Proposal Preparation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Questions Frequently Asked by Research Administration Staff
Last Updated 2/26/2020

If you have questions that are not included in these FAQs, please send them to your SRA.

Question by category:

Go to specific questions:
Click on the question to view the answer

A. Standard Information

1. What is the official name for SPA that should be included in standard forms?

The official name is the <u>Office of Research Administration</u> and this is what should be used in all forms. The office is also often colloquially referred to as SPA or Sponsored Programs Administration.

2. What standardized addresses should be used for SF424 sections 5,14, & 19, Performance Sites & Key Personnel Section?

See below for SF424 examples. As a general rule:

- The institutional address is 677 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115-6028
- The administrative address (for SRAs, signing officials, etc.) is 677 Huntington Avenue, Landmark Center, 3rd Floor East, Boston, MA 02115-6028
- The PI's address is their office address
- The performance site is the location of where the work is taking place
- Use the USPS Zip Code Search Tool

Section 5

5. APPLICANT INFORMATION		Organizational DUNS:	1496173670000

Legal Name: President and Fellows of Harvard College
Department: Department   Division: Harvard Chan Sch Public Health
Street1: 677 Huntington Avenue
Street2:
City: Boston   County / Parish:
State: MA: Massachusetts   Province:
Country: USA: UNITED STATES   ZIP / Postal Code: 02115-6028

Person to be contacted on matters involving this application
Prefix: First Name: AD First Name   Middle Name:
Last Name: AD Last Name   Suffix:
Position/Title: AD Title
Street1: 677 Huntington Avenue
Street2: Landmark Center, 3rd Floor East
City: Boston   County / Parish:
State: MA: Massachusetts   Province:
Country: USA: UNITED STATES   ZIP / Postal Code: 02115-6028
Phone Number: AD Phone   Fax Number:
Email: nga@hsph.harvard.edu

Section 14

14. PROJECT DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Prefix:	First Name: `PI First Name`	Middle Name:
Last Name: `PI Last Name`		Suffix:

Position/Title: `PI Title`

Organization Name: `President and Fellows of Harvard College`

Department: `Department`   Division: `Harvard Chan Sch Public Health`

Street1: `PI Office Address`

Street2:

City: `Boston`   County / Parish:

State: `MA: Massachusetts`   Province:

Country: `USA: UNITED STATES`   ZIP / Postal Code: `PI Zip+4`

Phone Number: `PI Phone`   Fax Number:

Email: `PI@hsph.harvard.edu`

Section 19

19. Authorized Representative

Prefix:	First Name: `AD First Name`	Middle Name:
Last Name: `AD Last Name`		Suffix:

Position/Title: `AD Title`

Organization: `President and Fellows of Harvard College`

Department: `Office of Research Admin.`   Division: `Harvard Chan Sch Public Health`

Street1: `677 Huntington Avenue`

Street2: `Landmark Center, 3rd Floor East`

City: `Boston`   County / Parish:

State: `MA: Massachusetts`   Province:

Country: `USA: UNITED STATES`   ZIP / Postal Code: `02115-6028`

Phone Number: `AD Phone`   Fax Number:

Email: `nga@hsph.harvard.edu`

Performance Site

Project/Performance Site Location(s)

Expiration Date: 12/31/2

Project/Performance Site Primary Location

☐ I am submitting an application as an individual, and not on behalf of a company, state, local or tribal government, academia, or other type of organization.

Organization Name: `Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health`

DUNS Number: `1496173670000`

* Street1: `Address Where Work is Performed (e.g. Lab or Office)`

Street2:

* City: `City`   County:

* State: `MA: Massachusetts`

Province:

* Country: `USA: UNITED STATES`

* ZIP / Postal Code: `Zip+4`   * Project/ Performance Site Congressional District: `MA-007`

Senior/Key Personnel

PROFILE - Project Director/Principal Investigator				
Prefix: [▼]	* First Name: PI First Name		Middle Name:	
* Last Name: PI Last Name			Suffix: [▼]	
Position/Title: PI Title		Department: Department		
Organization Name: President and Fellows of Harvard College		Division: Harvard Chan Sch Public Health		
* Street1: PI Office Address				
Street2:				
* City: Boston		County:		
* State: MA: Massachusetts	[▼]	Province:		
* Country: USA: UNITED STATES	[▼]	* Zip / Postal Code: PI Zip+4		
* Phone Number: PI Phone	Fax Number:			
* E-Mail: PI@hsph.harvard.edu				

3. What standardized addresses should be used for the Statement of Intent (SOI) Cooperating Institution information and business contact information when we are the subcontract?

COOPERATING INSTITUTION INFORMATION					
Cooperating Inst.	President and Fellows of Harvard College, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health				
PI Name			ERA Commons ID		
PI Phone		PI Fax	PI E-Mail		
Project Period			Direct Costs		Total Costs
Performance Site	Address where work is being performed		F&A Costs		
BUSINESS CONTACT INFORMATION					
Name	AD Name and Title, Office of Research Administration				
Address	677 Huntington Avenue, Landmark Center, 3rd Floor East, Boston, MA 02115-6028				
Bus. Phone		Bus. Fax	Bus. E-Mail	nga@hsph.harvard.edu	
DUNS #	1496173670000		Congressional District #	MA-007	

4. Should an equipment attachment be included in NIH proposals?

According to the instructions, there should be an attachment. A document with the title "Equipment" which contains "None" should be included so that the application is complete per the instructions.

B. Budget & Budget Justification

1. Should inflation be included in the budget?

NIH does not have a policy on salary escalation included in application budgets. Escalation can be in included but may be cut from an award at the discretion of the NIH (please research other awarding institutions as appropriate). It is common practice at the school to include salary escalation wherever possible at 3%. If not feasible due to project limits (e.g. budget cap), salary escalation can be reduced or removed.

2. Is an Additional Narrative Justification required for modular budgets for FOAs *where the money cannot be split evenly across the project years* (e.g. R21s)?

Per NIH Guidelines: "The Additional Narrative Justification is not needed in applications to FOAs with direct cost limits that do not spread evenly across budget periods (e.g., R21 FOAs that allow $275,000 in direct costs over two years)."

If you have a modular budget where direct costs <u>could be split evenly</u> across budget periods <u>but are not</u>, include an Additional Narrative Justification, since there would be variations in the number of modules requested annually. Also, this section should describe any direct costs that were excluded from the total direct costs (such as equipment, tuition remission) and any work being conducted off-site, especially if it involves a foreign study site or an off-site F&A rate."

C. Biosketches

1. Should Biosketches ever be included in Other Attachments?

Nothing should be included in this section unless stated in the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA).

D. Letters of Support

1. Can letters of support go over 1/2inch margins?

Per NIH instructions, documents must provide at least one-half inch margins (½") - top, bottom, left, and right - for all pages. NIH will add headers, footers, page numbers, bookmarks and a table of contents when they assemble your grant application upon submission. Anything in the margins will be in the way of NIH's auto-formatting. Although the application may not get rejected for this, it will not look perfect and it is best to follow instructions.

E. Research Team

1. Who should be included in the research team in GMAS?

The following should be included in the research team:
- Anyone who is a Harvard faculty member.
- Anyone who is considered "key personnel" per the sponsor's definition.
- Anyone who meets the PHS definition of an "investigator": any individual responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of the research, regardless of their title or position.
- Anyone associated with the Harvard portion of the award who is performing research, even if they don't meet the above criteria, as they will need to sign the Harvard Participation Agreement.

2. The PD/PI would like to designate all personnel as senior/key in the application, is this acceptable?

No. "Senior/key" applies only to individuals who contribute to the scientific development or execution of a

project both substantively and measurably. If you misidentify personnel as senior/key, <u>you will unnecessarily increase your burden for the preparation of the proposal application, submission of Just-in-Time information, and annual reporting requirements.</u>

3. Does being key on a proposal automatically make you key on the award and who should decide who is key on the proposal?

No, being key on a proposal does not always make you key on an award notice. For some federal institutions (eg. NIH, US Department of Education), they will decide who they think is key and list those people on the Notice of Award (NOA) regardless of who the applicant listed as key on the proposal. For some other sponsors (e.g. DoD), all listed key personnel may be key on the award. **It is important to follow sponsor instructions as this varies.**

The key personnel designation will result in certain administrative requirements depending on the sponsor. For example, for NIH:
- Listing someone as Key on the proposal will result in administrative requirements in the proposal application, submission of Just-in-Time information, and annual reporting requirements.
- We will need prior approval for significant effort changes (equal or greater than 25%) for all key personnel named on the NOA. However, we should be mindful of effort changes also for key personnel not named. Per our Sponsored Effort Management Policy:
    - "An effort commitment represents the sponsor's understanding of the amount of time the researcher will need to devote to accomplish the project's aims. This understanding is established via the proposal or other written documents exchanged between the business official in SPA and the sponsor. When making commitments on federal proposals, researchers should keep in mind that the government is explicit in their expectation that the commitment be a reasonable estimate"
- A Financial Conflict of Interest approval will need to be managed for each key person during the course of the award.

Regarding who should decide on who is key during the proposal, the decision rests with the PI. However, administrators should be well informed about the definition of key personnel and the consequences of designating individuals as such to help inform the PI's decision. And although the PI recommends who should be Key, the Grants Manager and Sponsored Research Administrator should feel comfortable pushing back if they think individuals are being named as Key unnecessarily or inappropriately.

F. Other

More to come!