



Application Stage Minimum Processing Times: Research Services Office

Date: **April 21, 2011**

Revised: **February 18, 2020**

Introduction

The Research Services Office is committed to providing professional and efficient service to researchers. One of the Office's primary goals is to support researchers in capturing and advancing research opportunities. It is through the Research Services Office that grant applications, proposals, and agreements are reviewed and approved for final submission to funding sponsors.

Each application/proposal for research funding (to both internal and external sponsors) must be approved by an official University signing authority before the application/proposal may be submitted to the sponsor ([Research Policy C.1 University Approval to Submit Applications/Proposals to External Sponsors](#)). Most letters of intent, excluding those submitted directly to the Tri-Agencies (NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR), must also be submitted to the Research Services Office for review and approval prior to submission to the sponsor.

Approval is required regardless of whether or not the University of Guelph researcher is the principal investigator submitting the proposal, or is a co-investigator, co-applicant or collaborator. For example, approval is required when University of Guelph researchers are working with a third party (e.g. other university, industry partner) on a proposal or application where the third party is responsible for the proposal's submission to the sponsor or funding agency.

Researchers submit copies of applications/proposals, along with a Research Proposal Approval "OR-5" Form, through their departments/schools and colleges to obtain necessary local approvals and signatures prior to submission to the Research Services Office. The Research Services Office reviews all submissions prior to forwarding to an official University signing authority (e.g., the Associate Vice-President, Research Services or Managing Director, Research Operations) for final University approval and signature.

After securing necessary University signature(s), the Research Services Office makes copies of the submission (hard copy and/or electronic), for file and distributes as applicable. For some programs, the Research Services Office is responsible for final submission to the sponsor (electronic or courier where applicable).

Researchers are contacted when final approval has been received and, in most cases, they are responsible to submit their application/proposal to the external research sponsor.

Purpose

The Research Services Office has minimum processing times for all programs and funding opportunities. Sufficient processing time will promote planning and preparedness, leading to higher quality applications/proposals; will allow for departments and colleges to undertake mentorship and/or internal review processes at their discretion; will ensure time is available for Research Services Office review and University signature on submissions; and ultimately, will ensure the submissions are advanced to funding agencies before external submission deadlines. As a reputable, research-intensive university, on-time submissions are also valued to ensure we uphold university and sponsor policies and guidelines and effectively manage a high volume of grants and contracts.

Minimum processing times will be set for all programs and funding opportunities based on the type of submission (**Operating Grants/Standard Applications, Major/Partnered/Large-Scale Grants/More Complex Applications, or Institutional/Strategic Grants**).

For example, researchers are primarily responsible for content, completion, formatting, etc. of individual operating grants (e.g. NSERC Discovery, CIHR Project, SSHRC Insight Grants) so the corresponding minimum processing time for these competitions is one (1) week ahead of the external deadline. Details on minimum processing times by submission type are summarized in **Table 1**. Table 1 is for reference purposes only. Internal deadlines for specific funding opportunities are included in [Research Alerts](#). In the absence of a Research Alert the schema found in Table 1 will be instructive. Researchers may also contact research.services@uoguelph.ca for information on applicable deadlines.

In cases where a legitimate reason exists and the researcher cannot submit to allow for the posted minimum processing time, they must apply to their college (through the college's Associate/Assistant Dean, Research (ADR) or equivalent) for a late exemption. The ADR may/may not support the late request. If the request is supported by the ADR, they will forward the submission to the Research Services Office.

The Research Services Office recognizes that there may be legitimate reasons and **extraordinary circumstances** that will result in minimum processing times not being met and will work with researchers and ADRs to facilitate submissions under such exceptional circumstances. **These submissions will only be considered in extraordinary circumstances and on a non-recurring basis.** Where the submission does not provide Research Services Office staff with

the minimum time required for full processing, staff will make every effort to process the application/proposal to ensure submission by the external deadline. However, due to the volume of applications received and other factors (i.e., availability of signing authorities, degree of risk posed to University, etc.), the Research Services Office cannot guarantee the review, approval and/or submission of such proposals/applications. Further, in these cases, the Research Services Office may not be able to complete the full scope of review activities described in Table 1 below.

Implementation

Posted minimum processing times became effective June 1, 2011 and were last revised February 18, 2020.

Complete submissions (including an OR-5 Form, research proposal/application, and a budget) must be submitted to the Research Services Office to allow for the minimum processing time.

In addition to the Research Services Office minimum processing time, colleges and departments may set earlier deadlines to provide time for department-level or college-level reviews or to enable peer review processes to be completed as appropriate.

Further information

Questions regarding Research Services Office review and minimum processing times may be directed to Jill Rogers, Managing Director, Research Operations (jlrogers@uoguelph.ca or ext. 54508).

Application Stage Minimum Processing Times: Research Services Office Table 1: Submission and Review Types
Effective June 1, 2011, Updated February 2020

The following table provides guiding principles around the review times applicable for research applications for funding. [Research Alerts](#) are the ultimate source for applicable deadlines. In the absence of a Research Alert the following schema will be instructive. Please contact research.services@uoguelph.ca for inquiries on applicable deadlines.

If your proposal/application is funded, please allow adequate time for the successful negotiation of agreement terms and to obtain approvals. It is typical for agreements to require at least a month for processing. Please engage the Research Services Office as early as possible if deadlines apply.

Type	Characteristics	Standard Review Type	Minimum Processing Time	Activity by Office of Research
OPERATING GRANTS/STANDARD APPLICATIONS	Individual operating grant applications Researchers are primarily responsible for content, completion, formatting, etc.	BASIC Submission received on time	1 week/5 business days prior to external deadline	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check meaning of institutional signature and identify any binding terms in sponsor's program guidelines and forms 2. Review application for completeness 3. Confirm eligibility of researcher(s) 4. Confirm/verify submissions' compliance with sponsor or program guidelines 5. Confirm/verify submissions' compliance with University of Guelph policies and procedures (e.g. indirect costs) 6. Review proposal/application budget and budget justification including calculation, indirect costs, eligible expenses and institutional commitments 7. Obtain University approval(s) and signature(s) 8. Submit applications to sponsors, and resolve technical on-line portal submission problems, where applicable.
MAJOR/PARTNERED/LARGE-SCALE GRANTS/MORE COMPLEX APPLICATIONS	Budgets may require leveraged/matched funding from other sources and institutional commitments Projects may be multi-institutional requiring time for coordination of signatures, commitments, budgets, researcher eligibility, etc.	DETAILED (also includes BASIC Review activities) Submission received on time	2 weeks, or 10 business days prior to external (sponsor's) deadline	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Includes BASIC Review activities listed above 2. Review application content for alignment with program sponsor's guidelines, providing feedback to the researcher to help in improving the competitiveness of the application 3. Verify matching accounts and documentation supporting institutional and partner commitments of cash and in-kind: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Verify accounts used for matching/leveraging (e.g., to avoid stacking, over-leveraging, etc.) – Verify letters of support are consistent with budget and are signed by appropriate signing authorities 4. Submit applications to sponsors, and resolve technical on-line portal submission problems, where applicable.

INSTITUTIONAL/ STRATEGIC	<p>Institutional allocation programs Funding is based on an allocation to the University. Grants are awarded to the University (rather than to individual researchers)</p> <p>Major competitive strategic programs high financial and/or strategic value; typically involve cross-sectoral, multi-industry, and/or multi-institutional partnerships; and, require institutional endorsement with cash or in-kind contributions</p> <p>Honours and awards for which the university serves as nominator</p>	<p>STRATEGIC Submission received on time</p>	<p>Timelines vary; See Research Alerts</p>	<p>Proposal and nomination review and processing (may vary by program)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scientific, Advisory Committee, and External Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solicit and coordinate reviews of draft applications 2. Coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaise with partnering institutions to confirm participation and involvement 3. Administrative Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verify eligibility of project and researcher - Check completeness and formatting 4. Strategic Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review draft applications against program criteria, suggesting changes to strengthen the narrative, organizational logic and coherence, clarity, and style - Review support letters against program criteria and for implicit bias 5. Budget Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verify compliance with University Indirect Costs Policy - Check institutional commitments against letters of support - Check budget against budget justification and other supporting documents - Verify compliance with program guidelines (e.g. matching/leveraging, eligible costs) 6. Processing and Submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check OR-5 for department/college authorization - Facilitate University authorizing signatures - Submit complete applications to the sponsor
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