Climbing the Pre-award Mountain: Proposal Project Management for Research Administrators

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Who Am I?

- Research Administration Senior Manager
- Survey Research Center, University of Michigan
- Four full research programs
- Lifecycle research administrator
- Managing all pre-award activities – anywhere from 40-80 per year

Learning Objectives

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- Effectively manage the proposal submission process from solicitation to submission

- Identify possible pitfalls during the process and implement effective mitigation strategies for them

Quick Housekeeping

Let's Learn About All of You!

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- How many of you…..

  - Have been in research administration less than two years?

  - More than two years?

  - Anyone a preaward/project coordinator?

  - Anyone jobs assisting to submit?

  - Do you find this mystifying?

Expanded Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives Part Deux

- Realizing you are submitting
- Funding announcements
- Key players
- Gathering information
- Finding your tribe
- Details, details, details
- Wrapping up
- Submitting
- Tips/tricks along the way

It's all a game of Clue!

Before We Get to the Good Stuff….
The "Why"

The Why!

- Following standardized, efficient process that maximizes change of success is vital
- Good science can't be submitted without good processes FOR submission
- No hard & fast rule
- Someone needs to drive!
- A successful proposal is based on proper solicitation review

CASE FILE

CONFIDENTIAL
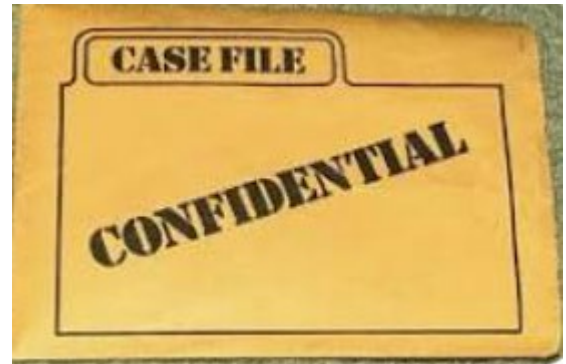
First Thing's First
The "What"

"The What" – What is a FOA?

- Funding opportunity announcement
- Normally published by the government / nonprofit / any funding agency
- Includes full details of submission
- Also called…
  - RFP (request for proposal)
  - RFA (request for applications)
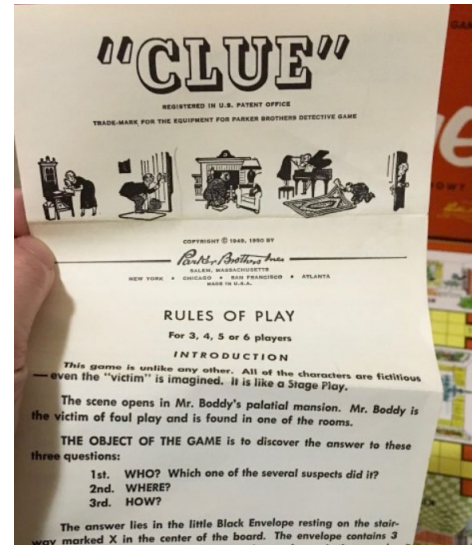 - NOT (notice of funding opportunity)
  - Solicitation

Basically…..the rules!
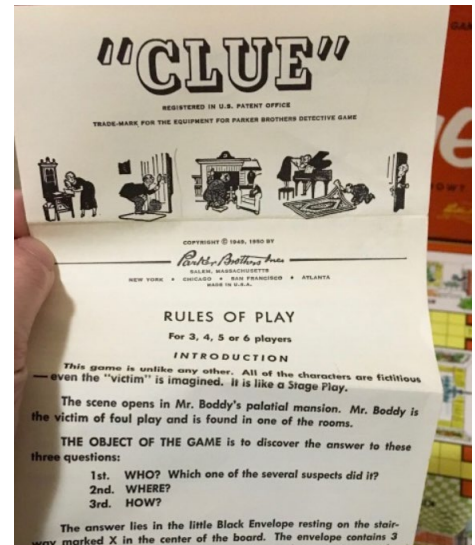
"The What" – What is a FOA?

- Specific formatting or general
  - Esp for foundations
- Any pieces "not normal"
- Inconsistencies between common vs. RFP specific language – how to solve
- Sign up for FOA / RFP updates electronically to not miss any changes over time

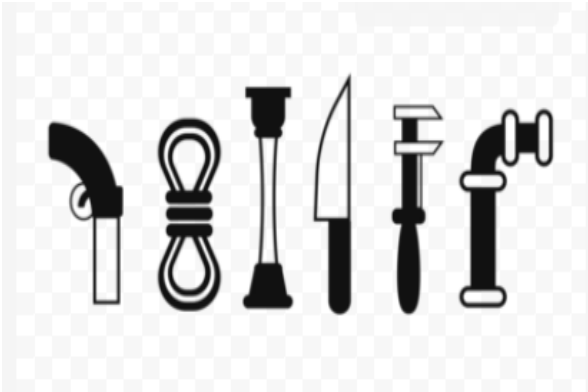**Basically…..the rules!**

Next Steps
"The Who"

"The Who"

- Key Players

  - PI's or faculty (who is submitting)

  - Administrative personnel

  - Internal Office of Research

  - Sponsor personnel

  - Can anyone assist if additional info needed?

Next Steps
"The How"

"The How"

- How do you find out you're submitting?
  - PI directly
  - PI meetings with larger group
  - Emails out to faculty
  - Sending out RFP's of interest
  - Lab manager / project manager
  - Renewals

How do you all find out?

"The How"

- How to get information together!
  - Timeline
  - Contact list
  - Checklists for proposal
    - Documents needed
    - Style sheet
    - Oddities
  - Sharing & storage
  - Any pre-reqs for submission?
  - Know your submission systems

"The How"

PIECES TO BE SUBMITTED TO NIA	Page Length	Completed by?
SF424 Cover Page (full details)	n/a	Nick or Rachel
PHS 398 Cover Page Supplement	n/a	Nick or Rachel
Research / Related Other Project Information		
- Abstract for R21	30 lines of text	PI
- Project Narrative (laymen's terms; relevance of the proposed project to public health)	Three sentences	PI
- Facilities & Resources (summarize the overall environment relevant to effective implementation of R01; don't forget subcontractors!)	n/a	Nick or Rachel
- References	n/a	PI
Project Performance Sites (don't forget subcontractors!)	n/a	Nick or Rachel
Research/Related Key Personnel (don't forget subcontractors!)	5 pages	PI/Nick or Rachel
- PI Biosketch		
- Co-I needed		
Budget	n/a	Nick or Rachel
- Budget Justification	n/a	Nick or Rachel first draft
Research Plan		
Specific Aims	1 page	PI
Research Strategy	6 pages	PI
- Organize into the following subheadings: Significance, Innovation, Approach.		
- Significance: Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress that the proposed project addresses. Describe the scientific premise for the proposed project, including consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of published research or preliminary data crucial to the support of your application. Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields.		
- Innovation: Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms. Describe any		

"The How"

	Title
	TBN NIA Proposal
	HOW TO APPLY: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-h/career-forms-h.pdf
	PAGE LIMITS: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/page-limits.htm

	Timeline
10/12/24	Proposal due to NIH
10/8/24	Submission to ORSP for full review
10/7/24	All finalized documents due to Nick (administrator) by 3pm
10/4/24	All reviews completed by ISR Proposals & Contracts; awaiting final science only.
9/30/24	Administrative shell routed. Includes all pieces except introduction, specific aims, research strategy, references**

National Institute on Aging (NIA)

Scientific Program Contact:
Jamie Lahvic, Ph.D.
National Institute on Aging (NIA)
Email: NIAtraining@nih.gov

Grants Management Contact:

Ms. Jessi Perez, NIA
Phone: 301.402.7739
Email: jessi.perez@nih.gov

NIA Specific Information:

For more information, see the NIA K99/R00 webpage.

Salary Support: Up to $75,000 plus fringe benefits per year.
Research Support: Up to $25,000 per year.

Enter Sponsor Deadline: 10/12/2024

Results (materials must be submitted to ISR Research Administration):

Admin Shell All Proposals (10 days) On:	Monday, September 30, 2024
Admin Shell routine/standard (7 days) On:	Thursday, October 3, 2024
ISR Finalized (Full) On:	Monday, October 7, 2024
ORSP (Full Review) Due Date:	Tuesday, October 8, 2024
ISR Finalized (Limited) On:	Wednesday, October 9, 2024
ORSP (Limited Review) Due Date 9 am:	Friday, October 11, 2024

updated through 1/1/2025

Next Steps
"The When"

"The When"

- When is this going in?
  - Know deadlines
  - Back deadlines up as needed
  - Watch due dates / times proposals are due
  - Plan for disasters / illness / system outage

Next Steps
"The Where"

The Where

- Now it's budget time!

  - Review FOA again

  - Any inclusions / restrictions?

  - Look for caps / direct vs. indirects

    - How are subcontracts handled

  - Any cost sharing?

  - How are IDC's calculated?

 - Is a budget justification required? Use it to craft your budget!

You're Almost There!
# "The Accusation"

The Accusation

- One last check of the RFP to be safe
- Phone a friend to review
- Hold frequent proposal meetings especially near the end
- Leave time for formatting everything
  - Try to anticipate issues
- Make sure you…..
  - Leave time for review
  - Leave time for your own mistakes
  - Leave time for routing
  - Leave time for error correction
- Always assume the system will crash!
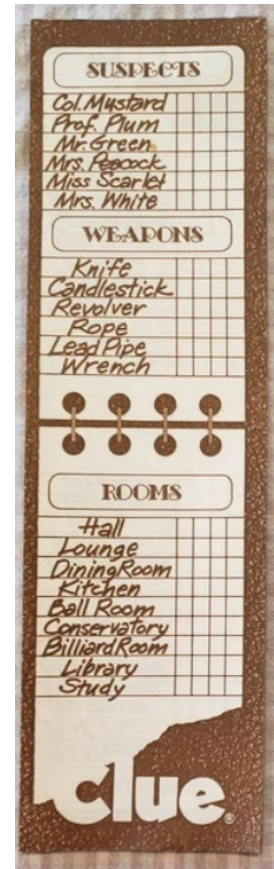
Take Home Lessons
"Being a Better Player"

"Being a Better Player"

- Talk with your PI's early & often
- Review, then review again. Then review again!
- Put a plan in place for submission and take control
- Include plenty of time for edits/formatting/review
- Know WHO you are submitting to, inside and out
- Be prepare for roadblocks
- After submission – revise your system to use again
- Don't make the same mistake twice!
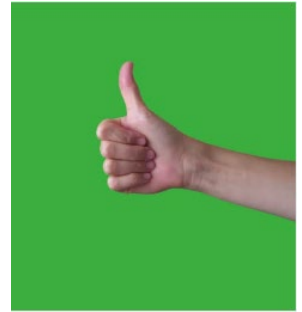
Any Questions?

Nick Prieur – nprieur@umich.edu
Thank you so much!