

# Elliott School of International Affairs

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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March 29, 2018

## **Sponsored Research at the Elliott School**

Sponsored research funding to Elliott School faculty has dramatically increased over the past several years. The Elliott School's Research Team serves to support and enhance this trend. We are proud of our faculty's entrepreneurial spirit and encourage you to think of us as partners in the process of identifying funding, developing competitive proposals, and promoting your work.

Please include us early in the process of identifying funders and planning a proposal. Once you know that you are applying for a grant, contact someone in our team directly with the name of the grant, the deadline, and a link to the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) or the sponsor's invitation to apply.

All sponsored research proposals must be approved by the Elliott School Research Team and GW's Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) *before* they are submitted to the sponsor.

Please follow the guidelines below to facilitate this process.

## Proposal Submission Guidelines

### STEP 1

*Notify the ESIA Research Team of your intention to apply.* Our team will verify your eligibility, provide a suggested timeline for internal deadlines, identify complexities that may arise, and ensure that your proposal moves quickly through the review and approval process. If you are affiliated with an institute, contact the operations manager of your institute, who can assist you with budget development and preparation of proposal documents. If you are not affiliated with an institute, our team can assist you.

We require **10 business days** - 5 for the Elliott School and 5 for OVPR - to review and approve your proposal (excluding the date of submission to the sponsor). While minor changes can be made to the project narrative during the Elliott School review period, a complete, final narrative must be submitted by the start of business two full business days prior to the funding agency's deadline. Please plan accordingly!

### STEP 2

*Prepare required documents.* These include, at minimum:

1. Initialed [Conflict of Interest form](#)
2. The sponsor's funding announcement or invitation and proposal requirements (pdf)
3. Budget (pdf and Excel)
4. Budget narrative (pdf)
5. Project narrative or scope of work (pdf)
6. All final documents that will be submitted to the sponsor (single pdf file)

You may also need:

- The sponsor's indirect cost policy, if different from GW's federally negotiated rate.
- [Multi-School Routing Form](#), if you are working with faculty from other schools at GW. The Research Team will facilitate obtaining signatures from the collaborating schools.
- [Cost Sharing Request Form](#), if GW is contributing cost share or matching funds. The Elliott School Finance Director must sign off on this.
- [Subrecipient Commitment Form](#) and subrecipient documentation (subrecipient budget, budget narrative, and scope of work), if there will be subrecipients.

*Budget and budget narrative.* All proposals must include a budget and budget narrative. These should describe the costs that will be incurred by the program and explain why each cost is

needed. Your institute's staff can assist with developing the budget. If you are not affiliated with an institute, please work with Sonja Christmas. Carefully review the sponsor's guidelines to determine if there are special instructions or limitations on what costs are allowable on the grant. The budgeted items and timeline of the performance period should reflect what resources are needed to complete the work you propose to do.

Note: Some sponsors require a specific budget template. Consequently, your proposal may require two budgets – an internal budget that meets GW's requirements and an external budget in the sponsor's template.

*Proposal narrative or Scope of Work.* This section should provide a description of the proposed work to be performed. Carefully follow the sponsor's requirements for the narrative's formatting and content. The research team is available to provide feedback on your methodological and theoretical content as you develop your narrative.

*Supporting documentation required by GW and by the sponsor.* Supporting documentation varies from proposal to proposal. These may include documents for subrecipients, letters of commitment from collaborators, institutional information, CVs, etc. The research team can often provide institutional information and templates to help you develop these documents.

### **STEP 3**

*Submit your proposal for internal approval **a minimum of 10 business days** prior to the sponsor's deadline.* Please let us know if you believe you cannot meet this timeline. Proposal documents are uploaded electronically using [Cayuse 424](#). Your staff can create a proposal for you in Cayuse and help you to upload necessary documentation.

Please refer to OVPR's [Cayuse User Guide](#) for instructions.

Note: Most proposals are submitted electronically, but if the proposal needs to be submitted via post, we will move the deadline up accordingly to ensure time for shipping.

### **STEP 4**

*The Elliott School will review your entire proposal for compliance with the sponsor's guidelines and GW's internal requirements.* Additionally, our team will conduct an extensive review of the proposal narrative for clarity, persuasiveness, and research design. Please allow yourself time to incorporate feedback.

### **STEP 5**

*Once Elliott School review is complete, we will instruct the PI to go to the "Routing and Approval" tab in Cayuse and check the box next to his/her name in order to initiate the internal routing process.* The proposal must be routed to OVPR at least **five business days** before the sponsor's deadline. OVPR may request further edits to the proposal. You are required to be

available during this time to answer questions and implement suggested revisions. The final proposal narrative is due to OVPR at the start of business two full business days prior to the funding agency deadline. In the rare event that a proposal cannot be submitted at least five days prior, requests for exceptions must be submitted online via the [Grant Proposal Waiver Request](#) and approved by the research dean and director of sponsored projects.

#### **STEP 6**

*Once OVPR approves the proposal, it is ready for submission. **No changes can be made to the proposal once it receives OVPR approval.*** OVPR will ask you to confirm that you are ready to submit. In some cases, the university is required to submit the proposal; we will coordinate with OVPR to determine who submits the application to the sponsor.

#### **STEP 7**

*Notify the research team when you learn the outcome of the sponsor's review. Please let us know if your proposal is funded or rejected. Contact us immediately if the sponsor requests revisions to your proposal or budget. **Any revisions to the proposal or budget must be approved by OVPR.***

## **Guidance on Specific Issues**

### ***Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)***

Although sponsored projects are carried out under the direction of an individual principal investigator, GW assumes the legal obligations imposed by the Federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to grant awards. Therefore, all proposals for external funding must be reviewed and approved by an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) before they can be submitted to sponsors.

### ***Budgeting for Administrative Support***

The general administrative costs of doing sponsored research at the university are included in the budget as Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs (also referred to as “overhead” or “indirect costs”). However, it is appropriate to include administrative salaries or wages as direct costs in the budget if:

- (i) Administrative or clerical services are integral to a project or activity;
- (ii) Individuals involved can be specifically identified with the project or activity;
- (iii) Such costs are explicitly included in the budget or have the prior written approval of the Federal awarding agency; and
- (iv) The costs are not also recoverable as indirect costs.

Refer to GW’s policy on [Direct Charging of Administrative Costs Associated with Sponsored Projects](#) for additional information.

### ***Conflicts of Interest***

According to the [Policy on Conflicts of Interest and Commitment for Faculty and Investigators](#):

*“Faculty and investigator activities shall be conducted in a manner that avoids inappropriate conflicts of interest and commitment. Conflicts of interest may occur when there is a divergence between a Faculty Member’s private interests and professional service to the University.”*

For each proposal, faculty are required to initial the [Conflict of Interest and Financial Disclosure Form](#) certifying that they do not have any conflicts of interest or disclosing potential conflicts of interest. If you have questions, the Research Team can assist in the identification and management of potential or actual conflicts of interest.

### *Cost Share*

“Cost sharing” is an institution’s contribution to the total cost of a sponsored project. These are costs not covered by the sponsor and may include: cash, equipment, third party in-kind contributions, faculty release time, or indirect costs covered by a university.

Mandatory cost sharing is when the sponsor requires cost share. An example would be when a sponsor requires GW to cost share a specific portion of the total project costs. Voluntary committed cost sharing is not required, but offered by the applicant to further demonstrate the institution’s dedication to the program. This becomes a binding commitment to the funding agency and part of the award’s terms and conditions.

It is critical that you contact the research team as soon as possible if you are submitting an application that involves cost share. We can help you come up with creative ways to meet cost sharing requirements or facilitate negotiations for larger requests from the school or university. Cost sharing support for proposals is at the discretion of the school and the university and is not guaranteed.

### *Course Buyout*

If you need to be relieved of some of your teaching duties in order to conduct the work you are proposing, you may wish to include a course buyout in your proposal budget. The GW rate for one 3-credit course release is 1/6<sup>th</sup> of your annual base salary. You must submit a Course Buyout Request Form signed by Lisa Stephenson and your department chair **before a course buyout can be included in a proposal.**

### *Draft Submissions, Letters of Interest (LoI), Concept Papers*

For letters of intent, statements of interest, white papers, concept papers, and preliminary submissions, PIs should check with the research team to determine whether routing is required. Typically, if a sponsor requests detailed budget information or authorized signatures, the application must be approved by the Elliott School and OVPR prior to submission.

### *Effort Certification*

Faculty and staff who receive salary support from sponsored research are required by law to certify their effort. GW’s effort reporting periods are January-June and July-December, and the PI and program staff must confirm time and effort expended on his/her award(s) twice a year. Prior to proposal submission, PIs should be sure to reach agreement with those included in the proposal regarding prospective effort.

Refer to GW's [Effort Certification Policy](#) for additional information or contact our assistant director for grants management with questions.

### ***Export Controls***

Export control laws restrict shipment, transmission, or disclosure of certain types of information, technologies, and goods from the U.S. to foreign countries or individuals. In addition, economic sanctions laws and regulations restrict certain transactions, such as providing certain goods or services to sanctioned or embargoed countries or to individuals on any Restricted Parties screening list (i.e. Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons list). Before engaging in activities that involve an export, members of the university community should understand and identify any potential export requirements or limitations.

Refer to GW's [Export Control Policy](#) or contact the research team for additional information.

### ***Fringe Benefits***

Fringe benefits are employee benefits paid by an employer (e.g., FICA, Worker's Compensation, retirement, health insurance, tuition benefits, etc.). Whenever salary is included in a proposal, we also need to include fringe benefits. Fringe benefits are calculated as a percentage of salaries. The rates are set as part of GW's negotiated rate agreement with the federal government. The current rates are 24.6% of regular full- and part-time salaries and 6.3% of wage and temporary personnel rates.

### ***Hiring Students***

#### Graduate Students

Most GW graduate students are hired as temporary wage employees, Graduate Research Assistants (GRA) or Graduate Research Fellows (GRF.) Refer to [the latest guidance from OVPR](#) for more information about GRAs and current compensation rates.

A student should be hired as a **temporary wage employee** if they will work less than 20 hours per week, less than a full semester, or are hired only for the summer. When budgeting for temporary wage employees, you need to determine the hourly wage rate and the total number of hours you expect them to work.

A **GRA** receives a salary to work for at least one semester during the academic year. They must be full-time students and work at least 20 hours per week, but no more than 28 hours per week. GRAs are non-benefited positions. GRAs cannot be a regular part-time or full-time employee or wage employee of the university at the same time. When allowed by a sponsor, PIs are encouraged to budget for tuition for the student as a direct cost to the project in order to create a full funding package. For grants that allow us to use our full indirect cost rate, if you budget for 1/3 of a student's tuition on the grant, the Office of Graduate Student Assistantships and

Fellowships (GSAF) will award a tuition fellowship equal to 2/3 of a student's tuition. Tuition is excluded from the total direct costs used to calculate indirect costs.

Students not described above may fit into other [Assistant and Fellow categories](#) designated by the university.

### Undergraduate Students

GW undergraduate students should be hired under the Student Research Aide classification (account 51229) as temporary wage employees. For details concerning undergraduate hiring, see [GW Student Employment Manual](#).

### ***Indirect Costs***

GW has a federally negotiated indirect cost rate of 59.5% of total direct costs for on-campus research activities, 26% for off-campus research activities, and 38.4% for other sponsored activities, such as travel grants, conferences, and events. A single rate is used for the entire project. The rate is determined by the categorization of the sponsored activity. Projects are defined as on-campus or off-campus based on the primary location of the majority of the project's activities and GW personnel effort. If your sponsor's *published policies* limit indirect costs to a rate that differs from GW's indirect cost rates, GW will honor your sponsor's maximum allowable rate.

Indirect costs are excluded on stipends, tuition, and equipment. Indirect costs can only be charged on the first \$25,000 for subrecipients. GW's newest federally negotiated rate information for fringe benefits and indirect costs can be found at the [Office of the Comptroller](#).

IMPORTANT: A portion of the indirect costs on your proposal is returned to you through the [Research Enhancement Incentive Award \(REIA\) program](#). REIA returns 8% of total indirect cost recoveries to the PI and 4% to their institute or center. The amount of REIA is determined based on *expenditures* during the preceding fiscal year. REIA funds should be used by principal investigators and center and institute directors in support of research-related activities.

### ***Institutional Review Board (IRB)***

Much of the research conducted by Elliott School faculty involves human subjects. Activities that meet the definition of human subject research must receive [IRB approval or exemption](#) before the work can be carried out. If you are not sure whether your project involves human subjects, please complete the [Human Subjects Determination Worksheet](#). If you have questions about your project or the forms, please email [ohrirb@gwu.edu](mailto:ohrirb@gwu.edu).

### ***Multi-School Collaboration***

When a proposal involves collaboration with faculty from another GW school, we need to develop a separate budget and justification outlining the portion of the project work and funds that will go to the collaborating unit. The budget, budget justification, funding announcement, and a description of the project should be prepared for the collaborating unit, to be sent along with a [Multi-School Routing Form](#). OVPR will coordinate obtaining signatures from the collaborating faculty member(s) and administrative personnel.

### ***Post-Award Management***

Once a proposal is funded, OVPR will work directly with the sponsor to negotiate the terms of the award and sign the award agreement. OVPR will set up the award accounts and oversee your spending and reporting throughout the life cycle of the grant. Please contact Sonja Christmas for any questions related to post-award management.

### ***Salary Support, Supplemental Compensation, and Wage Employee Support***

If your proposal includes salary support, supplemental compensation payments, or wage employee support, review the terms and restrictions on these types of support with Sonja Christmas before you submit your proposal. Stipends may not be used as compensation for work.

### ***Travel***

While per diem rates may be used as a basis for cost estimation, GW reimburses actual costs. The Fly America Act guidelines apply to funding from all U.S. Government sponsors. Any international travel by students to high-risk countries must be cleared by the GW Office of International Programs at the time of the proposal.

### **Links to Additional Information**

Sponsored Projects Handbook:

[https://sponsoredprojects.gwu.edu/sites/sponsoredprojects.gwu.edu/files/downloads/Sponsored\\_Projects\\_Handbook.pdf](https://sponsoredprojects.gwu.edu/sites/sponsoredprojects.gwu.edu/files/downloads/Sponsored_Projects_Handbook.pdf)

Institutional Information for Sponsored Projects:

<https://research.gwu.edu/institutional-information-sponsored-projects-proposals>