

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I want to apply for a grant. What should I do first?

Contact the Office of Sponsored Programs to determine who will fund your project and to initiate the procedures for administrative approval. OSP subscribes to the Illinois Researchers Information System (IRIS) database of funding opportunities. OSP also has information on other funding databases and many application materials from federal, state and private funding sources. Start the process as early as possible so OSP can provide you with the best possible service.

I know of a funding source for my project. Do I need to contact the Office of Sponsored Programs?

YES! OSP staff will help you obtain University approval for your project. Before being mailed, all grant proposals must have a Final Approval Form filed in the Office of Sponsored Programs. On it the project director must assure compliance with relevant University policies. Ten working days prior to the deadline is requested to assure timely routing.

What if I don't understand the guidelines or cannot answer the questions exactly?

Contact the Office of Sponsored Programs for assistance in interpreting grant program guidelines.

Who is authorized to sign grant proposal forms as Sponsoring Group or Authorizing Official?

Only the president or designated substitutes are authorized to commit the University to any financial arrangement with an outside entity, including accepting grants of money, equipment, or services. The Office of Sponsored Programs will help you obtain authorization and signatures.

Is it necessary to follow all the details in the program guidelines?

ABSOLUTELY! Follow the guidelines meticulously, because the reviewers will. Funding agencies report the most common problem with proposals is failure to follow directions.

When should I have my application to the Office of Sponsored Programs?

Both the Office of Sponsored Programs and the PI's submitting department need adequate time to review and approve proposal submissions. Proposals submitted with insufficient review time are at risk for electronic submission deadlines, although OSP will make every effort to submit each proposal.

Why do I have to submit ALL of my electronic proposals at least 3 days in advance of the submission date?

The process for submitting a grant via Grant.gov takes quite a bit longer than the old mailing process. Submitting to a sponsor via Grants.gov with no problems can take 2-4 business days alone. If there are errors, the time to submit can increase significantly. A 3-day submission policy is actually

quite liberal. Because there are so many grants submitted electronically, the lead time for all proposals is increasing, therefore, we have implemented the new submission deadline across the board.

What should I keep in mind when planning the budget?

At some point during the agency's evaluation of your grant application, the budget will be the most important part. A flawed budget can result in rejection. Give the best estimate possible--a padded budget will be detected but an inadequate budget will reflect the applicant's inexperience. Bring a list of anticipated expenses to the Office of Sponsored Programs and the staff will work with you.

What is NEIU's negotiated indirect cost rate?

Currently, 55 percent of direct salaries and wages for all grants and contracts with the federal government. Other indirect cost rates may be used depending upon the funding agency and the program.

How do I determine fringe benefits?

The Office of Sponsored Programs will help you in determining which fringe benefits apply to your budget.

My project will involve research using human subjects. What should I do?

File an Application for Approval of the Use of Human Subjects with the chair of the Human Subjects Committee before initiating research. The Human Subjects Committee is responsible for reviewing all research or related activities which involve humans as subjects that is proposed by any member of the NEIU faculty, staff, or student body (whether full or part-time). The current chair of the Human Subjects Committee is Saba Ayman-Nolley. OSP serves as support to the committee and provides all necessary forms to faculty, staff and students.

I have underestimated the time needed to complete my grant project, can I extend my project period without prior approval?

Yes, refer to the [memo on expanded authorities granted in part 75 of EDGAR](#) for further details. Also see Expanded Authorities Overview document (available in either [Word](#) or [PDF](#) format).

I have miscalculated expenditures for several categories in my grant budget, can I transfer funds between categories?

Yes, refer to the [memo on expanded authorities granted in part 75 of EDGAR](#) for further details. Also see Expanded Authorities Overview document (available in either [Word](#) or [PDF](#) format).

I have money left over at the end of the year, can I carry funds over to the next budget period?

Yes, refer to the [memo on expanded authorities granted in part 75 of EDGAR](#) for further details. Also

see Expanded Authorities Overview document (available in either [Word](#) or [PDF](#) format).

I'd like to use grant money to pay for activities related to the funded project that occurred before the effective date of the grant, can I obligate funds for expenses that occurred before the effective date of the project period? How far back?

Yes, refer to the [memo on expanded authorities granted in part 75 of EDGAR](#) for further details. Also see Expanded Authorities Overview document (available in either [Word](#) or [PDF](#) format).

What services does the Office of Sponsored Programs provide?

The staff of OSP will:

1. Help you acquire information and application guidelines from potential funding sources
2. Give you advice concerning the step-by step process of proposal development
3. Help you develop your concept and format
4. Give you feedback on preliminary drafts and edit your text for organization, style, grammar, and compliance with guidelines
5. Facilitate the University approval process
6. Secure documentation for compliance and regulatory issues
7. Proof your proposal, if necessary
8. Assist with transmittal of proposals
9. Help you meet your deadline

For information on the Office of Sponsored Programs or further information on IRB issues, please call or send e-mail to:

Office of Sponsored Programs

phone (773) 442/4670

Staff listing and e-mail addresses at <http://www.neiu.edu/~sprogram/AboutF.html>

For information on Accounting issues, please call or send e-mail to:

Buff Rosen-Boyd, Grant Accounting

BE-Rosen@neiu.edu

phone (773) 442-5142

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