

Best Practices & Alerts

The following are best practices and alerts to keep in mind when working within UFIRST.

Best Practices

- Create a record as soon as the PI indicates their intention to submit. This way the record remains in your Worklist as a reminder to follow up with the PI. Additionally, DSP can see how many items are in the queue for submission on a given day.
- The help text displayed to the right of each question should be your first resource when a question in a SmartForm is unclear.
- Upload a copy of the solicitation from the Sponsor outlining the forms, rules, and procedures for submission. Many times links can expire and having a copy of the requirements is very helpful to those building and reviewing the proposal.
- A change request to a proposal should be sent to the entire Proposal Team. This is to prevent any unnecessary delays in response.
- Identifying common cost shared items reveals the true cost of doing business at the University.
- This **Hide/Show Errors** feature should be used upon completion of your final budget grid (requested or cost share budget).
- The **Calculate Unrecovered Indirects** activity should be used whenever the difference between the University's federally negotiated indirect cost rate and the Sponsor's indirect cost rate will be used to meet mandatory cost sharing.
- To protect scientific information contained within the proposal, as well as the integrity of the proposal record, access should be limited only to the individuals who are required to develop the proposal or have another specific business purpose for accessing the information.
- Utilize the **Comment** activity to capture any communication that may have taken place outside of UFIRST (i.e. copies of emails sent outside UFIRST).
- Utilize the **Update Funding Status** activity to communicate a Sponsor's response to your proposal. Updating the funding status provides a cue to primary unit contact to track this proposal more closely, supports proper tracking of proposal success rates, and keeps your inbox and worklists clear of records that do not need to be managed further.

Alerts

- Do not use browser controls (back, forward, refresh) to navigate within UFIRST, instead utilize the "Continue", "Back" and "Save" options within the application.
- The **Back** button in UFIRST does not alert you to save nor will it save your work. Use the **Jump To...** feature or **Save or Exit** link to save and return to a previous page. The **Continue** button will save your work.
- All budget information related to personnel is entered in the personnel section of the **requested budget**. Personnel whose full effort is being cost shared to the project should also be entered in this section. Cost share for personnel flows through to the cost share budget and cannot be edited in the cost share budget grid.

- All personnel salary is annualized to 12 months. This has been done to create uniformity in budgeting across 12-month and 9-month appointments. Therefore, the budget grids require effort commitments and requested salary to be entered as person months in lieu of percentages of time.
- Verify you have entered the Salary Requested Months in addition to the effort months as this entry generates the requested costs for personnel. If you fail to do so, all of the costs attributed to effort committed will be registered as cost share.
- In the event that the amount of salary requested months is less than effort months, a cost share budget will automatically be generated as this situation constitutes cost share.
- When budgeting personnel whose salary exceeds a Sponsor's salary limitation this constitutes Over the Cap Salary. UFIRST recognizes this as cost share as UF will not be reimbursed for the full cost of that person's effort.

For example, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) salary cap is \$183,300 for 12 months of effort. UF can only budget a person's salary to the equivalent amount of the salary cap. One month at the salary cap rate is \$15,275. For a PI whose base salary is \$225,000, one month is \$18,750. The difference between these two numbers is the expense to the University to support this research.

However, this type of cost sharing does not require approval from a unit's cost share approver. Over the Cap Cost Sharing results in an FYI notification to the department in lieu of an approval request.

- There are five different budget grids that MAY be necessary to complete. You will always see the Personnel, General, and Tuition Costs Grids. If you've identified the proposal as a training grant, and/or having a subrecipient, grids for those two budget categories will be available.
- When UF is submitting a proposal with subaward recipient costs, the Proposal Team (PI, Primary Administrative Contact or Study Staff, Grants Administrator) is responsible for obtaining the letter of commitment, scope of work, detailed budget information and other supporting documentation from the subrecipient.
- If the proposal's sponsor requires a Financial Conflict of Interest Form to be completed you must attach these forms before submitting to workflow. UFIRST will not allow the record to be submitted for review without these forms. If you are unsure if your sponsor requires an FCOI form the Key Personnel section on the Proposal Workspace Summary will tell you. If the box below "FCOI?" says "N/A" your sponsor does not require the FCOI forms. If it says "Yes" or "No" in this box FCOI forms are required. "Yes" indicates the FCOI form has been uploaded or "No" indicates the required FCOI form has not been uploaded.
- Submitting the proposal into workflow for review and approval locks the forms and grids from editing by the Proposal Team (PI, Study Staff, Grants Administration). Attachments can still be added to the proposal.
- Only emails sent from within UFIRST are logged in the History tab. Any responses to UFIRST generated emails from a personal email address will not be stored.
- The **Copy Proposal** activity is the most complex function in the system. This process can take several minutes. Once the process has completed, the new proposal is accessible from the existing proposal's history tab or through the **Proposal Worklists**.
- When a sponsor requests any post submission materials (JIT, budget revision, etc.) you **MUST** provide DSP the documentation using the **Notify DSP of Post Submission Update** activity. Attach documents to be submitted to the Sponsor as well as the communication from the Sponsor regarding this request.

- Activities available to an individual will update as the proposal changes moves through the proposal life cycle.
- It is highly encouraged to provide comments when disapproving or transferring the Ad Hoc Review.
- When requesting a change, a message explaining the nature of the changes must be included on the request.
- If a financial agreement submitted for review does not have a previously submitted proposal, the proposal module should be used, not Agreement Review.

Contact Information:

Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP)
University of Florida
219 Grinter Hall
352-392-3516
Website: www.research.ufl.edu