

# Office of Sponsored Programs Questions and Answers

**Q1.** What is the Office of Sponsored Programs?

**A1.** The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) coordinates external research funding, it assists with finding funding opportunities, submitting funding proposals, negotiating and accepting awards, and helps with post-award management.

**Q2.** What is a sponsored project?

**A2.** A sponsored project is a project that is funded by a third party external to the university. Generally, the project is funded by means of an award agreement, and the award terms require some kind of deliverable (a technical report, a financial report, milestones, etc.).

**Q3.** How is the OSP organized?

**A3.** The OSP is divided into three main areas, these being:

a) Proposal Development – a well written, skillfully prepared, and organized research proposal is vital to the success of an application for research funding. OSP and the proposal development team provide assistance and guidance throughout the proposal development process to ensure proposals are as strong and competitive as possible. We can help in many areas such as locating funding opportunities, reviewing and editing proposal text, developing a budget, and reviewing and submitting the completed proposal.

Please feel free to contact Proposal Development Manager, Carol Brodie on (702) 895-1328, for more information, or contact her by e-mail at [carol.brodie@unlv.edu](mailto:carol.brodie@unlv.edu).

b) Pre-award – you will be assigned a research administrator who will assist primarily with seeking funding opportunities, developing and submitting proposals, and negotiating awards.

c) Post-award – you will be assigned a grant accountant who will assist primarily with financial management of the award (account setup, billing, financial reporting, and close-out). The post-award grant accountant will also assist with requests for an extension of time, budget revisions, and other post-award administrative matters.

**Q4.** How do I know who my pre-award and post award contacts in OSP are?

**A4.** You can see who your pre-award and post award contacts are by checking on the OSP website, would you like me to send a link to you?

<https://www.unlv.edu/research/osp-assignments>

**Q5.** Who is authorized to sign proposals, award agreements, and invoices/financial statements?

**A5.** The authorization to sign proposals, awards, invoices, financial statements, and other official documents related to sponsored programs is vested in the Vice President for research and the Executive Director of Sponsored Programs. Researchers should not sign any of these documents as the authorized university signatory.

**Q6.** Can my dean or department chair sign a proposal on my behalf?

**A6.** No, all proposals to external funding agencies must be reviewed and authorized by OSP before they can be submitted to a sponsor.

**Q7.** Am I authorized to commit university resources?

**A7.** Faculty should discuss potential commitment of university resources with OSP prior to submission of a proposal. Faculty are not authorized to commit university resources in a contractual arrangement.

Chairs, deans, vice presidents, the provost, and the president have the ability to commit resources, but any such commitment for a sponsored project must be submitted to the sponsor through OSP.

## FINDING FUNDING

**Q1.** How do I identify funding opportunities?

**A1.** Faculty can work with OSP staff to obtain assistance in finding funding opportunities. Please feel free to contact Proposal Development Manager, Carol Brodie on (702) 895-1328, for more information, or contact her by e-mail at [carol.brodie@unlv.edu](mailto:carol.brodie@unlv.edu). Faculty can develop searches and receive e-mailed listings of award opportunities from several sources. Contact your OSP pre-award research administrator for more information.

## DEVELOPING AND PREPARING A PROPOSAL

**Q1.** What forms are required by the university in order to submit a proposal?

**A1.** Any sponsor forms related to the proposal submission cover pages, budget pages, representations, and certifications, etc. are required.

The university uses an Internal Routing Form to obtain information about your project; you should complete the form and have it signed by your chair and dean prior to sending it to OSP.

If you have sub-recipients on your project, OSP will also need a copy of the sub-recipients' statement of work and budget as well as a letter on letterhead agreeing to participate in the project.

Would you like me to send you a link to the Internal Routing Form?

[http://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page\\_files/27/Research-UNLVRoutingForm.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/Research-UNLVRoutingForm.pdf)

**Q2.** Who will review and sign the final proposal?

**A2.** OSP staff will review and sign the final proposal. Some electronic systems will allow the principal investigator to submit the final version of the proposal, but it should be remembered that OSP authorization is required prior to submission. Your OSP research administrator should be able to determine who will need to be the final signer and submitter of the proposals.

**Q3.** Who can help me develop my budget proposal?

**A3.** Your pre-award research administrator in the OSP can assist you develop your budget.

**Q4.** Who can help me develop my proposal guidelines?

**A4.** Your pre-award research administrator in the OSP can assist you in interpreting proposal guidelines.

**Q5.** Does the OSP prepare any part of my proposal?

**A5.** The OSP can assist with preparation of forms such as the cover sheet, representations and certifications, and budget forms, along with a range of other administrative documents.

**Q6.** Does the OSP have to have a completed copy of my application before signing it?

**A6.** Yes

**Q7.** When should I submit my completed application and routing form to the OSP?

**A7.** The OSP prefers to have your completed application and routing form four days before the proposal deadline. If you cannot comply with this deadline, the OSP will review as much of the proposal as possible, given existing proposals awaiting review and their deadline.

**Q8.** Which sponsored program proposals should be submitted through the OSP?

**A8.** All proposals that require an authorized university signature and involves a project that commits university resources must be submitted through the OSP, such commitments include, but are not limited to: proposals that propose deliverables (technical report, financial report,

etc.); require a budget; involve a sub-recipient; or involve human subjects, animal subjects, radiation, or biohazards.

**Q9.** What is our legal name, Tax Identification Number (TIN), and our Dun and Bradstreet number (DUNS) etc?

**A9.** UNLV's legal name is Board of Regents, Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) on behalf of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

The university's TIN (also known as an EIN) is 88-6000024. UNLV's DUNS number is 098377336.

**Q10.** Do I have to include my salary in a proposal budget?

**A10.** Principal investigators should include salary and fringe benefits in the proposal for work that they will undertake for the project. The salary can be paid for by the sponsor (called "buyout" because the PI is buying out @me from teaching) or can be donated by the university (cost sharing). PIs must obtain chair and dean approval for buyout or for cost-shared salary and fringe benefits.

**Q11.** What are fringe benefits?

**A11.** Fringe benefits are any of various benefits, as free life or health insurance, paid holidays, a pension, etc., received by an employee in addition to regular pay and could include retirement and health insurance benefits associated with salaries. Medicaid and workers' compensation are also included in fringe benefits.

OSP requires the use of a fringe benefit rate when developing budgets.

The actual charge for fringe benefits depends on the employee's job classification and number of dependents. Detailed information on fringe benefits can be viewed at Fringe Benefits Actual Costs.

Would you like me to send you a link?

[https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page\\_files/27/BreakdownofFringeBenefitRatesFY16.pdf](https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/BreakdownofFringeBenefitRatesFY16.pdf)

**Q12.** I am an employee with an academic-year appointment. Do I need to include fringe benefits for my requested summer salary support in my budget?

**A12.** Yes, you should include funding for retirement in your budget.

## BUDGETS

**Q1.** What are F & A, or Indirect costs?

**A1.** "F&A" stands for facilities and administration, and the term is used interchangeably with "indirect costs."

These terms are defined as "...those expenses which cannot be specifically identified as solely benefiting one particular project, but instead are incurred in support of common or joint expenses which are derived from the administration and maintenance of the sponsored activities."

In universities, F&A costs are incurred for general support and management of the mission-related research/teaching/service enterprise. They are sometimes referred to as "pooled costs" because they are accounted for and controlled centrally. Examples are library costs, utility costs, costs of operating and maintaining facilities, and the cost of the general administration of the institution.

**Q2.** How does OSP know which facilities and administration (indirect) rate to use?

**A2.** The university negotiates a facilities and administration rate agreement every three to five years that provides the rate to be charged depending on the type of sponsored project. Would you like me to send you a copy of the Facilities and Administration Rate Agreement?

<https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/24/Cost-Negotiation-Agreement.pdf>

**Q3.** My proposal is for only a small amount of funding. Do I still need to include facilities and administration (indirect) costs in the budget request?

**A3.** Yes, generally F&A should be applied to all sponsored projects. However, there are exceptions to this rule. If the sponsor has a written policy that restricts the rate to a lower percentage than the university's negotiated rate, please notify OSP. OSP will review the sponsor's policy and will make a determination on the use of the sponsor's rate. Requests for partial or full reduction of F&A should be very rare. However, UNLV may consider a reduction or full waiver in the following circumstances:

Exceptions Based on Sponsor Policy - UNLV will honor a sponsor's official policy regarding F&A if the sponsor has a formal, published policy regarding the reimbursement of F&A costs, or the RFP/ solicitation formally documents a project specific F&A restriction. Documentation of the sponsor policy or solicitation restriction must be forwarded to OSP.

Reductions or Waivers to Meet Mandatory Cost-Sharing - contributing some or all recoverable F&A costs to meet cost-sharing requirements is highly discouraged. However, if all other cost-

sharing options have been exhausted and a compelling argument can be made that the project has strategic benefit for the overall institution an exception may be considered. The Vice President for Research will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis, and waivers will only be approved with compelling justification.

VPR Approved Discretionary Reductions – Exceptions to the policy to charge full F&A, especially for sponsors willing to allow full recovery including industry, will be extremely rare. The Vice President for Research will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis, and waivers will only be approved with compelling justification.

**Q4.** How do I prepare a budget?

**A4.** The easiest way to develop a budget is to work with your OSP senior research administrator. If you want to develop your own budget, you should consider including the following line items, which are included in most budgets:

- 1) Salaries and wages
- 2) Fringe benefits
- 3) Materials and supplies
- 4) Equipment
- 5) Travel
- 6) Other direct costs (including sub-recipient and services agreements)
- 7) Facilities and administrative costs

OSP will review your budget prior to submission to the sponsor to ensure compliance with sponsor, university, and NSHE requirements.

**Q5.** What is cost sharing?

**A5.** Cost sharing is the provision of internal university funds in support of the project funded by the sponsor. Most sponsors do not require cost sharing; if it is not required, you do not have to provide cost sharing as part of your budget.

If the sponsor requires cost sharing, you can cost share in two ways – cash or in-kind. A cash match is a match of dollars. An in-kind match is a match of services. Typically, UNLV faculty will provide in-kind cost sharing through donation of their effort.

Faculty must be cautious not to overcommit effort. Faculty are not permitted to work more than 100

Per cent of their time (except in limited circumstances). All cost-shared effort donated to sponsored activity must fit into the 100% available. Generally, faculty cannot commit more than 25% of their time to cost sharing for sponsored activities. This is because the teaching of classes, work with graduate students, and committee work must also fit into the 100%.

**Q6.** What do I do if I need funds for cost sharing for my project?

**A6.** State-funded faculty may cost share a portion of their effort if they are not 100% committed to teaching and other academic duties. In addition, third parties can provide cost sharing. The researchers should obtain a letter from the third party on letterhead that indicates that party will provide cost sharing in the amount that is required. It is important that any valuation is supported by a justification for the value assigned.

**Q7.** How do I include a sub-recipient in my application?

**A7.** You would reference sub-recipients by name in both your statement of work (and describe their activities) and in your budget, under either the category of "Sub-recipients" or "Other Direct Costs." Your sub-recipients should also submit a letter on letterhead indicating their willingness to participate in the project, a statement of work, and a budget.

**Q8.** What do I need from sub-recipients to include their costs in my budget?

**A8.** You will need a statement of work and budget to document their costing. Depending on the nature of the award, you may need to obtain detailed costing information from the sub-recipient. In addition, there may be a need for additional documentation, depending on the requirements of the sponsor. This is particularly true in the case of subcontracts under prime agreements with Federal Acquisition Regulation clauses.

**Q9.** What is the difference between a vendor and sub-recipient agreement?

**A9.** A vendor provides a commercial item, like paper, or a service, such as maintenance services for copiers. A sub-recipient, on the other hand, participates in the research by contributing to the development of the research and has an impact on the direction of the research. A sub-recipient is a participant and collaborator in the project, unlike a vendor. A key difference between a vendor and a sub-recipient is that a sub-recipient must be performing/working autonomously.

## SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

**Q1.** Can I submit a proposal without OSP review?

**A1.** No, all proposals to external funding agencies must be reviewed and authorized by OSP before they can be submitted to a sponsor.

**Q2.** What forms are required by the university in order to submit my proposal?

**A2.** Any sponsor forms related to the proposal submission – cover pages, budget pages, representations, and certifications, etc. – are required. Additionally, the university uses an Internal Routing Form to obtain information about your project. You should complete the form and have it signed by your chair and dean prior to sending it to OSP. If you have sub-recipients on your project, OSP will also need a copy of the sub-recipients' statement of work and budget as well as a letter on letterhead agreeing to participate in the project.

**Q3.** Who will review and sign the final proposal?

**A3.** OSP staff will review and sign the final proposal. Some electronic systems will allow the principal investigator to submit the final version of the proposal, but it should be remembered that OSP authorization is required prior to submission. Your OSP research administrator should be able to determine who will need to be the final signer and submitter of the proposals.

**Q4.** How do I submit a proposal electronically?

**A4.** It depends on the sponsor; different sponsors use different electronic systems. Most systems require data and files related to the proposal to be uploaded into the sponsor's system, either through use of a sponsor-created software package or on the web. Your OSP research administrator will assist you with the submission.

**Q5.** Why does my chair/dean need to sign off on my grant proposal?

**A5.** Your chair and dean are required to sign off on the proposal so that they are aware of the research and sponsored activity taking place in their department and college. Additionally, the chair and the dean are permitted to commit university resources to the proposal if required. Their signatures authorizing such commitments are necessary for OSP's file.

**Q6.** What do I do if my department chair or dean are not available for signature?

**A6.** Most department chairs and deans delegate signature authority when they are out of the office. If a designee is not available, discuss the situation with your OSP research administrator.

**Q7.** I submitted an application without going to OSP and have an award. What do I do?

**A7.** Send a copy of the proposal and budget, along with a routing form, to OSP for their files. OSP may review the submission for compliance with university and NSHE rules. If the proposal is not compliant, OSP will contact the sponsor to make any necessary revisions to the proposal in coordination with the principal investigator.

**Q8.** I just received a check for my grant. What do I do?

**A8.** Deliver the check to OSP for deposit. (Do not send the check by campus mail.) OSP will ensure that the funds are credited to your sponsored project account.



## COMPLIANCE ISSUES

**Q1.** I'm not sure if my project involves human subject research. Who can give me the definitive answer?

**A1.** The staff of the Office for Protection of Research Subjects can provide that determination. Would you like me to send you a link to that web-site?

<https://www.unlv.edu/research/compliance-guidance>

**Q2.** I may have a conflict of interest with a sponsor that I am applying to, what should I do?

**A2.** You should contact OSP and describe the conflict of interest. View the policies page for information on the university's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Would you like me to send you a link to that page? <http://www.unlv.edu/research/policies>  
General Conflict of Interest matters are dealt with by the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost.

**Q3.** What is export control, and why is it important to me?

**A3.** "Export control" is a term that describes the application of the export control regulations. Knowledge of export regulations may be important for you to know about if you:

- 1) Send data, technology, intellectual property, or tangible items (like equipment) out of the country.
- 2) Employ non-U.S. citizens in your laboratory and perform applied research in a sensitive area or you work with a third party's data, technology, intellectual property, or equipment, especially if the third party is a corporation.
- 3) Work with embargoed countries such as Afghanistan, Angola, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Rwanda, Sudan, Syria, or the Western Balkans (Serbia and Montenegro).

Would you like me to send you a link to the export control web-site?

<http://www.unlv.edu/research/export>

Talk to Kristin Bloomquist, the university's Export Control Officer about these issues if you anticipate transmitting or shipping anything outside the U.S. or if you anticipate performing non-fundamental research with non-U.S. citizens. Kristin may be reached by telephone at (702) 895-0905 or e-mail at [Kristin.bloomquist@unlv.edu](mailto:Kristin.bloomquist@unlv.edu).

## AWARDS

**Q1.** How will I be notified if I receive an award?

**A1.** If the award comes to OSP, OSP will send you a copy of the agreement. You may receive the award directly from the sponsor. If you do, deliver the award to OSP so that they may review and sign the award, as required, and set up your account number.

**Q2.** Can I accept an award from the sponsor?

**A2.** University rules require that OSP accept awards on behalf of the university.

**Q3.** I know I am going to get an award. Can I start spending?

**A3.** If you have been notified by the sponsor that an award is imminent, let OSP know. The OSP may be able to set up a risk account for you so you can begin spending in advance of the receipt of the award.

**Q4.** What is a risk account, and can I get one?

**A4.** A risk account is an account that OSP can set up for you in advance of receipt of your award if they have received written notice from the sponsor that the award is being processed. Your OSP research administrator can assist you in requesting a risk account. All requests must be submitted to your OSP research administrator.

**Q5.** How do I get an account number for my award?

**A5.** When an award has been signed by both the sponsor and OSP, it is ready to receive an account number. Your OSP grant accountant will enter budget, invoicing, and financial reporting information into the university's systems and will generate an account number for your expenditures on the award. It usually takes a couple of days for an account number to be generated after the award has been signed by both the sponsor and OSP.

**Q6.** My grant has been awarded, but I want to change my budget. What should I do?

**A6.** Some sponsors permit you to make budget revisions without permission. You should review your award terms and conditions for specifics or ask your OSP grant accountant. If you have to seek permission from the sponsor to change the budget, submit your revision to your grant accountant with an explanation of the revision. OSP will then forward the request to the sponsor and revise the budget when the sponsor approves the change.

**Q7.** Who prepares the financial reports required by my grant?

**A7.** Usually, your OSP grant accountant will prepare financial reports required by the sponsor. In unusual cases, you may be asked to assist with the preparation of the reports, especially if receipts for expenditures are required or when the reporting documentation is extensive. Additionally, sponsors sometimes request that a copy of the technical report be sent with the financial report; your OSP grant accountant will coordinate submission of the financial report with your technical report in these cases.

**Q8.** Who prepares all the paperwork associated with personnel, purchases, travel, etc., on my award?

**A8.** Your departmental administrative support staff should provide assistance with paperwork associated with your project.

## SUB-RECIPIENTS

**Q1.** I am working with a sub-recipient on my project. What are my responsibilities?

**A1.** The principal investigator is responsible for monitoring sub-recipients' performance of the work they agreed to perform. In addition, the principal investigator should review and sign-off all sub-recipient invoices for correct billing, including any required cost sharing. If the invoiced amount is acceptable, the PI should write "approved" on the invoice, sign and date it, and forward it to Accounts Payable on a payment voucher. The PI is also responsible for ensuring the sub-recipient submits all deliverables and technical reports as required under the sub-recipient agreement.

**Q2.** I am having trouble getting a sub-recipient to provide reports/deliverables. Can anyone help me?

**A2.** Contact OSP as soon as possible, even if there is potential for a problem, if your sub-recipient is not performing adequately and provide us with the details. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, OSP may have to contact the Office of General Counsel to assist in resolving the situation.

## POST-AWARD ISSUES, EXTENSIONS, REVISED BUDGETS, AWARD TRANSFERS

**Q1.** My grant is going to end, but I'm not finished with the work. What can I do?

**A1.** You can ask the sponsor to extend the period of performance. Contact your OSP grant accountant if you need to extend the end date of the project. You will need to provide an explanation of why the extension is necessary. (Spending out the account is not a valid reason to extend a project.) Your OSP grant accountant will submit the request to the sponsor and update the end date if the extension is approved.

**Q2.** Do I need approval from the sponsor to adjust my budget to add funds for specific items or services?

**A2.** In some cases, you will need approval. Review your award for sponsor approval requirements. If you do not need approval, your grant accountant will be able to adjust the budget quickly. If sponsor approval is required, you should work with the OSP grant accountant to prepare a budget revision request. OSP will send the request to the sponsor; when the request is approved, the account budget will be modified.

**Q3.** Does OSP need a copy of my technical reports required under the award?

**A3.** No, but let OSP know you sent it to the sponsor. A copy of the cover page for documentation purposes is sufficient for OSP's files.

**Q4.** Can I move equipment purchased on a grant to an off-campus location?

**A4.** Please review UNLV's equipment disposition policy.

**Q5.** I will be leaving UNLV. Can I transfer my award?

**A5.** In many cases, you can transfer your award, such a transfer is at the discretion of the sponsor. There are essentially three outcomes:

- 1) The award is transferred.
- 2) The award is retained at the institution and a new Principal Investigator is appointed.
- 3) The award is retained and a substantial proportion of the award obligations are sub-contracted by the university.

Discuss transfer with your department chair, and if she or he approves the transfer, contact your OSP grant accountant. OSP will review sponsor requirements for transferring the award. You should finalize all expenditures on the project if transfer is approved. Additionally, if you anticipate transferring equipment or data, please let OSP know the details. You must let Delivery Services know if you are transferring equipment so that inventory can be updated.