



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE Research Administration Policy

Policy 20.3: Pre-Proposals for Sponsored Projects

<i>Effective Date:</i>	January 6, 2020
<i>Last Updated:</i>	May 6, 2024
<i>Responsible Office:</i>	Office of Research Services (ORS)
<i>Contact:</i>	Director, Office of Research Services

Reason for Policy

In some instances, sponsors ask for a pre-proposal as the first stage of the proposal review process to conduct preliminary screening of potential applicants for a sponsored project. This policy establishes the guidelines for the submission of pre-proposals in order to authorize commitments on behalf of the University, ensures that UNC Charlotte does not submit more than the allowed number of pre-proposals for limited submission funding opportunities, and enhances data collection on research productivity.

Policy Statement

A pre-proposal establishes communication between the sponsor and the applicant to determine whether a full proposal should be submitted and, in some instances, to obtain advice that will improve the proposal's chance of success. Pre-proposals can take many forms, including a shortened version of the proposal, a letter of intent (LOI), or a white paper, the specifics of which are either outlined in the funding opportunity announcement or otherwise communicated by the sponsor. Occasionally a pre-proposal may result in an award without the need to subsequently submit a full proposal. Other times, an invitation to submit a full proposal follows a preproposal.

The pre-proposal must be routed for internal approval before being submitted to a sponsor if any of the following circumstances apply:

- Limited submission: the number of pre-proposals and/or full-proposals either from the University or from a College/School/Center is limited. In these instances, the PI must request and receive approval from the Center for Research Excellence to submit;
- An authorized signatory is required or the pre-proposal is submitted through an electronic system that requires submission by an Authorized Signing Official (e.g. Research.gov, Grants.gov, etc.);
- The pre-proposal commits the University to cost sharing of any kind;
- The sponsor requests project budget information of any kind as part of the pre-proposal, except when the pre-proposal includes only a total proposed amount that matches the maximum award amount cited in the call for proposals, or when the sponsor requires the amount requested from all applicants to be listed as a specific, predetermined amount.

Procedures

Pre-proposals requiring internal approval are prepared and routed for internal approval via the University's electronic research administration system. If applicable, [PI eligibility status](#) may need to be confirmed and an [F&A waiver](#) may need to be requested and approved as part of the pre-proposal approval process. The [5-day rule for institutional review](#) process applies to pre-proposals that require internal approvals.

If the sponsor approves the pre-proposal for submission of the full application, the full application should also be prepared and routed for internal approval via the University's electronic research administration system.

Exclusions/Exceptions

None

Failure to Comply

Failure to obtain required approvals prior to the submission of a pre-proposal can result in the University declining to approve a resulting full proposal submission, or significant changes being required to the full proposal submission.

Related Information

[Policy 20.1: PI Status](#)

[Policy 20.2: Deadline for Proposal Submissions to University Offices](#)

[Policy 50.3: Facilities and Administrative \(F&A\) Costs](#)

[Guidelines for Charging Facilities and Administrative Costs](#)