

TIGER TIPS

RESOURCES FOR AUBURN RESEARCHERS

Reviewing the Solicitation

Most funding agencies issue various forms of proposal solicitations that can be called requests for proposals (RFPs), requests for applications (RFAs), program announcements (PAs) or funding opportunities announcements (FOAs). Whatever term the agency uses, the solicitation is a researcher's point of reference for the entire proposal development process. Most solicitations include a variety of items such as: the goals and objectives of the agency; scope of the project; general and specific topics to be addressed; budget requirements; outcomes; eligibility requirements; timelines and deadlines; and review criteria. Most agencies require clear compliance with every element of the solicitation in order to justify review of a proposal; many are rejected by agencies even before they are evaluated for scientific merit on the basis of not following the solicitation requirements. If aspects of a solicitation are unclear, please contact your Sponsored Programs [Contract Administrator](#) or College-level designee. In addition, if the question is more scientific in nature, the investigator can often communicate with a designated program officer or another individual responsible for fielding questions at the sponsoring agency. The contact information for these individuals is normally included with the solicitation.

Some solicitations may limit the number of proposals that an eligible institution may submit. This limitation can be inserted by: 1) limiting the number of proposals from any given entity, or 2) requiring a preliminary proposal or letter of intent. If you encounter a solicitation that limits the number of proposals an institution can submit, you can review AU's [Limited Submission Policy](#). Funding opportunities with limited submissions are coordinated through the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development and an internal deadline for submitting a pre-proposal (white paper) will be reflected in the [bimonthly funding newsletter](#). If you do not see the funding opportunity listed, contact [Marc Haon](#) as soon as possible and include a link to the funding announcement in your e-mail.

If the solicitation requests a preliminary proposal, usually a shorter version of the proposal, the deadline is typically months prior to the full proposal deadline. Sponsors review these and then reduce the number of applications eligible to submit full proposals.

Reading a program solicitation for the first time can be overwhelming. However, by planning early, developing clear timelines and creating content outlines using the solicitation as a guide for writing, the process is manageable.