

**Letters of Intent
OSP Procedures
Revised - September 14, 2021**

BACKGROUND:

A Letter of Intent, also called a White Paper, Pre-Proposal, Concept Paper, or Quad Chart (hereafter called LOI), is a shortened version of a complete grant proposal. Typically, Sponsors will request LOIs to allow them to assess whether or not there is a good match between the proposed project and their interests. Sometimes the Sponsor will offer the option of an LOI, but it will not be required or evaluated. Following submission of an LOI, the Sponsor will invite full proposals (except in some cases where the LOI is optional)

LOIs are primarily technical narratives; however, some Sponsors will request aggregate budget numbers or a detailed budget. Additionally, Sponsor requirements regarding submission will vary; some Sponsors require the Principal Investigator (PI) to submit the LOI while others require the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) to do so. In some cases, the Sponsor requires the PI to submit but requires a signed letter of intent by the AOR.

Additionally, some sponsors impose limits on the number of LOIs that your institution can submit. In these cases, you will need to follow the internal application instructions if the opportunity has been posted to the Research Development listserv or posted on the limited submission [deadline table located on the Research Development Services website](#). If the opportunity has not been posted, contact the Research and Innovation Initiatives office to obtain internal approval prior to submitting the LOI via limited@gmu.edu, or contact the Office of Sponsored Programs for assistance.

PROCEDURES:

1) Submission of LOIs

Principal Investigators (PI) are encouraged to contact OSP (appropriate team manager) if they are unsure whether OSP involvement is required. OSP will advise on whether a Request for Proposal Assignment is needed and whether OSP will need to review and/or submit the LOI.

PIs must submit a Request for Proposal Assignment when:

1. the Sponsor requires, or the LOI contains, a detailed budget or the discussion of institutional commitments.
2. the Sponsor requires an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) signature.
3. There is a limit on the number of LOIs the institution may submit.
4. A letter of support is required with the submission. An OSP Grants Administrator will prepare the letter of support and send to PI when signed.

OSP will need to review, submit and/or sign the LOI on behalf of the PI (institution) when:

1. a detailed budget is required with the LOI.

2. the Sponsor requires the signature of the Authorized Organizational Representative.
3. the sponsor sets a limit on the number of LOIs for the institution.
4. signing the LOI is a proxy for signing a full proposal (i.e. there wouldn't need to be a signature on a full proposal if invited to submit, the Sponsor uses the LOI signature.)

For those LOI's submitted by OSP, OSP will perform a limited review to flag for the College/School whether any of the following are included. If included, OSP will required confirmation from the ADR via email that they approve the LOI submission.

- Cost share
- Indirect cost deviation/waiver from approved rate
- Personnel effort
- Representations and Certifications (e.g. Intellectual Property, data sharing, etc.)

Additionally, if the LOI names subrecipients or collaborators, OSP strongly recommends obtaining letters of commitment from those institutions and submitting a copy to OSP to ensure there are no difficulties should the LOI be invited to submit a full proposal.

2) Successful LOIs (Invitation to Submit a Full Proposal)

- a. If the PI receives notification from the Sponsor that they are invited to submit a full proposal, the PI must, within 48 hours, submit a Request for Proposal Assignment to OSP.
- b. OSP will assign a Grants Administrator to work with the PI on the full proposal. OSP will send PI initial email identifying assigned Grants Administrator.
- c. Upon receiving initial email from OSP, PI forwards the notification from Sponsor (invitation to apply, if applicable) and copy of submitted LOI proposal to assigned Grants Administrator if it was not submitted by OSP
- d. PI submits full proposal documents to Grants Administrator in accordance with the University's 4-day internal deadline policy.
- e. OSP conducts internal review and submits a full proposal to Sponsor, unless Sponsor requires otherwise.