

To: Faculty and Staff Submitting Proposals for External Funding

From: Pierre Hohenberg

Subject: ELECTRONIC PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS – NEW SYSTEMS HELP & NEW INTERNAL DEADLINES

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The imposition by the federal government of electronic submission of most proposals through Grants.gov has created hurdles for the research community nationwide. Applicants who have already submitted through Grants.gov know how difficult it can be to use and how many opportunities for errors it entails as it validates the data and forwards it on to the federal agency sponsor. Because each application is requested by each agency according to its own program requirements, the data fields are often reassembled and subjected to a second set of validations at the agency level where additional policies for accepting (or not) corrections may apply. Grants.gov has even been known to fail during high-volume deadlines. It has become so problematic that NSF recently announced it will postpone implementation of Grants.gov for now and will normally require submission via FastLane. Given this inability on the government's part to impose uniform electronic proposal submission standards, NYU, like most grantee institutions, continues to struggle in order to keep abreast of agency requirements.

1. We are therefore pleased to announce that NYU has contracted with an outside vendor for an independent, user-friendly interface with Grants.gov called Cayuse 424. Cayuse allows users to complete federal grant applications faster, more easily and with greater accuracy. It supports grant mechanisms accepted by most federal agencies within a single system which communicates directly with Grants.gov. Among its many features, it auto fills both standard University and PI information, simplifies budget development, pre-validates proposals, and assigns a Grants.gov tracking number immediately upon submission. Also included is a subscription to Subawards.com, another Cayuse product, which enables collaborators at other institutions to prepare and submit required subcontractor documentation on-line, free of charge, directly into the Cayuse application.

Cayuse also provides for internal routing and clearance of application materials, as well as assignment of submission privileges to unit-level offices. While OSP will continue to exercise signoff authority, it is our intention over time to delegate submission responsibility to school or departmental offices subject to mandatory training in related processes.

OSP is in the process of launching Cayuse with a series of hands-on training workshops which will be repeated for as long as necessary to accommodate the Washington Square community. We urge all users to take advantage of this superior electronic application system when planning submissions. Please contact OSP Projects Officers with any questions, or Anita Mills, Associate Director for Research Administration Training and Institutional Liaison, anita.mills@nyu.edu.

2. Accompanying this improvement to our electronic submission capabilities, we are also instituting a more specific and realistic set of internal deadlines. We have been reluctant to do so up to now, but recent experience necessitates the timeline which appears below. In checking with our colleagues from other institutions, we have confirmed that these changes are consistent with their practices. Department and school staffs as well as OSP Projects Officers need adequate time to review and approve proposal submissions. As mentioned above, this is particularly critical in the case of electronic submissions, where a variety of technical challenges arise in addition to normal review issues.

We will appreciate the cooperation of faculty and staff in making this new submission process a success.

Meeting Deadlines: NYU Policy

- With at least ten (10) business days notice prior to the deadline, OSP will review program guidelines, identify and test submission requirements, and alert faculty and departmental administrators to any unusual requirements.

- With at least five business (5) days lead time prior to the deadline*, OSP will perform a complete review for:

- PI eligibility
- Comparison of proposal to formal requirements (e.g., forms, type size, formatting)
- Review of budget and budget justification (calculations, rates, relevance to project description, cost sharing)
- Compliance issues (e.g., human/animal subjects, hazardous materials, conflict of interest)
- Departmental and school approvals
- Responsiveness to sponsor review criteria

The results of the review will be communicated to the originator who must, where appropriate, make required corrections.

OSP will submit final proposals received at least three days in advance of the deadline, but cannot guarantee a successful transmittal if technical errors are present.

-If proposals are received with only two business (2) days lead time prior to deadline*, OSP cannot guarantee successful submission, but will review for:

- PI eligibility
- Budget for correct rates, cost sharing
- Compliance issues
- Departmental and school approvals

- With less than one business day prior to the deadline*, OSP may only be able to verify that the PI and chair/dean have approved (the minimum requirement for any proposal to be submitted) and also cannot guarantee successful submission.

* Submit by email or hand-delivery to your OSP Projects Officer. Depending on the file size, an email attachment is preferred if the submission will be electronic. However, if the file exceeds 50 mb, it must be received on a CD or USB drive for other than Cayuse proposals. The responsibility for delivering to OSP a technically acceptable submission rests with the Schools and Departments.

This policy applies to all final, competitive (new and renewal) proposals. By final, we mean the complete business components (forms, budget and budget justification, including all required documentation from third-party collaborators) and submittable project text, incorporating any corrections or other changes previously discussed. Noncompeting continuations, such as NIH SNAP-eligible progress reports, may be received two (2) working days prior to the deadline.

Please note that these conditions are not intended to represent the most OSP can do, but the minimum OSP will do, so that expectations are clear. If possible, OSP will provide a more thorough review than these minima, time permitting. Projects Officers will inform applicants when a proposal will receive less than a complete review due to time constraints. Obviously, during major deadline cycles such as those imposed by NIH and NSF, such constraints may be considerable.