SFA OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS

PROPOSAL BASICS: PART I
Articulate Your Idea

- Prepare a clear, concise description of project.
- Specify your goals, objectives and outcomes.
- Review literature.
- Develop your timetable.
- Determine how to evaluate your results.
- Determine staffing, equipment, and other project costs.
- Identify potential partners (if needed).
Concise and clear Project Description

- Develop a 1-page abstract of your idea
  - What is your hypotheses, research question, goal?
  - What are the questions you hope to answer?
  - Why is your project important?
    - To you? To SFA? To a larger audience?
  - How will the results contribute to the existing body of knowledge?
Goals, objectives, outcomes

- **Goal – broad statement**
  - Increase the participation of faculty in submitting funding proposals to external sponsors.

- **Objective – concrete step to achieve the goal.**
  Quantifiable, measurable, attainable, realistic. Could be a behavior, performance, process or product.
  - By the end of FY13, ORSP will host 5 pre award workshops to faculty and staff to provide information on developing proposals and how to follow SFA procedures.

- **Outcomes – actual result**
  - 100% of new faculty will be invited to the workshops
Literature Review and Methodology

- **Lit review (if required)**
  - Preliminary research - be selective and critical, not exhaustive.
  - Helps you narrow and focus your idea.
  - Reviewers want to see your evaluation of pertinent works

- **Methodology**
  - How will you test your hypothesis?
  - What experiments will you perform?
  - What data will you gather?
  - What steps will you undertake?
  - Why choose this approach?
Timetable and Evaluation

- **Timetable**
  - Overall project
  - Staffing, major purchases
  - Objectives
  - Evaluation

- **Evaluation**
  - Plan to evaluate objectives and goal
  - Who will perform evaluation?
  - How will evaluation be performed?
Budget Items

- **Personnel**
  - Faculty, staff, students
  - Include fringe benefits

- **Equipment**
  - Purchase, rental

- **Supplies**
  - Books, chemicals, office supplies*

- **Contractors**
  - Consultants, partners
• Why is your project important?
  ○ To you? To SFA? To a larger audience?

• What need does your project fill?
  ○ What problem does it solve?

• How will you measure your success?
  ○ Project evaluation and dissemination.

• What do you need to carry our your project successfully?
  ○ Staff, equipment, travel, partners, supplies
Anatomy of a Proposal

Typical items include:
• Cover Letter
• Abstract
• Organization Description
• Statement of Problem/Need
• Program Goals and Objectives
• Methodology or Project Design
• Evaluation
• Dissemination
• Sustainability
• Budget and Budget Justification
General Rules for Formatting

- Consistent headings (bold, underline, etc.)
- Proofread
- Bullets, numbering
- Well-constructed charts
- Numbered pages
- 1” margins, 12-point font
- Avoid abbreviations and jargon
- Proofread; have colleagues and ORSP proofread
### Cover Letter and Abstract

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cover Letter</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Addressed to a specific person</td>
<td>• First Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Total cost of project, total requested, other sources</td>
<td>• One of most important parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brief statement of purpose</td>
<td>• 1-2 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Positive tone</td>
<td>• Future tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Liaison information</td>
<td>• Includes statement for each section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Signed by highest-ranking person in organization</td>
<td>• “Snapshot” of project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organization Description

- *History and mission - ORSP*
- Target audience/populations served
- *Structure of organization - ORSP*
- Partnerships
- Personnel and qualifications
- Accomplishments
- Fiscal information, prior grants
- Positive feedback
Sustainability

- Outline specific plan of action
- Show that the foundation’s money will not end with your project.
- Consider all the costs
  - Personnel
  - Staff training
  - Payment to human participants
  - Travel
Budget and Justification

- Written, narrative explanation
- Justifies each item in budget request
- Matches budget form/spreadsheet
- Matches proposal narrative

See separate Budget Presentation
Proposal Clearance Process

- The university’s commitment is documented on the *Proposal Clearance Form (PCF)*

  #1 The Project Director (PI/PD) fills out the PCF, signs it, and secures signatures of Chair and Dean (or appropriate supervisor).

  #2 The PD sends the form to ORSP with the project package (proposal, final budget, forms, etc).

  #3 ORSP reviews and submits package to appropriate administrative officials for signature.

- Your proposal is now ready for submission to the funding agency! *Coordinate submission with ORSP.*
SFA’s Authorized Signatory

- **SFA’s President** is the only person who can legally sign a contract or agreement on behalf of SFA.

- Although you will most likely be the project director, the award will not be to you, but rather to SFA. SFA is the applicant and the awardee.

- Since SFA is legally responsible for the performance of the work, the SFA units affected by your project must be aware of commitments involving them which are included in your proposal.
Remember!

- Begin early
- Be specific and realistic
- Follow the guidelines. Explicitly. Every single one.
- Contact sponsor in advance (when allowed)
- Match your needs with sponsor’s needs
- Follow the guidelines. Explicitly. Every single one.
Tips for Success...

- Find a mentor
- Read successful grants
- Attend workshops
- Find collaborators
- Participate as a reviewer
- Submit, review, and resubmit