1. INTAKE

The proposal intake process begins when an investigator submits the Proposal Intake Form.

The intake form is built in Microsoft Forms and includes fields for basic proposal details such as title, deadline, key personnel, human subjects, vertebrate animals, etc. Some questions are conditional and will not appear if not applicable to the proposal. Users can upload attachments such as a sponsor solicitation, letter of intent, program officer communication, or other related proposal materials.

We use the information from the intake form to initiate the proposal in Kuali Research, an S2S technology solution.

Use the QR code above to view a sample intake form with additional notes and comments.

2. NOTIFY

Notification emails are next triggered using Power Automate. This includes:

1. HCRS Office Notification: email with basic proposal details, alerting manager to new intake form.
2. College/Department-Specific Notification: Email triggered based on college/department selected on the intake form. This notification will flow to the designated college/department contact(s) and includes the basic proposal details.
3. Human Subjects Notification: Email with human subjects-specific details from the intake form sent to the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) office. The HRPP office will contact the Principal Investigator, if needed.

Use the QR code above in section 1.1 for more about the automated notifications as part of the proposal intake flow.

3. REVIEW

The HCRS Manager or delegate reviews the intake form in the SharePoint List to determine difficulty level and project parameters to appropriately assign the proposal to a team member. This review also takes into consideration current assignments and difficulty level, performance goals, scheduled time off, etc.

The HCRS difficulty scale ranges from 1 to 4 with additional difficulty added for international components, multiple subawards, sponsor, or other proposal considerations. Additionally, HCRS utilizes a responsibility matrix based on job level and years of experience. These documents are part of the HCRS standard operating procedures and are available for all team members to review.

The Manager manually enters the difficulty level and activity code/prop of the list entry, which are used in later reporting. Finally, the team member is selected from a drop-down menu in the SharePoint List.

Use the QR code above to view the HCRS matrix used when making proposal assignments.

4. LOG

Proposal tracking and effort is subsequently managed in the SharePoint List.

Team members log their activities, such as final budget, proposal submission date, and submission status according to the MSU deadline policy.

The HCRS data set is refreshed 8 times daily from SharePoint, so HCRS team members and colleagues have access to reports through Microsoft Teams or online. Sharing Power BI reports requires both the owner and the viewer to have Power BI Pro licenses.

5. REPORT

Data from the SharePoint List can be reported on using Power BI. The HCRS data set is refreshed 8 times daily from SharePoint, so the reports provide near real-time data.

This proposal intake flow automates much of the more manual aspects of the initial preaward process. A summary of benefits includes: streamlined proposal data collection, automated notifications requiring no additional time or effort, transparency of workload and progress among team members, PI satisfaction, and extensive reporting capabilities.

In addition to the proposal intake process, HCRS utilizes a similar flow for Just In Time (JIT) requests. The JIT log uses a lookup field to pull data from the proposal intake list, minimizing repetitive manual entries. Similar automated emails and flows are designed for the JIT process.

Theresa Couch, Research Administration Manager, Health Colleges Research Services, Michigan State University