Proposal and Award Management: Tips & Tricks

OSR Quarterly Network
Wednesday, February 26th

Andrea Zakrzewski
Grants Officer
Sponsored Research

• Sponsored research represents funding for research, training and public service provided by a variety of external sponsors

• Variety of mechanisms – grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, subawards

• Each project is unique and each requires careful preparation
Sponsored Research

• Planning begins at proposal stage, which sets up successful management at the award stage

• Support and management continues until the award ends

• RA plays a role throughout the lifecycle, proposal to award closeout
Solicitation: Proposal Roadmap

• Solicitation will (usually) guide you in all aspects of sponsor expectations and guidelines for proposal development

• Tempting to only read applicable sections, but reading through the entire document thoroughly is beneficial

• Use search function to quickly find “buzz words”
  – Export controls, conflict of interest, intellectual property, publications, certifications, SETA
Proposal Templates

• Having templates at your disposal helps both the RA and PI
• Most recent biographical sketch in appropriate sponsor formats
• Keep current and pending updated as proposals go out and awards come in
• Budget templates
• Work with department to develop broader standard documents (e.g., facilities)
Award Notice: Post-Award Roadmap

• While solicitation is your roadmap for the proposal, the award notice is your roadmap for post-award management
  – Project Account Summary (PAS) flags some items but understanding the entire award document is critical
• Grant vs. Contract
• Understand RTC/FDP and what it means for award management
• Knowledge of these specifics helps you make decisions and advise the PI appropriately
Grant vs. Contract

• Grants are *assistance* mechanisms
  – Research for the sake of research
  – Funds to carry out a project or activity
  – Outcomes are typically less defined and do not determine payment

• Contracts are *procurement* mechanisms
  – Contracts generally outline very specific goals and requirements for a task to be completed by a certain date
  – Subject to an extensive body of law and regulations.
  – Usually milestones & deliverables
FDP/RTC

• Federal Demonstration Partnership/Research Terms and Conditions
• Cooperative initiative among federal agencies and institutional recipients of research funds
• RTC page (http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp)
  • Provides explanations
  • Links to participating agency’s specific RTC (which may differ from the standard FDP/RTC)
  • Includes prior approval matrix
Reporting: GM044

• Can work to run by department, multiple departments, or individual PIs
• Manage portfolio at a high level
• Monitor:
  – Balances and spending
  – End Dates (Project Period vs. Budget Period)
• Help anticipate issues well in advance
  – No-Cost Extension, Prespending
Project Period vs. Budget Period

• Project Period
  – Entire awarded period for the overall research project
  – Anywhere from 1-5 years (typically)

• Budget Period
  – Current period (typically 12 months)
  – Listed as the ACTIVITY PERIOD on the GM044

• A three year research project starting on 9/1/14
  • Project period: 9/1/14-8/31/17
  • Budget period: 9/1/14-8/31/15

Why is this important to understand as it relates to post-award requests?
Be Resourceful!

• Being resourceful can be the best tool an RA has in their toolbox – at the proposal and award stages
• Google it!
• Understanding how to find answers and information is crucial
  – More informed
  – More effective
  – Better resource for your faculty
Questions?