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Policy Statement

This policy establishes explicit, fair, and uniformly applied levels of service for processing proposals for externally-funded research and sponsored projects. The policy is intended to be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of both Lehigh University (“University”) researchers and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) research administrators. This policy establishes three levels of service for ORSP processing of proposals: Full Review, Limited Review, and At-Risk. The level of service for ORSP processing of proposals is determined by the amount of lead time between the Submission Deadline and the date and time of ORSP’s receipt of the Final Version of all Proposal Components.

Reason for Policy and Underlying Principles

Lehigh University encourages faculty and staff to obtain funding from external sources in support of research, service, education, and other scholarly activities, and provides an administrative infrastructure to support these activities. The external funding environment is increasingly competitive and highly regulated, and proposal submission entails more than just the physical transmission of a proposal from the University to a potential sponsor. Electronic submission formats and systems are numerous and continuously evolving. In accordance with applicable laws, external funder requirements and guidelines, and national best practices in research administration, allowing sufficient time for conducting compliance checks and to address any potential systems-related problems is essential to minimizing risk to the institution.

In order to be clear, fair, and consistent, this policy applies to all sponsored project proposals regardless of budget size or the number of researchers, disciplines, or institutions participating in the project. ORSP will not adjust service levels and associated timelines for a particular project, or prioritize multi-investigator projects with large budgets over smaller single-investigator applications.

ORSP Service Levels


1. Full Review

When Final Versions of all Proposal Components are received in ORSP at least five full Business Days in advance of the Submission Deadline:

- a. ORSP will provide a Full Review for compliance with both Lehigh University’s and the sponsor’s requirements;
- b. Any known terms and conditions of the sponsor that would be binding upon the issuance of an award will be reviewed for acceptability under Lehigh University policy, and;
- c. Provided that the PI or Project Team makes all ORSP-Identified Changes within the timeframe established by ORSP, the proposal will be submitted by the Submission Deadline and ORSP will obtain confirmation that it was received by the sponsor.

2. Limited Review

When Final Versions of all Proposal Components are received in ORSP between two and five full Business Days in advance of the Submission Deadline:

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- a. ORSP will provide a Limited Review for compliance with Lehigh University requirements, but may not be able to provide a review for compliance with the sponsor's requirements;
- b. Provided that the PI or Project Team makes all ORSP-Identified Changes needed to meet at least Lehigh University requirements within the timeframe established by ORSP, the proposal will be submitted by the Submission Deadline;
- c. ORSP cannot guarantee that the proposal will be complete and correct when submitted to the sponsor, and;
- d. ORSP may not be able to accept the terms of any resultant award, and/or the acceptance and award set up may be delayed due to the need for negotiation of terms.

3. At-Risk Proposals

When Final Versions of one or more Proposal Components are received in ORSP less than two full Business Days in advance of the Submission Deadline:


- a. ORSP will attempt to submit an At-Risk Proposal by the Submission Deadline, provided that there are no other proposals in the queue ahead of it, and if there is sufficient time to conduct a Limited Review;
- b. ORSP cannot guarantee that the proposal will be submitted by the Submission Deadline, and/or that the proposal will be complete or correct upon submission, and;
- c. ORSP may not be able to accept the terms of any resultant award, and/or the acceptance and award set up may be delayed due to the need for negotiation of terms.

Circumstances under which a proposal will NOT be submitted:

1. Missing fCOI Disclosures for all Project Personnel.
 - a. Proposals are not submitted to sponsors unless all Project Personnel have submitted completed disclosures to ORSP.
2. Missing acknowledgement for receipt and review of the Research Essentials Handbook for all Project Personnel.
 - a. Proposals are not submitted to sponsors unless all Project Personnel have reviewed and acknowledged the handbook.
3. PI for the proposal does not meet the PI Eligibility criteria as identified in the [Eligibility to serve as Principal or co-Principal Investigator on Sponsored Projects Policy](#).
4. Missing required documentation from a Subrecipient where Lehigh University is the Prime recipient.
 - a. This includes, but is not limited to, a completed and signed Subrecipient Commitment Form, or FDP Expanded Clearinghouse Membership Confirmation.
 - b. [NOTE: The Subrecipient's scope of work, budget and budget narrative, biographical sketch for key personnel, current and pending or other support, collaborators and other affiliates document (if NSF), and any other documents as required by the agency and solicitation are identified as Proposal Components and fall within the same criteria as Lehigh University Proposal Components for purposes of the Service Levels above.].
5. When all final documents are not complete and received by ORSP by noon on the day of the Submission Deadline, (or five hours before the Submission Deadline if earlier than 5 pm), there should be no expectation of ORSP's ability to submit the proposal.

ORSP Service Standards

1. The level of service for ORSP processing of proposals is determined by the amount of lead time between the Submission Deadline and ORSP's receipt of the Final Versions of all Proposal Components. The

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Submission Deadline is formally identified by ORSP for each proposal upon receipt of the Intent to Submit. Therefore, it is important that the Intent to Submit be submitted to ORSP as soon as a PI identifies a funding opportunity in which they are interested in participating. The Proposal Components are considered incomplete if the Intent to Submit does not include the Sponsor's Deadline or the funding opportunity announcement/solicitation.


2. With the exception of ORSP-Identified Changes, additional changes or edits to Proposal Components made by the PI or Project Team subsequent to submission of the Final Versions of all Proposal Components to ORSP may impact the ORSP service level for the proposal.
3. Lehigh University's Business Day ends at 5:00 pm ET. Even if a Sponsor's Deadline time is later than 5:00pm, the Submission Deadline time is considered to be 5:00 pm ET.
4. ORSP will not prioritize At-Risk Proposals over other proposals.
5. For proposals with no designated agency Submission Deadline (e.g. NSF programs that accept unsolicited proposals any time, or DoD/DoE Broad Agency Announcements open throughout a fiscal year), ORSP Service Levels and Service Standards apply. The anticipated Submission Date must be provided by the PI as the 'Agency Due Date' in the Notice of Intent to Submit.

Lehigh University Adverse Weather Closures

When Lehigh University closes due to inclement weather in accordance with the [University's Adverse Weather Policy](#), ORSP may not be available to submit proposals that are due that day. It is at the discretion of the PI, in consultation with the assigned ORSP CGS, whether or not to submit or seek an extension from the sponsor when the University is closed. The assigned ORSP CGS must be copied on all extension requests. Generally, the decision to accept late submissions is made by the sponsor on a case by case basis. Please refer to the sponsor's specific policies on late submissions due to inclement weather.

Definitions

Term	Definition
At-Risk Proposal	A proposal for which Final Versions of one or more Proposal Components are received by ORSP fewer than two full Business Days prior to the Submission Deadline.
Business Day	A Business Day is defined as Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm ET. Lehigh University HR determines the holidays when the University is closed for staff. These staff holidays are not considered Business Days and are not counted when assigning the service level of a proposal.
Final Version of Proposal Component(s)	A portion or section (e.g. Summary, Description, References, Budget, Title, Biographical Sketch, etc.) of a proposal that the PI or Project Team has determined is in a status ready for submission to a sponsor.
Full Review	The level of proposal review provided by ORSP when Final Versions of <u>all</u> Proposal Components are submitted to ORSP with a lead time of at least five full Business Days prior to the Submission Deadline.

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Limited Review	The level of proposal review provided by ORSP when Final Versions of <u>all</u> Proposal Components are submitted to ORSP with a lead time of at least two full Business Days prior to the Submission Deadline.
ORSP-Identified Changes	Updates or revisions to one or more Proposal Components identified by ORSP during review of the Final Version that are needed in order for the proposal to meet Lehigh University or sponsor requirements.
Sponsor's Deadline	The date and time that an external sponsor must receive a proposal in order for it to be considered for funding.
Submission Deadline	<p>The date and time by which a proposal must be submitted by ORSP in order for it to be received by the Sponsor's Deadline. The Submission Deadline is formally identified by ORSP for each proposal upon confirmation of the Sponsor Deadline. In most cases, this should be upon receipt of the Intent to Submit by ORSP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For electronic submissions, in most cases, the Submission Deadline and the Sponsor's Deadline are the same. • For hardcopy proposal submissions where overnight courier service or USPS will be used, the Submission Deadline is at least one full Business Day before the Sponsor's Deadline. • For subawards to Lehigh University on projects with another organization as the lead institution, the Submission Deadline is calculated based on the date and time the lead institution has set for receipt of Lehigh University's Final Versions of Proposal Components. This deadline should be identified in writing by the lead institution at the time of receipt of the Intent to Submit by ORSP. Lehigh University's Business Day ends at 5:00 pm ET. Even if a Sponsor's Deadline time is later than 5:00pm, the Submission Deadline time is considered to be 5:00 pm ET.

For questions about this policy:

Office of Research and Sponsored Program


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<https://research.cc.lehigh.edu/contact-us-orsp>

Revision History

Date	Summary
14-Apr-2021	This revision adds the newly implemented requirement for acknowledgement of receipt and review of Research Essentials Handbook to the "Circumstances under which a proposal will NOT be submitted" section.
15-Sep-2020	This revision replaces the 28-Nov-2020 "Grants.gov and Revised Lehigh Proposal Submission Policy". This revision establishes uniformly applied levels of service for processing proposals for externally-funded research and sponsored programs.

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Appendix - Summary of ORSP Service Level Standards

ORSP Service Level Standard	Review Level		
	Full Review	Limited Review	At-Risk Proposal
Proposal checked for compliance with Lehigh University requirements	X	X	X
Proposal submitted by Submission Deadline	X	X	
Proposal checked for compliance with sponsor guidelines	X		
Terms and conditions binding upon award reviewed for acceptability	X		
Proposal submission confirmation received from sponsor	X		