

# Limited Submission Grant Application Policy

## Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development

### Policy

Funding agencies (sponsors) sometimes place limits on the number of letters of intent, pre-proposals or proposals that any one university may submit in response to a funding opportunity announcement (commonly referred to as a Request for Proposals – RFP). The following policy is designed to support an equitable review process while preventing any submission disqualifications due to submissions from The University of Alabama beyond the allowed number.

### Internal Procedure

The Office for Sponsored Programs (OSP) is continuously searching for limited submission RFPs from our primary funding agencies as well as those funding agencies that issue RFPs that might be particularly relevant to research and sponsored projects at the University. Opportunities are managed via Pivot and available through the OSP Limited Submission website (<http://osp.ua.edu/limited-submissions.html>), distributed to the Associate Deans for Research ([ADRs](#)), and announced via other OSP communications.

Despite the best efforts of OSP, not every funding opportunity may be identified. Those interested in applying to a limited submission opportunity that is not posted on the [OSP Limited Submission](#) website or announced via other OSP communications should email the Limited Submission Coordinator (Angie Shotts at [ashotts@research.ua.edu](mailto:ashotts@research.ua.edu)) and copy their Associate Deans for Research with: 1) the PI's name, 2) name of the grant competition, 3) a link to the program announcement, and 4) the agency proposal due date. It is important that no one assume a limited submission grant program is relevant only to a particular college or other subset of faculty. Failure to send this email notification in a timely manner may result in disqualification of an applicant for the relevant grant competition. Once notification is received, OSP will review the guidelines, determine if the situation warrants a Request for Interest (RFI) or pre-proposal announcement and, if so, establish appropriate internal due dates, post the announcement to the [OSP Limited Submission](#) website, update Pivot, distribute the announcement to the ADRs, and publish the information in other OSP communications.

When a Request for Interest (RFI) is announced, those interested should email the Limited Submission Coordinator, stating an interest in submitting a proposal, and copy their Associate Deans for Research. The RFI usually has a short turn-around time and requires only an email stating the individual's or group's interest in applying. Those who respond to the RFI will be notified that they may apply or, if interest exceeds the sponsor's limit on proposals, provided the details of the pre-proposal competition.

When a pre-proposal competition is needed, each applicant must submit a pre-proposal that is responsive to the RFP. The entire pre-proposal must be combined into one PDF and emailed to the Limited Submission Coordinator by the posted internal due date and time with the PI's Associate Dean for Research copied. If, by the deadline, the number of responsive submissions received in the proper format is at least the number of proposals that the University can submit then no further submissions will be accepted for review. This will ensure that OSP has adequate time to review all pre-proposals and that the PI(s) selected to apply will have sufficient time to complete a full proposal. If, by the deadline, fewer submissions are received than the University can submit, or if at any time it

is decided that insufficient responsive pre-proposals have been submitted, then additional proposals will be considered as they are submitted, until the limit is reached.

If the number of proposals submitted exceeds the limit prescribed by the agency, the following down-select process will be initiated.

## **Committee Selection**

A committee, composed of three to five ADRs, will serve as the review panel. When deemed appropriate, at-large faculty experts may be identified to serve as needed.

## **Review Process**

Committee members will individually review and score the pre-proposals based on a sound knowledge of the RFP and then will meet to discuss their scores and make selections. Reviewers will provide strengths and weaknesses for each pre-proposal, which will be shared with the Vice President for Research and Economic Development (VPRED). In the unusual case where there is unanimous agreement among members of the committee, reviews by the committee will be circulated to all members by email with a request to indicate whether: a) a committee meeting is needed, or b) the results can be recorded based upon the emailed reviews.

Any committee member may request to convene the committee for a formal meeting. During the meeting, committee members may choose to postpone their final vote until each PI has made a short oral presentation to address concerns and answer questions posed by the committee during the review.

If, after submission of the pre-proposal but before the committee decision is made, applicants learn that relevant grants have been funded or that relevant papers have been accepted, this additional information may be submitted as supplemental data (up to 1/2 page) to the Limited Submission Coordinator. No other supplemental data may be submitted.

Once the committee has determined which proposals merit further consideration, the results of the deliberations will be forwarded to the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development (OVPRED). It is expected that this review process will take about one to two weeks. Once a final decision is confirmed by the VPRED, information will be provided to applicants, their respective ADRs, and departmental chairs. Each applicant will receive his/her reviews in unattributed summary form, as will the respective ADR, as appropriate.

All selected applicants will receive an email notification and must reply, confirming their plans to proceed. Selected applicants will work with the appropriate Grant Specialists in OSP to facilitate any needs in the proposal development process.

The above process will be followed for most down-select / limited submission applications. In situations where there is insufficient time to convene a committee, the OVPRED may identify alternative procedures to ensure greatest institutional flexibility and competitiveness.

## **Policy Violations**

*Withdrawal of selected applicant:*

If a selected applicant(s) withdraws his/her proposal, the applicant(s) who received the next highest ranking will be notified that he/she is selected and may develop a proposal. Notification of withdrawal should occur as early as possible. Any applicant who withdraws with limited notice and without extreme extenuating circumstances will be identified as a risk for future limited submission

competitions and reviewers will be notified accordingly. The VPRED will also follow-up directly with the appropriate Dean(s) and ADR(s) regarding the late withdrawal.

*Submissions without OSP approval:*

If a PI submits a proposal to a limited submission solicitation without following these procedures and fails to obtain OSP's approval prior to submission, the University will withdraw the unauthorized proposal.

## Internal Submission Requirements

### Pre-proposal Format

Unless otherwise prescribed, internal pre-proposals must follow the formatting requirements, including page limitations, described below.

All pre-proposals must be formatted with **one-inch margins, single spacing, and 12 pt. font.** Appendices should not be included with pre-proposals. All pre-proposals must include:

- Cover page with a 1 page limit
- a) Title of proposal
  - b) If applicable to the RFP, the track or type of proposal
  - c) Name of Principal Investigator
  - d) PI's e-mail address.
  - e) PI's Department
  - f) PI's Department Chair and email address
  - g) PI's office address
  - h) Primary UA and external participant(s) and relevant information such as UA College and department, other University and departmental affiliation, and/or external affiliation. Examples: Jane Doe, UA Mechanical Engineering; John Doe, XYZ University, Mechanical Engineering; J. J. Doe, Motor Sports Inc.

\*\*\*When applicable, any additional information that would be relevant to the internal review process may be added to the 1 page cover sheet. For example, briefly stating the proposal is a resubmission that received positive reviews and that the reviewer comments will be addressed in the current proposal would be appropriate to include on the cover page.

- 2 pages { i) Project Summary - 2 page limit (including references if applicable).
- 1 page { j) Summary of impact on current and future instructional and research activities.  
k) Total Cost by general categories (include and identify cost sharing, if applicable).
- l) Current and Pending support for the UA PI and UA co-PIs from the past three years - no page limitation.
- m) Vitas for the UA PI and UA co-PIs. The NSF or NIH biosketch formats are acceptable but not required. Each Vita may be 2-5 pages.

**Note:** Exceptions, if any, to the above format for internal pre-proposal submissions will be listed in the announcement distributed to the Associate Deans for Research and on the OSP Limited Submission Website.

## Internal Pre-proposal Review Criteria

Internal pre-proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

1. Does the project address the program objectives described in the solicitation?

2. Does the project fit with the agency's primary direction?
3. Is the Investigator(s) qualified to conduct the proposed scope of work? A review of the current & pending support for the participants will be reviewed and evaluated, as applicable.
4. Information regarding University of Alabama strategic considerations, or other information relevant to the selection process, may be provided to reviewers by the VPR prior to deliberations.

Please note: These standards/criteria may be modified for individual funding opportunities. Any such modifications will be available through the [OSP Limited Submission](#) website, distributed to the Associate Deans for Research (ADRs), and announced via other OSP communications.

### **Office for Sponsored Programs Limited Submission Coordinator**

The contact for inquires, pre-proposal submissions, and all other communication related to external limited submission funding opportunities is **Angie Shotts, Coordinator of Research Support**, at [ashotts@research.ua.edu](mailto:ashotts@research.ua.edu). Other contact and limited submission information can be found at <http://osp.ua.edu/limited-submissions.html>.