The College of Information Science & Technology Office of Proposal Development focuses on pre-award services to help faculty members identify suitable funding opportunities and prepare proposals that meet specific requirements.

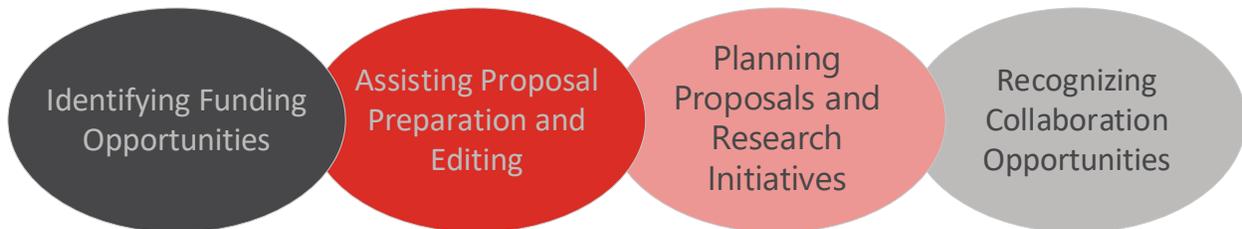# OFFICE OF PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA
COLLEGE OF INFORMATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Welcome to the Office of Proposal Development

The College of Information Science & Technology (CIST) Office of Proposal Development focuses on pre-award services to help faculty members identify suitable funding opportunities and prepare proposals that meet specific requirements. We provide tools and support to help faculty coordinate research goals and collaborate with other researchers. We also work closely with the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) to help faculty members through the submission process of externally funded initiatives and with the Office of Research and Creative Activity (ORCA) for internal funding and other research development activities.

Identifying Funding Opportunities — **Assisting Proposal Preparation and Editing** — **Planning Proposals and Research Initiatives** — **Recognizing Collaboration Opportunities**

Setting Up Your Research Presence

To facilitate engagement with agencies, reviewers, potential collaborators, and students, it is crucial to establish a robust online research presence. This should include a consistently updated personal webpage with a bio, your research areas, your credentials, and links to your professional social media platforms and research publications pages. Here are some recommended platforms:

- **Watermark**: Every UNO faculty member receives access to their Watermark page (formerly Digital Measures), which directly feeds into your UNO bio page.
  - Having all faculty information in one place enables the university to demonstrate its campus community engagement and research activities. When state legislators, accreditors, regents, or other campus administrators inquire about faculty activity in a particular area, the university can respond using the information stored in the system.
  - Watermark is also used by faculty to complete their annual reviews and Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT) processes. Annual reviews and RPT are simplified by entering data once into the system. The system workflows enable an easy routing process for submissions and reviews.
- **Digital Commons**: DigitalCommons@UNO is a digital showcase of the research and scholarly output of the members of the University of Nebraska at Omaha community. The DigitalCommons@UNO repository is administered by the UNO Libraries and serves as a digital repository for these materials.
- **Google Scholar**: Automatically updates your publications and citation metrics.
- **ResearchGate**: Connects you with other researchers and showcases your work.
- **GrantForward**: Helps in identifying funding opportunities based on keywords extracted from your publications.
- **ORCID**: Provides a unique identifier to distinguish your research outputs.

From these resources, identify and narrow down your top three to four research focus areas.

Best Practices

GrantForward Account: Create a GrantForward account and save search parameters. Then subscribe to receive daily, weekly, or monthly listings of new funding opportunities that may fit your research.

NSF and NIH listserves: Create an NSF and an NIH account and save search parameters to receive listings from them that match your research themes. (GrantForward will list many of these, but this is more focused and will include Dear Colleague Letters and other upcoming things to watch for). Look to set up similar listserves for other funding organizations that you are likely to seek funding from.

Identify Potential Collaborators: Discuss research ideas and goals early and often to help identify potential collaborations both within CIST and with external connections.

Periodic Updates: Use your calendar to schedule periodic updates to your research page. Keeping this list up-to-date will help other researchers easily review your research program and make departmental updates easier for you, your departmental chair and deans, and the Office of Proposal Development.

Communicate Your Research: Annually contribute to the IS&T research slides, which are highlighted on CIST's Collaboratorium research pages. Frequently post on LinkedIn and your other social media feeds. Broaden your professional social media networks. Contribute your scholarship to DigitalCommons@UNO.

Leverage Internal Funding: Internal funding is generally intended to help you purchase materials and/or pay personnel to complete early steps for preliminary data or small pilot projects. Leverage these studies to be competitive for external grant funding.

Find Others' Research: Use your professional networks to search for research in the same areas as yours. Leverage relationships within the College, connections on social media, research topic links within your online research platform, etc.

SPARK Dashboard

The Office of Proposal Development will assist in setting up your SPARK (**SP**onsored **A**ctivity and **R**esearch coordination **K**it) dashboard. This tool will include all current and previous research proposals and publications, helping you plan and coordinate your research activities effectively.

Initial Meeting with the Proposal Development Manager (PDM)

- Before this first meeting, provide the PDM a list of your previous research proposals and publications and a link to your primary online research listing platform.

- At the meeting, we will have a draft SPARK prepared based on the list you provided. Together, you and the PDM will examine your SPARK for any errors and missing information and identify the research focus areas of those items.

- This discussion should help the PDM understand your previous areas of research focus, some outcomes or outstanding questions, current resources, and your near-term research goals.

- We will also discuss how to leverage this resource to develop your longer-term research path.

  Updating your research pages in a timely manner helps you and our office keep your SPARK up to date to determine next steps and identify potential collaborations or funding opportunities.

Identifying Funding Sources

CIST researchers find available funding from many sources, but some are more common funders of IS&T faculty research. Our office can help provide insight into where your research goals might closely fit into the missions of the different funding organizations and directorates.

MavOps: A Curated List of Grant Opportunities

About every two weeks, the Office of Proposal Development sends a department-wide email to highlight open funding opportunities that are potentially relevant to IS&T faculty.

Individual Funding Opportunity Emails

If the Office of Proposal Development staff identify a funding opportunity that closely fits your focus areas, we will send an individual email to bring it to your attention.

Reach Out to Discuss Funding Needs

If you are developing an idea for research but have not identified a funding source

- write a white paper or a clear summary.

- set up a meeting to discuss with the PDM so we can more effectively assist in the search for appropriate funding.

Attend Research Seminars and Collaboratorium Events

Periodically, the college will hold events to bring researchers together whose varied interests intersect under one of the six identified research Collaboratoria. Attendance is encouraged as these not only keep you informed of research happening within the college but also might open doors for collaborative research relationships. Our C-BYTES Research Showcase and Student Competition attracts CIST students engaged in research and creative activities under a particular collaboratorium together with advisors, other faculty, and professionals from IS&T disciplines, creating opportunities for robust interaction across disciplines.

Inform the Office of Proposal Development

Interest or Intent to Submit: When you determine a funding opportunity is a potential fit, let us know at the earliest opportunity, and we will put it into our task matrix as a potential submission and schedule follow-ups to help move the process forward. If you haven't already, we will also connect you with your OSP grants coordinator, so they are aware and available to guide you through budgeting, compliance, deadlines, and communication with stakeholders.

Notification of Decision: Often, you as the PI will be the only one to receive direct notification of a decision (award or decline). It is good to inform the Office of Proposal Development, but especially the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP), so NuRamp has the most up-to-date information.

Keep Communication Open

- Feel free to call, email, stop in, or set up a meeting (in-person or Zoom/Teams) with the Proposal Development Manager with any questions or concerns you may have regarding a proposal's requirements, process questions, or to discuss any other elements of your research goals.

- To ensure the Office of Proposal Development has the capacity to assist in proposal review or editing, submit drafts early.

- Share documents with collaborators, including the PDM, using collaborative software (e.g. MS SharePoint).

Get to Know UNO's Research Support Services

Office of Research and Creative Activity (ORCA): UNO's resource for faculty and student research responsible for administering internal awards and research development resources such as grant proposal workshops. It is a good idea to register for ORCA's newsletter to stay informed about opportunities.

Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP): Responsible for administering externally sponsored projects, ensuring compliance with federal, state, university, and sponsor regulations, terms, and conditions. Familiarize yourself with OSP's Proposal Timeline Guide. Your OSP grants coordinator will work closely with you to prepare a budget, communicate with stakeholders, ensure compliance, and submit required documents.

Getting an External Review: ORCA will facilitate expert reviews of external grant proposals. The Office of Proposal Development can assist with these requests, but ultimately, we will work with ORCA to move this forward. You will be asked to list at least four external experts who you think will provide objective, critical feedback for your draft. Reviewers typically take about two weeks to provide feedback. To allow for experts to be contacted and agree to set aside time for this, please request review at least six weeks before, and plan to have a draft ready for review one month before the submission date.

List of UNO Links

Office of Proposal Development (Pre-award services):
https://www.unomaha.edu/college-of-information-science-and-technology/research-labs/resources/index.php

Collaboratoria:
https://www.unomaha.edu/college-of-information-science-and-technology/research-labs/collaboratoriums/index.php

Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP):
https://www.unomaha.edu/office-of-research-and-creative-activity/office-of-sponsored-programs/index.php

OSP's Proposal Timeline Guide:
https://www.unomaha.edu/office-of-research-and-creative-activity/office-of-sponsored-programs/proposal-preparation-and-submission/proposal-timeline.php

Office of Research and Creative Activity (ORCA):
https://www.unomaha.edu/office-of-research-and-creative-activity/index.php

ORCA Newsletter registration:
https://web.unomaha.edu/orca-listserv-subscribe#_ga=2.212707284.112696385.1703086207-472518105.1652806174

Watermark:
https://www.unomaha.edu/systems-intelligence-and-data-analytics/services/watermark-faculty-success.php

Digital Commons:
https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/

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