

Does the early and late bird get the worm? Internal proposal deadline management



Speakers



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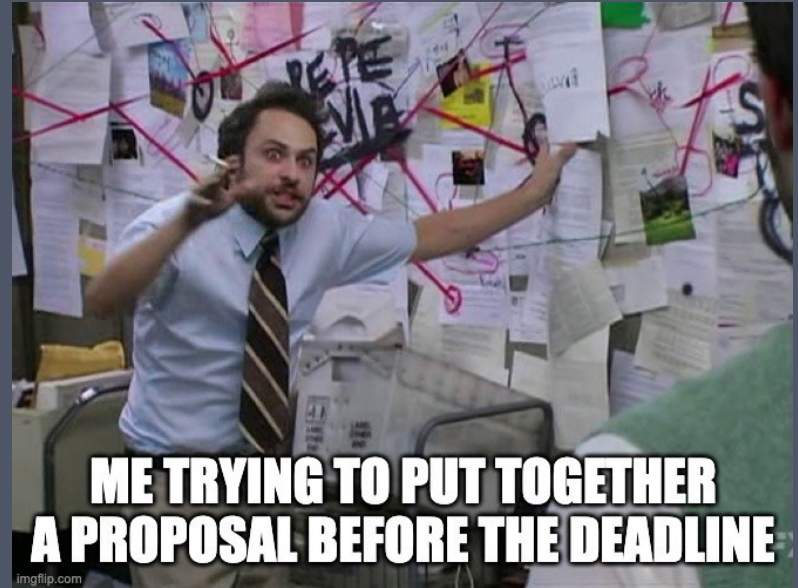
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Objectives

- 01 Describe why proposal deadline policies are needed for the stakeholders involved
- 02 Compare how institutions implement and manage their deadline policy
- 03 Recognize when things go sideways and intervention strategies to right the course
- 04 Gain insight from audience experiences



Proposal Deadlines, A History

- Deadlines help us to collaborate towards achieving a shared goal, and to keep complex, multistage tasks on track
- Per federal guidelines 2 CFR 200.204 - generally a notice of 60 days is provided before proposal due date, but may be 30 days. There has to be exigent circumstances for less than 30 days (COVID).
 - Sponsor primarily gives adequate time before a RFA deadline
- **Problem** - despite adequate notification time before proposal due date, research administrators are often rushing to meet the deadline.



“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

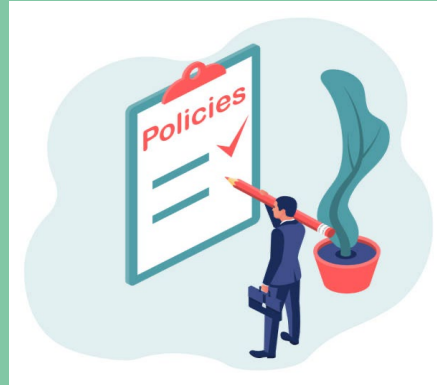


Internal Proposal Deadline Policies - Why are they needed?



Proposal Deadlines - a process where RAs are in the middle with little control

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Implementing policies and structure for meeting deadlines brings control to RAs

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Compliance with sponsor and institution requirements

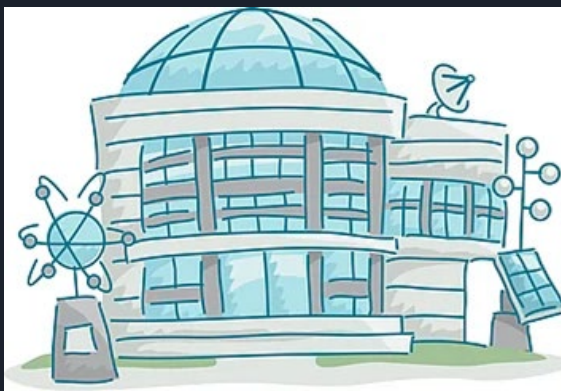
Positive collaboration RA/ Central Office / PI / Department



Higher quality proposals for successful funding

Proposal Deadline Policies Across Institutions: Our Experiences

Non-Profit Research
Organization



Academic Hospital



R1 Higher Education
Institutions



R1 Research Universities

Policy Overview:

- Central Office Initiated - Departments and Colleges have individual policies to meet central office policy
- Timelines before deadline drive the type of review -
 - ex: 4 business days before deadline full review (both institutional and sponsor requirements); 16 business hours before deadline limited review (only institutional requirements); less than 16 hours proposal is marked “At Risk”
- Consequence for not abiding by deadline policy:
 - “At Risk” proposals have potential to not be submitted to sponsor as they are limited priority
 - Limited and At Risk proposals aren’t reviewed for sponsor specifics for compliance
 - Sometimes central office requires department leadership to approve further submission of late proposals and central office tracks departments who are not compliant with policy

R1 Research Universities

Strengths

- Policies were enforced and supported by leadership
- Allows flexibility of review type and what the PI values (time vs. review type)
- Departments were given power to allow late proposals to proceed but were tracked by central offices to keep them accountable

Struggles

- College and Department policies focused deadlines on when to get documents to central office and initially did not take into account time for RAs to review and facilitate proposal
- Hard for RAs to keep track of other collaborating department/college policies

Suggestions/Takeaways

- Metrics were important to be able to make changes to department policies
- Templates and tools for calculating internal deadlines are helpful for RAs when communicating internally and externally to ensure proper timelines are



Academic Hospital

Policy

- Initiated by research leadership to allow the central office sufficient time to review proposals.
- Documents initially routed 7 business days before deadline and are draft versions of the science and final versions of administrative documents.
- No review levels based on policy compliance
- Central office would return proposal for final uploads 3 business days before proposal is due and then do another review prior to submission
- No consequences for RAs, Departments, or PIs if policy is not abided by.
- There is a policy but it is not implemented



Academic Hospital



Strengths

- Allowed PI's more time for working on the final versions of the science documents.

Struggles

- Required central office to review proposals twice and once version was often in rough shape
- Same day notification and submission of proposal was an often occurrence
- No motivation to follow policy (positive or negative)
- Policy didn't outline a period of guaranteed time for research administrators to work on the proposal
- Policy not widely dispersed or well known about in research community

Suggestions/Takeaways

- Ensure both faculty and staff feedback is obtained when structuring policy
- Leadership - be willing to say no to extremely short turnaround times

Non-Profit Research Organization

Policy

- 10 days policy for final ancillary and draft science documents, 3 business days for final science documents
- If deadline is missed, PI receives an email reminding them they missed the deadline and their application will face limited or no review prior to submission
- If the proposal submission is very deadline there often is additional conversations between the PI and various leadership members before submission happens, but ultimately, the submission is not withheld



Non-Profit Research Organization



Strengths

- Grant Office is continuously working with scientists 1 on 1 to educate on the importance of the deadline policy and that there a direct benefit to them for following
- There is leadership support for repeat offenders that are late on proposal deadline to submit without review.

Struggles

- No real consequences for late applications or incentives for meeting the deadline
- Culturally it is known amongst research community that the deadline policy won't stop proposals from being submitted.
- Multiple rounds of review from RA staff due to structure of policy and late final versions being provided

Suggestions/Takeaways

- Internal metrics have shown proposals that are very late and not in order are rarely funded
- Leadership tries to explain this to scientist to hold off until next proposal round if needed



Enforcing Deadlines

Prep for Success

- Take metrics initial to understand impacts of deadline policy
- Prepare RAs, Faculty, Departments for transition
- Testing period for deadline policy
- Provide RAs resources for successfully communicating and teaching with faculty
- Get input from the many stakeholders
- Advocate for eRA system that can lock the proposal from editing to meet deadline policy without multiple reviews

Strategies for Maintaining Success

- Metrics, metrics, metrics
- Leadership needs to be actively involved and follow through with consequences for not following policy
- RAs are the facilitators of the policy and Leadership are the enforcers
- RAs should continuously teach faculty about the policy and how it impacts their proposals - the personal advantages of meeting the deadline for faculty

Group Conversation





Thank you!

- If you would like email templates and resources please email us at:
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Effective proposal
deadline policies provide
research administrators
power within the proposal

