

GRANTS.GOV AND REVISED LEHIGH PROPOSAL SUBMISSION POLICY

Background

- OMB guidance - By the end of FY 2006 75% of proposal submissions to most federal agencies will be via *grants.gov* (100% in FY 2007).
- The *grants.gov* system is still in relative infancy and is experiencing associated growing pains: servers cannot handle a large volume of proposal submissions at one time; it frequently takes many attempts to submit a proposal (i.e. log in, submit, receive confirmation); for technical reasons unknown, the *grants.gov* system “freezes up” and access is not possible (sometimes for days).
- As of now, *grants.gov* is merely a standardized proposal submission mechanism. Once submitted, the proposals are transferred to the appropriate federal agency. Most agencies will convert the proposals to their own grants management systems (FastLane, NIH Commons, IIPS (DOE), etc.).
- NIH has added an additional required step – once the *grants.gov* submission is converted to NIH commons, within two days both the PI and the Institution Official must log in to NIH Commons and “sign” to validate the proposal. NIH will send notification of this requirement to the PI and IO for each proposal. The December 1, 2005 NIH SBIR/STTR submissions will be the first time this procedure is used.
- For all submissions, the date/time the proposal is received by *grants.gov* is considered the official proposal receipt date. *Grants.gov* does a cursory check to make sure all the sections are completed. When the proposals are reviewed by the respective agencies, if a problem is encountered applicants will be given the opportunity to make corrections. HOWEVER, if the corrections are not submitted by the ORIGINAL due date, the proposal may be considered late. NIH has confirmed this policy; NSF is formulating its policy.

Discussion

- PIs making last-minute proposal submissions risk running into problems with *grants.gov* and risk non-acceptance by funding agencies because of lateness. This scenario would be especially aggravated when many proposals are due at the same time, e.g. NIH standard deadlines, NSF CAREER deadlines, NSF submission windows, overlapping agency due dates.
- To ensure properly completed proposals are received at agencies on time, ORSP should be able to submit *grants.gov* proposals at least three working days before the due date.
- *Grants.gov* is here to stay. Lehigh’s proposal/research volume is only going to increase. ORSP has limited personnel.

NEW POLICY EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2006

- Grants.gov proposal submissions – fully completed proposals must be received in ORSP a minimum of **five** working days prior to the agency deadline.
- All other proposal submissions – fully completed proposals must be received in ORSP a minimum of **three** working days prior to the agency deadline.
- Proposals not meeting the above submission criteria will not be accepted / submitted.