External Proposal Submission Policy: Frequently Asked Questions

1. **When should I begin working with my grant specialist on a proposal submission?**
   Routing of a Cayuse proposal record signifies the final phase of the pre-award process; it should not be the first or only notification of an intent to submit a proposal application or discussion with key stakeholders. Please work with your departmental specialist prior to submitting a proposal record in Cayuse to ensure all fields are completed correctly and the required documents have been verified.

2. **How does Sponsored Project Administration (SPA) calculate the internal deadline?**
   A Cayuse proposal record with required documents and 424 proposal, if applicable, must be **fully routed**, **certified** and **approved by college/departmental approvers** no fewer than three (3) full **business days <u>prior to</u>** the application deadline. For example, if the proposal is due on Friday 10/1 then the proposal must be fully routed, certified and approved by 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, 9/28.

   If more time is needed to complete the scope of work and/or the project narrative, the final scope of work/project narrative is due to SPA one full business day prior to the application deadline. For example, if the proposal is due on Friday, 10/1, the scope of work/project narrative is due to SPA by 8:00 a.m. Thursday, 9/30. A draft scope of work should be included in the Cayuse SP record for appropriate review by approvers. All other attachments needed for the proposal must be in final form and uploaded to the application at routing.

   If the final documents are not received in time to meet this criterion, a Late Waiver request must be submitted and the submission of the proposal is not guaranteed. If the proposal is allowed for submission, SPA is not able to guarantee a complete review prior to submission. Any proposals refused submission or returned without review by the sponsor under these conditions will be the responsibility of the PI and not SPA.

3. **What if the proposal is required by the sponsor to be submitted in a portal or method other than Cayuse 424?**
   Cayuse 424 should be used unless the sponsor requires a different portal or method. In those cases, at the time of Cayuse routing, SPA should have all rights to submit and view the proposal in the portal if possible (i.e. research.gov). If the proposal must be submitted by the PI and SPA is not able to view, a screenshot of the completed proposal form and any supporting documents attached to it must be attached in Cayuse SP for SPA review and approval prior to submission by the PI.

4. **What are the required documents that must be routed with the proposal record three (3) business days prior to the due date?**
   Requirements for proposal submission documents vary by sponsor; only those documents required by the solicitation must be completed and routed in the 424 submission or attached to the Cayuse proposal record for review and approval.

   Common examples of final administrative elements may include, but are not limited to: key project information (title, period of performance, performance locations, et.); project summary, budget (in the sponsor template as required by the notice of funding opportunity AND excel format that matches the total in the sponsor budget), budget justification, biographical sketch, current and pending support, collaborators and other affiliations, facilities and resources, data management plan, postdoctoral mentoring plan; all subaward documentation; resource sharing plan; multiple PI leadership plan, letters of support, etc.

   The following documents **MUST** route in the Cayuse SP record:
   - Detailed excel budget that matches the total requested and a separate excel spreadsheet for cost share if required by sponsor - always required
   - Budget justification – always required
   - Copy of the funding announcement – always required for proposals submitted based on a NOFO or public solicitation
   - Sponsor-required certifications or proof of training/disclosures – as required by sponsor
   - Subrecipient documents (budget, budget justification, sub vs. vendor form, subaward commitment form) – applicable if issuing a subaward
   - Late waiver approval form - if applicable
   - Required forms for AOR signature – as required by sponsor. Email/notify SPA ahead of time.
   - Proof of limitation of F&A by sponsor or a F&A Waiver – if applicable

Failure to include the required documents as applicable above will result in the Cayuse SP record to be returned for correction and re-routed for approval.

5. **How do I route the final technical/scientific documents to SPA after a Cayuse SP record has been routed?**
   The final technical /scientific document should be loaded in the attachment section of the Cayuse proposal.

6. **When will a Cayuse SP record be re-routed for approval?**
   - The budget does not match the amount recorded in SP or if the total budget changes by 25% or more overall – Departmental Grant Administrator will make all budget changes in SP
   - Committed cost share is not accurately reflected and/or documentation missing
   - Changes in PI, Co-PI or Senior/Key Personnel
   - Addition or removal of subaward
   - Missing required documentation in SP or application as noted in #4 above
   - Incorrect F&A rate

7. **What is the definition of a complete and "FINAL" proposal?**
   Proposals are considered complete and final once SPA has received ALL final proposal documents and ALL applicable parties responsible for Cayuse SP review have completed the approval process.

8. **Will SPA begin reviewing my proposal as soon as it is received?**
   SPA will prioritize review of proposals based on sponsor deadlines and on a "first come, first served" basis, assuming the Cayuse SP record ad final proposal documents are received within the deadlines established by the External Submission policy.

9. **Will SPA wait until the day of the sponsor deadline before submitting the proposal?**
   In order to successfully manage the volume of proposal submissions, the PI should expect that SPA may formally submit any complete and final proposals to the sponsor in advance of the deadline.

10. **What happens if I do not meet the internal deadlines outlined in this policy?**
    To ensure appropriate review and consideration are given to the PIs who prepare in advance and meet the internal deadlines, SPA will not accept proposals that do not comply with the required policies and procedures. SPA also reserves the right to submit a proposal with minimal or incomplete review; withdraw an application; attempt to submit a correction; or decline an award if unfavorable award terms and conditions cannot be successfully negotiated.

If there are extenuating circumstances that lead to a proposal not meeting the internal deadline, the Lead PI may request a late wavier. All late waivers must be approved by SPA prior to proposal submission. Late waivers are not guaranteed for approval.

11. **What happens if I am asked to participate on a sponsored project with short notice or the notice of funding was issued late?**
   In extraordinary circumstances, the Lead PI may submit a Late Waiver request, detailing the mitigating circumstances. SPA reserves the right to approve or deny exceptions.

12. **I am collaborating with an external organization and the University of South Alabama is considered a proposed subrecipient. What is the deadline to route the Cayuse SP record and submit documents to SPA?**
   Incoming subawards are considered a formal proposal submission to the prime organization; internal deadlines and required documents outlined in this policy will apply to this proposal type. Please note, this date will be earlier than the deadline of the sponsoring agency, and it should be reflected in the Cayuse SP record as such.

13. **I am working with a sponsor who wants to contract with the University. When do I initiate the Cayuse SP record?**
   Grants and Contracts that do not have a formal proposal submission process or specified deadline typically advance in three stages as noted below. An employee serving in the Lead PI role, or their designee, must initiate the Cayuse SP record prior to stage 3.
   - Stage 1 generally includes proposal development and informal discussions with a potential sponsor.
   - Stage 2 may include informal negotiations with the sponsor resulting in acceptance of the proposed scope of work and budget (approved by the college, department and SPA using appropriate F&A rates, etc.)
   - Stage 3 involves formal contracting of terms and conditions between the sponsor and University. The length of time for stage 3 to be completed is dependent on the type of sponsor, previous experience with a sponsor complexity of proposed terms and conditions, and level of SPA engagement prior to stage 3.

   Once informal negotiations have ceased and the potential sponsor requests documentation, such as a budget, contact your grant specialist to finalize the budget and other applicable documents. Any prior informal agreements between the Lead PI and sponsor may be subject to modification by SPA. Externally sponsored agreements will not be signed by an Authorized Organizational Representative of the University if

the Cayuse SP record with the required documentation is not routed, reviewed and approved by SPA.

14. **What if the sponsored agency requires PI submission of the proposal rather than SPA, is the proposal routing policy still applicable?**
Yes. Regardless of who the sponsor designates as the submitter, University approvals are still required through the Cayuse SP record and approval process. This also ensures our proposal submission efforts are captured on institutional reports. In addition, SPA will have all of the appropriate documentation in Cayuse, should and award be granted.

15. **The sponsor sent me a new contract for competitive renewal of annual funding (e.g. state contracts). What is required next?**

The Lead PI, or their designee, must initiate the Cayuse SP record, including the contract, statement of work, budget, budget justification and any other applicable documents. The contract will not be reviewed or signed by an Authorized Organizational Representative of the University if the Cayuse SP record with the required documentation is not routed, reviewed and approved by SPA.