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Subject: Updated Dartmouth Proposal Guidelines
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From: Dean Madden, PhD, Vice Provost for Research

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to announce the release of our updated and **clarified [guidelines](#)** regarding proposal deadlines for external grant and contract support. These guidelines are effective immediately.

Over the past six months, staff from the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) and finance offices, our department research grant managers, and research leadership teams from all schools across Dartmouth have been working collaboratively to address a growing number of last-minute applications by faculty members. Such applications not only risk rejection due to errors that cannot be caught in haste but also disrupt established review timelines for other pending applications, potentially endangering the success of colleagues' proposals. The entire research team understands the growing pressures on faculty. At the same time, truly last-minute submissions represent an unsustainable burden on our staff across campus, particularly as the number of federal requirements continues to grow and change at a rapid pace.

The good news is that our existing 2- and 7-business day deadlines are sufficient to avoid recent problems. Indeed, the deadlines have been moved from 9am to 11am on those days, to give a bit more time. To clarify what needs to happen before those deadlines, we have provided additional guidance on the steps that should be taken 4-6 weeks ahead of the deadline. Please note that individual schools may also have firm expectations about the timelines for preparing applications – please check with your department research grant managers for more information. Be proactive! It is ultimately our responsibility as faculty members to understand the system.

The goals and key principles of the [revised guidelines](#) are summarized below. For a complete understanding of these new guidelines, please refer to the link here to find the [guidelines](#). Your adherence to these updated procedures will enhance our collective efforts in securing external funding and ensuring compliance with sponsor requirements. It will also demonstrate respect for all of our faculty and staff colleagues.

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please reach out to the Office of Sponsored Projects or your department grant manager/research administrator. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your ongoing commitment to advancing Dartmouth's research initiatives.

Key Highlights of the Revised Guidelines:

1. **Greater Clarity and Best Practices:** While the routing deadlines to OSP are not new, the goal of these revisions is to provide greater clarity and outline best practices for proposal development.
2. **Proposal Routing Through OSP:** All proposals expecting any form of funding from external sources to Dartmouth must be routed and submitted through the OSP. This requirement, which has been in place for many years, remains essential even when sponsors allow direct submissions by Principal Investigators (PIs).
3. **Comprehensive Timeline for Proposal Development:** We have created a framework that encompasses various phases of proposal development to promote the submission of high-quality proposals while respecting competing priorities and the well-being of faculty and staff.
 - **30-45 Days Prior:** Begin your grant development process and engage with your department grant manager/research administrator early.
 - **8-10 Business Days Prior:** Ensure your proposals are routed through RAPPORT for departmental/divisional review.
 - **7 Business Days Prior:** All final administrative components must be uploaded into RAPPORT for OSP review.
 - **2 Business Days Prior:** Finalize and submit your research/science components into RAPPORT.
4. **Customer Service Commitment:** Our team is dedicated to supporting proposal development and continues to prioritize flexibility and customer service. We are here to assist faculty and staff as they navigate this process, providing the necessary resources and support for successful submissions.
5. **Defined Roles and Responsibilities:** It is crucial that everyone involved understands their responsibilities to facilitate a more efficient proposal process. This includes PIs, department grant managers, divisional approvers, and OSP.
6. **Planning Ahead and Proposal Support:** We encourage early consultation with OSP for complex proposals, as well as utilizing resources such as Grant Proposal Support (GrantGPS) and Corporate and Foundation Relations (CFR) to enhance your submissions.
7. **Focus on Early Communication:** This is not a waiver process. The aim of these guidelines is to provide a clear framework for early communication among faculty and department grant management staff. We encourage you to reach out proactively for assistance as you embark on proposal development. In cases where internal deadlines cannot be met and there has been no early communication with OSP and other approvers, divisional research leadership and OSP may need to communicate that a proposal will not be submitted. It is important that we explore ways to mitigate late submissions, such as working with a prime institution to establish more reasonable deadlines or providing additional resources. **Expect proposals that are not substantially complete 10 days before the deadline to be deferred to the next submission cycle.**
8. **Exceptions to Deadlines:** Specific circumstances may warrant exceptions to these deadlines, particularly in cases of extenuating personal emergencies or sponsor changes.

Best regards,

Dean Madden, PhD, Vice Provost for Research