Pre Award
Procedures Manual

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Table of Contents

Mission

The mission of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) is to provide support for the Albany State University community (including faculty, staff, and students) in the acquisition and successful administration of externally funded projects for research, teaching, and service.

Services

The Office of Research & Sponsored Programs (ORSP) seeks to promote scholarship, research, creative activities, and engagement by encouraging and providing comprehensive support to faculty and staff in the pursuit of sponsored programs.

The office performs the following services:

- identifying funding opportunities;
- disseminating grant-related information to faculty and administrators;
- organizing and supporting the development of grant proposals and budgets
- reviewing proposals alongside the RFP for submission to sponsors; ;
- assisting in development of proposal narratives
- assisting in the development of project budgets and budget justifications
- assisting in the completion of internal requirements for proposal development and submission, including securing approvals, letters of commitments, institutional data and coordination of review of research protocols involving human participants and animal subjects
- assuring compliance with federal and state regulations and University policies and procedures;
- packaging of proposal for submission
- assisting in the electronic online submission of proposals
- maintaining a central file and database of all proposals submitted and awards received
- generating reports of sponsored program and grant activity
- coordinating activities with the Budgets and contracts, accounting section of the Controller's Office and Human Resources as required
- assisting in the review and processing of contracts and sub-contracts awarded to the university.

Overview

Grants and *sponsored research* are activities supported by external funds awarded as a result of a written proposal, request, or an application. Faculty and staff are encouraged to seek financial support from external sources for research, development, instruction, equipment, enhancement, service learning, and/or community service activities. Sponsoring agencies may be federal, state, and local governmental agencies, private foundations, corporations, businesses and industries, non-profit organizations, and professional societies.

Award notices/letters, contracts or *cooperative agreements* are evidence of the receipt of this support from external sources. The award agreement commits the sponsor to fund the project at a certain level and commits Albany State University to perform the activities specified in the proposal within a specified period of time.

Unlike grants and sponsored research, *gifts* and *bequests* to the University that do not include faculty salaries are administered through the Albany State University Foundation. The Vice President for Institutional Advancement oversees these functions. These donations are not intended for use with sponsored projects.

Generally, when a grant award or contract is offered by a funding agency, it is awarded to the University on behalf of the project director or principal investigator (PI) who is primarily responsible for executing the requirements of the award.

Every request for external funds submitted by Albany State University is a legal agreement committing the University to engage in certain activities at a certain cost; therefore, the proposed project must accord with University, college, and department goals, capabilities and policies. This is the rationale for all grant/contract proposals to be reviewed, and signed/approved by appropriate departments, that may include colleges, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP), Controller's Office, Vice President for Financial Affairs, and Provost and Vice President. Faculty or staff members do not have the authority to bind the University in a legal manner: the signatory authority rests with the President of Albany State University or designee.

The principal investigator, when developing and submitting a proposal and administering a project, is representing the University and is responsible for upholding the high standards expected. The PI serves as the budget unit head with all responsibilities pursuant to fiscal management of the project.

Identifying Funding

Funding is available from the following sources

- Federal
- State
- Local
- Private/Non-profit agencies
- Foundations
- Industry/Companies

Grants. Gov. The 'search grant' feature in grants.gov is an excellent resource for identifying federal funding opportunities. The link is https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html

Institutional Database subscriptions

ASU faculty, staff, and students have access to the following:

SPIN Database

SPINPlus database to search for funding sources. SPINPlus is a Web-based subscription package that includes SPIN, a widely used funding opportunities database that matches investigators/researchers with grant and contract announcements based on their user profiles. The SPIN database can be accessed on and off-campus. To utilize SPIN off campus each user must set up a new profile which must be approved by ORSP. The SPN Database can be accessed at https://spin.infoedglobal.com/Home/SOLRSearch

Foundation Center

- A subscription to foundation center is also available at FoundationSearch.com. This database provides access to over foundations and allows customized searching for opportunities using several parameters including geography. You must contact the ORSP to request a search in this database.

Detailed information on how to access these databases are available. Please contact the Office of Research and Sponsored programs for training and assistance in using these tools.

Other Notifications

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs shares select funding opportunities as they become available either through ASU Info or email to all faculty/deans. Please reach out to us if you wish to discuss your specific project or general funding goals or to facilitated individualized funding searches at orsp@asurams.edu.

Proposal Submission Approval Process

Once you have identified a specific funding opportunity and plan to submit a proposal, you must notify the Office of Research and Sponsored programs. This can be done by sending an email to the office along with the **PI Initiation/Approval** form. This notification is necessary for several reasons

- To ensure that ASU is eligible to apply for the grant
- To determine if multiple PIs are interested in responding to the same RFP

- To facilitate initial discussions with deans, chairs and other administrative leaders and units as necessary to ensure the support, capabilities and resources are available to implement the proposal if funded
- To allow sufficient time to process and resolve all compliance requirements during the proposal preparation process.

Please note that it is not required that the grant proposal be completed in order to submit the PI Initiation/ Approval Form. Provide as much information as possible about the project in the **initial stages** of proposal development. At a minimum, however information on any costs that the institution may incur in terms of resources or funding (e.g. released time requests, cost sharing, request for waiver of indirect funds) should be placed on the form to share with Deans and Chairs so that the commitment from the institution is clear. This also avoids you spending time writing a grant that will not be approved by the institution. Once the proposal is finalized, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs will update the form based on information provided and assist in securing the necessary approvals. Approvals must be secured before the grant is submitted.

By signing the routing form, the department chair and dean are certifying that the faculty/staff time commitment is consistent with faculty/staff assigned effort in the department and is within the maximum 100% time available for University duties should the proposal be funded. Also, these signatures indicate that the content of the proposal, the amount of external funding requested, and the source of any University funds contributed to the project are acceptable.

If there are human participants, animal subjects, hazardous or radioactive materials involved, you should also submit certification forms to the Internal Review Board(s) or the Safety and Environmental Health Officer as appropriate.

Proposal Preparation

The responsibility of writing the proposal is that of the faculty or staff member; however, ORSP staff can facilitate refining ideas and identifying funding sources. ORSP can also provide feedback regarding project design and proposal format, preparing and checking budgets, and reviewing compliance and assurance statements. Contact ORSP **early** in the planning process, even weeks or in some cases months before the submission deadline.

ORSP can provide assistance in obtaining required internal approvals and support/commitment letters for the proposal, however in order to do so at a minimum an abstract, budget, and budget narrative or justification are required.

In planning the proposal, it is a good idea to consult your department head and dean **early**. The dean and department head should be informed of your intentions and any aspect of the proposed project that might affect departmental and college administration or duties. Early discussion of personnel and facility commitments will smooth the way for the proposal later. Also, consult with the professional staff in the University's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs who can assist in determining if the funding opportunity complies with institutional policies.

Writing a proposal for a grant or contract for research or a program is a practice in persuasion. In general, assume the reader/reviewer is a busy, skeptical person who has no reason to give your proposal special consideration and is faced with more requests than can possibly be granted, or even read thoroughly. This reader wants to determine quickly and easily the answers to the following questions.

What do you want to do, how much will it cost, and how long will it take?

How does the proposed project relate to the sponsor's interest?

What difference will the project make to the University, students, state, nation, etc.?

What has already been accomplished in the project area?

How do you plan to implement and evaluate the project?

Why should you, rather than someone else, do this project?

How these questions are addressed depends on the nature of the proposed project and on the agency to which the proposal is being submitted. Most request for proposals include a scoring rubric that lets you know how the proposal will be reviewed. If you write your proposal to address the scoring rubric criteria, the reviewers questions will be answered.

During the proposal preparation process it is good practice to always do the following

- **Carefully** review the funder's guidelines:
- **Follow all directions** – both content and format;
- **Address funder interest**; not your interest
- Use **current** data to support the case/need;
- **Proofread/edit/check** for accuracy/formatting.

The most important aspect of any proposal is that it provides exactly the required information in a clear and well organized format. Some agencies specify the exact parts of the proposal, in sequence, with a page limitation for each. Other agencies allow greater flexibility and variability in the format and nature of the proposal that is being submitted. In general, a good proposal must accomplish the following tasks:

- Summarize the project;
- Identify the problem that is being addressed and provide pertinent background information;
- Demonstrate the need for the project;
- Explicitly list objectives, goals;
- Describe the project plan and activities for which funding is requested
- Give time sequence of activities showing staff responsibilities;
- Identify key staff members and their qualifications;
- Describe how the project will be managed;
- Describe an evaluation plan for the project;
- Include the relevant institutional resources available to carry out the project.
- Describe how project results will be disseminated
- Describe how the project will be sustained beyond the grant funding period
- Present the detailed budget and budget justification or narrative.

Budget Development

Budgets should be prepared according to the sponsoring agency's guidelines and University policies and should sufficiently cover all anticipated direct and indirect costs to be incurred under the proposed work. All budgets should be accompanied by a budget justification. The Office of Research and Sponsored programs will provide assistance in preparation and review of budget to ensure alignment with sponsor and institutional requirements.

Below are the most common budget categories for federal grants and contracts.

Salaries and Wages

The Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-21 views research as a normal faculty responsibility undertaken as a part of a faculty member's base salary. Sponsored programs should generally be undertaken on release or buyout basis. For example, a faculty member with a full teaching load which equates to the equivalent of 30 hours per academic year could request a 20% buyout equal to one 3-hour class per semester or a 10% buyout for one course per year.

When an employee undertakes sponsored projects on a release or buyout basis, the grant shall be charged for the portion of time and effort devoted to the project based on the individual's base salary rate. Base salary refers to academic/fiscal year appointment contract amounts.

In no instance should external funding be used as a means to increase the regular academic base salary of a University faculty member.

Extra Compensation

Extra compensation also referred to as Supplemental Compensation, is permitted under the following conditions

- when the work is carried out in addition to a normal full work load;
- no other qualified person is available to carry the work as part of his/her normal work load;
- the work provides sufficient funds to be self-supporting and
- the additional duties do not interfere with performance of regular duties.

Supplemental Compensation for employees is subject to BOR Policy 8.3.12.5 and Section 5.3.2 of the BOR Business Procedures Manual on Extra Compensation. Please refer to the ASU supplemental compensation policy for additional information.

Faculty are eligible for up to 10% of each academic semester; staff 7.5% per semester.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. At Albany State University fringe benefits include pension/retirement plans, FICA, vacation pay, health insurance, unemployment insurance and worker compensation. Fringe benefits are included at a specific percentage of an individual's salary based upon the category of an employee (full-time or part-time) and specific health insurance package.

Other Personnel Services.

This category may include undergraduate and graduate students, temporary help, and student assistants who are paid by the hour. All personnel employed through externally funded projects require that fringe benefits be projected in the budget submission. The fringe benefit rate for part-time personnel is calculated on the employer's share of FICA.

Travel

Travel expenses necessary to support and advance the sponsored program may be included in the sponsored program budget. The budget justification should indicate who will travel, where, and why, estimated air fare (or other cost of transportation), cost of meals and lodging, meeting registration fees, etc. Estimates of travel costs for in state and out-of-state travel must comply with University and Georgia state regulations. This includes ground travel, airfare, conference fees, car rental, hotel charges, meals, etc.

Equipment

The Federal definition of **equipment** is: tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds $5,000. For reporting & budgeting purposes on Federal grants, equipment that doesn't meet the criteria above is considered a supply. Computing devices under the $5000 threshold are classified as supplies.

All equipment to be purchased must be justified, written or email quotes should be obtained from vendors, and the Purchasing Office should be contacted in case bidding procedures are necessary.

Materials and supplies

Materials and supplies include items required for the performance of the project and may include items such as consumables such as chemicals, laboratory glassware, disposables, stationery, printer ribbons), books teaching aides, etc. In addition any software regardless of cost should be placed in the supply line item unless the sponsor requires that software is listed on a separate line item.

For Federal award in the specific case of computing devices, charging as direct costs is allowable for devices that are essential and allocable, but not solely dedicated, to the performance of a Federal award.

Professional Services

Service Fees or contracts offered to individuals not employed by the University such as outside consultants, evaluators, accountants, lecturers, legal council, auditing services, and contractors fall in this line item. If you are hiring a University employee for any professional service you must include that individual under personnel, *not under professional services.*

Publication costs

Publication costs include handouts, journal charges, cost of illustrations, and costs of preparing and reproducing reports required by the agency.

Other Costs

These costs may include postage, printing , testing/analysis costs, fabrication costs, equipment maintenance, liability insurance, professional dues, participant costs, subscriptions and any other item that does not logically fit elsewhere.

Indirect costs

Indirect cost also referred to as Facilities and Administrative Costs [F&A] Costs or overhead costs) are those incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified readily and specifically with a particular grant-funded project, an instructional activity or any other college activity. Indirect costs include two broad categories of expenses:

1) Facilities are defined as depreciation and use allowances, interest on debt associated with certain buildings, equipment and capital improvements, operation and maintenance expenses and library expenses.

2) Administration is defined as general administration and general expenses, departmental administration, grants administration, student administration and services, and all other types of expenditures not listed specifically under one of the subcategories of Facilities.

Albany State University has an indirect cost rate that is approved by Health and Human Services

- On-Campus rate: 58% of salaries (fringes excluded)
- Off-Campus: 32% of salaries (fringes excluded)

Some agencies limit indirect costs that can be charged to the grant. Please make sure that the correct indirect rates for the specific proposal is applied. Any requests for waiving of the institutional indirect costs must be submitted to and approved by the ORSP.

Institutional Information for Proposals

The following is a table of frequently needed information for preparing and submitting proposals:

Legal Name and Institutional Address	Albany State University 504 College Drive Albany, GA 31705-2796
Institutional Official (authorized to commit the University by their signature)	Mrs. Marion Fedrick, President Mr. Shawn McGee, Vice President for Administration & Fiscal Affairs
Tax Identification Number (TIN or FEIN)	58-6001996
Tax Identification Number (TIN or FEIN) – ASU Foundation	23-7032763
DUNS Number: Dun & Bradstreet, or D-U-N-S Number, is a unique nine-digit identification number for each physical location of the university.	030052815
CAGE Code A Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code is a five position code that identities companies doing or wishing to do business with the Federal Government.	9W263
Institutional Profile Number	138716
North American Industry Classification, NAIC	611310
Standard Industrial Classification, SIC#	82210101
Office of Postsecondary Education Identification (OPE ID)	00154400
Office of Justice Programs Grants Vender Number	586001996 (TIN#)
ASU's E-Verify Number	158834 Date: 10/16/2008
Marketing Personal Identification Number (MPIN) – Sam.gov	ASU1903JH
Indirect Cost Rate Information Indirect costs are overhead expenses (for example, rent and utilities) and general and administrative expenses (for example account department costs and personnel department costs) that a university charges an agency to operate a grant. **Type of Indirect Rate/Effective Dates** **Cognizant Agency** The Federal agency responsible for reviewing, negotiating and approving cost allocation plans or indirect cost proposals developed under OMB Circular A 87 on behalf of all Federal agencies.	On-Campus Rate: 58% Off-Campus Rate: 32% (ASU's rate is based on salaries exclusive of fringe benefits.) PRED. 07/01/2015 – 06/30/2019 PROV. 07/01/2019 – 06/30/2021 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Supplemental Compensation Rates	Faculty (9/10 month) 10% of Base Salary/semester Staff (12 month): 7.5% of Base Salary/semester
Fringe Benefits Rate	Academic Year Rate with TRS: 39.80 % Academic Year Rate with Other Option: 28.14 % Summer Rate (Faculty) with TRS: 28.55% Summer Rate (Faculty) with Other Option: 16.89% Supplemental Compensation: 7.65%
Congressional Districts	Federal: U.S. 2nd (GA-02) State House: 153 State Senate: 012

Institutional Review Board (Human Subjects) **Albany State University IRB**	Contacts: Dr. Dorene Medlin, IRB Committee Chair dorene.medlin@asurams.edu Mrs. M. Cheri Williams, ORSP mackelle.williams@asurams.edu
Federal Wide Assurance #	FWA# 00008372 IORG#000425 Assurance # 00004776
Human Subjects Research Submission Portal	http://www.irbnet.org
IRB Certification (Training)	http://www.citiprogram.org
Course Release Calculations	**1 – 3 hour course release =** • 12.5% • 1.125 months **2 – 3 hour course release =** • 25% • 2.25 months **1 – 4 hour course release =** • 16.67% • 1.5 months **2 – 4 hour course release =** • 33.3% • 3 months

Proposal Submission

Following the approval to submit the proposal, the proposal will be submitted to the funding agency by ORSP as long as all requirements and components are in place.

Hand delivered/mailed proposal submissions. A cover letter of transmittal will be prepared to accompany the proposal by the ORSP to present the formal application to the sponsoring agency and to request that notification of award or rejection is mailed to: Louise Wrensford, Executive Director, Research and Sponsored Programs, 504 College Drive, Albany GA 31705. Photocopying and mailing or delivery to the funding agency is the responsibilities of the principal investigator.

Electronic proposal submissions. Almost all agencies that require electronic submissions require the proposals to be submitted by an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). The University review and approval process is the same for electronically prepared proposals as for traditionally prepared proposals. ORSP is the authorized University office for submission or transmission of proposals to a sponsoring agency: submission by an individual to an agency is prohibited.

Grants.gov: Grants.gov lists all federal grant opportunities and provides a mechanism for applying for those opportunities. Proposal preparation in Grants.Gov is done using the Grants.gov **Workspace**. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace. Before you can use Workspace, you will need an account with Grants.gov. Grants.gov registration guidance is provided at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html. Follow the steps to register as an Individual Applicant in Grants.gov. After you completed the registration, a notification will be sent to your EBiz POC(s) to grant you a role in Workspace.

We recommend starting your grant application process early, especially if you are a first-time user. ORSP is already registered and serves as the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR).

SAM.gov. The *System for Award Management* (SAM) is the Official U.S. Government system that consolidates the capabilities of the Central Contractor Registry (CCR/FedReg), Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA), and Excluded Parties List System (EPLS). As you review proposal guidelines you will see that the institution must have an active SAM.gov registration in order to submit proposals to the Federal government. The ORSP works with ASU's EBiZ Point of Contact to ensure that this registration is up to date.

NSF FASTLANE/Research.gov

FastLane is an interactive, real-time system used to conduct NSF business over the Internet. FastLane supports application submission and award notifications and requests processes. Project reporting and financial management are supported in Research.gov. To use NSF FastLane and Research.gov you will need an active account with a user name and

password. Only one account is needed to access both systems. To activate your account, contact ORSP.

Please allow three days for NSF to validate and activate your account. You will receive an email when you have been added as a FastLane user. Please call us at (229) 500-2032 if you have any questions.

FAstlane can be accessed at https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/fastlane.jsp

NIH eRA Commons

PIs who plan to submit proposals to the NIH will need to be registered in eRA Commons to apply for NIH grants. eRA Commons is an online interface where grant applicants, grantees and federal staff at NIH and grantor agencies can access and share administrative information relating to research grants. You will use eRA commons throughout the lifecycle of a grant - from application submission to grant closeout.

To use the NIH eRA Commons, all PIs submitting to NIH will need an active account with a user name and password. PIs who have been funded, who have applied for NIH grants, or who are NIH reviewers may already be registered. Contact the ORSP for assistance in setting up your account.

Once your eRA Commons account has been set up, NIH will send you an email within three days that contains your user name and a temporary password. NIH requires that you complete your registration two to four days prior to any Grants.gov submissions. If you have not registered, we suggest you do so immediately.

You may access eRA commons here NIH eRA commons

Internal Submission and Deadlines
PIs should submit a complete proposal along with the final signed Proposal Initiation/Approval form to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at least 5 business days before the agency deadline for review. This allows the ORSP some time to provide a final review to ensure that all of the sponsors requirement has been meet. The final narrative can be submitted within two days of submission date.

ORSP will approve the proposal and submit electronic proposals to the funding agency. The PI will be provided with the completed packet for proposals that are to be mailed or hand delivered, and of what has been electronically submitted.

ORSP will share emails and notifications regarding receipt of the proposal by the funding agency with the PI.

Some of the information in this manual was adapted from the following: www.grants.gov and Nicholls State University

Attachments
    i.   Grant Development and Submission Checklist

    ii.   Grant Development and Submission Responsibility Matrix

   iii.   PI Initiation form