



Maine Medical Center Research Institute
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OFFICE OF RESEARCH GRANT SERVICES

POLICY ON TIMELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSALS

NOTE THAT FAILURE TO MEET THESE DEADLINES MAY RESULT IN YOUR GRANT PROPOSAL NOT BEING SUBMITTED

The Office of Research Grant Services provides guidance and support to Faculty and Investigators throughout MaineHealth who are applying for external research grant funding. All research grant proposals submitted by MaineHealth Principal Investigators must be reviewed, routed, approved and submitted through this office. The Research Grants Team ensures that the proposal adheres to both institutional policy and funder guidelines, and is accurate, error-free, and responsive to the funding opportunity. Grants staff work with Principal Investigators to provide guidance on funder policies, budget development, templates/drafts for grant sections, editing services, and compliance issues. Grants staff will assist with the process of institutional approvals, and will work with collaborating institutions to ensure required documentation is received on time.

OVERVIEW OF DEADLINES FOR RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

It is our policy to submit federal proposals 1-2 days prior to deadline. This policy follows NIH recommendations and allows time to solve any technical difficulties prior to the due date. Please note that there are several types of proposals that differ in scope and complexity and each of them will follow a different timeline:

- a) **Standard Research Proposals:** These include career development and fellowship proposals, pilot project proposals, NIH R01 and R-equivalent proposals, and standard research proposals to private funding agencies (e.g. American Heart Association, American Cancer Society).
- b) **Large program or institutional proposals or multi-site/collaborative applications:** These proposals take more time to prepare, given budget complexities, participation of multiple departments and/or institutions, and the need for letters, budgets, and documents from many sources. This must be factored into our timeline and therefore we must begin earlier on an institutional, program, or collaborative proposal.
- c) **Subaward Proposals:** When a MaineHealth investigator is asked to participate in another institution's proposal, MaineHealth will need to submit documents as a subaward site. Depending on the scope of work to be done at MaineHealth, this type of proposal may be simple or complex. The research grants team will work with the PI to assemble the subaward documents needed.

The Research Grants Office will work with PIs over an approximate to six to eight week period for standard R01-type proposals. Larger program or multi-site proposals will generally be on a timeline of 2-3 months. Subaward proposals will take 2-4 weeks depending on scope of work to be done at the MaineHealth site. We expect the Prime Institution to provide at least two weeks for our office to assemble required documents (more time may be needed if the scope of work is large, the budget is complex, or human subjects or animal procedures are included).

Once an investigator sends the “Start-Up/Intake Questionnaire” to the Research Grants Office, we will create a customized timeline/checklist and work closely with the PI throughout the process. By reviewing and assisting with documents over this period, our office can trouble-shoot issues that may arise and ensure we submit the highest quality application possible.

Table 1 below gives deadlines for standard and large program applications. Table 2 gives deadlines for subaward applications.

Table 1: DEADLINES FOR RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Deadline For Standard (R01, K, etc) Proposals	Deadline for large program, institutional or multi-site proposals	Task/Document	Notes
6-8 weeks prior to deadline	10 weeks prior to deadline	PI informs Grants Office; Pre-submission form signed by Department Chair (approval of cost-share included) Start-Up Proposal questions due	Dept. Chairs must sign, and provider of any cost-sharing must approve. Grants staff will review funding opportunity and start-up questions and discuss issues with PI such as collaborating institutions, budget allocation, and human subjects requirements. Grants Staff will develop a timeline for PI.
4 weeks prior to deadline	8 weeks prior to deadline	Facilities, Equipment, Resource Sharing, Authentication	The Grants Office provides templates and editing services
4 weeks prior to deadline	6 weeks prior to deadline	Collaborators are contacted; budget caps for Subawards are identified	Grants staff will work on this with PI, particularly how to allocate budget.
3 weeks prior to deadline	4 weeks prior to deadline	Budget and justification, human subjects or vertebrate animals (if applicable), Biosketches for senior/key personnel	Grants staff will assist with budget development and advise on biosketch formats/questions and human subjects sections as needed.
10 working days prior to deadline	2 weeks prior to deadline	Finals of abstract, narrative, and letters of support; final documents from collaborators are due; near final draft of Introduction, Aims and Research Strategy	Near final means there will be no further changes that affect budget, status of vertebrate animals or human subjects, or change collaborators or subawards
3 working days prior to deadline	5 working days prior to deadline	Final Aims, Strategy, References	
2 working days prior to deadline	4 working days prior to deadline	PI and Grants Staff review final pdf	Changes made if needed prior to submission
Deadline (as stated by grants office)	Deadline day	Grants staff submits	PI must sign off as approver of final proposal.

Table 2: DEADLINES FOR SUBAWARD PROPOSALS (when MH is a subaward site on the Prime Institution's Proposal)

DEADLINE (GIVEN BY PRIME INSTITUTION)	TASK
2 weeks (10 working days) prior to deadline	Inform grant office and have prime institution supply the following information: Title, Dates of Support, funder guidelines (including indirect rate, salary caps, etc.), aims or abstract of project, and list of required documents, including budget caps for MH, and gives deadline.
5 working days prior to deadline	Draft budget Scope of Work Biosketch and Facilities PI letter of support Department Chair approval (presubmission form)
1 working day prior to deadline	Grants Office sends package: Institutional Letter of Intent Budget and Justification Biosketch, Facilities, Letter of support Other required documents

NOTE: if the subaward participation involves human subjects research, cost-sharing, or in-kind support, more time may be required. In addition, if the work involves clinical procedures, the CTO Project Management team may need to review the budget that is offered.

Please note special situations that can impact the timeline and grant proposal process:

Applications that involve human subjects: The Research Grants staff, in consultation with research compliance and research navigation as needed, will work with you regarding the correct human subjects designation for your project, and provide instructions on this section of the proposal. This should be done early in the process in case the project is complex and requires consultation to identify the correct designation. Our office has prepared an updated application instruction booklet for NIH including its human subjects section. Additionally, if your application involves clinical procedures, we will consult with the Clinical Trials Office/Project Management to ensure we are budgeting for these procedures correctly.

Fellowship and Career Development Applications: These applications will involve a different set of documents and requirements, and will often require reference letters, mentor letters and/or institutional commitment letters. Such letters must be requested in advance to allow the references enough time to meet the deadline. Junior investigators should meet with Grants staff at least six weeks prior to submission to begin this process.

Subaward Sites: If your proposal includes external collaborative sites, time is factored into the process to work with the site to obtain required budgets and other documents. Subaward sites have their own approval process; they cannot be brought into the proposal at a late stage.

Cost Sharing: The pre-submission form signed by the Department Chair or Chief will ask you to state whether you are requesting any cost share or in-kind support. This means you are committing Institutional resources to the project, such as salary support. The institution does not encourage voluntary cost-sharing; a strong justification is required. You will also be asked if your department has enough equipment and space to perform the project. If additional resources or cost-share are requested, the department chair who is providing the resources will need to submit written approval.

Scientific Peer Review of Research Applications: MMCRI requires that all research applications be reviewed scientifically before submission. The required pre-submission form asks the PI to name who will be scientifically reviewing the application. If a PI would like assistance in identifying appropriate reviewers, he/she may contact any of the MMCRI center directors, as appropriate for the proposal. Center Directors are: Tom Gridley (Center for Molecular Medicine); Clifford Rosen (Clinical and Translational Research Center); Liz Jacobs (Director of MMCRI and Interim Director, Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation); Susan Santangelo (Center for Psychiatric Research); for fellowship, career development applications and Junior Investigators, Lucy Liaw should be notified (Director of Research Training Programs). The MMCRI leadership group will assist in identifying appropriate reviewers. For NIH proposals, it is critical to include reviewers who have had NIH funding and/or served on NIH review panels.

Resources Available to Investigators: We have developed an instruction guide for NIH proposals that includes all updated requirements as 2020. There is a separate instruction guide for the Human Subjects section. These guides, as well as forms needed for submission, NIH templates, information on the NIH review process and study sections, writing tips, and funding opportunities are available on [Grants and Contracts Services](#)

For more information about research grant proposal submission, please contact any of our staff:

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