

PARTNERS RESEARCH MANAGEMENT - PROPOSAL BEST PRACTICES

Animal Costs – Animal purchase, per diem and facility fees (if applicable) must be broken out and detailed in the budget justification if using a non-modular budget. Refer to [Animal Cost Guidelines](#)

Attachments – Attachments should adhere to application instructions and be uploaded without headers/footers or password security.

Biosketch – Approval should be sought from an investigator prior to including his or her biosketch material into a proposal.

Checklists – Refer to [Research Management Checklists](#) for the most up to date forms (both internal and sponsor) for New, Non-competing, Subcontract, Foundation and Electronic SF424 proposals.

Correcting an Electronic SF424 Proposal – If a proposal reached the NIH Commons with errors a Change/Corrected application must be submitted and coordinated with the G&C office.

Cost Sharing – Partners discourages PIs from volunteering to commit unsupported effort to a project when not required by the sponsor. A PI's effort on all projects, regardless of the source of salary support must not exceed 100%.

Deadlines for Submissions – Departments should assess their internal deadlines to ensure that they provide ample preparation time and sufficient lead-time for review and approval by their respective department or division chiefs. Refer to [Research Management Deadline Guidelines](#).

Facilities and Administration Costs (Indirect Costs) – Apply the DHHS negotiated rates. If a non-profit sponsor requires a rate and/or applicable base that differs from those listed in the federal rate agreement, Partners will charge the maximum amount allowed by the sponsor. A copy of the sponsor's overhead policy must be included with the proposal documents if the rate is different from our Federal rate.

Fringe – Prorate fringe according to the rates determined for each Fiscal Year. Refer to current [Fringe Rates](#).

Inflation – Escalate 3% for personnel costs per the current Partners Salary and Wage Program. Non-personnel costs should also escalate 3% unless documentation recommends higher escalation.

JIT (Just in Time) Information Requests – PHS Research Management must approve all information and submit it to the NIH. To eliminate any delays in submission, it is required that the JIT information be uploaded into eCommons by the PI. In addition the JIT information must now also include institutionally authorized subcontractor JIT material. Refer to the [JIT Information Request Procedure](#)

Key Personnel Listings – Approval should be sought from an investigator prior to naming them as key personnel.

Other Support – Include only when requested by the Sponsor. JIT information is not needed until the NIH formally requests it via direct communication. Refer to [JIT Process](#) for material and format requirements.

Modular Budgets and Excluded Categories – Categories excluded from F&A costs must be identified on the [Exclusion Spreadsheet](#) and forwarded to Research Management along with the proposal.

Non-personnel costs – Detail in the budget and the budget narrative as required by the Sponsor. Verify the costs are allowable, allocable and reasonable per the [Partners Cost Charging Policy](#) and 45CFR Part 74.

Page Limitations – Double-check the specific program announcement for page limitations. If it is an Electronic SF424 proposal, construct the Research Plan as one complete document and then split into separate .pdf documents just before uploading. This will help to verify the page limits are not exceeded.

Personnel Costs – Salaries should escalate on the calendar year, not the individual's anniversary date.

PI Changes – The sponsor must approve a change in Principal Investigator. Provide reason, replacement and qualifications to Research Management for approval coordination. Proposal coversheet should be included with all applications (chief level approval is required for new, competing and resubmissions).

Proprietary Information – If the proposal will include proprietary information or transfer of materials you should discuss with Research Ventures & Licensing (RVL) prior to finalizing the proposal.

Rejecting an SF424 Electronic Proposal – Only Research Management has the ability to reject a proposal through the NIH Commons. PIs should work with their central administrator to determine when the reject option is appropriate. The decision to reject should be considered if all or part of the application was lost or did not transfer correctly and should not be used to continue working on the scientific sections. If the proposal reached the NIH Commons with Warnings only, the proposal does not have to be corrected and will move on for scientific review.

Salary, Cap & Effort Information Release – If a PI draws less salary than the effort indicated on the budget, a statement as to what source will fund the effort must be included in the budget justification. If an investigator's salary is under the current NIH cap (\$186,600) the investigator should be budgeted at their institutional base. If salary is over the cap, budget at the cap amount and note in the justification that the actual institutional base salary exceeds the current NIH cap.

Subcontractor Budgeting – A detailed budget is required if non-modular. If modular, a breakout of direct, indirect and total costs rounded to the nearest thousandth is required. If a foreign subcontractor, F&A is capped at 8%. If a non-profit sponsor does not pay full overhead, subcontract costs should not be excluded before calculating the F&A, unless the sponsor's policy restricts overhead on subcontracts. A [Statement of Intent/Statement of Work](#) is required by all subcontractors.

Subcontract Within A Subcontract – This is a 3rd-party subcontract. We do not recommend the use of this feature. Historically it has slowed down the processes for approval and the setup of the agreements. Contact your central administrator for questions regarding this feature.

Time and Effort – Effort cannot exceed 100% or 12 person months. Effort is not based on a 40-hour workweek. The ability to devote 12 person months to research is limited by the extent of other required institutional roles including teaching, administrative and clinical duties. The dollars charged to a proposal cannot be more than the committed effort.