

“Five Day Rule” for UCF Sponsored Award Proposals

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1. When is this effective?

Beginning Jan. 22, 2018, the Office of Research will require that investigators applying for sponsored projects submit all proposal documents required for review through ARGIS at least five business days before they are due to a funding agency.

2. Does this mean that any proposal due after that date will be subject to this new procedure?

Yes. All sponsored project proposals must be submitted to the Office of Research at least five business days before they are due to the funding agency.

3. How was this change communicated?

Dr. Elizabeth Klonoff, Vice President of Research, has personally made visits to the Deans and faculty of each college within the university. The announcement has been made at monthly EXCIT meetings to the research administrators and business managers multiple times. An email was sent campus-wide through Campus News on January 10th, 2018. An announcement is posted on the research landing page [here](#).

4. How can PIs receive instruction on how to use the revised PTF?

A PowerPoint presentation and a recorded webinar are available on the Office of Research website which describes the PTF in detail. The PI may also contact their Office of Research representative to ask questions. Instruction sessions may be scheduled for faculty business units through contacting the Office of Research. Periodic training will be offered for faculty and staff through FRAC TRAX.

5. What happens if I submit my PTF in less than 5 business days prior to the stated sponsor deadline?

The Office of Research will not submit proposals that miss the 5-day deadline without authorization of the Vice President for Research and the Associate Dean for Research of your college.

6. I have a company that would like a proposal by the end of the week (within 5 days), will there be any exception for these quick requirements?

Special permission may be sought from the Vice President for Research and the Associate Dean for Research of your college. Please be sure to provide documentation to substantiate your request.

7. The RFP was only recently released (within 5 days), will there be any exceptions for this?

Special permission may be sought from the Vice President for Research and the Associate Dean for Research of your college. Please be sure to provide documentation to substantiate your request.

8. My proposal deadline is at 11:59pm. Will ORC submit the proposal after hours to allow me to have more time?

ORC submits proposals during normal business hours from 8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. ORC proposal staff do not submit proposals on any days when the university is closed for any reason. If a proposal is due outside normal business hours or on a day when the university is scheduled to be closed, the timeline for proposal preparation should be adjusted accordingly by the investigator team in order to allow five full business days for review and approvals for submission by 5pm on a day when the university is open for business.

9. Who can submit in ARGIS?

The same people that previously had access can initiate a PTF and submit for review and approval routing can still initiate a PTF and route for review and approval for submissions to the agency. When a proposal is in Draft mode, the PI/Research Coordinator/Project Assistant may make edits to the full PTF record. Once it is submitted, the same group (PI/Research Coordinator/Project Assistant) may make changes to the documents to respond to needed revisions or edit the scope of work until the proposal documents are certified as final (2 business days before the sponsor agency deadline.)

10. What is required now for the PTF?

The full proposal must be submitted for review. The requirements of the sponsoring agency must be met for the proposal. In addition, a budget and budget justification must be provided. The categorical budget and budget justification are necessary for financial review of the proposal. Additionally, any required subrecipient or consultant information forms must be provided (see FAQ question 18).

11. Why is a budget justification a required document?

Certain elements of the budget cannot be reviewed without a budget justification. For example, the indirect costs cannot be determined without a categorical breakdown of the budget. The budget justification is also needed in order to manage the account after the award arrives.

12. Do these documents need to be final?

The documents should be in final format. Fine tuning of the scope of work (technical narrative) may continue until the documents are certified two business days before the sponsor deadline. Additionally, any changes that are recommended by your proposal manager in the Office of Research may be made in order to correct errors or omissions in the original proposal submitted for review.

13. Can I just submit what I have for the review and approval workflow, even if the proposal is still very rough, and be considered as having complied with the Five-Day Rule?

No. Proposals are expected to be full and complete at the time of submission for review and routing. The only exception to this is the fine tuning of the technical narrative. The ORC Proposal Staff will make notes of any portions of the proposal that have been omitted, are inaccurate, or are non-responsive to the sponsor guidelines in the ARGIS comments. Those comments will be forwarded by email to the PI, Business Unit Research Admin Team, Department Chair, and Dean to alert them of the quality level of the proposal.

14. Will ORC always route a proposal for review and approval, even if it is incomplete?

Proposals that are substantially incomplete may be declined at initial review. If declined, the PTF will need to be resubmitted with accurate information. If they are in the five day window after decline, they will need to go through the ADR to the VPR for permission for a late submission.

15. Is it really necessary for me to follow the sponsor guidelines precisely as long as the information they require is included?

Proposals are expected to be responsive to the sponsoring agency guidelines. Failure to adhere to sponsor guidelines may result in the proposal being rejected by the sponsor or by a determination that the proposal is substantially flawed and does not favorably represent the University of Central Florida. During initial review, deviation from sponsor guidelines will be noted. Minor deviations or corrections may be allowed during the proposal routing process. All corrections must be made prior to certification that the proposal is final and ready for submission.

16. What happens if a PTF form is substantially inaccurate at the time of proposal submission for review?

Proposal transmittal forms (PTFs) are expected to be accurate at the time of proposal submission for review and approval routing. Proposal transmittal forms have questions that inform the VPR, Deans, and broader research community of important information that ties to factors such as safety requirements, space needs, and equipment acquisition considerations. PTFs that are substantially inaccurate will be declined and must be resubmitted for review and approval. If this places the proposal inside the five day window, Dr. Klonoff will have to approve a request by the college ADR for an exception.

17. What is Document Certification?

Document certification is a new process in ARGIS. Document certification verifies the documents are in final form and ready for final review by the Office of Research and submission to the agency.

18. Who can certify?

The PI/Research Coordinator/Project Assistant are all eligible to certify.

19. When are documents supposed to have been fully routed and certified by the PI as ready to send to the sponsor?

Proposals are expected to be certified as final and ready to submit to the sponsor by not later than 8am on the business day prior to the sponsor deadline day. Failure to fully route and certify documents as final and ready to submit by 8 am on the day prior to the sponsor deadline day may result in the proposal not being submitted or being submitted without final review.

20. Can I just ask for an exception every time and get my proposal to ORC on my own timeline and certify when I feel I am ready to submit regardless of the stated deadlines?

Requests for VPR Exceptions to the 5-Day Rule and failure to adhere to document certification timeline will be tracked. Requests for exceptions may not be approved for any faculty member or business unit that has a high frequency of exceptions. ORC staff have been instructed to track the frequency of exceptions to the five day rule and failure to certify documents as ready for submission to sponsor by 8am on the day prior to the proposal deadline date.

21. Can a PI submit directly to the Office of Research and certify without going through their business unit (College, Institute, Center, Department) for review?

The proposal must be submitted to the Office of Research for review and routing for approvals five full business days prior to the sponsoring agency deadline. Please contact the leadership of your business unit as to their requirements for proposals. During the review process, your business unit leadership will be required to review and approve various aspects of the proposal. If you have not met the requirements set by your academic unit, it could create delays or failure for your proposal to be approved during the routing process.

22. How will the Office of Research review be communicated?

All communication will take place in ARGIS. ARGIS notes will be the official documentation of the activities surrounding the proposal history.

23. Does the proposal have to be fully routed within the 5 business days?

The proposal must be fully routed with all required approvals before submission to the agency by the Office of Research. It is the responsibility of the PI to oversee the routing process through the business unit. If you have any special considerations, it is recommended that you have discussions about these prior to routing in order to facilitate a quick routing process. (e.g course release, space requirements, cost share, equipment installation)

24. How do I request/document cost share?

All requests for cost share will be made and documented through the PTF process. Cost share requests for the Vice President of Research (ORC) must be made at least 10 business days prior to the sponsoring agency deadline. Cost share approvals at all levels will be documented within the PTF review and approval process. Instructions regarding cost share are documented within the PTF.

25. What if I have a subrecipient on my proposal?

All subrecipient documents must be uploaded prior to the proposal submission, and at the time of the PTF submission in ARGIS. A list of required sub documents can be found at:

<http://www.research.ucf.edu/Research/SubmissionGuidelines.html>

26. What if I am a PI of a subaward? The prime award institution has given me a deadline to them that is different than the sponsor's deadline. Which deadline do I use for the five day process?

When we are the subrecipient, the prime awardee is actually our sponsor. If they set an earlier deadline than the awarding sponsor, you should use the prime awardee's deadline as the deadline date. Please make a note of the prime award deadline in the PTF notes. You will still be required to provide the RFP from the sponsoring agency in order to insure we are meeting the awarding agency proposal requirements.

27. What if there are personnel changes within the college and/or department and the Workflow Personnel need to be updated. Who do we contact to make these updates? Your proposal manager will be able to facilitate this for you.

28. When the PTF was submitted into Workflow, I accidentally entered something incorrectly in the system. Who do I contact for this correction? Does this communication also occur within the system?

Your proposal manager will be able to facilitate this for you. Contact your proposal manager about the problem and the proposal manager will note in the system.

29. What should I do if I have not received my initial Office of Research review within 48 hours of submitting the PTF into Workflow?

Please contact the Director of Contracts and Grants if this occurs. A metrics report has been written to enable the Director to monitor timely performance.

30. How will indirect cost rate reduction requests be handled?

Rate reduction requests must be made prior to initiation of the proposal routing and review process in order to prepare your budget. Rate reduction requests should be made ten business days prior to the agency deadline to allow sufficient time for review and to answer any questions that could arise during review. Documentation of the approved rate reduction must be included in the documents tab of the proposal prior to submission for review and approval routing.

31. Proposals that are already in funded status will show the PTF as being delinquent for the two required documents. Do we have to go back in and add the RFP and budget now, after it has been funded?

No. The Office of Research will work with CRATA to do a bulk upload with a document that states that the RFP and budget requirements were not in effect at the time of the original submission. For any proposals currently in review, the full PTF requirements will have to be met.