

Guidelines for Submission of Grant Proposals at Beloit College

These guidelines provide information concerning the development and preparation of [grant](#) proposals and their submission. They are also intended to ensure compliance with federal grantee management standards and with federal reporting requirements for grantee institutions. The guidelines are applicable to any person at Beloit College who is responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of grant-funded activities, no matter the source of funds.

All Beloit College faculty and staff must adhere to these guidelines and are responsible for the accuracy of statements included in their proposals, for the successful implementation of their projects, and for adherence to funders' reporting requirements. The final accountability for projects, however, ultimately rests with Beloit College, the official recipient of the award, which necessitates appropriate internal reviews and controls.

I. Proposal Preparation

Preparing a strong proposal involves discussing the project with appropriate faculty and staff and writing, circulating, and revising rough drafts of the proposal, which will include a budget as well as other ancillary documents. It is not unusual for an applicant to need several months to conceive, develop, and submit a viable grant proposal. At a minimum, three weeks is necessary to develop a proposal with a strong chance of success, but more time is often needed. While small award proposals may take less time, group proposals can take longer.

The Provost's Office or the Office of Advancement should be notified of plans to develop a proposal as soon as possible. They will designate a grant administrator who will ensure that the required institutional steps are completed prior to approval and submission.

Potential [Principal Investigators \(PI\)](#) should follow these steps if they are interested in submitting a grant proposal, pre-proposal, a [Letter of Intent \(LOI\)](#), or if they are seeking a [sub-award](#) or [subcontract](#) at Beloit College.

1. **Seek preliminary approval.**

Potential PIs should contact the Provost's Office or the Office of Advancement to initiate this process. Individuals should be prepared to discuss the idea with a designated grant administrator from either the Provost's Office or the Office of Advancement in order to begin the process of developing a plan of action. This initial step is very important because others' time and energy will be directed towards the proposal prior to submission and internal deadlines in advance of the sponsor's deadline may need to be set to successfully meet it.

For faculty and staff working with the Provost's Office, the potential PI should provide

- The source of funding (e.g., NSF, NEH, etc.)
- The name of the funding opportunity (e.g., Award Type, Program Title, etc.)
- The grant amount (preliminary)
- The submission deadline
- A brief description of the basic points of the proposed project including the goals, the planned activities, and potential start and end dates
- Copies of a Compliance and Disclosure Form and a Financial Conflict of Interest Form will be provided at the initial meeting for the PI to sign. The purpose of these forms is to ensure alignment with college policies, compliance with federal statutes, and with sponsor terms and conditions.

For faculty and staff working with the Office of Advancement, the potential PI should provide this *additional* information

- How the project advances Beloit College strategic initiatives and weaknesses and gaps in higher education knowledge or approaches
- Additional financial assumptions may also be required as an outcome of the initial meeting.

2. **Draft the narrative.**

After crafting a general narrative, PIs may consider contacting the funders. Most federal agencies and many private foundations encourage such discussions. These contacts must be coordinated with the grant administrator.

During proposal preparation, PIs should also seek input from college personnel identified during the initial consultation with the grant administrator such as, the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) if the research involves human subjects, the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#) if the research involves animal subjects, or the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning if the proposal includes an integrated assessment plan. In the case of human subjects or animal research subjects, the PI must take responsibility for acquainting themselves with federal guidelines and with institutional policies and procedures. Regardless of the funding source, all such research must be approved or determined exempt by the IRB or the IACUC.

[Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research \(RECR\)](#) training and oversight is required for students, staff, and faculty who will be supported by a grant. To provide training that is educationally relevant for all research disciplines and ensure verification, the Provost's Office has secured on-line RECR training called Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program). In addition to RECR training, CITI Program offers a variety of other web-based materials for higher education communities, staff, and students conducting research or other compliance-related activities. PIs are encouraged to explore the range of materials offered. For questions about accessing the CITI Program, please contact the Provost's Office.

The precise content of the proposal will depend on the goals and requirements of the grant program; however, all proposals should make clear what is being proposed, how the research will be accomplished, and why it is significant. At a minimum, funders will judge the proposal on the basis of the strength of the narrative, the PI's qualifications and experience related to the proposed project, the perceived quality and strengths of Beloit College, and the coherence of the budget and its relationship to the proposal narrative.

3. Prepare the budget.

The development of a budget is an excellent planning exercise that helps determine the scope and progression of your planned activities. Budgets must also comply with the funder's requirements and Beloit College policies. The grant administrator will guide PIs through the process of developing a budget and writing a budget narrative, as well as through the approval process with the Offices of Accounting and Human Resources.

Basic budget terms and special considerations related to salaries and equipment follow.

- a. **Direct Costs.** Direct costs are expenses directly related to the activities of the project. They may include:
 - Salaries, wages, stipends, and fringe benefits
 - Permanent equipment and its maintenance
 - Supplies
 - Experimental subject costs or payments
 - Construction and/or renovation
 - Travel (transportation, room, and board)
 - Communication costs
 - Programming (e.g., workshops, courses)
 - Participant Support Costs

- b. **Indirect Costs.** Indirect costs are real expenses that the institution incurs as a result of the project, but that are not obviously assigned to it. Indirect costs are customarily billed as some fraction of the budgeted direct costs when allowed by the sponsor. Indirect costs may include:
 - Heating, air conditioning, cleaning, and maintaining an office, laboratory, or other physical space that is used during the course of the project
 - Cost of books, journals, or other supporting materials needed to complete the project, when provided by the campus Library.
 - Costs of running the various campus offices that support grant-funded projects (Accounting, Human Resources)
 - Administrative support, if not allowed by the sponsor as a direct expense

Beloit College is required to maintain a negotiated federal indirect cost rate with the Department of Health and Human Services, which is currently sixty percent (60%) of all direct salaries and wages (including vacation, holiday, sick pay, and

other paid absences but excluding all other fringe benefits). The college's negotiated indirect cost rate is used on many, but not all federal grants, as agencies differ in their approach to budget development and may mandate a different treatment for indirect costs. Other funding entities may have a cap on indirect costs. If the cap is less than the college's negotiated indirect cost rate, then the cap may be used. Most private sources of funding (private foundations and corporations) do not permit use of the negotiated federal indirect cost rate, but when they do permit indirect costs, the college's negotiated indirect cost rate should be included.

Indirect costs are allocated directly to the institution. The current distribution of grant funds for indirect costs is (APM, Ch. IV, K.):

- one-third will be administered by the department/program(s) of the primary principal investigator(s) (PI) to invest in the professional development of the PI(s) and to ensure that the larger objectives of the project are met;
 - one-third will be distributed to the provost's Fund for Strategic Initiatives, a discretionary fund that will be used to advance strategic initiatives (including matching funds for other grant opportunities) that are identified by the provost in consultation with the Academic Strategic Planning Committee; and
 - one-third will be directed toward the operating budget of the college to offset the costs of project support.
- c. **Cost-sharing or Matching.** Cost-sharing, also known as matching funds, are contributions from the college directly to the project. When there is documented evidence that the commitment is necessary to ensure the competitiveness of the proposal, the college may allow these commitments and manage the committed resources. Any grant that requires an institutional match requires careful advance planning with the grant administrator and other appropriate offices. Matches may be set at various rates, and the word "match" itself does not imply a 1-to-1 matching funds requirement. There are several categories of matching funds:
- i. *Mandatory Cost Sharing.* Project costs that are not paid by the sponsor and are required as a condition of the award. Mandatory Cost Sharing must be tracked and reported.
 - ii. *Voluntary Committed Cost Sharing.* Costs specifically pledged on a voluntary basis and specifically included in the award budget. Voluntary Committed Cost Sharing must be tracked and reported.
 - iii. *Voluntary Uncommitted Cost Sharing (VUCS).* Costs not required by the sponsor or included in the award budget. VUCS does not need to be tracked or reported.
- d. **Equipment.** Equipment (as defined by the grantor) must be separately budgeted and described in the grant proposal as such expenses typically require prior

approval. The principal investigator is responsible for complying with applicable procurement standards, including obtaining multiple bids, if applicable.

- e. **Salaries.** The Human Resources Office must be consulted for salary-related budget information.
 - i. *Faculty.* For the sake of grant budgets, full-time faculty cannot make more than 100% of their contracted [institutional base salary](#) during the academic year, unless [supplemental pay \(a stipend\)](#) is issued. When academic-year salary is included in a grant budget, this is meant to "buy" out time from the college so that the PI can dedicate it to the project; it is not an addition to the academic year salary. Any work that will require more than 1/6 of the PI's time during the academic year will require a course-release or a course-overload, and the associated approvals.

Summer salary is not included in the 100% figure above. For summer salaries, faculty can request up to a maximum 2/9 of the academic year salary. Note that academic year salaries reset every September 1; the summer salary is based on the preceding academic year salary.

Faculty members seeking a full-time grant-funded leave must apply for a professional development leave or a sabbatical, depending on the timing of the leave (APM Ch.VI, J.).

- ii. *Staff.* For the sake of grant budgets, full-time staff cannot make more than 100% of their contracted salary or wages during the time of their contract. When staff salary is included in a grant budget, and the work takes place during the time of their contract, this is meant to "buy" the staff member's time from the college for the project; it is not an addition to their contracted salary. Staff salary for work outside of the contracted period of employment must be based on the staff member's salary or wage rate plus fringe benefits of the college's fiscal year in which the effort will fall.

II. Required Internal Review and Approval

Proposals cannot be submitted to funders without the completion of the three internal review and approval forms listed below. In order to ensure a successful submission and allow sufficient time for the necessary internal review and approvals, and to allow time to navigate complex online submission systems, final proposal documents should be submitted to the Provost's Office or the Office of Development approximately **at least 5 business days** prior to the Beloit College target submission deadline, assuming that the guidelines in this document have been followed. If a PI does not follow the guidelines in this document, the college cannot guarantee that a funder's submission date can be met. The grant administrator will assist in the completion

of the internal review and approval forms. LOIs or pre-proposals may be submitted without the completion of the forms if the inquiry has been approved by the Provost's Office or the Office of Advancement.

1. **Compliance and Disclosure Form.** Completed when PI seeks preliminary approval from the Provost's Office or the Office of Advancement to pursue a grant proposal (see Section I).
2. **Financial Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.** As a recipient of federally sponsored awards and as part of Beloit College's commitment to promoting objectivity in research and in compliance with federal regulations on conflict of interest, Beloit College has adopted an annual disclosure practice as described in the Beloit College's Financial Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest for Recipients of Funds policy in APM, Ch. IV, H. This form requires investigators to report if they have a Significant Financial Interest in a Sponsor, a vendor or (sub) contractor related to their proposed sponsored program activity.
3. **Grant Proposal Approval Form.** The purpose of this form is to ensure all applicable departments and institutional officials understand the impact of and certify the proposal.

III. Submission

At Beloit College, the Provost's Office has access to the federal government's on-line proposal submission tools (e.g., Research.gov, Grants.gov) and will submit these proposals. For other proposals, the grant administrator, or designee, will submit or, when appropriate, delegate to the PI the role of submitting a grant proposal. If submitted by the PI, they should provide the grant administrator all submitted materials and correspondence.

IV. Post-Award Administration & Reporting

When a proposal has been approved by a sponsor for support, the college will usually receive notice that an award is being prepared. Once a formal award letter or notification is received, the grant administrator (in the Provost's Office or the Office of Advancement) can administratively initiate the award set-up. If PIs receive such notices, they should contact the grant administrator to verify that they have also received the notice.

When an award document is received which requires the college's signature in order to be effective, it is the responsibility of the Provost's Office or the Office of Advancement to review the terms and conditions of the award and negotiate if needed, obtain the necessary signatures, and return signed copies to the sponsor. **Please note PIs are not authorized to sign award documents on behalf of the college.** Upon receipt of the fully executed award agreement, the grant administrator will work with accounting to set up an account number.

Once a new award has received an account number, the grant administrator will prepare a new award package consisting of an **Initial Award Notification and Management Form**, a budget, and a copy of the complete award agreement and distribute it to the PI, Accounting, and any other relevant departments like Human Resources. Typically, The grant administrator will schedule an initial award meeting with the PI and the relevant offices to discuss grant administration, project implementation, reporting requirements, and answer any questions that may exist.

The Accounting Office and the grant administrator will support the PI in the financial and reporting requirements of the award and be a resource for assisting with any revisions to the award or assisting with any compliance questions. The precise nature of reporting depends on the requirements of the sponsor.

The timeliness and quality of reporting can enhance or detract from the possibility of future funding. Delinquency in reporting may result in PIs or the college being prohibited from further grant activity. Therefore, the grant administrator and Accounting will work with the PI to ensure that all reporting requirements are met. Typically, reports include a narrative describing the activities and findings of the project, as well as a financial section outlining how grant funds were used within the reporting period. All reports (e.g., quarterly, annual, final) should be approved in advance of submission by the grant administrator and Accounting.

Any administrative questions, changes with the budget, change in personnel, or a change in scope that arise during life of the award should be discussed with the grant administrator as such modifications usually require prior approval of the sponsor.

V. Definitions

Grant - A cooperative agreement with the legal power of a contract between the recipient and the funder. The activities included in the proposal, and accepted by the funder with pre-stated conditions and provisions, form the basis of the contractual obligations of both parties. For almost all awards, the legal grantee is Beloit College, and the PI acts as the primary point of contact to the grantor.

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) - An administrative body that provides oversight and ensures appropriate review of the use of vertebrate animals in teaching, testing, and research.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) - An administrative body established to protect the rights and welfare of human research subjects recruited to participate in research activities conducted under the auspices of the institution with which it is affiliated.

Principal Investigator (PI) - The Code of Federal Regulations, Title 42, Part 52, defines a Principal Investigator as “the single individual designated by the grantee in a grant application who is responsible for the scientific and technical direction of the project.”

Letter of Intent (LOI) - Some program solicitations require or request submission of a letter of intent in advance of submission of a full proposal. An LOI is not a binding document. The predominant reason for its use is to help funders gauge the size and range of the competition, enabling earlier selection and better management of reviewers.

Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (RECR) - Appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research for students, staff, and faculty who will be supported by a grant.

Institutional Base Salary (IBS) - The annual or academic year salary or hourly wage paid by Beloit College for duties associated with an individual's appointment letter and job description. IBS does not include additional compensation amounts.

Supplemental Pay (stipends) - Fixed amount payments for services not covered by IBS calculations. Supplemental pay does not increase IBS and is not included when calculating maximum additional compensation limits.

Subaward - A subaward is "under" a main grant award; the grant recipient receives the funds and passes them through to the subrecipient.

Subcontract or contract - A contractor provides goods or services to the grant recipient, and a subcontractor provides goods or services to the contractor.