HARVARD
MEDICAL SCHOOL

OFFICE OF
Research Administration

Applicable To: HMS & HSDM PIs and department administrators
Key ORA Contact: Associate Director, Pre-Award Services

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Guidance on Preproposals: ORA Review & GMAS Entry

Guidance Rationale

This document identifies the criteria for which a preproposal must be entered into GMAS for review by ORA prior to submission to the sponsor. It also outlines the process for GMAS entry by department administrators/grants managers (GM).

Preproposals may require institutional certifications, acceptance of award terms and conditions, and/or submission by an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). Some may also have strict PI eligibility requirements or a limit on the number the University or School may submit. ORA must ensure all preproposal submissions comply with these requirements.

Related Resources/Links

- University Guidance on Entering Preproposals into GMAS, February 1, 2017

Definitions

Preproposals, also referred to as Letters of Intent (LOI), abstracts, solution summaries, or White Papers, are used by sponsors as a screening tool, allowing full proposals to be submitted by invitation only. This document does not distinguish preproposals from letters of intent, abstracts, solution summaries, or White Papers that include the below criteria necessitating ORA review.

Criteria for ORA Review of Preproposals

If the preproposal announcement, guidelines, or instructions include any of the following, the preproposal must be entered into GMAS for review and authorization by the applicable ORA pre-award representative prior to submission to the sponsor:

- Signature or submission by an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) or institutional official
- Detailed budget
- Acceptance of award terms and conditions
- Current and Pending Support information
- Limitation on the number of submissions the University or School may submit*
- The funding source is ARPA-H, where HMS/HSDM is the primary proposer

*Note that preproposal limited submission opportunities (LSO) must be vetted **prior** to submission. If the preproposal announcement, guidelines, or instructions refer to a limited number of submissions, email Barbara Rankin as soon as possible, with a copy to your ORA pre-award rep.

Business Process: Entering Preproposals in GMAS

Entering preproposals into GMAS creates a record of the information submitted to the sponsor, which will be retained if the applicant is invited to submit a full proposal.

Responsible Party Roles:
Dept. Approver = senior department administrator responsible for authorizing proposals on behalf of the Department
GM = Grants Manager/Department Administrator
PAO = ORA Pre-Award Officer
PDO = ORA Proposal Development Officer (for ARPA-H proposals)
PI = Principal Investigator

Step	Responsible Party	Description
1	GM	Create initial GMAS proposal: • Enter Title as "PREPROPOSAL: project title" • Enter preproposal deadline as the Sponsor due date • If full proposal due date is available, note in Comments field • Complete other GMAS proposal fields, as applicable • Upload preproposal documents required by sponsor and any related correspondence between PI/GM and sponsor
2	GM	Once finalized, lock and route GMAS proposal, adding required signatures: PI, Department Approver, and University Authorized Signatory (ORA Pre-Award rep),
3	PI & Dept. Approver	Review documents and info in GMAS; sign GMAS proposal to indicate approval,
4	PAO/PDO	Review and authorize preproposal. If sponsor requires AOR submission via an online portal/website, submit directly. If not, notify GM that preproposal has been authorized for submission by the PI.
5	PAO/PDO	"Submit to sponsor" in GMAS to move the preproposal from "under internal review" to "pending" status,

If applicant PI is invited to submit a full proposal:

Step	Responsible Party	Description
1	GM	Notify PAO that PI was invited to submit a full proposal in advance of the 5-day HMS proposal deadline.
2	PAO/PDO	Retract GMAS proposal to allow GM to edit it.
3	GM	Edit GMAS proposal: • Remove "PREPROPOSAL" from Title

		• Revise Sponsor due date to reflect full proposal deadline
		• Revise budget (if changed from preproposal) or enter budget if not required at preproposal stage
		• Revise Research Team, Approval questions, Other school info, and any other information to match proposal
		• Upload finalized proposal documents
4	GM	Once finalized, lock and route proposal **by 5-day HMS deadline**, adding required signatures: PI, Department Approver, and University Authorized Signatory (ORA Preaward rep).
5	PAO/PDO	Review and authorize proposal per usual process.

Revision History

Version Number	Effective Date	Summary of Revisions
1.0	2/1/17	University guidance drafted and posted on OSP website
1.1	9/1/21	Guidance specific to HMS & HSDM audience drafted and posted to ORA website
1.2	8/23/2024	Added: inclusion of Current and Pending Support and ARPA-H to list of criteria for preproposals that require ORA review prior to submission; approach for ARPA-H proposals and the ORA transformational award team's role; updated contact for LSO submissions.