

Office of the Vice Provost for Research	Effective Date: 08/01/2026
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OVPR-05: Policy for Proposal Submission and Internal 30-10-5-3 Deadlines

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PURPOSE

Baylor University’s Office of the Vice Provost for Research (OVPR) establishes internal submission deadlines aligned with industry standards to support the timely submission of proposals for external funding. These deadlines ensure that proposals receive thorough review for their compliance with university policies, sponsor guidelines, and state and federal regulations.

Pre-Award University Research Administrators (URAs) and Pre-Award Central Administrators partner with Principal Investigators (PIs) to prepare and submit proposals. Pre-Award URAs support faculty in preparing proposals in accordance with sponsor guidelines. Pre-Award Central Administrators conduct institutional review proposals for accuracy and compliance, coordinate sponsor communications as needed, and submit proposals to external funding agencies.

OVPR serves as the Baylor’s Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) and is responsible for the institutional review, approval, and submission of all proposals to external sponsors. As the submitting authority for the institution, OVPR ensures that proposals meet sponsor requirements, comply with applicable laws and regulations, accurately reflect institutional commitments, and mitigate financial and compliance risk to the university.

Sponsored awards are issued to Baylor University as the legal applicant. Required certifications and signatures are provided by the university's designated AORs. Signature authority for sponsored projects resides with the Board of Regents and is delegated to OVPR, which holds authorized power to execute documents on behalf of the university. OVPR may consult with the Office of General Counsel or other administrative offices as needed. Internal deadlines and workflows are designed to ensure adequate time for these reviews and approvals.

POLICY RATIONALE

Adherence to internal submission deadlines ensures that proposals undergo institutional review before submission. This review enables OVPR to identify and resolve administrative, financial, and compliance issues in advance, enhances proposal quality, and maximizes the likelihood of successful funding. Key benefits of adhering to internal submission deadlines include:

Proposal quality and compliance. OVPR reviews proposals for sponsor requirements, formatting, budget accuracy, and required approvals (including international activities, data security, conflicts of interest, IACUC, IRB, etc.) ensuring the proposal is complete, accurate, and competitive before it reaches the sponsor.

Fairness and equity. Internal deadlines promote equitable access to pre-award support. PIs who meet internal deadlines receive the same level of institutional attention and service, regardless of discipline, department, or sponsor.

Error prevention. Adequate review time allows OVPR to identify and resolve inconsistencies between the narrative, budget, and subrecipient documentation; detect administrative and technical errors; and address electronic submission issues before the sponsor deadline, maximizing the likelihood of a successful submission.

POLICY STATEMENT

All proposals for external funding must be submitted by PIs to OVPR in accordance with the internal deadlines described in this policy. Proposals are created and submitted in Baylor's online electronic research administration system, CARA (Compliance And Research Administration). These internal deadlines allow OVPR to conduct a thorough institutional review, verify compliance, and obtain institutional approvals before submitting the proposal to the sponsor. OVPR retains final authority over whether a proposal is submitted. Requests to bypass institutional review will not be approved.

30-10-5-3 Framework

Baylor's 30-10-5-3 framework is a tiered internal deadline structure built around four milestones, each counted in business days before the sponsor's deadline. The sponsor's deadline is Day Zero (0). All internal deadlines count backward from that date in business days. "Business day" means Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. CT, excluding weekends and university holidays. When Baylor is participating as a subrecipient under another organization's prime award, the submitting institution's deadline serves as Day 0. Academic units may set internal deadlines that precede those established by OVPR. PIs must also observe any such departmental or college deadlines.

Investigators are encouraged to begin working with their Pre-Award URA four (4) to six (6) weeks prior to sponsor deadlines whenever possible. Early engagement improves proposal quality, allows for strategic budget development, and significantly reduces submission risk.

At a Glance: 30-10-5-3 Internal Deadlines

All external funding proposals must be initiated and completed in CARA according to the following internal deadlines, counted in business days before the sponsor’s deadline:

Day	Milestone	Requirement
30	Initiation Deadline For proposals issuing subaward(s)	For proposals that include issuing subawards, thirty (30) business days before the sponsor deadline, the PI notifies the Pre-Award URA and provides information to initiate the proposal in CARA. This ensures time for subrecipient documentation and coordination.
10	Initiation Deadline For proposals not issuing subaward(s)	For proposals not issuing subawards, ten (10) business days before the sponsor deadline, the PI notifies the Pre-Award URA and provides proposal details including a draft budget with all named personnel to initiate the proposal in CARA.
5	Complete Proposal Package Due by 5:00 p.m. CT	By Day 5 at 5:00 p.m. CT, all proposal elements must be final, uploaded in CARA, reviewed by the URA, certified by the PI, and approved for routing. The proposal narrative may be in <i>near-final</i> form at Day 5, with edits permitted until Day 3. All university required research trainings and disclosures must be complete for all named personnel by Day 5.
3	Final Proposal Narrative Edits Due by 5:00 p.m. CT	By Day 3 at 5:00 p.m. CT, all proposal narrative revisions must be complete, and the CARA proposal must be approved by unit leadership and all required ancillary reviewers.

Day 30 — Proposal Initiation Deadline for Projects Issuing Subaward(s)

For proposals in which Baylor serves as the prime applicant and will issue one or more subawards to external institutions, proposal initiation must occur no later than thirty (30) business days prior to the sponsor’s deadline. Subawards require cross-institutional coordination, including documentation, compliance review, budget development, risk assessment, and institutional approvals.

Initiation means the PI has notified their Pre-Award URA of their intent to submit and has provided sufficient proposal details for the URA to open the record in CARA. At minimum, this includes the sponsor, funding announcement, project title, anticipated project dates, estimated funding amount, draft budget, all named personnel, and subrecipient institutions (see appendix for proposal components due at each deadline).

This requirement applies to proposals issuing subawards, which means Baylor will pass through sponsored funds to subrecipient organizations for the performance of a substantive portion of the project scope.

This requirement does not apply to proposals that include external collaborators who are not receiving subaward funding, projects where Baylor is serving as a subrecipient under another organization’s prime award, or consultant or vendor relationships that do not meet the definition of a subaward.

If Day 30 is missed: Full institutional review and/or submission cannot be guaranteed.

Subaward coordination requires the full thirty (30) business days to complete the documentation, compliance review, and cross-institutional approvals necessary for a compliant submission. When this deadline is missed, OVPR will determine whether a limited review and submission is feasible or whether the proposal must be deferred to a future sponsor deadline. The PI and unit leadership will be notified of that determination.

Day 10 — Proposal Initiation Deadline for Projects Not Issuing Subaward(s)

Proposals in which Baylor is not issuing subawards to external institutions must be initiated no later than ten (10) business days prior to the sponsor deadline.

Initiation means the PI has notified their Pre-Award URA of their intent to submit and has provided sufficient proposal details for the URA to open the record in CARA. At minimum, this includes the sponsor, funding announcement, project title, anticipated project dates, estimated funding amount, draft budget, and all named personnel (see appendix for proposal components due at each deadline).

This requirement applies to proposals submitted by Baylor as the prime applicant that do not include subrecipients and proposals in which Baylor is participating as a subrecipient under another organization's prime award.

If Day 10 is missed: Full institutional review and/or submission cannot be guaranteed.

Ten (10) business days are required for the PI and Pre-Award URA to collaboratively develop the proposal and for OVPR to complete the institutional review activities necessary for submission. When this deadline is missed, OVPR will determine whether a limited review and submission is feasible or whether the proposal must be deferred to a future sponsor deadline. The PI and unit leadership will be notified of that determination.

Day 5 (5:00 p.m. CT) — Complete Proposal Package Due

All proposal elements must be final, uploaded in CARA, reviewed by the URA, certified by the PI, and approved for routing by Day 5 at 5:00 p.m. CT. The proposal narrative (also referred to as the scientific or technical content, research plan, statement of work, or project description) is the sole exception and may be in *near-final* form at this deadline, provided that all substantive decisions affecting research design, compliance, budget, and personnel are established. After Day 5 only minor editorial changes are permitted. Substantive revisions introduce submission risk and cannot be accommodated.

PIs are responsible for providing all materials to their URA in the Days 10–5 window to allow time for review and revision *before* the Day 5 deadline. Submission of proposal materials for the *first time* on Day 5 does not allow sufficient time for institutional review and will not be accepted.

What must be finalized by Day 5 by 5:00 p.m. CT:

- Final budget and budget justification
- All administrative components (cover sheet, biosketches, current and pending support, data management plan, facilities, and other required documents (see appendix for components due at each deadline)
- Conflict of Interest disclosure in CARA for all named personnel

- Completed required research trainings for all named personnel: CITI Responsible Conduct of Research, CITI Conflict of Interest, and CITI Research Security Training
- Near-final proposal narrative. “Near-final” means the narrative is developed to the point that no further changes would occur to the research design, project concept, collaborators, human/animal subjects involvement, or any other element that affects the budget or administrative components. The narrative may continue to be refined for language and clarity until Day 3 at 5:00 p.m. CT.

Required Investigator Trainings and Disclosures

Completion of mandatory research trainings and disclosures is a precondition of proposal submission. Failure to meet training and disclosure requirements by Day 5 will prevent institutional approval and submission.

All individuals responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of sponsored activity, including all personnel named in the proposal budget and budget justification, must complete the following requirements prior to Day 5 routing: Conflict of Interest Disclosure in CARA, CITI Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), CITI Conflict of Interest Training, and CITI Research Security Training.

If Day 5 is missed: Submission cannot be guaranteed.

Proposals that are not final and routed by Day 5 at 5:00 p.m. CT may only receive a limited review and submission cannot be guaranteed. OVPR will determine whether a limited review and submission is feasible or whether the proposal must be deferred to a future sponsor deadline. The PI and unit leadership will be notified of that determination.

Day 3 (5:00 p.m. CT) — Final Narrative Edits & Approvals Due

All proposal narrative revisions must be complete, and the CARA proposal must be approved by unit leadership and all required ancillary reviewers by Day 3 at 5:00 p.m. CT.

If Day 3 is missed: Submission cannot be guaranteed.

Proposals that are not fully approved and ready for submission by Day 3 at 5:00 p.m. CT may not be submitted. OVPR will determine whether submission is feasible or whether the proposal must be deferred to a future sponsor deadline. The PI and unit leadership will be notified of that determination.

Proposal Submission Timing

Once all required institutional approvals are secured, OVPR submits the proposal at the earliest opportunity. While proposals may be submitted any time between Day 3 and the sponsor deadline, OVPR targets submission by Day 2 as standard practice to mitigate technical risks, avoid sponsor system congestion, and preserve time to resolve any unforeseen submission errors. OVPR may request minor revisions or clarifications during Days 2 and 1; therefore, faculty should remain attentive to email and be prepared to respond promptly.

If a PI requires submission in advance of the sponsor’s deadline (e.g., due to travel, scheduling constraints, or preferences), the preferred submission deadline must be identified at proposal initiation. Internal deadlines will be established accordingly to support timely review and submission. Submission deadlines may not be adjusted at the last minute to accommodate preferences or scheduling conflicts.

Limited Review

When internal deadlines are missed, sufficient time no longer exists to complete a full institutional review. In such cases, OVPR may, based on available capacity and time remaining, determine whether a limited review can be conducted prior to submission. A limited review is a partial institutional review and is not equivalent to a full review. A limited review does not carry the same institutional protections for the PI or the university.

Proposals submitted under a limited review may be subject to the following risks:

- The budget may not be fully verified for accuracy or sponsor compliance
- Compliance requirements may not be fully validated prior to submission
- Inconsistencies between the narrative, budget, and administrative components may not be identified or resolved
- The proposal may not meet all sponsor formatting or system requirements, which can result in automatic rejection
- If funded, award acceptance may be delayed or denied pending a post-submission compliance review

Note: Even under limited review, OVPR cannot submit a proposal unless it is free of system-level errors in the sponsor's submission portal. System-level errors are technical validation failures (such as missing required fields, file format violations, or budget calculation errors) that prevent a sponsor's portal from accepting a submission. These errors must be identified and resolved before submission can occur.

OVPR may decline submission of any proposal that presents significant institutional, financial, or compliance risk, regardless of proximity to the sponsor deadline. Where submission is not advisable, OVPR will communicate that determination to the PI and unit leadership.

Exceptions

Proposals that do not meet the Day 30 or Day 10 internal deadlines may still be accepted for review.

In such cases, OVPR will make a good-faith effort to work with the PI to review and submit the proposal based on available capacity and the time remaining; however, these proposals may be eligible only for a limited review, and all associated limitations and risks apply.

Proposals that do not meet the Day 5 or Day 3 internal deadlines may not be authorized for submission.

Exceptions may be requested only in rare circumstances outside the control of the PI. Such circumstances may include situations in which a sponsor issues or significantly modifies a deadline without adequate advance notice. Exception requests must be submitted as soon as the need is identified and no later than prior to Day 5 (requests submitted on Day 5 or later will not be considered). All requests require approval from the Department Chair, Dean, and Vice Provost for Research. Exceptions will not be granted for circumstances within the PI's control, including delayed proposal development or late discovery of a funding opportunity. Proposals submitted under an approved exception may receive a limited review, and all associated limitations and risks of a limited review apply. Approval of an exception does not set precedent for future submissions.

Special Circumstances

Proposals with Open Deadlines. For proposals with open or rolling deadlines, the PI sets and communicates a target submission date to the Pre-Award URA. Internal deadlines will be established accordingly to support timely review and submission. Submission deadlines may not be adjusted at the last minute to accommodate preferences or scheduling conflicts.

Proposals with Cost Share. Proposal with mandatory cost share commitments must specifically quantify the cost share in the proposal budget and budget justification. All proposed cost share must be approved by unit leadership (e.g. college, department, center) and OVPR during the internal proposal review process. See [OVPR-015: Policy for Cost Share](#) for more information.

Pre-Proposals and Letters of Intent. Pre-proposals and Letters of Intent (LOIs) may require OVPR review and approval, depending on sponsor requirements. OVPR review is required when the pre-proposal or LOI includes budgetary information, involves cost share, requires institutional certifications or assurances, or must be submitted by an AOR. If none of these elements are present, the faculty member may submit the pre-proposal or LOI directly to the sponsor without routing through OVPR.

Limited Submissions. When a sponsor restricts the number of proposals an institution may submit, the PI must obtain approval to apply to that funding opportunity. The PI should coordinate with the Research Development or Corporate & Foundation Relations office. See [Limited Submission | Office of the Vice Provost for Research | Baylor University](#).

After-the-Fact Proposals. An after-the-fact proposal is a proposal entered into CARA and routed for institutional review and approval after it has already been submitted to a sponsor or after an award has been received. All proposals must be reviewed and approved by OVPR prior to submission. In cases where a sponsor does not require a formal proposal prior to issuing an award, the PI must notify OVPR as early as possible and work with their Pre-Award URA to enter a retroactive proposal in CARA for review, routing, and approval. Proposals submitted outside of the required institutional process are considered noncompliant with university policy and the university may withdraw such proposals or decline any resulting award. If the university determines that acceptance is appropriate, the PI works with their Pre-Award URA to enter an after-the-fact proposal in CARA for review and approval. All sponsored awards must have an approved proposal in CARA before the award can be established in the university's financial system.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all Baylor University personnel submitting proposals to participate in research or sponsored projects funded by a) federal, state and/or local government agencies, b) commercial sponsors, and c) other organization funding projects at or on behalf of Baylor University.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Vice Provost for Research is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy. Day-to-day responsibility for such implementation is delegated through the Vice Provost for Research to the Assistant Vice Provost for Research, Pre-Award Administration.

REGULATIONS AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

Applicable Law

n/a

University Policies and Documents

[OVPR-12: Policy for Principal Investigator Eligibility](#)

[OVPR-15: Policy for Cost Share](#)

[OVPR-09: Policy for Outgoing Subaward Issuance and Subrecipient Monitoring](#)

[OVPR Process for Limited Submissions](#)

GOVERNANCE

This policy will be reviewed and updated, as necessary, on a regular basis by the OVPR. If a federal agency issues rules governing cost principles in sponsored research, those rules will govern where applicable. Any changes in federal requirements will supersede the relevant provisions of this policy.

DEFINITIONS

Ancillary Review: A process used to request review or approval from individuals outside the primary routing chain for a proposal. Ancillary reviewers evaluate aspects of a proposal within their area of responsibility to ensure that relevant institutional considerations are addressed.

Business Day: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CT and excludes weekends and university holidays.

Compliance And Research Administration (CARA): Baylor University's branded implementation of the Huron Research Suite, configured with the modules selected for institutional use. CARA serves as the university's electronic research administration system, providing an integrated portal to create, review, route, and submit proposals while ensuring compliance with university policies, sponsor requirements, and federal regulations across the research lifecycle.

Funding Solicitation: A formal announcement issued by a sponsor that invites proposals for financial support of specific types of projects or activities.

Principal Investigator: The individual with overall responsibility for the conduct of research or other activity described in a proposal or award, and/or the individual with fiduciary responsibility for award management and reporting. See [OVPR-12 Policy for Principal Investigator Eligibility for Externally Funded Activities](#).

Proposal: An application for funding that contains all information necessary to describe project plans, research team capabilities, and funds requested. Formal proposals are officially approved and submitted by an organization on behalf of a principal investigator.

Proposal Package: The complete set of documents required for faculty to submit a grant proposal to a sponsor for external funding. It typically includes all budgetary, administrative, and narrative components necessary for institutional review and sponsor submission.

Sponsor: A federal agency, private entity, non-profit organization, institution, or other external entity that provides funding or other support for sponsored activity.

Sponsor Deadline: The specific date and time set by the funding agency (the sponsor) by which a proposal must be received to be considered for funding.

Subaward: A formal, written agreement issued by a pass-through entity (such as Baylor University) to a subrecipient to carry out a portion of a sponsored project. A subaward transfers a substantive programmatic effort, along with associated funding, to another organization or institution that performs part of the project's scope of work. See [OVPR-09 Policy for Outgoing Subaward Issuance and Subrecipient Monitoring](#).

Submission: The official action of transmitting a proposal to an external funding agency on behalf of the university.

APPENDIX

The table provides examples of components typically required at each stage of the 30-10-5-3 framework. Requirements vary by sponsor and proposal type.

Proposal Components	Day 30 (issuing subaward) Day 10 (not issuing subaward) CARA proposal initiated	Day 5 by 5:00 p.m. CT CARA proposal complete; Certified by PI; Approved by URA	Day 3 by 5:00 p.m. CT CARA proposal approved by unit; Proposal narrative final
Key Proposal Details PI & Co-PI/I(s) Sponsor Funding Announcement Project Title Project Dates Funding Amount Draft Budget (with all named personnel) Funding Agency Portal Subaward Details Research Type	Provide All Key Proposal Details to URA		
Budget Components CARA Budget Budget Justification Cost Share Budget Sponsor Budget Template	<i>(Note: Some proposals may require a final budget before Day 5. Consult your URA.)</i>	Final Budget Components Due	
Administrative Components Cover Sheet Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources Biographical Sketches Current & Pending Support Synergistic Activities Conflict of Interest Data Management Plan Mentoring Plan Other Personnel Biographical Info Other Supplementary Documents List of Suggested Reviewers List of Reviewers Not to Include Deviation Authorization Additional Single Copy Documents Letters of Support		Final Administrative Components Due	
Proposal Narrative Components Abstract Project Summary Project Description References Cited		Near-Final Proposal Narrative Components Due	Final Proposal Narrative Components Due
Disclosures & Trainings Conflict of Interest Disclosure in CARA CITI Responsible Conduct of Research CITI Conflict of Interest Training CITI Research Security Training		Completed Disclosure and Training for all named personnel	