funders, develop the proposal, work the budget with Sponsored Research Services (SRS), and submit it on time to the sponsor. Ideally, the next stage is negotiating the award and setting it up in Maestro to receive the funds. PIs will successfully execute the project, supply the deliverables, and complete the project closeout and reports.

### **Contents of this Guide**

Sections 1 through 9 go on to provide information and tips during the pre-award phase and include:

- Section 1: CLLA background and mission and Texas A&M's focus on society's big problems
- Section 2: Overview on Texas A&M funded project administration
- Section 3: Search for external funding sponsors
- Section 4: Understanding sponsor guidelines
- Section 5: How to prepare the proposal application package
- Section 6: Federal cost principles and budget preparation
- Section 7: Budget categories
- Section 8: Texas A&M proposal routing and submission process
- Section 9: Useful websites, resources and definitions

## **Section 1. Introduction to Research at Texas A&M University and the College of Liberal Arts**

The Texas A&M College of Liberal Arts supports faculty in obtaining funding, from proposal development through compliance and fiscal management of the award funds. The CLLA project administration involves collaboration among departmental faculty and staff and central administrative officials and offices. The Principal Investigators (PIs or co-PIs) are the person(s) who are responsible for the fiscal and scholarly/scientific outcomes for the project. PIs work with the professional staff in the office of Sponsored Research Services (SRS) (<https://srs.tamu.edu/>) to manage proposal accounts according to the contract's terms for funded projects.

During the pre-award stage, PIs prepare proposal applications for submission to internal or external sponsors following each sponsor’s exact guidelines. PIs may consult with the College of Liberal Arts’ Research Strategy and Development office at any point in the pre-award development stage. The submission process differs for proposals submitted to *internal* sources of funding (CLLA or Texas A&M Division of Research, etc.) versus proposals submitted to *external* funding sponsors. PIs also work with [SRS](#) on detailed budgets for external proposal submissions. SRS staff are responsible for reviewing proposal applications for compliance with federal, state, and university regulations. They ensure all required proposal components are completed, route the proposals for signature signoff, and accept and negotiate awards on behalf of Texas A&M. SRS provides administrative support for the financial management of project fund accounts, which includes establishing funded accounts in Maestro, the Texas A&M enterprise-wide fiscal management system that supports researchers and research administration. Once funds are awarded, SRS post-award staff work with the PI and departmental business staff on the post-award and fiscal management of their research projects.

Proposals are developed with one goal in mind – to secure funding for your idea. Proposals are a persuasive document to *sell* your idea to a funder and your ability and expertise to complete a project successfully. Your idea should be do-able, current, and interesting. Proposals that receive funding from external, non-Texas A&M sources are called *sponsored projects*. *Grants* are non-repayable funds disbursed by one party (grant makers) to a recipient. Grant makers are governments, corporations, foundations, trusts, etc. Grant recipients are non-profits, educational institutions, businesses, or individuals. Grants require written documents be submitted to potential funders. Proposals may be unsolicited, or solicited in response to a request for a proposal or other announcement.

In CLLA funded proposals are most often awarded as grants or fellowships, these can be:

- Internal funds from CLLA or Texas A&M
  - This is “seed funding” intended to lead to externally funded research, fellowships, or in support of artistic or creative activities
  - It includes travel grants, strategic development funds, PESCA or A&H Fellows programs
- External funds
  - Grants and contracts that are awarded to the institution via SRS
  - Fellowships that may be awarded to the institution or to the individual based on the funder
  - Donor endowments and gifts that are handled via the CLLA Development Office

Both Texas A&M and CLLA administrative policies and procedures mentioned in this handbook must be followed for successful proposal application submission. This includes college policies covering salary savings, course buyouts, and fellowship leave. It is important to learn your college and departmental policies and processes related to proposal efforts. The CLLA RSD office is a good place to start if you have questions not answered by those in your department. Seek answers to any questions as early as you can. It is important to know the routing (signature) chain, internal deadlines, etc., before a grant application deadline. Travel and meetings may make immediate access for needed signature and approvals problematic, so be sure to plan ahead.

## 1.1 Research Initiatives at the College of Liberal Arts and Texas A&M

### 1.1.1 College of Liberal Arts Information

The **CLLA Mission** is to educate students for a rapidly changing world and instill in them a desire for lifelong learning through our faculty’s influential research, distinguished scholarship and creative work, inspirational teaching, and dedicated service—all in the context of the arts, humanities, and social and behavioral sciences. The CLLA (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu>) has a faculty resources webpage: <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/forms-guidelines/>. The CLLA Strategic Plan for 2015-2020 is found: <https://libarts.tamu.edu/app/uploads/2017/06/Strategic-Plan-2015-2020-Outline-Final-Revision-Fall-2015.pdf>.

The **CLLA Motto** is *Knowledge for Life* which captures the CLLA goals to: (1) create knowledge through

distinguished research, scholarship, or creative work in a wide variety of academic fields of study; (2) employ exciting pedagogies to provide undergraduate and graduate students with the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for a lifetime of learning and productive personal, professional, and civic lives; (3) equip people with the awareness and practices that kindle welcoming and inclusive environments; and (4) share the knowledge that fosters thought-provoking engagement within Texas A&M and our communities (from *CLLA Strategic Plan*).

**Council of Principal Investigators (CPI)** <http://cpi.tamu.edu/>

Members of the Council are elected representatives of the Principal Investigators from various units of the Texas A&M research community. It is the responsibility of Council members to maintain an effective dialogue with their constituents. Various guests may be invited to meetings, at the discretion of the CPI Chair, when a meeting topic or issue is discussed that intersects with the purview of an administrative office. The list of invited guests changes every year at the discretion of the CPI Chair.

*College Representatives (2017-2020): Sandra Braman, Steve Maren, and Harland Prechel*

**University Research Council** <https://vpr.tamu.edu/research/faculty-research-community/urc>

The University Research Council (URC) reports to the Vice President for Research and provides advice and assistance on the development of research, research planning, and research policy. The URC is an advisory body that may consider any matter of policy and procedures regarding university research. The Council may make recommendations on the manner by which research is initiated and conducted in support of the primary teaching function of the University. Members include the research deans from each college and Division of Research senior administrators.

*College Representative: Paul Wellman*

**1.1.2 Texas A&M Vision 2020**

The College of Liberal Arts is part of the university’s plan for excellence called [Vision 2020: Creating a Culture of Excellence](http://vision2020.tamu.edu/) (<http://vision2020.tamu.edu/>) that articulates Texas A&M's bold recognition of necessary institutional evolution required to achieve its mission as a land, sea, and space grant institution of global preeminence. Adopted in 1999, with an explicit vision for acceptance as a consensus leader among peer public institutions, over 250 stakeholders worked to identify benchmarks which, if achieved, would enhance the value of Texas A&M to The Texas A&M University System, the State of Texas, and the nation. *Vision 2020* identifies [twelve specific areas of focus](http://vision2020.tamu.edu/the-twelve-imperatives) (<http://vision2020.tamu.edu/the-twelve-imperatives>), which are underscored as well-crafted imperatives that define accepted precepts and goals that the university will target over the course of two decades.

**1.1.3 Texas A&M Grand Challenges**

Your research and scholarly activities may involve more than a single person and discipline. The Texas A&M Grand Challenges are multidisciplinary, faculty-driven initiatives that address the large and complex problems our society will face in the coming decades. These challenges are not solvable via one solitary discipline. The Grand Challenges (<https://grandchallenges.tamu.edu/home/>) are defined as:

- Protecting Our Environment
- Growing Our Economy
- Improving Our Health
- Enriching Our Youth
- Feeding Our World
- One Health Grand Challenge, <http://onehealth.tamu.edu/research/challenge>

The CLLA has ongoing initiatives to address these and other challenges located on the webpage <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/about/engagement/ongoing-initiatives/>. Additional collaborative opportunities are on the VPR’s, [Research Interest Groups](https://vpr.tamu.edu/resources/research-interest-groups) webpage, <https://vpr.tamu.edu/resources/research-interest-groups>.

## Section 2: Getting Started - Project Administration

### 2.1 Administrative Offices

The Vice President for Research (VPR) provides oversight of the central administrative offices supporting sponsored projects at Texas A&M, and provides a wealth of services and useful information. The Texas A&M VPR's website <http://vpr.tamu.edu/> includes information on A&M Research, Research Administration, Research Development, Research Compliance, and Business Services (<https://vpr.tamu.edu/staffing/business-services>).

The Texas A&M College of Liberal Arts (CLLA) provides resources to faculty on the college website: <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/forms-guidelines/> and includes information on Fellowships and Awards, forms for Seed Grants, Professional Development Leave, and fellowship leave policy, etc. In addition, the CLLA Research and Support Service's website <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/> provides useful information on finding funding, stages of proposal development, sponsor information and logistics. Additional campus-wide assistance in proposal development is offered through the VPR's Research Development Services office <http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/proposal-development-resources>. They provide workshops, administer internal grant programs, facilitates large-scale multidisciplinary team proposals, and NSF and NIH experts.

CLLA faculty seeking funding will work closely with their department business administrator, the CLLA RSD office, and the Texas A&M Sponsored Research Services office pre- and post-award support representative. The responsibility of SRS is to authorize all research proposals to external sponsors, and to assist faculty and department administrative staff in fiscal and project management during the pre- and post-award processes. SRS personnel are assigned to either pre-award or post-award work, with some overlap. The PI prepares the research proposal applications for SRS review and submission to a sponsor (pre-award), and, if funded (post-award), SRS manages the research project account(s) and providing financial and progress reports to the sponsor.

Helpful information about the structure and staffing of SRS is available at the following links:

- **SRS Website** <https://srs.tamu.edu/>
- **SRS Organizational Charts** <https://srs.tamu.edu/leadership/>
- **Finding Your SRS Contact** <https://srs.tamu.edu/my-contact/>  
Each CLLA department has designated pre- and post-award contacts in SRS. The name and phone number of your department's designated pre-award contact is found on this website.

### 2.2 Who is the Principal Investigator (PI)?

A PI is the lead researcher or scholar for a particular well-defined science or academic project who takes direct responsibility for completion of a funded project within budget, directs the research, and reports directly to the sponsor. When Texas A&M accepts a grant or contract award from an external sponsor, the university assumes responsibility for the proper performance of the project, the fiscal management of the funds received, and accountability to the sponsor. Since the institutional responsibility for meeting these obligations is vested in the PI, only individuals in the categories below are authorized to be PIs or Co-PIs for sponsored projects.

- **Guidelines and Special Conditions for Texas A&M PI Eligibility** on Sponsored Agreements, Proposals and Projects are located on the VPR's website: <http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchadmin/FAcompliance/pi-eligibility>
- **TAMUS Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP)** for PI Eligibility on Sponsored Agreements with PI, co-PI definitions and eligibility information are located: <http://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/15.01.01.M5.01.pdf>
- **University Faculty Equivalent/PI Eligible Title Codes** are located: <http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchadmin/FAcompliance/time-and-effort/general-information/pi-eligible-title-codes> (Note: M = TAMU, E = Engineering, and A = Agrilife/Extension)



### 2.3 PI Eligibility on Sponsored Agreements, Proposals, and Projects

Eligibility to act as a Texas A&M PI, Co-PI, or Co-Investigator on a sponsored project is limited to university employees (faculty or faculty-equivalent research position), excluding positions for which student status is a requirement. Employees in non-faculty or non-faculty equivalent research positions who are University PIs must be granted an exception based on the approval of the VPR or designee. Requests for PI status from the College of Liberal Arts first must be routed through the relevant department chair, then through the Office of the Dean, prior to forwarding on to VPR.

### 2.4 How to Request PI Status

If the PI in CLLA **does not** belong to one of the approved titles of faculty positions for PI status, a recommendation for an exception from the department/unit head and dean is required prior to routing to the VPR or designee for approval. The request must be sent in writing (via email) to the CLLA Office of the Dean. The request should include a curriculum vita, a statement regarding the individual’s qualifications to serve as a PI or Co-PI on the proposed project, and the individual’s responsibilities on the project.

For those who do not report to an academic college, the appropriate unit head will make a recommendation to the VPR for approval. Except as provided in the case of retirees, all individuals who serve in the role of a principal investigator on university-sponsored projects must be employed by Texas A&M in a budgeted position.

Individuals with the titles listed below are authorized to be a PI, Co-PI, or Co-Investigator within the identified limitations as determined and approved by the department or center and the dean of the college or head of the unit, in which the person is appointed. Approval by the VPR or designee is not required for the following titles:

Retired Faculty	Postdoctoral Research Associate (Title Code 7360)
Emeritus Faculty	Visiting Faculty

### 2.5 Obtaining Access to Electronic Systems

Your department’s Human Resources (HR) staff will ensure you receive access to the Texas A&M computer systems when you are hired and will provide your unique Single Sign On (SSO) ID and password. In addition, you will need to request a Maestro account from SRS in order to submit or receive grant funding from a sponsor that is processed through Texas A&M, or to have a university account created in Maestro to receive incoming fellowship funds.

As a PI or co-PI, you will also need access to a number of electronic systems outside of Texas A&M that will enable you to successfully create grant proposal applications and if funded, manage grant awards. These requests are handled by your department’s SRS contact who interfaces with federal agencies for account access to agency portals. Access to these systems will not be provided unless specifically requested and may include Grants.gov, NSF Fastlane, NIH Electronic Research Administration (eRA) eCommons, NIH ASSIST, etc.

Below are some of the electronic systems most commonly used in sponsored project administration. If you do not see the one that you need, contact SRS.

#### 2.5.1 Maestro

Maestro is Texas A&M’s sponsored projects research administration system where you track proposal submissions and manage awards and reporting. You log into Maestro via the Texas A&M single sign on system. Tips to using Maestro are found within the online program. Additional questions can be directed to SRS.

#### 2.5.2 Grants.gov

Grants.gov is an electronic research tool that enables federal grant-making agencies to create funding opportunities and applicants to find and apply for these federal grants. Grants.gov is the central storehouse for information on finding and applying for federal government grants. Texas A&M is a registered user of

Grants.gov and you already have access to apply for grants and to download grant application packages. You can search for specific agencies or funding opportunities and may subscribe to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and receive notifications of new grant opportunity postings and updates that pertain to your interests.

### 2.5.3 NSF FastLane

[FastLane \(https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov\)](https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov) is the [National Science Foundation's \(NSF\)](https://www.nsf.gov) online website through which researchers and potential researchers, reviewers, and research administrators and their organizations interact electronically to conduct business, such as submitting proposal applications and progress reports. You must have an account created through your SRS department contact.

### 2.5.4 NIH Electronic Research Administration (eRA) Commons

[eRA Commons \(https://commons.era.nih.gov/\)](https://commons.era.nih.gov/) is a virtual (online) meeting place where NIH grantee organizations, grantees, trainees and post-docs can exchange research grants administration information relating to research grants. You must have an account created through SRS (Texas A&M Signing Official) and must **allow at least 4 weeks before your grant applications submission deadline**. You can view the status of your application in eRA Commons. Note if you already have an eRA Commons account prior to joining Texas A&M and were not a Signing Official at your prior institution you do not need a new account; however, SRS will need to affiliate your existing account with Texas A&M. You should check to ensure your new contact information and titles are correct.

### 2.5.5 NIH ASSIST – The NIH Online Portal for Proposal Submissions

[ASSIST \(https://public.era.nih.gov/assist\)](https://public.era.nih.gov/assist) is the Application Submission System and Interface for Submission Tracking for NIH portal and is used for the preparation, submission, and tracking of NIH Center Grants since its 2013 inception. ASSIST uses your eRA Commons credentials and allows access via the internet. The features of the ASSIST portal include:

- Secure web-based data entry
- Collaboration of multiple users
- Pre-submission validation of many NIH and Grants.gov business rules
- Pre-population of data from eRA Commons profiles
- Pre-submission print/preview of application in NIH format
- Submission status tracking for both Grants.gov and eRA Commons within a single system
- Ability to import subaward budget data from external sources
- Ability to copy application data (excluding attachments) from a previously prepared application

### 2.5.6 NEH eGMS- electronic Grant Management System

NEH uses the eGMS system for application review and grants management. NEH automatically provides eGMS accounts to:

- **Awardees** for the purpose of submitting reports and sending messages. Your user name is provided in your award notice.
- **Panelists** for the purpose of reviewing grant applications. Your user name is provided to you via email by your panel coordinator.

## 2.6 Responsibility Matrix: PI and SRS Research Administrators

Understanding the PI's role in proposal development, project management, and closeout will help streamline the proposal application process. See Table 1.0 (page 7), for the PI Responsibility Matrix indicating specific activities and the corresponding position responsible. DEPT indicates department head or business/office administration assistance. SRS is the pre- or post-award proposal administrator assigned to your department.

**Table 1.0 PI Responsibility Matrix**

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY		
	DEPT	PI	SRS
Determine if PI already holds PI status; or request if needed		X	X
Research & identify funding opportunities to support desired activities		X	
Determine which sponsor matches funding interest		X	
If funding opportunity limits the number of submissions, check the VPR Limited Submissions page. For questions, email Shelly Martin at <a href="mailto:shelly.martin@tamu.edu">shelly.martin@tamu.edu</a>		X	
Contact SRS department representative & notify of intent to submit to initiate proposal in Maestro. Provide contact, sponsor guidelines, due date.		X	X
Setup PI in Maestro for effort submitting via Texas A&M		X	X
Verify process & ensure sponsor access if individual submits (fellowship)		X	
Determine who should be on research/project team & define roles/deliverables		X	
Contact proposed research team members to secure their agreement to participate & obtain supporting documents		X	
Read proposal guidelines & create outline of requirements		X	
Send Letter of Intent if required by due date		X	
Contact funding sponsor program manager to discuss idea fit if possible		X	
Contact Department Head for any special departmental commitments & obtain supporting documentation	X	X	
Request leave approval if project work will be done off-campus	X	X	
Assess research risks (human, animal, biohazard, etc.)	X	X	X
Submit documentation & secure approval if study requires IRB (human subjects), IACUC (animal subjects) or IBC (biosafety) approval	X	X	
Prepare proposal narrative & documents needed for routing & submission		X	
Prepare detailed proposal budget		X	X
Provide partner list & contact info to SRS for subawards		X	
Contact vendors for price quotes needed		X	
Complete mandatory cost sharing forms & approvals	X	X	X
Collect required texts & documents from team members/subawardees		X	X
Obtain letters of commitment/access to facilities if needed		X	
Load proposal text and documents or complete items online		X	X
SRS compliance check & authorize submission to sponsor		X	X
Post submission sponsor requests/questions/clarifications		X	X
Complete budget revisions		X	X
SRS negotiates award as needed		X	X
SRS accepts award on behalf of Texas A&M & establishes accounts			X
Manage project, science & outcomes/deliverables & provide closeout reports		X	

## 2.7 Learn the Lingo

It is helpful to be knowledgeable about the various terms, definitions and acronyms specific to sponsored research administration. Also, agencies and disciplines have their own language and acronyms. Several glossaries are listed in Table 2.0 below.

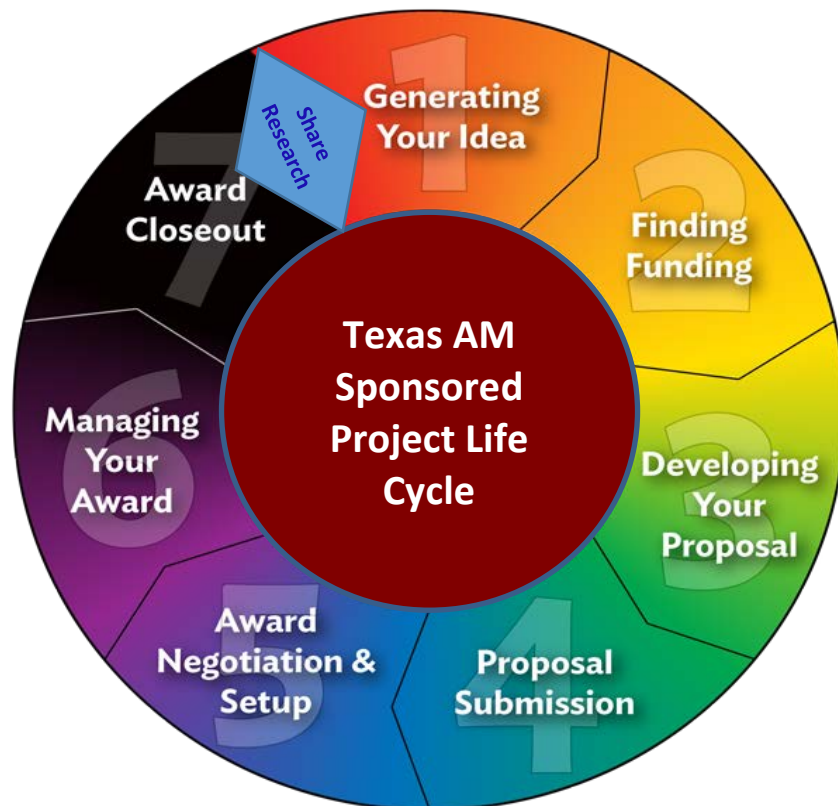
**Table 2.0 Glossaries of Research Grant Terminology.**

<a href="http://cerd.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Glossary-of-Terms.pdf">Texas A&amp;M Grant Related Terms</a>	<a href="http://cerd.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Glossary-of-Terms.pdf">http://cerd.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Glossary-of-Terms.pdf</a>
<a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grant-terminology.html">Grants.Gov Grant Terminology</a>	<a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grant-terminology.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grant-terminology.html</a>
<a href="http://grants.nih.gov/grants/glossary.htm">NIH Glossary and Acronym List</a>	<a href="http://grants.nih.gov/grants/glossary.htm">http://grants.nih.gov/grants/glossary.htm</a>
<a href="https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind12/pdf/toc.pdf">NSF Glossary &amp; acronyms</a>	<a href="https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind12/pdf/toc.pdf">https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind12/pdf/toc.pdf</a>

## 2.8 The Sponsored Project Life Cycle

Once you have your idea, next you need to identify a funding source to submit your proposal for funding consideration. Figure 1.0 shows the Sponsored Project Life Cycle and how it repeats. Proposal development begins with idea generation and ends with proposal submission. Achieving funding success typically requires multiple attempts before you secure funding, and it is a skill you will craft and improve upon throughout your career. Think of each proposal as part of a cyclic process to refine your next proposal submission.

**Figure 1. The Sponsored Project Life Cycle (Pre- and Post-Award)**



## Section 3: Searching for Sponsored Research Funding Opportunities

### 3.1 What are Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs)?

FOAs are publicly available documents by which agencies or other sponsor organizations make known their intentions to award funding, usually as a result of a competitive process. Funding opportunities (or solicitations) may be called by a number of names, including: Request for Proposals (**RFP**), Request for Applications (**RFA**), Funding Opportunity Announcements (**FOA**), Proposal Announcements (**PA**), Broad Agency Announcement (**BAA**), or any other name the sponsor decides to use. It is important to check for new funding opportunities frequently. In addition, you should check periodically to see if a sponsor has revised an existing FOA. These documents detail the guidelines and requirements for preparing the proposal and the review criteria that will determine how proposals are evaluated and selected for funding.

### 3.2 Who Is Responsible for Finding Funding?

The PI is responsible for actively seeking funding sources. Contact the CLLA RSD office to get training on available resources and conducting searches. It's a good idea to keep your department head informed of any proposal you plan to submit.

### 3.3 Texas A&M Funding Opportunities

Resources for funding opportunities are located on the CLLA Research Support & Services website, <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/>. Funding opportunities are either internal (funding source is CLLA or Texas A&M) or external (funding is from Federal, State, private, etc.). Note proposals for internal funding are submitted to CLLA or to the VPR or Provost depending on who is sponsoring the funding.

#### 3.3.1 CLLA Internal Funding Opportunities

CLLA support for faculty includes Seed Grants, International Travel, Fellowship and Development Leave, etc. Information is located under Fellowships/Awards heading on the CLLA Faculty Resources website: <https://libarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/researchers/internal-funding/>.

- The [Seed Grant](#) program encourages faculty to develop research, and scholarly or creative programs that provide the potential for sustained professional development and extramural support.
- The [International Travel Support Grant](#) enhances faculty research and creative activities by providing international travel funds to full-time faculty who are presenting original research or creative works at recognized international meetings (excluding Mexico, Canada or Puerto Rico).
- The [Melbern G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research](#) supports research that advances knowledge through investigation, inquiry, and interpretation of human experience, culture, and expressive forms. Humanities research may be grounded in traditional humanities disciplines and methods, interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research, and non-humanities or technical disciplines, which clearly foreground interpretive approaches to questions of meaning in human experiences and endeavors.

#### 3.3.2 VPR Internal Funding Opportunities

The Office of the VPR (VPR) supports several funding opportunities for faculty. See their website for more information <http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding>. For the internally awarded programs, workshops are provided to clarify the submission and proposal development. Below are repeating opportunities.

- [PESCA Grant Program](#) <http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding/internal/PESCA>
  - The PESCA Grant Program supports significant research and scholarly projects with the potential to lead to external funding awards by agencies and endowments, such as major federal research funding agencies, national endowments, institutes, foundations and councils. A variety of activities are

eligible for PESCA funding, including travel for research and to collections and libraries, access to data resources, graduate student support, and seed funding to support application for federal and other national-level grants.

- For single PI or teams. Funded amount ranges from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Due in late October.
  - Program Manager Dr. Jim Izat, [jizat@tamu.edu](mailto:jizat@tamu.edu)
- **Arts & Humanities Fellows Program** <http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding/internal/arts-and-humanities/ahfp>
  - This program is to stimulate interactions among scholarly and artistic faculty at Texas A&M as well as nationally and internationally. This program rewards faculty for scholarly and artistic merit in their chosen discipline. Induction as an Arts & Humanities Fellow recognizes extraordinary scholarship and creativity and provides faculty with a supportive environment to advance their scholarship and creative work. It is also hoped that recognition as a fellow will build, strengthen, and sustain long-term relationships with fellows outside their chosen discipline.
  - Designed for Texas A&M single PI eligible faculty engaged in scholarship in the humanities or creative work in the arts, this 3-year A&H Fellows Program provides \$5,000 per year (\$15,000 total) to the awarded fellow. Due in late January or February (tbd).
    - Program Manager Dr. Jim Izat, [jizat@tamu.edu](mailto:jizat@tamu.edu)
- **International Research Grant Programs** <http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding/international-research-grant-programs>

The Division of Research offers several funding opportunities to grow international research. Texas A&M faculty-researchers collaborate with international partners through the Texas A&M's ongoing grant programs with universities in Brazil and with the Mexican Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) member universities and research centers in Mexico. These programs support collaborative research that develops innovative and transformative ideas to successfully garner new external funding.

  - **Texas A&M CAPES** (with Brazilian universities) <https://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding/international-research-grant-programs/CAPES/texas-a-m-capes>

Since 2013, this program seeks to facilitate global faculty-to-faculty collaboration and further research ties between the two countries that yield preliminary results and enable joint applications for extramural funded programs. This program is expected to announce its next competition and guidelines Fall 2018.

    - Program Manager Ms. Monica Bruno Holder, [m-holder@tamu.edu](mailto:m-holder@tamu.edu)
  - **Texas A&M-CONACYT** (with CONACYT-member Mexican universities and research centers) <https://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding/international-research-grant-programs/conacyt>

Texas A&M and the Mexican Council for Science and Technology, [Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnologia](http://www.conacyt.mx) (CONACYT) began the Collaborative Research Grant Program in 2001. This competitive, peer-reviewed program advances inter-institutional cooperation in science, technology, and scholarly activities through the complementary efforts of scientists and scholars from Texas A&M and Mexican institutions. Next competition due dates are to be decided. Proposals were last due in mid-January 2018. Letters of Intent (required) were due November 2017.

    - Program Manager Ms. Monica Bruno Holder, [m-holder@tamu.edu](mailto:m-holder@tamu.edu)

- **TAMU Research Development Fund** <http://rdf.tamu.edu/>  
 This fund started in 2014 to enable one-time investment in shared research infrastructure to enhance the competitiveness for multi-project extramural funding and to facilitate new Texas A&M capacity. This fund focuses on strategic investments that support the overall Texas A&M research enterprise and catalyze new ventures. The application requires a management plan and a sustainability plan.  
 The criteria to receive funding are:
  - Benefit to TAMU research enterprise
  - Need for localized technology and addition of new technology or resources
  - Transformational “cutting edge” research
  - Increase competitiveness for federal or other funding
  - Multi-unit/multi-disciplinary
  
- **Support from DOF for Faculty Development Leave** <http://dof.tamu.edu/Faculty-Resources/Faculty-Development-Leave>  
 The Dean of Faculties receives funding from the Association of Former Students and the Provost’s Office to support faculty who go on faculty development leave. Funds for the faculty development program are distributed to the college, and the college has full discretion on how they use the funds.  
  
 DOF also receives some funding from the Texas A&M Foundation to help faculty who receive awards or opportunities that commit the individual to travel and live outside of College Station (e.g., Fulbright, Guggenheim, etc.). This Foundation money is allocated on a first come basis to faculty for whom accepting an award means also incurring a substantive expense above and beyond the support received from the award, their department, or their college. If you receive a Fulbright, Guggenheim, or other prestigious award that fails to cover all your expenses, you may inquire directly to the Dean of Faculties for the availability of funding to assist you.
  
- **Limited Submission Proposals** <http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding/lsp/lsp>  
 Funding agencies may issue requests for proposals that limit the number of applications they will accept from an institution. The manner in which sponsors limit applications varies, but may consist of one or more of the following: limiting the number of proposals that may be submitted; limiting the type of institutions that can apply; and/or limiting PIs by stage of career. The Office of the VPR (OVPR) manages and selects via an internal competition the proposals that may go forward for sponsor submission. Typical steps include:
  - The Office of the VPR identifies limited submission proposal opportunities
  - Internal proposal submission, review, and selection
  - A date is established for an email of intent to be sent to the OVPR
  - An internal proposal must be submitted electronically using e-proposal <https://eproposal.tamu.edu>
  - **Note:** You must upload a 1-3 page research plan summary, a 2 page bio sketch, and a budget.
    - Contact Shelly Martin at [shelly.martin@tamu.edu](mailto:shelly.martin@tamu.edu) for questions.
  
- **Texas A&M PI Research Listserve** for faculty. This listserv relays information relevant to PIs/co-PIs.
  - <https://listserv.tamu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=DOR-PI-BULLETIN&A=1>

### 3.4 How to Find External Funding

Finding external funding requires that you research a variety of potential funding sources. This includes conference sponsors, stakeholders noted in professional publications and websites, database searches, agency and foundation websites, networking with colleagues, program speakers, and agency program officers. Before you decide to pursue a funding opportunity, you should research what they have funded in prior competitions.

Funding opportunities may be solicited (an announced competition with specific guidelines, goals, and due dates) or unsolicited (in support of general program but less specific guidelines and timeline and may have open submissions that are not date-specific). Responding to a solicited opportunity usually means more competition. Unsolicited submissions will have less submissions applying for the funding.

A good place to start is on the CLLA Research website at [External Funding](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/external-funding/), <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/external-funding/>. This is organized by funding agency with a lengthy list of non-Federal foundation sources. You will want to match the potential funding opportunity to the activities you need funded. Requesting travel money in a budget when the funder says they will not allow money to be used for travel defeats the purpose. Knowing the funder's missions and set goals for any program they support is key for writing a proposal that resonates with the reviewers.

Texas A&M supports two paid subscription websites services for its researchers and faculty. This includes the **PIVOT** database (formerly Community of Science PIVOT), and the **FoundationsDirectoryOnline** database. Both of these are available via the Texas A&M Library Databases website, <http://tamu.libguides.com/az.php?a=p>. The **FoundationsDirectoryOnline** database provides comprehensive information about the missions, goals, tax forms and funding programs for foundations. For assistance contact library staff. Additional links to databases for federal grant opportunities are also shown and include Grants.gov, NEH, NIH and NSF. More databases are available on the [Texas A&M Library Databases A-Z](http://tamu.libguides.com/az.php) located at <http://tamu.libguides.com/az.php>.

### 3.4.1 PIVOT Database

All Texas A&M employees can access the [ProQuest PIVOT \(formerly Community Of Science\)](http://pivot.cos.com/funding_main) searchable database at [http://pivot.cos.com/funding\\_main](http://pivot.cos.com/funding_main). Make sure it has "*Texas A&M University-College Station*" at the top to ensure you are in the subscription website. Create a username and password to view funding opportunities or identify potential collaborators. A PIVOT Quick Start Guide, introduction to Profiles, Help Desk, and Online Training, which includes details for doing a funding search, are all available on this website.

### 3.4.2 Texas A&M Libraries

The Library has 5 facilities plus an online library with ~4 million volumes and 400,000 e-books, and it offers tremendous resources beyond publications. Experts can assist you in how to best do searches, inform about available resources, conduct literature searches, and create class guides. You can request a tour, a resource, or a consultation. Subject librarians can come to your class for instructional sessions for your students.

- **Services offered** <http://library.tamu.edu/services/index.html>  
Comprehensive list of services offered by Texas A&M Libraries.
- **A-Z Database List** <http://library.tamu.edu/search/databases.html>  
Alphabetical listing of databases available via Texas A&M Libraries.
- **Subject Librarians** <https://library.tamu.edu/directory/findmylibrarian>  
Are experts assigned to liaise with every academic department on campus and skilled in various subjects and the resources available. A list of their services for faculty and students is found [http://library.tamu.edu/services/reference\\_services.html](http://library.tamu.edu/services/reference_services.html).
- **The Medical Sciences Library (MSL)** <http://msl.library.tamu.edu/index.html>  
The MSL offers resources and services to support the teaching, research, and clinical programs of the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, the Texas A&M Health Science Center, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.
- The **Digital Library** <http://digital.library.tamu.edu/index.html>  
Provides services that support the scholarly activities of faculty and students. It serves as a repository for research including theses and dissertations, faculty publications and datasets, digital archives, course



management and learning materials, digital media, and special collections.

### 3.5 Federal Funding Opportunities and Notices

Most, if not all, federal sponsors maintain a website that announces and catalogs their active funding opportunities and solicitations. Table 3.0 lists major federal sponsors and their funding websites.

**Table 3.0 Funding Websites for Major Federal Sponsors**

Federal Entity	Website
<a href="http://grants.gov">Grants.gov</a>	<a href="http://grants.gov">http://grants.gov</a>
<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/funding/">Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</a>	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/funding/">http://www.cdc.gov/funding/</a>
<a href="http://cdmrp.army.mil/funding/default.shtml">Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP)</a>	<a href="http://cdmrp.army.mil/funding/default.shtml">http://cdmrp.army.mil/funding/default.shtml</a>
<a href="http://www.acq.osd.mil/chieftechologist/funding.html">Department of Defense</a>	<a href="http://www.acq.osd.mil/chieftechologist/funding.html">http://www.acq.osd.mil/chieftechologist/funding.html</a>
<a href="https://www.arts.gov/grants">National Endowment for the Arts</a>	<a href="https://www.arts.gov/grants">https://www.arts.gov/grants</a>
<a href="http://www.neh.gov/grants">National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Grants Match</a>	<a href="http://www.neh.gov/grants">http://www.neh.gov/grants</a>
<a href="https://www.epa.gov/research-grants/research-funding-opportunities">U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</a>	<a href="https://www.epa.gov/research-grants/research-funding-opportunities">https://www.epa.gov/research-grants/research-funding-opportunities</a>
<a href="http://grants.nih.gov/funding/index.htm">National Institutes of Health (NIH)</a>	<a href="http://grants.nih.gov/funding/index.htm">http://grants.nih.gov/funding/index.htm</a>
<a href="http://www.nsf.gov/funding/">National Science Foundation (NSF)</a>	<a href="http://www.nsf.gov/funding/">http://www.nsf.gov/funding/</a>
<a href="https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_list.jsp?org=sbe">NSF SBE Directorate</a>	<a href="https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_list.jsp?org=sbe">https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_list.jsp?org=sbe</a>
NSF Dissertation Improvement Awards	Note: Located under related SBE program area
<a href="http://nij.gov/funding/Pages/welcome.aspx">National Institute of Justice (NIJ)</a>	<a href="http://nij.gov/funding/Pages/welcome.aspx">http://nij.gov/funding/Pages/welcome.aspx</a>
<a href="https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grants-apply.html?src=pn">US Dept of Education</a>	<a href="https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grants-apply.html?src=pn">https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grants-apply.html?src=pn</a>

### 3.6 Funding Opportunities via Federal Listservs

If a sponsor maintains a funding listserv, it is advisable to subscribe to it in order to cut down your search time and to stay abreast of current, expiring, or extended funding opportunities. Some commonly used listservs are:

- [Grants.gov subscriptions](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/manage-subscriptions.html) <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/manage-subscriptions.html>
- [H-Net Humanities & Arts Announcements](https://networks.h-net.org/h-announce?page=1) <https://networks.h-net.org/h-announce?page=1>
- [NIH Listserv](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/listserv_dev.htm) [https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/listserv\\_dev.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/listserv_dev.htm)
- [NSF E-Mail Subscription service](https://www.nsf.gov/funding/index.jsp) <https://www.nsf.gov/funding/index.jsp>

### 3.7 State Level Funding Opportunities and Notices

- [Texas Education Agency \(TEA\) Grant Opportunities](#)
- [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board \(THECB\) Research and Project Grants](#)

### 3.8 Corporate Sponsorship Funding Opportunities

For-profit corporations may provide a PI funds for research sponsorship. Sponsorship funds provided by corporations may be in the form of a grant or contract. The appropriateness of the terms and conditions of these types of research projects are validated by SRS after the PI has made contact with the corporation. Special consideration needs to be given to the non-disclosure of confidential information, intellectual property issues, or other matters that are pertinent to the specific project being considered for funding as corporate and

university requirements may differ.

### 3.9 Foundations/Non-profits Funding Opportunities

Private foundations fund many research projects through Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or through direct contact with PIs. You should research foundations and what they have funded in the past before submitting a proposal. Note each foundation proposal is unique and requires different supporting documentation. You may need to build a strong relationship to have success.

- A comprehensive web database of U.S. grant makers and their grants focused especially on non-profits and organized philanthropy can be found at [FoundationDirectoryOnline](#) via the Texas A&M subscription (note the subscription website must be accessed via the Texas A&M Library).
- Check foundation-specific websites for information about their funding opportunities.
- See [Philanthropy News Digest](#) for information about foundations.

#### 3.9.1 Research Gifts

Research gifts are donations made to the CLLA for strategic purposes according to the donors' intent. The CLLA Development Office manages these gifts to our college. Please contact Mr. Larry Walker, Senior Director of Development for the College of Liberal Arts, (979-458-1304; [lwalker@tamu.edu](mailto:lwalker@tamu.edu)) who assists donors in identifying the areas and programs in the college where their support will enhance Texas A&M's capability to be a top university.

### 3.10 Research Training and Sponsorships for Students and Postdoctoral Fellows

The CLLA Research Office hosts an annual Grant Writing Seminar for graduate students presented by [Grant Writers' Seminars and Workshops, LLC](#). This provides an opportunity for graduate students to learn basic information about grant writing such as: (1) The organizational structures of the major federal funding agencies; (2) How priority scores are calculated; (3) What facilities and administrative (indirect, overhead) costs are; and (4) How to analyze a critique in anticipation of a resubmission.

The NIH and NSF, as well as other agencies provide fellowship sponsorship or training grants for students and postdoctoral researchers. A few are listed here:

- [American Heart Association \(AHA\)](#) Search the keyword "fellowships"
- [NIH Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award \(NRSA\)](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\), Research Experience for Undergraduates \(REU\)](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\) Specialized Information for Postdoctoral Fellows](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\) Specialized Information for Graduate Students](#)

Depending on the sponsor, naming the student as the PI on the award document may not be permitted; however, the expectation is that the student will conduct the research and perform other grant management duties. Regardless of who is named as the PI in the award document, for tracking purposes in Maestro the student's research project is listed under their PI's name.

### 3.11 Refine Potential Funders

Once you have identified some sponsors and funding opportunities to consider it is important that you narrow down the choices to the best matches. The information below helps you refine the possible choices.

- Check for a clear link between the funder's mission to the research and activities you plan to accomplish in your proposal.
- Does your project fit the sponsor's current funding priorities?

- Check the eligibility requirements. Are you eligible? Is the effort funding only junior (pre-tenure) faculty within a set number of years from their Ph.D.? Is it open to any level faculty? Does it have geographic restrictions? Is it a limited submit?
- What have these sponsors funded in the past among your peers?
- Does the funding range fit your budget needs? Does it support types of activities you need funded? Does the scale of your project match their funding?
- Do you have the expertise to compete well? What is the competition? What is the success rate? How many awards will be given?
- Is it a repeated, ongoing funding program? If you aren't funded can you use your proposal's reviews to improve your proposal and resubmit in the next round?
- How does the funder/agency work? Are there any special, undefined criteria? Do they fund from open competitions or select from an "inner circle" or do you have to partner with people they already know?
- Does the funder provide FAQs or adequate information online? Are you allowed to talk with program officers to clarify any questions regarding the funding announcement and discuss how well your idea aligns with their program goals?
- Will the funder offer a pre-submission review of your proposal outline or draft? NEH does allow this with select programs.
- Do you have enough time to complete a competitive proposal before it is due? When funded, does the funding align so you can complete your project within the proposed start and stop dates, and meet proposed deliverable deadlines?

## **Section 4: Understanding Funding Opportunity Guidelines**

### **4.1 Overview of the Proposal Development Process**

This section covers how to make sense of a sponsor's solicitation and how to understand or interpret the guidelines and requirements. While funding opportunity announcements may be called a number of names (RFP, RFA, FOA, PA or BAA), the basic steps to understand the sponsor's proposal submission guidelines and instructions are similar regardless of what the funding agency calls the announcement.

#### **4.1.1 The Funding Announcement and Guidelines**

Each funding opportunity announcement has a specific set of instructions, or guidelines associated with it. Be sure to download the most recent version of the sponsor's guidelines and look for any associated updates to the opportunity (i.e., deadline extensions, format changes, FAQs, etc.) to ensure you have a complete set of instructions before proceeding to the application.

Most federal funding requires that a proposal be prepared using agency-specific formats. Be aware of the information required on the current application for each submission. You will work with your department's SRS Proposal Administrator to complete submissions and forms that go through Texas A&M. All of the sponsoring agencies that submit through Grants.gov use the basic SF424RR form; however, each agency can add their own particular form(s) to the basic SF424RR application set, or they can ask that certain information be loaded into sections of the application where it may not seem to fit intuitively. SRS will assist in completing any institutional and compliance information on the forms.

#### **4.1.2 READ the Guidelines and Documents Carefully**

Note the important dates, specifications, and other information that the RFP requires proposals to address. Pay particular attention to any suggestions in the guidelines that are described as “strongly encouraged,” or “would like to see.” Most announcements will include important information about specific review criteria. Be sure to address both the requirements and review criteria in your proposal. Create a timeline for milestones based on the due dates for any required Letters of Intent (LOI), preliminary submissions, or full proposal final dates. Table 4.1.0 shows the suggested timeline for proposal development and submission tasks. Be sure to pay attention to the time of day a proposal is due, as it is often in another time zone (Eastern vs. Central). It is best to plan to *submit at least 2 days early* to have enough time to handle any exceptions that occur and need to be address before the submission is finalized and accepted by the funding sponsor.

**4.1.3 Notify Your SRS Proposal Administrator of Intent to Submit**

Once you have read the guidelines and decided to submit a proposal to a funding opportunity, it is important that you notify your department Proposal Administrator at SRS of your intent. A list of CLLA Proposal Administrators is found on the Texas A&M SRS website under [My Contact](#). You will need to provide the following items:

- Your contact information
- Sponsor information (include program announcement/guidelines and due date)
- Project title
- Project start date and duration of the project
- A list of Co-PIs and any outside collaborators, including their contact information.

The Proposal Administrator will log the proposal into Maestro and work with you to complete the Maestro Compliance and Reporting Code screens.

**4.1.4 Create a Checklist and Timeline**

Note the required formatting guidelines and create a checklist to track important format requirements, required sections, specific information requested, and milestone/timeline dates. A suggested timeline allows for at least three months preparation in advance of the due date. Note you must contact your SRS Proposal Administrator at least three weeks prior to the proposal deadline in order for your budget to be completed and your proposal to be submitted by the due date. A minimum suggested timeline for proposal development is shown in Table 4.0. Allowing more time for critiques and iterations of your proposal will make it stronger and more competitive. Larger, more complex proposals with multiple partners will require a longer preparation time in advance of the due date.

**Table 4.0. Suggested Timeline in Advance of Proposal Due Date**

3 Months	3 Weeks	5 Days	2 Days
Begin Proposal & Notify SRS Rep	Create Budget with SRS	Final Budget & Budget Justification Due	Submit Proposal
Allow extra time if partnering Get sponsor accounts	Give SRS access online & all contact info Do cost share, leaves, etc.	Have CLLA approvals & start routing Upload proposal	Compliance checks & final fixes Verify OK to submit

## 4.2 Key Elements in the Funding Opportunity Guidelines

### 4.2.1 Submission Formats and Deadline Date

Proposal submissions to federal agencies usually are through the Grants.gov website. Some federal agencies allow alternative routes to be used, as in the case of whitepapers (via email or upload to a specific agency portal) or NSF (FastLane). While most proposals are submitted electronically to the sponsor, there is the relatively rare paper submission. If this is the case, you must check whether the due date is a “postmark by” or “receive by” date. *Proposal due dates and times are not negotiable.* This can make or break your submission. “Postmark” will allow the application to be mailed in on the day it is due. “Received by” means you must send the proposal with enough lead time for the sponsor to receive it by the deadline time on the due date. Most sponsors will not accept a late proposal submission or one that arrives past the deadline time. Rather the proposal is triaged and returned without review.

### 4.2.2 Time of Day Deadline

Some sponsors specify the time a proposal is due, i.e., 3 PM Eastern (ET). Be sure to adjust to Central Standard Time (CST) so you do not miss the deadline. In this example it would be due before 2 PM CST.

### 4.2.3 Required Formats

Most agencies will require set margins, font types and sizes, limits on color illustrations, number of pages per section, etc. Usually guidelines have specific information either required or not permitted in the CV/Bio section. It is important to pay attention to these requirements as they often determine whether your proposal is rejected without a review, or included in the reviewed submissions. Getting a review is most helpful in refining your idea and revising your proposal for the next time you submit.

### 4.2.4 Applicant

Texas A&M University at College Station is the applicant when you are submitting a proposal via SRS. If the Request For Proposal (RFP) says “only one application per applicant”, this indicates this funding opportunity is a “limited submission” and the submission will be managed by the VPR office and they will select who will submit. See Section 3.3.2 for more information regarding limited submission programs. If you are submitting as an individual, as may be required for some fellowships or proposals to some private foundations, the PI is the applicant.

### 4.2.5 Appendices

Are appendices allowed? If so, what can be included? Private foundations require very different supporting documentation from federal sponsors and their formats are generally not uniform like government agency grant proposals. Refer to the guidelines/instructions for the proposal applications for specific requirements.

### 4.2.6 Funding Restrictions

A sponsor may place restrictions on the use of its awarded funds. Be sure to note any restrictions detailed in the funding opportunity announcement and follow those restrictions when crafting the budget and the budget justification. Each funding opportunity and sponsor is unique; a different set of restrictions may be employed by the same sponsor for different opportunities. Some examples of sponsor restrictions are:

- Mandatory cost sharing
- Cap on Facilities & Administrative costs that a sponsor will pay
- No tuition allowed
- No salaries allowed

### 4.2.7 Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Cost Rates

Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs are also called indirect costs (IDC) or overhead costs. These refer to

those costs incurred by the university in support of the project that are not easily allocable as direct costs. These costs are usually associated with facility operation and maintenance, utilities and building and equipment depreciation, etc. Most sponsors recognize that universities that conduct research incur these costs in addition to those direct costs that are that are directly allocable and included in a project's budget. Sponsors have agreed that the portion of F&A costs identified with organized research is distributed by applying a cost rate(s) that is negotiated between the university and the federal government. This is the Federally Negotiated IDC Rate, and it is typically renegotiated every three to five years. This process allows the university to recover some portion of the costs associated with conducting research. The [Federally Negotiated IDC Rate for Texas A&M University](http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/budgets-acct/pdf/FA_Rates_College_Station_Based-FY2015-18.pdf) ([http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/budgets-acct/pdf/FA\\_Rates\\_College\\_Station\\_Based-FY2015-18.pdf](http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/budgets-acct/pdf/FA_Rates_College_Station_Based-FY2015-18.pdf)) is based on where the project is located ( on- or off- campus). This is in process of being updated.

- 48.5% On-campus Rate, effective Sept 1, 2015 – Aug 31, 2018
- 26.0% Off-campus Rate, effective Sept 1, 2014 – Aug 31, 2018

Read the opportunity guidelines to determine if the sponsor imposes a limit or restriction on the amount of cost recovery that is less than the Texas A&M IDC rate of 48.5%. If so, SRS requires written documentation from the sponsor that confirms a lower rate must apply. This is usually found in the proposal guidelines. This is considered a non-voluntary cost share since you are required to give up some of the IDC funds you would normally have in the budget. Proposals to industry or other “for profit” sponsors must use the full negotiated F&A rate mentioned above in the Texas A&M System Rate Agreement. An explanation of the F&A Costs is located at: <http://www.tamus.edu/business/budgets-and-accounting/accounting/facilities-administrative-costs/facilities-administrative-cost-brochure/>.

**4.2.8 CLLA and Texas A&M Facts and Institutional Information**

Proposals may require background information about your department, college or university. Fact Sheets are useful for specific information that you may need. Table 5.0 lists useful CLLA & Texas A&M websites.

**Table 5.0. CLLA & Texas A&M Fact Sheet Websites**

College of Liberal Arts	
<a href="#">Diversity Fact Sheet</a>	<a href="https://libarts.tamu.edu/app/uploads/2017/06/Diversity-Fact-Sheet_2016_FINAL.pdf">https://libarts.tamu.edu/app/uploads/2017/06/Diversity-Fact-Sheet_2016_FINAL.pdf</a>
Texas A&M	
<a href="#">About Texas A&amp;M</a>	<a href="http://www.tamu.edu/about/index.html">http://www.tamu.edu/about/index.html</a>
<a href="#">Texas A&amp;M Rankings</a>	<a href="http://research.tamu.edu/rankings/">http://research.tamu.edu/rankings/</a>
<a href="#">Student Demographics</a>	<a href="http://accountability.tamu.edu/All-Metrics/Mixed-Metrics/Student-Demographics">http://accountability.tamu.edu/All-Metrics/Mixed-Metrics/Student-Demographics</a>
<a href="#">Data &amp; Research Services</a>	<a href="http://dars.tamu.edu/">http://dars.tamu.edu/</a>

**4.2.9 Letters of Recommendation and Support/Commitment**

Applications may require letters of recommendation that become part of the overall application. Letters of recommendation speak to the applicant’s ability and potential to conduct the proposed research. Typically if a sponsor requires letters of recommendation they are due at the time the application is submitted. Letters of support/commitment can also be an important part of an application. These may come from consultants who are agreeing to work on a project, from research sites, from departmental personnel who are committing resources to a project or equipment access, etc. Include these letters with the submitted application.

Sponsors dictate (1) if letters are allowed at all; (2) if letters are required; (3) if letters are mandatory at the time of submission; (4) the content of the letters; (5) use of a specific form or the format of the letter; and (6) whether or not letters count against the page limitation. Details should be specified in the guidelines.

It is important that PIs understand the nuances surrounding letters of recommendation and support, because if

an error is discovered at the time a proposal is reviewed by SRS, it may be too late to request new letters. It is essential to request these letters *four to six weeks in advance* of the submission deadline, and to verify they are submitted or received by you to submit. This time frame allows the PI to find alternate letters should they be needed. Funding organizations may not allow a proposal to be submitted without the required letters. If an optional letter arrives after the deadline date, it may be possible to submit non-mandatory letters directly to an agency. This is only possible AFTER the application has been assigned to a Scientific Review Officer (SRO) at the funding agency. The SRO may accept the letter and provide it to the review panel, but this is completely discretionary and is not a request that should be relied on. In today's funding climate, it is imperative to get all of your application materials completed and submitted on time.

## **Section 5: Proposal Application Preparation**

Figure 1 on page 8 shows the pre- and post-award life cycle of a sponsored project. The items listed in section 5.1 are the steps the PI will complete with their department's SRS Proposal Administrator as the proposal is submitted through Texas A&M's SRS office.

### **5.1 Overview of the Pre-Award Cycle**

- The researcher has a compelling research idea or concept.
- Funding sources are researched and selected by the PI based on the "best match" for the activities the PI needs funded and how well the project idea contributes to the funding source's mission.
- If responding to a program announcement, the PI should check periodically to see if the sponsor has revised or amended the solicitation during the proposal preparation phase.
- The PI informs their SRS Proposal Administrator of the planned submission (see 4.1.3, pg 16 for details).
- The PI reads guidelines and discusses idea and priorities with the sponsor's Program Officer, if allowed.
- The proposal application is written and formatted according to the sponsor's guidelines.
- The PI works with their department's SRS Proposal Administrator to draft and finalize the budget.
- The PI provides SRS 5-business days prior to sponsor due date with near-final draft and budget to begin routing for final administrative approvals prior to submission.
- SRS reviews the proposal application and communicates with the departmental administrator or PI about any questions or additional information that may be required. The PI verifies upload of final versions of the documents. SRS uploads the final budget and institution items.
- The PI gives SRS ok to submit before the due date and SRS submits the proposal to the sponsor.
- The sponsor contacts SRS with any questions about the proposal or to request any additional information that is required.
- The sponsor completes proposal review and informs the PI or SRS of the funding decision.
- SRS works with the PI to obtain and promptly submit any information required by the sponsor including revised budgets, compliance committee protocol approvals, etc.
- If an award is made, the sponsor sends SRS the "Notice of Grant Award" (NGA) document. Note, the PI does not sign the NGA. It must be signed by SRS as the Texas A&M signature authority.

### **5.2 The Faculty Perspective**

For the Principal Investigator (PI), proposal application preparation begins with an idea. It may be a single PI project, or a large project with collaborators or consultants, which will add some complexity to the development process. It is important to match a funding opportunity that supports the type and scale of activities the project

needs. Sources to find funding include database searches, funding source websites, listservs, databases and conferences related to the topic. Databases include free ones and those that are a paid subscription by Texas A&M and provide a more robust search engine. Two useful paid subscription databases provided by Texas A&M to its faculty include PIVOT and FoundationDirectoryOnline, which are described in section 3.4.

Funded proposals are a legal contract between the funding sponsor and the institution. While awards are made to the institution (with the exception of individual funded fellowships), the PI is responsible for project oversight, fiscal management, timely deliverables, and reports.

### **5.3 Preparing the Proposal Application**

Several resources are available to assist you in your proposal preparation both within CLLA and Texas A&M. This section covers some of the more useful resources and the steps to prepare your proposal.

#### **5.3.1 Proposal Development**

As the PI, you are responsible for all aspects of the proposal text. The CLLA Research Support & Services website (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/>) contains useful information to assist you in preparing your proposal application. Get started with the tips below. Proposals consist of several sections. Common sections are the abstract, project summary, project narrative/description, budget, budget justification, CV or biographical information, current and pending funding, facilities and resources, data management plan, letters of support or commitment, and required forms. It is important all sections be completed per the sponsor's guidelines. The most critical sections are the project summary, the budget, and the project narrative. The project narrative requires multiple components that detail the background, the problem statement or scholarly significance, the project goals and objectives or specific aims, methods, plan of work and respective roles of team members, a timeline, deliverables, evaluation, and broader impacts/outreach. You may need to include details about institutional support or sustainability. Refer to the guidelines for the exact sections and information required. Clearly state what you will do, how you will do it, why it is significant or matters, what impact will it have, and how will it be known that the project is a success.

#### **5.3.2 Print the Guidelines and Submission Instructions**

Always download the most recent opportunity announcement/guidelines from the sponsor's website. Sponsors may revise or amend guidelines at any time so periodically check for updates. Thoroughly read the guidelines and any available FAQs. The PI may need to contact a sponsor program officer to clarify information about what is required for the proposal application.

#### **5.3.3 Planning the Proposal Submission**

Create a checklist for required documents, sections, and specified information. Include a timeline for milestone completion. Inform your Department Head of your intention to submit. Special consideration is needed if you will take leave to conduct the project off-campus or if you need a course buy-out, cost sharing, or have other concerns. You need approval for an alternative work location. Contact the CLLA RSD office to request a discussion regarding strategy, resources, sponsor requirements, special items (cost share, leave, benefits, etc.), or to request a review of your proposal draft. Most importantly, leave yourself plenty of time to prepare a competitive proposal. Lack of time is the #1 problem with proposal development. If you have partners outside of Texas A&M, allow even more time.

Individual vs Texas A&M Submissions: Two common routes exist for proposals to be submitted: (1) via the Texas A&M SRS office, the typical case for research proposals, or (2) via individual submissions which may be required by sponsors' fellowship applications. Individual Submissions may have a simple budget, if any, and are awarded to the individual, and these awards are not managed through Texas A&M. The awards may be a lump sum. Be aware that individual submissions, if awarded to the individual and not routed through Texas A&M's SRS, may have implications regarding the PI's federal tax and employment benefits, such as health insurance. PIs should



contact the CLLA RSD to discuss these issues during the proposal's development and *before* you accept an award.

Texas A&M Submissions: When submitting through Texas A&M, you need to contact your department's SRS Proposal Administrator to ensure your proposal gets set up in Maestro and is on the schedule of submissions. Send your contact information, proposal title, funding opportunity announcement (or website link), due date, beginning and ending dates for the project, and any partner names along with their contact information. SRS will create a timeline to remind the PI about upcoming due dates. SRS works with the PI on complex budgets and ensures compliance with Texas A&M and the State of Texas rules.

SRS is the Texas A&M liaison with federal agencies and manages account access to their electronic portals. You will need to notify SRS if you need an account for a submission with a sponsor, such as NSF FastLane or NIH eRA Commons/ASSIST. SRS also handles setting new passwords for accounts if you have forgotten the password and are unable to access the account to update your information or upload documents.

Note if your proposed effort is for an external fellowship or appointment you must request [CLLA Academic Activity Leave](#). It is located under Fellowships & Awards, Developmental Leaves, External Awards & Fellowships, and Course Buyouts on the CLLA Forms & Guidelines webpage, <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/forms-guidelines/>.

Table 6 on the following page details a typical proposal preparation guideline to help you organize and plan for your proposal development.

### 5.3.4 Proposal Format

Precisely follow the sponsor's format guidelines, as any deviation may be used to return your proposal without being reviewed. Google searches provide several writing resources (both generic and by agency), tips on budgets and sample budget justifications. Avoid using jargon and write the proposal so it speaks the same "language" of the funding opportunity.

You may find it necessary to seek clarification on guidelines or discuss how well your idea aligns with the funding sponsor's priorities. Should you need to contact the program director, send a courtesy email first requesting a time to call. If you can be bit flexible in your project's approach, you are able to your idea so it is a better fit for funding.

### 5.3.5 Completion of Proposals Submitting through SRS

You will develop the proposal project description, budget justification, biographical sketches, and other research-related proposal documents for submission to the sponsor. Budgets can be complicated and time-consuming for those who do not regularly prepare them. SRS works with the PI to create the budget and this should be started early in the proposal process. SRS completes Texas A&M information on sponsors forms, and certifications, and initiates routing on time. SRS also checks requirements and compliance for each section of the proposal and manages the routing (signatures authorization) process.

### 5.3.6 Proposal Routing and Submission

Routing is the official signature process required before a proposal may be submitted through Texas A&M. For routing to begin, the PI completes the Maestro Compliance and Reporting Code screens, and provides SRS with a final budget, budget justification, title of the project, start date and duration of the project, and a near-final draft of your proposal text. Once routing begins, the PI ensures the final versions of the required proposal documents are uploaded and gives SRS the "ok" to submit. SRS is now ready to submit the proposal to the sponsor providing no concerns are raised with the routing of final versions of the proposal documents.

Note: Prior to routing, **all voluntary cost share must be approved by the Senior Associate Vice President for Research Administration, in advance, prior to proposal submission.** Please refer to Section 6 for more information on cost sharing.

**Table 6.0. Proposal Preparation Timelines**

ACTION	WEEK												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Form idea & develop & refine research plan.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Search for a funding match.	X	X	X	X									
Download RFP & Sponsor Guidelines/Instructions.		X	X	X	X								
Read & re-read RFP & Guidelines/Instructions; create checklists.		X	X	X	X								
Contact sponsor for clarification of guidelines, or discuss idea alignment with priorities. Inform your Dept Head if you plan to submit a proposal.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
If submitting for an external fellowship (e.g., Fulbright) PI must submit a Letter of Intent to CLLA prior to submitting the proposal.		X	X	X									
SRS creates proposal in Maestro; PI completes Maestro forms. PI checks contact & personal information are correct in sponsor systems (NIH, NSF)				X	X								
Write text & upload research & PI-related documents in appropriate system. Update proposal as you obtain information & materials.						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Send SRS a draft budget listing items/personnel & time commitments.					X	X	X	X					
Send requests for letters of support/commitment.			X	X	X	X							
Identify key personnel. Request CVs & biosketches & format. Send contact information for subawards to SRS.			X	X	X	X	X						
Follow-up on outstanding requests for letters, biosketches, C&P, etc. Begin finalizing budget.						X	X	X	X				
Get sections or entire proposal reviewed by fresh set of eyes. Check formatting & ensure all sections are complete.							X	X	X				
PI final review. Finalize budget (no later than 4 working days prior to deadline). PI completes budget justification.									X	X	X		
If voluntary cost share/waived IDC in budget, PI must have signed approval form prior to routing.								X	X	X			
Complete all document uploads; Submit to SRS for review & start routing 5 business days prior to due date. If hard copy items are required, PI must provide before routing. PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED & SUBMITTED TO SRS NO LATER THAN 3:00 PM 2 BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR TO SUBMISSION DEADLINE.											X	X	X
Promptly respond to any requests from SRS or the funding sponsor.											X	X	
Proposal is submitted to sponsor. Get assigned proposal # when available.												X	

**5.3.7 Due Dates**

While the funding opportunity may have a set due date, waiting to submit until that very date, especially with government agencies, is risky. More proposals are submitted on that last day, making the system much slower at processing submissions. Grants.gov, NSF FastLane and NIH ASSIST require submitted items to go through a compliance check on the receiving end. It can take *over 48 hours* before a notification of errors or omissions are processed and received by SRS or the PI. This may not leave sufficient time for the PI to correct the items and resubmit before the due date passes. Early submission allows a cushion of time for handling any proposal submission exceptions and is *especially* important for proposals being submitted through Grants.gov.

### 5.3.8 Proposals to NSF & NIH

The National Science Foundation currently allows you to use FastLane for NSF proposal submission but may allow Grants.gov as an option. Consult the funding announcement instructions (RFP, FOA, PA, etc.) for the method of submission. If submission via FastLane is required in the solicitation, the PI will upload the proposal documents (except for the budget) via FastLane and SRS will use FastLane to upload your budget and submit your application. As PI you will need to log into your FastLane account and initiate the proposal by creating a Cover Sheet and verifying your contact information and institution are correct. Once you have initiated the proposal, you will need to allow Sponsored Research Officer (SRO; your SRS Proposal Administrator) access to *View, Edit and Submit* so they can upload the budget and can submit the proposal on your behalf. For problems with a FastLane account, contact your SRS Proposal Administrator for assistance.

For the final submission, the PI will upload the following items to FastLane. Some submissions deviate and use special guidelines for the documents uploaded or their specific format. The PI should refer to the funding instructions or default to the NSF Grants Proposal Guide (PAPPG) standard instructions. Note most Federal proposals have similar sections and documents required but all have sponsor-specific formatting and details that must be followed. Below are typical NSF requirements.

- Project Summary: 1-page limit. Must include 3-distinct headings: Overview, Intellectual Merit, Broader Impacts
- Project Description: 15-page limit. Must include a section for Results from Prior NSF Support and Broader Impacts according to NSF instructions.
- References
- Budget (completed with SRS assistance; SRS uploads)
- Budget Justification
- Data Management Plan
- Biosketches / CVs
- Current & Pending
- Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources
- Special Information and Supplementary Documentation (Letters of Commitment)
- Appendices

NIH provides significant updated resources online to prepare your proposal. Proposal sections include the Project Abstract/Summary, Research Plan (Specific Aims, Significance, Innovation, and Approach), Budget and Justification, Human and Animal Subjects, and Resources and Environment. Below are some useful NIH websites for proposal preparation:

- [How To Apply: Preparation, Writing Applications, Developing Budgets, and Submitting](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide.html)  
<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide.html>.
- [Sample Applications, Summary Statements, Data Management Plans, and Biosketches](https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/sample-applications)  
<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/sample-applications>.
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\):](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/frequent_questions.htm) [https://grants.nih.gov/grants/frequent\\_questions.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/frequent_questions.htm).

**Data Management Plans** are now required by most federal agencies. This is more about *sharing* data that has been paid for by public funds and, when possible, data should be accessible to other researchers and the public. Check the [Texas A&M Libraries Research Data Management](#) website

(<http://tamu.libguides.com/c.php?g=658417> and the [VPR's Data Management Plans](http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/proposal-development-resources/data-management-plans) webpage (<http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/proposal-development-resources/data-management-plans>)) for help crafting the data management plan and other sections of your proposal.

### 5.3.9 Proposals to Limited Submissions Programs

Instructions are in the sponsor's proposal announcement and on [Texas A&M's Limited Submission Proposals website](https://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding/lsp/lsp) (<https://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/funding/lsp/lsp>). Be sure to determine if your college or department has additional preparation and routing requirements. The VPR's office maintains a [listing of limited submission opportunities](#) at Texas A&M. As sponsors frequently create new opportunities, you may see one not yet posted on the VPR's website. Carefully check opportunity announcements to see whether or not the sponsor is limiting the number of allowable applications from an institution.

### 5.3.10 Proposals to Private Foundations

Many foundations require submissions be from an individual and not through an institution's sponsored research office. Submissions may be hard copy, or electronic documents via email, or through a web portal. Sponsors may require background documentation that includes the total amount of sponsored funding, demographic information, minority representation, and more. Determine if the sponsor wants the information for the whole university, your college, school, or department. Texas A&M has comprehensive data available in prepared reports via the Texas A&M [Data and Research Services](http://dars.tamu.edu/) office (<http://dars.tamu.edu/>) and you can request specific data report if you don't find a prepared report with the information you need. Additional metrics are located on the [Texas A&M Accountability](http://accountability.tamu.edu/) website (<http://accountability.tamu.edu/>). For college, school, or department information, check with your department for who has access to that information.

If you plan to submit proposals to private foundations, you should check with the CLLA Finance and Operations office to determine if your Texas A&M benefits continue if you will be paid a salary or plan to work off-campus.

### 5.3.11 Proposals to Corporate Sponsors

Corporate funding may be in the form of a contract or grant to an individual for defined services or deliverables. Corporate sponsors may have terms and conditions that are at odds with those under which state institutions are required to operate. In these cases, negotiation is required and may involve intellectual property issues and require nondisclosure agreements (NDAs). NDAs are typically utilized in the early stages of research projects to consider possible funding opportunities or collaborations. The NDA describes the general topic for consideration and indicates that all confidential and proprietary information shared between the parties will remain confidential for a given time period. NDAs are not instruments used to conduct sponsored research. SRS will negotiate NDAs if they are received as part of the research project agreement; otherwise NDAs will be negotiated by the PI's System member. NDAs can take several forms and SRS will work with you to ensure compliance with System rules.

## 5.4 Research Compliance

Texas A&M is responsible for providing training and support to faculty and staff engaged in scientific research to ensure procedures and rules for research compliance are followed. Specific areas include, but are not limited to animals, biohazards, human subjects, export control, and responsible conduct of research including managing conflicts of interest.

### 5.4.1 Animals in Research and Teaching <http://rcb.tamu.edu/animals>

Using animals for research or teaching at Texas A&M requires [approval](#) from the [Institutional Animal Care & Use Committees \(IACUC\)](https://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/iacuc) (<https://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/iacuc>). The use of animals is defined as any activity involving vertebrate animals in which the natural lifestyle or movements of the animals is materially altered. Use of animal carcasses, tissues, and fluids obtained specifically for research, testing, or teaching purposes are subject to review according to applicable regulations and may be determined to be "use of animals."

Personnel who work with animals or are at risk from animal exposure must be enrolled in a [Biosafety Occupational Health Program](http://rcb.tamu.edu/bohp) (<http://rcb.tamu.edu/bohp>) and informed of the risks associated with the animal exposure. Research Compliance's Animal Welfare Office (AWO) supports Texas A&M's [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees](http://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/iacuc) (IACUC; <http://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/iacuc>), through which all faculty, staff, and students using animals, regardless of location or funding, **must obtain approval before activities begin**. [Committee decisions](http://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/iacuc) and guidelines are regularly posted to the IACUC website. Learn the steps to [receive approval for research and/or teaching with animals](http://rcb.tamu.edu/animals/approvals) (<http://rcb.tamu.edu/animals/approvals>) at Texas A&M.

#### 5.4.2 Biohazards in Research, Teaching or Testing (<http://rcb.tamu.edu/biohazards>)

All research conducted by faculty, staff or students of Texas A&M, or a component of The Texas A&M University System with a written agreement for biosafety-related services with Texas A&M, involving any of the agents/materials listed below, must be reviewed and approved by the [Institutional Biosafety Committee](http://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/ibc) (IBC; <http://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/ibc>) **prior to initiation**:

- Pathogens and potential pathogens of humans, animals, or plants;
- Materials potentially containing human pathogens (including human blood, tissue, and cell lines; non-human primate blood, tissue, and cell lines);
- Recombinant DNA (and RNA), including creation or use of transgenic plants and animals;
- Select agents and toxins (see <http://www.selectagents.gov/>) including strains and amounts exempted from the select agent regulations; or
- Any material requiring a CDC import license or a USDA permit.

The Biosafety Program provides training and support to faculty, staff, and students in regulatory requirements associated with research reviewed by Texas A&M's IBC. [Committee decisions](http://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/ibc) and guidelines are regularly posted to the [IBC website](http://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/ibc) (<http://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc/ibc>). Learn the steps to [receive approval for research with biohazards](http://rcb.tamu.edu/biohazards/approvals) (<http://rcb.tamu.edu/biohazards/approvals>) at Texas A&M.

#### 5.4.3 Human Subjects

Texas A&M's Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) complies with regulations of the Department of Health and Human Services for the protection of human subjects involved in research. All individuals engaged in human subjects research supported by Texas A&M, must submit an application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) **prior to commencement of any research activities**. This includes any project that:

- Is conducted by or under the direction of any faculty, staff, student, or agent of Texas A&M in connection with his or her institutional responsibilities
- Is conducted by or under the direction of any employee or agent of Texas A&M
- Uses any property or facility of Texas A&M
- Involves identifying or contacting human research participants or prospective participants

Grant funds will not be awarded until a required IRB is approved.

HRPP aims to protect the rights and welfare of research volunteers, by providing support, guidance, and education to facilitate research that is ethical and scientifically sound. Learn the steps to [receive approval for research with human subjects](http://rcb.tamu.edu/humansubjects/approvals) (<http://rcb.tamu.edu/humansubjects/approvals>).

#### 5.4.4 Export Control Issues

Texas A&M University is committed to the principle of freedom of access by all interested persons to the underlying data, processes, and final results of research. Texas A&M also must comply with all applicable federal export controls in its policy on export controls, which is accessible on the [Texas A&M Export Controls](http://rcb.tamu.edu/exportcontrols) website

(<https://vpr.tamu.edu/resources/export-controls>). For information on travel to countries outside of the U.S see [Texas A&M's Export Control Basics for International Travel](http://vpr.tamu.edu/resources/export-controls/export-controls-basics-for-international-travel) (<http://vpr.tamu.edu/resources/export-controls/export-controls-basics-for-international-travel>).

Exports are both the shipment of materials to another country and/or the disclosure of controlled information to foreign persons and entities (deemed exports) located in the U.S. Exports are regulated by several federal agencies. While the conduct, products, and results of fundamental research are generally excluded from federal export or deemed export controls, there may be some activities that are not excluded and require an export license.

The unlicensed export of certain commodities (technologies) or information is prohibited by U.S. Federal laws for reasons of national security or trade protection. For example, export control issues can arise because the nature of the export has actual or potential military applications or economic protection issues; there are security concerns about the destination country, organization, or individual, or there are government concerns about the declared or suspected end use or the end user of the export.

Most exports do not require government licenses. However, licenses are required for exports that the U.S. government considers "license controlled" under the following: the Department of Commerce's Export Administration Regulations (EAR), the Department of State's International Traffic In Arms Regulations (ITAR) or the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

PIs should review their research projects to determine how they might be impacted by U.S. export control regulations. While the Texas A&M Export Control office staff will assist PIs in assessing the application of the regulations, the primary compliance responsibility rests with the PI of the research project. The consequences of violating these regulations can be quite severe, including the loss of research contracts, monetary penalties, and jail time for the individual violating these regulations.

#### **5.4.5 Texas A&M Oversight Committees**

Transparent and consistent oversight for research with animals, biohazardous materials, and human subjects is provided by Texas A&M's [Research Compliance Review Committees](https://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc) (<https://vpr.tamu.edu/compliance/rcc>):

- [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) (IACUC)
- [Institutional Biosafety Committee](#) (IBC)
- [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB)

These committees report to the VPR and provide the structure and requirements needed to maintain a safe and compliant environment for research conducted at the Texas A&M. Researchers may need to obtain approval from a committee to conduct research at Texas A&M. The Texas A&M University [System Office of Research Compliance](http://www.tamus.edu/research/research-compliance/) (<http://www.tamus.edu/research/research-compliance/>) helps advance shared services for research-based system members in Brazos County and provides assistance for other Texas A&M System members in designing and implementing research compliance capacities.

#### **5.4.6 Texas A&M Special Issues in Research Administration**

[Intellectual Property and Technology Commercialization](#) are two areas that PIs may need assistance managing based on research outcomes. [Texas A&M Technology Commercialization](http://techtransfer.tamu.edu/) (<http://techtransfer.tamu.edu/>) office offers assistance with IP, licensing, new venture startups, technology commercialization and inventor resources. Technology Commercialization builds bridges between academic research and business.

[Conflicts of Interest](https://vpr.tamu.edu/researchadmin/FAcompliance/COI) (<https://vpr.tamu.edu/researchadmin/FAcompliance/COI>) are handled through Texas A&M System Regulation [15.01.03 Financial Conflicts of Interest in Sponsored Research](#), and [University Rule 15.01.03.M1](#), Texas A&M has the responsibility to identify and manage and reduce or eliminate conflicts of

interest that may arise due to financial or other personal interests of the PI. PIs and researchers are required to disclose financial interests related to their institutional responsibilities online via Maestro. Instructions are provided on the COI webpage referenced above.

Responsible Conduct of Research (<http://rcb.tamu.edu/more/otherprograms/rcr>) is the expectation that any research conducted through Texas A&M will be conducted responsibly and ethically. Topics related to Responsible Conduct of Research include: Research Misconduct, Data Management, Conflict of Interest, Collaborative Science, Responsible Authorship, Mentoring, Peer Review, Animals Research, and Human Subjects Research. See the CITI Course in the Responsible Conduct of Research (<https://www.citiprogram.org/>) for additional information.

Scientific Misconduct in research or scholarship is defined by the Texas A&M University System as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing reviewing, or reporting research. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data. For more information visit <https://vpr.tamu.edu/about/factsheets/scientific-misconduct-factsheet>.

Additional Proposal Writing Resources are in Section 9 for developing your proposal.

## Section 6: Cost Principles and Budget Preparation

This section describes the different types of costs and what is allowable. Proposals often require a detailed budget specifying the different types of items and costs that will be required to accomplish the activities for your project. Remember you do not create your budget alone. Your department's SRS Program Administrator will help you navigate the budget cost principles and work with you to develop the detailed budgets that are compliant with Federal, State and Texas A&M regulations.

### 6.1 Overview of Cost Principles

After a sponsored research award has been issued by a funding body and all terms and conditions have been agreed upon by all parties involved, SRS Project Administrators ensure that the requisites are followed. As a recipient of federal grant dollars, Texas A&M is required to comply with the terms and conditions of the awards, as well as with any applicable federal laws, regulations, and cost principles. The funding received for the allowable costs incurred on a grant is subject to federal cost principles for Higher Education Institutions, detailed in Circulars available on the OMB Circulars website (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/information-for-agencies/circulars>). NIH provides details are on its website about the four tests of cost principles: 1) Reasonableness & Necessity, 2) Allocability, 3) Consistency, and 4) Conformance. ([https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/html5/section\\_7/7.2\\_the\\_cost\\_principles.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/html5/section_7/7.2_the_cost_principles.htm))

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issues a set of federal cost principles called OMB Circular A-21 "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions" (05/10/2004) for determining costs applicable to grants, contracts, cooperative, and other agreements with educational institutions. These principles are designed to provide that the Federal Government bears its fair share of total costs, determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, except where restricted or prohibited by law. The provisions in OMB Circular A-21 determine whether or not a cost incurred by institutions of higher education is allowed to be reimbursed by federal awards (i.e., allowability).

In addition, OMB Circular A-110, "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-Profit Organizations") sets forth standards for obtaining consistency and uniformity among federal agencies in the administration of grants to, and agreements with, institutions of higher education (i.e., the process of documenting and assigning/allocating costs).

PIs don't need an accounting degree as they can rely on SRS to help understand the applicable OMB Cost Principles circulars for more complete information and further guidance on allowable and allocable costs for grant awards and related sub-awards

## 6.2 Allowable Costs

### 6.2.1 Allowable Costs Overview

All costs charged to grants awarded by federal sponsors must be allowable costs. In general, for a cost to be allowable under a grant award, the cost must be: (1) directly related to and necessary to carry out the approved activities, (2) reasonable, (3) allocable to sponsored agreements under the principles and methods provided in OMB Circulars, and (4) not specifically disallowed by the State or local laws or regulations.

Examples of allowable costs for grant awards include: salaries and wages, fringe benefits, consultant fees, travel costs, equipment, supplies and materials, and Facilities & Administrative costs (i.e., indirect costs). Allowable costs are defined and discussed in full in [OMB Circular A-21](#), the definitive document regarding allowable costs.

The PI's SRS Program Administrator will be familiar with the limits on allowable costs for grant funds and any explicit restrictions set out in the OMB Circulars. In order to ensure compliance with OMB Circular A-21 the Texas A&M University System has issued the [TAMUS Regulation 15.01.01](#), the "Administration of Sponsored Agreements - Research and Other". It addresses the administrative regulations that must be observed for all sponsored agreements. Before discussing one of these regulations, the determination of allowability of costs on sponsored agreements, it is necessary to distinguish direct from indirect costs.

### 6.2.2 Direct Costs vs. Indirect (Facilities and Administrative (F&A)) Costs

To prevent double charging sponsors it is necessary that costs incurred for the same purpose be treated consistently. To accomplish this, each type of cost is allocated as direct or indirect. Direct costs are those costs that can be identified specifically with a particular sponsored project relatively easily, and with a high degree of accuracy. Indirect costs (IDC, also called F&A or overhead costs) are costs incurred for common or joint activities of the institution and cannot be readily and specifically identified with a particular sponsored project. The determining factor in allocating a cost as direct or indirect depends on the circumstances under which the expense is incurred. Costs normally treated as indirect that are expended for special or unusual purposes related to the performance of a particular contract may be charged directly. These costs are usually associated with facility operation and maintenance, utilities and building and equipment depreciation, etc. Most sponsors recognize that universities incur these costs in addition to those direct costs that are directly allocable and included in a project's budget.

F&A costs that are reasonable, can be equitably distributed based on the relative benefits received, i.e., allocable, and not prohibited by law or regulation are allowable under OMB Circular A- 21. The portion of F&A costs identified with organized research is distributed (allocated) by applying a negotiated F&A cost rate(s) to most budget items. This process allows the university to recover some portion of the costs associated with conducting research activities. Your budget will have the following categories:

- **Total Direct Costs (TDC)**, which is the sum of cost that are directly tied to the project
- **Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC)**, which excludes equipment, capital expenditures, tuition, rental costs for off-site facilities, and the portion of each subgrant/subcontract in excess of \$25,000.
- **F&A or Indirect Cost (IDC)**, which is calculated by multiplying MTDC by the Federally Negotiated IDC Rate



The exact IDC rate is determined by Texas A&M’s Federally Negotiated IDC Rate, which is typically renegotiated every three to five years. The [Federally Negotiate IDC Rate for Texas A&M University](http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/budgets-acct/pdf/FA_Rates_College_Station_Based-FY2015-18.pdf) ([http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/budgets-acct/pdf/FA\\_Rates\\_College\\_Station\\_Based-FY2015-18.pdf](http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/budgets-acct/pdf/FA_Rates_College_Station_Based-FY2015-18.pdf)) is based on where the project is located; is it on- or off- campus. Rates remain until further notice from SRS.

- 48.5% On-campus Rate, effective Sept 1, 2015 – Aug 31, 2018
- 26.0% Off-campus Rate, effective Sept 1, 2014 – Aug 31, 2018

Read the opportunity guidelines to determine if the sponsor imposes a limit or restriction on the amount of cost recovery that is less than the Texas A&M IDC rate of 48.5%. Note PIs receive 10% of their projects IDC in incentive return to support their research efforts.

A detailed explanation of F&A Costs is available at the Texas A&M University System website <http://www.tamus.edu/business/budgets-and-accounting/accounting/facilities-administrative-costs/facilities-administrative-cost-brochure/>.

**Examples of Direct Costs**

Budget items such as salaries and wages, fringe benefits, consultant fees, travel costs, computing services charges, equipment, supplies and materials, and other expenses that are necessary to do the project and directly related to the approved research activities are called direct costs.

**Examples of Indirect Costs (IDC)**

Operations and maintenance expenses (buildings, furniture, space leased, utilities, sidewalks), administration costs for sponsored projects, business offices, human resources, purchasing, office supplies, postage, membership fees, clerical salaries, and fringe benefits on federal contracts. These are costs that are support the project but are not solely supporting just the one project.

**6.2.3 Administrative and Clerical Salaries and Fringe Benefits**

Per OMB Circular A-21 the salaries and fringe benefits of administrative and clerical staff should normally be treated as indirect costs on federal contracts. There are exceptions for:

- Large, complex programs such as engineering research centers and other grants and contracts that entail assembling and managing teams of investigators from a number of institutions
- Individual projects requiring project-specific database management, individualized graphics or manuscript preparation, and multiple project-related investigator coordination and communications
- Projects that require making travel and meeting arrangements for large numbers of participants, such as conferences and seminars
- Projects whose principal focus is the preparation and production of manuals, large reports, and books (excluding routine progress and technical reports)

Direct charging of these costs may be appropriate where the nature of the work performed requires an extensive amount of administrative or clerical support that is significantly greater than the routine level of such services provided by academic departments.

Administrative and clerical salaries and fringe benefits may be charged directly on all **non-federal contracts**. Direct charging administrative and clerical salaries and fringe benefits must be determined on a case by case basis for each **federal contract**. All of the following criteria must be met:

- The individuals have responsibilities specifically related to the work of the project and the effort devoted to the project is documented

- The title(s), percent of effort, and salary amount(s) for the clerical and administrative position(s) are included in the proposed budget of the sponsored agreement
- The special circumstances requiring direct charging of the services are justified in the proposal
- The sponsor accepts the cost as part of the project's direct cost budget

### 6.3 Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is that portion of a project or program cost that is not reimbursed by the sponsor. Cost-sharing represents a commitment by Texas A&M. The funding sponsor may require cost sharing (mandatory) as a condition of the award, or may allow cost sharing (voluntary) but not explicitly require it. Voluntary committed cost sharing is a cost contribution not required as stated in the sponsor guidelines, but is a commitment offered by Texas A&M when it is in Texas A&M's best interest in excess of mandatory cost sharing requirements.

Any voluntary committed cost sharing **must** have prior approval from the VPR. Voluntary cost sharing is highly discouraged per System policy and Texas A&M regulations, and may be rejected by some federal agencies with the adoption of the new OMB Uniform Guidance. It is important to realize that whether cost sharing is required by the sponsor or is offered by the Texas A&M or PI voluntarily, it must be tracked and reported by Texas A&M. Once the award is made, all cost sharing commitments are considered to be mandatory and represent binding obligations.

Terms to describe cost sharing include "Matching Contributions," "Third-Party Contributions," and "In-Kind Contributions." Cost sharing is paid by Texas A&M instead of the sponsor and has a significant financial impact on the department providing the funds and on the University as a whole. The University must provide a means of accumulating and documenting cost sharing incurred by the University, accounted for and reported in a manner consistent with requirements set forth by Texas A&M University, federal regulations (Office of Management and Budget circulars A-110 and A-21), and sponsoring agencies. Texas A&M's [Cost Share Policy](#) is located: <http://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/15.01.01.M1.03.pdf>

Regardless of the source of funding, federal guidelines are used for cost sharing. (Any example using the federal government as a sponsor applies also to non-federal sponsors.) **The Senior Associate Vice President for Research Administration must approve all voluntary cost sharing, in advance, prior to proposal submission.** The [Voluntary Committed Cost Sharing Request Form](#) must be completed, (<https://srs.tamu.edu/administrative-forms-documentation/>). Please contact Janet Killion, Director of Research Reporting, with any questions regarding cost sharing at [jkillion@tamu.edu](mailto:jkillion@tamu.edu) or 979.862.2841.

#### 6.3.1 Reduced or Waived F&A or IDC Cost Rates

Facilities and Administrative (F&A) or IDC costs are real costs and must be included in your budget using Texas A&M's Federally Negotiated Rate and will only be waived or reduced in rare and justified situations and are dependent upon the sponsor type. Waived or reduced IDC may represent a type of cost sharing. Note any deviations must be explained in writing on the IDC Waiver form and must include the benefits to CLLA/TAMU that justify a different F&A rate. Texas A&M follows these guidelines when establishing sponsored agreement terms for recovery of F&A (indirect) costs:

- Agreements with federal agencies will provide for the full F&A (indirect) cost rate unless:
  - the F&A (indirect) cost rate by a federal agency on a particular project is fixed or capped by statute or sponsor regulation, (or)
  - other circumstances dictate the necessity for accepting a lesser F&A (indirect) cost rate at the discretion of the University.

- Agreements with Texas State Agencies and political subdivisions, at the discretion of the University, except where the agreement is funded with federal flow-through funds, may agree to accept a lesser F&A (indirect cost) rate.
- Agreements with private foundations will provide for the fully negotiated F&A (indirect) cost rate, unless:
  - the F&A (indirect) cost rate by the private foundation on a particular project is prohibited or limited **and** such limitation or cap is explicitly stated in the sponsor’s guidelines or published in their by-laws. A formal letter from a foundation “official” is not an acceptable source of documentation.

As a public institution, Texas A&M must conduct research on a full cost recovery basis. When we do not recover F&A from private-for profit sponsors, Texas A&M is essentially subsidizing projects conducted for the primary benefit of the private company. The federal government specifically requires universities to ensure the Federal Government does not subsidize other non-federal activity in the reimbursements it provides for indirect costs associated with the performance of federal research.

To obtain prior approval from the VPR’s office for a reduction or waiver of the fully negotiated F&A (indirect cost) rate, the [IDC Waiver form](#) should be completed, routed through your respective Department Head and Dean, and then forwarded on the OVPR for review. The form can also be found on the Texas A&M SRS website at: <https://srs.tamu.edu/administrative-forms-documentation/>.

#### **6.4 Budget Types: Detailed vs. Modular**

Some sponsors require PIs to submit detailed budget category information with their proposal applications to assure that adequate resources are being requested for the proposed research activity. Other sponsors, most notably NIH, do not require as much budget detail at the time a proposal is submitted and allow the use of a “modular” budget for some proposals. NIH has detailed information on developing budgets, <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/develop-your-budget.htm>.

Modular budgets simplify the budget request by requiring less information than standard budgets and by allowing a PI to request funds in \$25,000 modules. The PI determines the number of modules that will be needed to fund the project each year, and then totals the number of modules to determine the project budget. Modular budgets are used when requesting \$250,000 or less during each year of the proposed study.

To determine which budget component (detailed or modular) to use for NIH and other government proposal applications, read and consult the specific funding opportunity announcement. Budget formats will be provided in the program announcement guidelines (RFP, PA, etc.). If you are submitting an application to a private foundation, check the website or talk to a program officer to discuss budget requirements.

Although SRS or the sponsor may not require a detailed budget in your proposal application, many researchers find it useful to first create a detailed budget on which they base their proposal application’s modular budget.

A budget estimator worksheet listing typical budget categories and information about fringe benefit rates and F&A costs is located on [the SRS Proposal Preparation and Submission](#) website (<https://srs.tamu.edu/proposal-preparation-and-submission/budget-development/>).

Sample modular NIH budgets are found at [NIH modular grant application formats](#) (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/develop-your-budget/modular.htm>). Details on NSF Budget categories are in the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG). See [PAPPG Part II. C.2.g for NSF Budget information](#).

## Section 7: Budget Categories Overview

Proposals that require an itemized (detailed) budget must have that budget prepared and submitted via your department's Proposal Administrator SRS. SRS will work with the PI's input to ensure budgets are compliant with Texas A&M University System regulations and ensure correct formulas and figures are used in calculations.

To get started on your budget, consult the [SRS Proposal Preparation and Submission](https://srs.tamu.edu/proposal-preparation-and-submission/) website (<https://srs.tamu.edu/proposal-preparation-and-submission/>) for budget basics. Locate your department's SRS Proposal Administrator via the Texas A&M SRS website, <https://srs.tamu.edu/my-contact/>.

Remember the CLLA RSD office can assist you with proposal development for proposals that are submitted either individually or via Texas A&M's SRS office. It is important that you prepare a realistic budget that accurately reflects the costs of completing the project you propose. Your numbers in your budget must be defensible. Think of it as meeting with a bank manager when you need a loan. You must justify the amount you ask for and why it is important to the end-results. Your budget priorities and scope must align with your project description.

In the 2007 version of *The Grant Application Writer's Workbook: Successful Proposals to Any Agency*, David C. Morrison and Stephen W. Russell state: *"You must remember that you can very quickly lose credibility by asking for either too much or too little, and that once any figure becomes suspect, all your budgetary line items will be scrutinized more closely. What you will be striving for is a budget that is so well justified that your reviewers will readily accept it."*

### 7.1 Calculating Direct Costs

The common direct cost budget categories are introduced below. PIs should work closely with their Department SRS Proposal Administrator, who are the experts in budget preparation.

#### 7.1.1 Salaries and Wages

Salary estimates should be based on the amount of effort committed to the project and on the actual salary figures for the PI and other personnel mentioned in the proposal. If personnel are included in the budget on a "to be determined" basis (not actually employed at the university when the proposal is submitted), be sure they are included and justified in the research plan, and use accurate salary information based on the titles at Texas A&M. SRS allows 3% for salary increases from year to year.

To calculate total salaries and wages, list the amount of time to be spent by each person who will be working on the project. Time should normally be shown in terms of person-months and/or as a percent of Full-Time Effort (FTE) and should be broken out for faculty as summer and academic year, or in calendar year months. For more information and useful answers to questions, see the [NIH Person Months FAQs](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/person_months_faqs.htm), located on the NIH website [https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/person\\_months\\_faqs.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/person_months_faqs.htm).

No employee may commit effort exceeding 100% in any given month. Sponsored activities may not result in any employees receiving compensation at a rate in excess of their authorized salary or academic rate. For multi-year projects, the budget should take into consideration any possible salary increases.

#### 7.1.2 Salary Caps

Federal agencies may impose limits on the amount of salary an individual can receive under a grant, i.e., "salary cap". Check the agency's guidelines to make sure that you are not restricted by a salary cap. For NIH specifically, the amount of the cap is adjusted annually, see [NIH Salary cap information](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm), located on the NIH website [https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap\\_summary.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm). For more information please contact Kristine Brisco, Assistant Dean for Finance and Operations at (979) 845-6516, [kbrisco@tamu.edu](mailto:kbrisco@tamu.edu)

### 7.1.3 Tuition for Graduate Students

Although tuition is exempt from F&A costs, Texas A&M requires sponsored research projects that involve paid graduate students in their budgets to include tuition remission and allowable fees for these graduate students.

### 7.1.4 Fringe Benefits

Fringe Benefits (group insurance and retirement) are considered to be a direct cost to a sponsored project. Grant or contract awards are responsible for the applicable fringe benefits incurred by each employee. Actual costs for fringe benefits are charged (billed) to the sponsored project at the time the cost is incurred, and is based on salary, the selected benefits package and other variables applicable to the individual employee. NOTE: A sponsor will only pay fringe benefits for an individual employee—not an employee and their family.

### 7.1.5 Non-Expendable Equipment (Capital and/or Fabricated)

Capital equipment refers to an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per item. It is important to get several vendor quotes if purchasing equipment costing \$5,000 or more per item. In general, capital equipment is not subject to (i.e., is exempt from) F&A cost recovery. See also [NIH Equipment FAQs, https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not95-121.html](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not95-121.html).

### 7.1.6 Expendable Equipment and Supplies

Normally, a research project will consume expendable supplies such as laboratory items, teaching aids, computer software, and office supplies necessary to conduct the day-to-day operation of the project. These items generally cost less than \$5,000 per unit and reasonable care should be taken to budget appropriately for these items.

### 7.1.7 Publication Costs

If the sponsor will pay for publication costs, you may include this item. Do not include publication costs in year one of the project because the PI will not have data to publish during the startup phase. Get price estimates from publishers for any publishing that might result from the projects. Page charges may vary from journal to journal. Consider both page charges and reprint costs.

### 7.1.8 Travel

Provide cost estimates for all domestic and foreign travel that is mentioned in the proposal application. Federal funds cannot be used to make trips to secure new or additional research support or funds.

### 7.1.9 Computer Time

Computer time costs may be included as a budget item, if appropriate. F&A costs apply to all types of computer time, and to all computer supply budgets.

### 7.1.10 Subagreement Budgets

Provide your SRS Proposal Administrator with partner contact information for both the researcher and their budget office for external partners. SRS will work with their budget staff to get the necessary budgets completed.

## 7.2 F&A Costs (IDC)

SRS will provide the F&A costs (IDC) as part of the budget they prepare. Contact SRS for more information.

## 7.3 Other Budget Preparation Resources

- [NIH Develop Your Budget](#)
- [NIH Allowability of Costs](#)
- [NIH Proposal Preparation Page](#)

- [NSF Allowability of Costs](#)
- [NSF PAPPG for NSF Budget Preparation](#)

## Section 8: Proposal Application and Routing and Submission

### 8.1 SRS Submission Deadlines for Proposal Applications

The steps for successful proposal submissions through SRS are:

- Gain required access to Maestro
- Contact your SRS Proposal Administrator
- Develop the budget
- Timely proposal routing and approvals
- Prepare proposal documents for submission
- Receive electronic copy of your submitted proposal via Maestro

With the tremendous time and effort investigators invest in preparing research proposals, it is vital that the proposals have the maximum opportunity of being reviewed and funded. To help ensure SRS has proper time to assist you, SRS has established required proposal submission lead times with the goal of submitting the most competitive research proposals possible. It is best if you contact your proposal administrator at least three weeks prior to your sponsor's deadline. Earlier is better! Budgets, justification, cost waivers, bios, C&P, data management plans and facilities sections of the proposal are required at least 5 business days prior to deadlines. Receipt of the proposal, in its complete and finalized form that is ready for submission, is due to SRS no later than 2 business days prior to the sponsor submission deadline. *If the proposal must be mailed, please allow for additional days prior to the sponsor submission deadline for it to be received on time.*

Adherence to the proposal submission lead times will allow SRS time to review the sponsor's requirements and complete the proposal submission, while also allowing time to conduct a thorough quality check of the proposal against the sponsor requirements. Submitting by the SRS lead times will also provide the opportunity for SRS to submit the proposal early and to overcome potential problems encountered during the electronic submission process (power outage, internet availability issues, etc.) that could lead to a proposal missing the sponsor deadline.

***Under no circumstances does SRS wish to discourage proposal submissions.*** Occasionally, circumstances beyond your control may not allow SRS lead times to be met. Best efforts will be made to complete the proposal submission process and provide full quality check services to late proposals when time and staff availability allows; however, late proposals will not receive priority over proposals. For proposals received outside of the requested timeframe, the investigator will assume the risk for proposals found to be non-compliant or does not meet the sponsor's deadline. Texas A&M SRS Submission Policy is found: <https://srs.tamu.edu/proposal-preparation-and-submission/policies-2/>.

Please note: When the sponsor decides to award funding, SRS staff will review the terms and conditions of the award for compliance with Federal, State, and Texas A&M requirements. Proposals submitted through Texas A&M require SRS, not the PI, to execute signature authority in accepting the award.

### 8.2 What to Expect After Submission to the Sponsor

Review periods vary by funding sponsor and typically range from 3-6 months for Federal proposal reviews, but may take longer. Fortunate PIs are notified that the proposed research project is being considered for funding or has been awarded funding by the sponsor. When your project is under consideration there are often questions to be

answered or project/budget adjustments to be negotiated. It is important that the PI be responsive to providing timely answers to the funding sponsor's requests as the funding is not a sure thing at this point. Once a notification has been received from the sponsor that the PI's proposal has been selected to be funded, the PI must contact SRS in order to accept the award. SRS will ensure the contract documents are processed through the required signature authority and the project accounts are established in Maestro. The PI (and SRS) will receive a notice of grant award (NGA) confirming the terms and conditions and the approved budgeted amount for the research project. Depending upon the source of the funding and the specific legal obligations contained in the terms and conditions, it may be necessary for significant issues to be negotiated and resolved prior to SRS signing off and accepting the award on behalf of the university and prior to the PI being able to spend the funds.

When a research project has been awarded funds by a sponsor, the post-award administrative process begins. This process involves a review of the award document by SRS staff, negotiation of the terms and conditions associated with accepting the funds, establishing accounts, spending the funds in accordance with federal regulations, and tracking, monitoring and reporting on project progress and financial expenditures.

### **8.2.1 Did Your Proposal Receive Funding?**

Congratulations! *Don't* sign the agreement. Funding agreements must be signed by SRS. Be sure to notify your Department Head and Research Dean. SRS will setup the accounts in Maestro. Talk with your Business Office to be sure accounts are setup before salary payments start. Be sure to complete any forms or compliance approvals necessary to receive the funds, such as, have you completed an IRB?

### **8.2.2 Not Funded, Now What?**

#### ***Focus on Forward!***

Even great ideas don't get funded! Every successful researcher has felt the pain of not receiving funding. Rejection is tough. Keep it in perspective. This is all part of developing winning proposals. Seek more information. Did you get useful review comments? Those are worth gold. Use them to improve the next submission. Remember getting funding for a successful proposal is a *process*. It isn't about doing one submission. You will hone your craft with each effort.

Truthfully look at *why* your proposal wasn't funded. Get reviews. Evaluate the comments. Was your proposal sloppy? Sloppy proposal = sloppy research in reviewers' eyes. Revise and resubmit when possible. Consider speaking with a program officer on how to adjust your idea to have a better fit next round, or perhaps consider another program.

Think like a reviewer. Did you match their funding mission – or yours? Did they fund a similar effort and want innovation as a criteria? Was it the right fit? What was your proposal missing? Did you pay attention to writing your proposal in an organized manner, with correct grammar and an easy-on-the-eyes format? Did you use jargon or include too much background and not enough about what you are planning to do and accomplish? Remember you must sell your idea and yourself to be successful!

***RETHINK > REVISE > REWRITE > RESUBMIT***

## Section 9: PI Research Resources - Websites, Proposal Types, and Definitions

### 9.1 Websites

College of Liberal Arts	<a href="https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/">https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/</a>
CLLA Resources for Faculty & Staff	<a href="https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/forms-guidelines/">https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/forms-guidelines/</a>
CLLA Research Strategy & Development	<a href="https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/">https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/intranet/research/</a>
Dean of Faculty	<a href="http://dof.tamu.edu/">http://dof.tamu.edu/</a>
Research@Texas A&M	<a href="http://research.tamu.edu/">http://research.tamu.edu/</a>
Research Interest Groups at Texas A&M	<a href="https://vpr.tamu.edu/resources/research-interest-groups">https://vpr.tamu.edu/resources/research-interest-groups</a>
VPR Research Development Services	<a href="http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment">http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment</a>
TAMU PI Bulletin listserv signup	<a href="https://listserv.tamu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=DOR-PI-BULLETIN&amp;A=1">https://listserv.tamu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=DOR-PI-BULLETIN&amp;A=1</a>
VPR Upcoming Workshops	<a href="http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/calendars/upcoming-events">http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/calendars/upcoming-events</a>
<b>TAMU LIBRARIES &amp; FACILITIES</b>	
Texas A&M Library	<a href="http://library.tamu.edu/index.html">http://library.tamu.edu/index.html</a>
Texas A&M Medical Science Library	<a href="http://msl.library.tamu.edu/index.html">http://msl.library.tamu.edu/index.html</a>
Texas A&M Library Databases	<a href="http://library.tamu.edu/search/databases.html">http://library.tamu.edu/search/databases.html</a>
Texas A&M Library Subject Experts	<a href="https://library.tamu.edu/directory/findmylibrarian">https://library.tamu.edu/directory/findmylibrarian</a>
Texas A&M Centers, Institutes & Core Facilities	<a href="http://research.tamu.edu/centers/?_ga=1.217255839.862378503.1469022342">http://research.tamu.edu/centers/?_ga=1.217255839.862378503.1469022342</a>
<b>TAMU &amp; CLLA FAST FACTS</b>	
CLLA Fact Sheet	<a href="https://libarts.tamu.edu/app/uploads/2017/06/Diversity-Fact-Sheet_2016_FINAL.pdf">https://libarts.tamu.edu/app/uploads/2017/06/Diversity-Fact-Sheet_2016_FINAL.pdf</a>
Texas A&M Rankings & Quick Facts	<a href="http://www.tamu.edu/about/at-a-glance.html">http://www.tamu.edu/about/at-a-glance.html</a>
Texas A&M Data & Research Services	<a href="http://dars.tamu.edu/">http://dars.tamu.edu/</a>
Texas A&M Metrics	<a href="http://accountability.tamu.edu/">http://accountability.tamu.edu/</a>
Congressional District 17, Rep Bill Flores	<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas%27s_17th_congressional_district">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas%27s_17th_congressional_district</a>
<b>TAMU &amp; CLLA COMPLIANCE</b>	
CLLA Academic Activity Leave	<a href="https://libarts.tamu.edu/app/uploads/2017/05/DEVELOPMENTAL-LEAVES-EXTERNAL-AWARDS-FELLOWSHIPS-AND-COURSE-BUYOUTS.pdf">https://libarts.tamu.edu/app/uploads/2017/05/DEVELOPMENTAL-LEAVES-EXTERNAL-AWARDS-FELLOWSHIPS-AND-COURSE-BUYOUTS.pdf</a>
Texas A&M University Rules	<a href="http://rules.tamu.edu/">http://rules.tamu.edu/</a>
Texas A&M IDC Waiver Request Form	<a href="http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchadmin/resources/list-serve-archive/2016-listserv-emails/vpra-updated-indirect-cost-f-a-waiver-request-form">http://vpr.tamu.edu/researchadmin/resources/list-serve-archive/2016-listserv-emails/vpra-updated-indirect-cost-f-a-waiver-request-form</a>
TAMUS Explanation of F&A Costs	<a href="http://www.tamus.edu/business/budgets-and-accounting/accounting/facilities-administrative-costs/facilities-administrative-cost-brochure/">http://www.tamus.edu/business/budgets-and-accounting/accounting/facilities-administrative-costs/facilities-administrative-cost-brochure/</a>



TAMUS Federally Negotiated F&A Rate	<a href="http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/budgets-acct/pdf/FA_Rates_College_Station_Based-FY2015-18.pdf">http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/budgets-acct/pdf/FA_Rates_College_Station_Based-FY2015-18.pdf</a>
Texas A&M Nondisclosure Agreement Form	<a href="https://srs.tamu.edu/negotiation-and-acceptance/nondisclosure-agreement/">https://srs.tamu.edu/negotiation-and-acceptance/nondisclosure-agreement/</a>
Texas A&M International Travel Forms	<a href="http://internationaltravel.tamu.edu/Forms">http://internationaltravel.tamu.edu/Forms</a>
Restrictions on IDC use per State	<a href="http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.145.htm">http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.145.htm</a>
Texas A&M University System Policies	<a href="http://www.tamus.edu/legal/policy/policy-and-regulation-library/">http://www.tamus.edu/legal/policy/policy-and-regulation-library/</a>
<b>FEDERAL AGENCY &amp; FUNDING WEBSITES</b>	
NEH	<a href="https://www.neh.gov/grants">https://www.neh.gov/grants</a>
NIH ASSIST	<a href="https://public.era.nih.gov/assist">https://public.era.nih.gov/assist</a>
NIH eRA Commons	<a href="https://commons.era.nih.gov/">https://commons.era.nih.gov/</a>
NSF Grant Proposal Guide	<a href="https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp">https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp</a>
NSF FastLane	<a href="https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/">https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/</a>
National Academies List of Highly Prestigious and Prestigious Awards	<a href="http://sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/resdoc/pga_044718">http://sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/resdoc/pga_044718</a>
<b>PROPOSAL WRITING RESOURCES</b>	
Proposal Content	<a href="https://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/proposal-development-resources">https://vpr.tamu.edu/researchdevelopment/proposal-development-resources</a>
SRS Budget Estimator, Benefits & IDC Rates	<a href="https://srs.tamu.edu/contracts-and-grants/proposal-preparation-and-submission">https://srs.tamu.edu/contracts-and-grants/proposal-preparation-and-submission</a>
The Foundation Center Proposal Writing Shortcourse	<a href="https://grantspace.org/training/courses/foundation-centers-online-proposal-writing-course/">https://grantspace.org/training/courses/foundation-centers-online-proposal-writing-course/</a>
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance – Developing & Writing Grant Proposals	<a href="http://njms.rutgers.edu/research/rast/DevelopingAndWritingGrantProposals.htm">http://njms.rutgers.edu/research/rast/DevelopingAndWritingGrantProposals.htm</a>
NIH Guide for Grants & Contracts	<a href="http://grants.nih.gov/funding/index.htm">http://grants.nih.gov/funding/index.htm</a>
NIH How-To Apply Application Guide	<a href="https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide.html">https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide.html</a>
NIH Annotated Sample Applications	<a href="https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/sample-applications">https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/sample-applications</a>
NIH Biographical Sketch help	<a href="https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm">https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm</a>
NIH Mock Peer Review Process	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBDxI6l4dOA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBDxI6l4dOA</a>
NSF Grant Proposal Guide	<a href="https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp">https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp</a>
NSF Guide to Proposal Writing	<a href="http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1998/nsf9891/nsf9891.htm">http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1998/nsf9891/nsf9891.htm</a>
NSF Broader Impacts Examples	<a href="https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2002/nsf022/bicexamples.pdf">https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2002/nsf022/bicexamples.pdf</a>
Data Management Tool	<a href="https://dmp.cdlib.org">https://dmp.cdlib.org</a> (Select Get Started then Texas A&M from affiliated list)
User Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation	<a href="http://www.informalscience.org/sites/default/files/TheUserFriendlyGuide.pdf">http://www.informalscience.org/sites/default/files/TheUserFriendlyGuide.pdf</a>
Non-Profit Guides: Grant Writing Tools for Non-Profit Organizations – samples	<a href="http://www.npguides.org/">http://www.npguides.org/</a>

Using Plain Language	<a href="https://grants.nih.gov/grants/plain_language_examples.htm">https://grants.nih.gov/grants/plain_language_examples.htm</a>
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## 9.2 Common Proposal Types

- Internal Grants & Fellowships** are institutional support for TAMU faculty and may be funded through your College or through the VPR's Office. Procedures to submit vary; however, the VPR supported efforts typically are submitted via the **TAMU eProposal** website. (*This is the same website for external proposals that must go through a selection process for **Limited Submissions** which is managed by the VPR's office.*) Other guidelines may apply so always refer to the current sponsor's instructions. The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and the Office of the Vice-President for Research support "Seed Funding" activities and research that enhances scholarship or preliminary work with the goal to enhance external funding success, supplement fellowships, and support artistic or creative activities. Examples include the CLLA International Travel Grants and Seed Grants and the VPR-supported PESCA and A&H Fellowships.
- External Grants & Contracts** are common instruments for external funding and are awarded (funded) to the Institution via SRS, not directly to the PI. **Applications are submitted by TAMU on your behalf via your proposal admin in Sponsored Research Services (SRS).** If the proposal is a **Limited Submission** opportunity it must be submitted to the VPR via TAMU's e-proposal for the ones allowed to go forward to be selected.
  - Submitted by TAMU SRS and award funded and managed through TAMU SRS
    - Contact your **SRS Proposal Administrator** as early as possible before deadlines
  - Indirect costs Apply
  - SRS helps you prepared a detailed budget & handles forms, routing, etc.
  - Grants & contracts have fixed deliverables and timelines
- External Fellowships** are awarded to an individual or the institution
  - May be submitted by individual or institution base on sponsor guidelines
  - If the proposal is a Limited Submission opportunity it must be submitted to the VPR via TAMU's e-proposal to be considered
  - Lump sum funded to individual
  - Simpler budget
  - Requires planning in advance with chair and dean if requesting release time or leave, matching funds, course buyout, or salary supplement
    - See the current [Faculty Leave Policy](#).
- Donor Endowments & Gifts** are handled through the College Development Office

## 9.3 Definitions

**CLLA Motto: *Knowledge for Life*** The motto for the College of Liberal Arts, "Knowledge for Life," captures the CLLA goals to: (1) create knowledge through distinguished research, scholarship, or creative work in a wide variety of academic fields of study; (2) employ exciting pedagogies to provide undergraduate and graduate students with the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for a lifetime of learning and productive personal, professional, and civic lives; (3) equip people with the awareness and practices that kindle welcoming and inclusive environments; and (4) share the knowledge that fosters thought-provoking engagement within our institution and our communities.

**CLLA Mission:** Educate students for a rapidly changing world and instill in them a desire for lifelong learning through our faculty's influential research, distinguished scholarship and creative work, inspirational teaching, and

dedicated service—all in the context of the arts, humanities, and social and behavioral sciences.

**Co-Investigator (Co-I):** As an investigator on a sponsored project, this individual is responsible for the conducting of research within the terms and conditions of the award and in accordance with University and System rules and regulations. Individuals serving in this role must be approved by the University through the normal administrative channels. Co-Is do not have fiscal authority by virtue of their title but can be given authority if delegated in writing by the PI.

**Collaborator:** An individual who commits to contribute to the scientific development or execution of the project, but does not commit any specified measurable quantified level of effort on the project. Individuals qualifying for the role of PI, Co-PI, or Co-I and/or contribute measurable effort may not be listed as a collaborator. Individuals are not expected to meet the eligibility criteria defined in TAMU Rule 15.01.01.M5 to serve as a Collaborator on a sponsored research proposal and/or project.

**Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI):** This individual has been designated by the University and the sponsor as a Co-PI and shares the responsibilities for the sponsored project with the PI. In addition to responsibilities for the administrative, compliance and scientific and technical direction of a sponsored project, the Co-PI has fiscal authority and may oversee the spending of a sponsored project in accordance with its terms and conditions.

**DUNS Number** A DUNS (Dun & Bradstreet) number is a unique nine-digit identification number for the physical location of a business. This is required for all organizations when submitting proposals to any government entity.

**EIN Number** An employer identification number (EIN) is a nine-digit number assigned by the IRS. It is used to identify the tax accounts of businesses. The IRS uses the number to identify taxpayers that are required to file business tax returns.

**Maestro:** The web-based application developed by Texas A&M University used to track & manage grants & funds.

**Nondisclosure Agreement (NDA):** A form signed between two or more parties that describes a topic for consideration in discussions and indicates the confidential and proprietary information shared between the parties will remain confidential for a given period of time.

**Principal Investigator (PI):** This individual has been designated by the University and the sponsor as the responsible person for overall administrative, fiscal, scientific and technical direction and conduct of a sponsored project within the terms and conditions of the award and in accordance with University and System rules and regulations. Where there are other PIs on the grant designated by the University and the sponsor, they are referred to as Co-PIs. In these cases the PI assumes the role of project leader or lead PI and is listed first on the proposal.

**SAP:** Standard Administrative Procedure. The complete Texas A&M University Rules and SAPs is located at <http://rules-saps.tamu.edu/TAMURulesAndSAPs.aspx> Texas A&M University System Policy and Regulation Library <http://www.tamus.edu/legal/policy/policy-and-regulation-library/>

**Sponsored Projects:** Research, training, instructional, or outreach/public service projects involving funds, materials, other forms of compensation, or exchanges of in-kind efforts from sources external to Texas A&M under awards or agreements

**SRS:** Sponsored Research Services. The Texas A&M University office which handles fiscal administration of grants and is authorized to submit proposals on behalf of Texas A&M and faculty. They assist faculty in creating detailed budgets to submit to sponsors and ensure compliance and routing are handled correctly.

