

Pre-Award Guidelines for Ecology Center Proposals

Here is a **suggested workflow** for proposals routing through the Ecology Center (EC).

Step 1: Notify the Ecology Center (EC) of proposal

Here are suggested times to **inform** us of upcoming proposals, though we understand this isn't always possible.

| Type of Project | When to Contact Ecology Center |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Single PI projects | 1 month before internal deadline |
| Multi PI, multiple USU units (e.g., MRI) projects | 2 months before internal deadline |
| Large, multi-PI, multi-institution, multi-disciplinary projects | 3 months before internal deadline |

Notifications can be submitted to our office in one of two ways:

1. Email: ecology_bus_svc@usu.edu or hollie.richards@usu.edu
2. Submit a request through Service now: https://usu.service-now.com/aggies?id=sc_cat_item&sys_id=d9c79e49db98d5109f76ab3c8a9619d3&parent_id=34755796dbf124503e0cef0705961934

Please include the following information:

1. Proposal Type (new, modification, etc.) – Required
2. Sponsor Name - Required
3. Solicitation number/ RFP - Required
4. Project Title and Dates – Required (can be changed later)
5. Draft Proposal documents – Suggested
 - a. Scope of Work
 - b. Budget draft
 - c. Budget justification draft
 - d. Etc.

Step 2: PI works with EC on budget

To help you build your budget, the EC business manager will send you a budget template with the appropriate indirect cost and benefits rates filled in. We will also provide a budget justification template. We encourage you to [meet with the business manager](#) at this point and to send early drafts of the budget and budget justification to the business manager. In our experience, we often go through a few iterations before finalizing the budget. *Key point: start working on your budget well in advance of the deadline!*

Step 3: PI drafts scope and project narrative

Step 4: PI finalizes proposal documents, details, and budgets

Step 5: PI sends finalized documents to EC two weeks before sponsor deadline.

Proposals are due to sponsored programs 4 *business* days before the sponsor deadline. We will need your proposal before that to complete our review. *We request a minimum of 2 weeks' notice prior to the sponsor deadline to ensure adequate review and support.* Under no circumstances may a PI submit a proposal directly to a sponsor.

Step 6: EC enters all documents and budgets into Kualu.

If you really want to deal with Kualu yourself (not recommended!), talk to the EC business manager.

Step 7: PI and EC work together to enter all documents into the sponsor's submission website.

You will work with the EC business manager to determine who will upload which documents to the submission system. For example, some PI's prefer to upload the project narrative and other documents themselves, and only ask the EC to enter the budget data and budget justification. Other PI's may want more help. *Key point: communicate clearly with the EC business manager.*

Step 8: PI, CO-I's, and key personnel complete Key Person Certification in Kualu

PI's should verify that their annual conflict-of-interest disclosure is complete, otherwise the proposal cannot move forward.

Step 9: Kualu record is submitted and routed for approvals

Step 10: Sponsored Programs reviews and submits to sponsor

Additional resources

[Example Documents](#)

Services we can provide:

- Understanding RFPs/Requirements
- Assistance with Kualu
- Budget development and review
- Compiling all documents for submission
- Initial Review
- F&A Allocation Forms
- Cost Share Forms (if required)
- Coordination with other departments/entities, such as compiling personnel documents (CV's, current pending, etc.)

Book a time to meet with Hollie at any stage in the process:

<https://outlook.office.com/bookwithme/user/186717e382d34da5a10775035749fe24%40usu.edu/meetingtype/0f5a994a-deec-475d-a147-371223462470?anonymous>

PI Role:

- Writing scopes of work/project description
- Key Personnel CVs/Biosketches (if required)

- Budget Narratives
- Key Personnel Certifications
- COI disclosures (at least once a year)

Sponsored Programs Office Role

- Review, officially approve, and submit proposals and applications
- Negotiate awards, material transfer, and non-disclosure agreements
- Facilitate sub award collaborations
- Manage awards, including all non-financial administration, compliance issues, reporting oversight, and administrative project close out

Funding Opportunities

- <https://www.grantforward.com/index>
- <https://www.grants.gov/>
- <https://gopb.utah.gov/planningresources/>

Budget template and useful budget building blocks

- <https://research.usu.edu/spo/benefit-rates>
- <https://www.usu.edu/registrar/registration/payment/>
- <https://research.usu.edu/spo/grad-student-insurance>
- <https://research.usu.edu/spo/fa-rates>

Other college/unit pages

- <https://qcnr.usu.edu/college/proposal-development>
- <https://www.usu.edu/science/proposal-development/services-menu>
- <https://caas.usu.edu/research-and-grant-resources/grants-for-beginners>

Example checklists for typical federal grant proposals (but be aware that every program has its own unique requirements!)

| NSF | USDA |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Cover Sheet | 1. Project Summary |
| 2. Project Summary | 2. Project Description |
| 3. Project Description | 3. Bibliography & References Cited |
| 4. References Cited | 4. Facilities & Other Resources |
| 5. Biographical Sketch (SciENcv) | 5. Equipment |
| 6. Collaborators & Other Affiliations | 6. Letters of Support |
| 7. Budget | 7. Biographical Sketch |
| 8. Budget Justification | 8. Current & Pending Support |
| 9. Subaward Budget & Justification | 9. Budget |
| 10. Cost Sharing | 10. Budget Justification |
| 11. Current & Pending Support (SciENcv) | 11. Subaward Budget & Justification |
| 12. Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources | 12. Data Management Plan |
| 13. Special Information and Supplementary Documentation | |
| 14. Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan | |
| 15. Data Management Plan | |

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| 16. Letters of Collaboration | |
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