



HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Office of the Provost

To: All Faculty, Administrators and Sponsored Research Staff

From: David Korn, Vice Provost for Research
Mark Barnes, University Director of Sponsored Research
Cathy Gorodentsev, Director, Office for Sponsored Programs

Subject: Grant Proposal Submission Deadlines

Date: December 17, 2010

Harvard University is implementing new submission guidelines for grant proposals to external funders, including government agencies and foundations. Please find attached the new *Policy on Proposal Submission Deadlines*.

The revised Policy on Proposal Submission Deadlines will be effective on February 1, 2011. Under this policy, a complete and final proposal, accompanied by the necessary school, University or sponsor approvals, must be received by the submitting office (OSP, HMS SPA, HSPH SPA) at least five (5) full business days prior to the sponsor's due date (or, for electronic submission, due time). Please note that most schools, impose additional time requirements regarding review and approval of sponsored programs proposals. These time requirements are intended to provide the submitting offices and the Provost's office, where appropriate (or where necessary), with adequate time to review proposals so that any problem areas can be identified and corrected before submission. In accordance with this Policy, any sponsored proposals that are not received by the deadline will not be reviewed or submitted. In cases of serious extenuating circumstances, such as inadequate notice from a sponsor as to the submission deadline, a request for exception to this policy can be made by the submitting office to Mark Barnes, the University Director of Sponsored Research.

The proposal submission deadlines are instrumental to the success of Harvard University's research enterprise for the following reasons:

Avoidance of errors that could result in the rejection or poor scoring of a proposal - Adherence to these deadlines will ensure that Harvard University faculty will receive careful and expeditious review of their proposal so that accurate and responsive proposals may be submitted by sponsor deadlines. It is necessary for the complete proposal to be reviewed by sponsored research offices, because narratives must support and be consistent with budgets, subcontractor and staffing references, and scopes of work.

Fairness and equity among faculty - This deadline is also intended to promote fairness and equity among faculty, as late proposal submission results in the late submitter's "jumping the queue" in front of his or her colleagues who have already submitted proposals within the applicable deadlines. Adherence to this Policy will guarantee that every faculty proposal receives the same careful pre-award support in the order in which the proposals are received by the submitting offices.

Electronic Submission - Harvard's submitting offices need sufficient time to create electronic profiles, identify any electronic system problems, and make any corrections in advance of sponsor deadlines. Moreover, effective January 25, 2011, NIH will be eliminating its current two day correction window; proposals submitted with errors will be rejected, and there will no longer be an opportunity for corrections. This makes preparing and finalizing proposals by the sponsor's deadline more important than ever.

Compliance - Harvard's three submitting offices need sufficient time to review the proposals for completeness and compliance with various submission requirements, which can differ from funder to funder and are sometimes idiosyncratic. The submitting offices review proposal formatting, budgets, narratives, and terms and conditions. The pre-award staff also confirms that all necessary approvals have been properly identified (e.g., IACUC, IRB, COMS, rDNA, etc.) and seek to identify any special risks that a proposal may pose to faculty, schools, and/or the University.

Provostial review – Under [University policy](#), some grant proposals require review and approval by the Provost's office before they may be submitted to funders. Provostial review is conducted promptly, most often within one business day of receipt, and can result in approval or in various suggestions or questions that require response from a school and/or a principal investigator. This new submission deadline allows sufficient time for the Provost's office to review proposals that meet the stated criteria. Nevertheless, in order to prevent any last-minute delays, faculty members are encouraged to submit to the Provost's office at as early as possible a summary of any grant proposal that may require this approval.

The remarkable research grant portfolio at Harvard reflects the talent, dedication, and hard work of Harvard's faculty and staff. Thank you for your efforts and, in advance, for your compliance with the proposal submission and review policies, which are designed to improve the quality of our submissions overall. If you have questions regarding this policy, please contact [Cathy Gorodentsev](#) at (617) 495-9047.