

SBS FOUNDATION PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Institutional approvals are required for **all** proposals to external entities to support work performed in one's capacity as a University of Arizona employee. Proposals to philanthropic foundations may require different processes, approvals, and terms and conditions than other sponsored projects. For example, awards may be made to the University of Arizona Foundation (UAF), the University of Arizona (UA), or pass through UAF to UA. Some foundations may not be approached without approval from UAF leadership. Others may require institutional cost-share. Some opportunities take the form of a published call for proposals with formal guidelines ("solicitation"), while others entail submission of an unsolicited general letter of interest or require an invitation from the foundation to apply.

SBS personnel must follow these guidelines *prior* to engagement with foundations about funding opportunities – inclusive of general inquiries and letters of interest.

Timeline: Initiate the process as soon as you contemplate approaching a foundation and no later than *20 business days* before a deadline, and preferably even more notice when feasible. Foundation proposals vary greatly in complexity of approval and submission processes. Therefore, start the process below as early as possible, even if you are not sure yet about the details.

Step 1. The PI should email both SBS pre-award business staff (see [contact list](#)) and SBSRI (sbsri@arizona.edu) about their intent to submit a proposal. The message should include at a minimum:

- The sponsor deadline (if applicable).
- Solicitation or invitation materials (A link or attachment is preferred). This may be referred to as a call or request for proposals (CFP/RFP); notice of opportunity (NOO), invitation, letter of interest (LOI), etc.
- If known: The identities and roles of project collaborators (e.g. co-I's, key personnel).

Step 2. SBSRI and SBS pre-award business staff will review the opportunity and consult with relevant offices in the UA Foundation and Sponsored Projects Services to confirm eligibility and determine the process for submission.

Step 3a. If the proposal will route as a sponsored project to the University of Arizona:

- The usual SBS process for sponsored project submissions will apply (see [guidelines](#)).

Step 3b. For all other cases:

- Follow SBS and UAF guidance to develop the proposal.
- Work with the SBS pre-award business team to complete the [SBS Foundation Pre-Submission Routing Form](#), in compliance with the SBS Policy on Foundation Fees (see below). **This form must be approved by the Department Head/Director and SBS Deans before submitting any materials (including an LOI) to the sponsor.**

- Do not submit materials to a foundation, even in draft form, until all other relevant offices have approved – this may include UAF and/or SPS, depending on context.

SBS Policy on UA Foundation (UAF) Fees

Per [university policy](#), most gifts and grants administered by or passing through the UAF are subject to a 5% University Development Fund fee. UAF will not waive this fee. SBS will not agree to cost-share this fee. Therefore, plans for coverage of this fee must be agreed upon *before* submitting a proposal or related materials (e.g. a letter of interest) to a foundation.

Coverage options, in order of preference are:

- Built into the proposal budget (donor/foundation pays). It is mandatory to request this.
- Departmental or PI discretionary funds, from a fund source that can be used for this purpose. This is only allowable if the donor or foundation has confirmed that they will not cover the fee. Use of such funds requires department head approval and business team verification of fund availability.

Revision History:

V 1.0. Guidelines published on August 21, 2026