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OUTGOING SUBAWARDS Best Practices

Background and Purpose

At the proposal stage, the PI determines if collaboration with research partners at other institutions is needed in order to complete a project’s SOW. Subaward recipients provide their own Letter of Intent, SOW, Budget, and Budget Justification for inclusion in proposal submissions.

If a project with such collaborations is awarded, an outgoing subaward agreement is needed to setup a formal relationship. Subaward agreements (subawards) are formal, legally binding contract documents, that need careful, case-by-case review. Subrecipients are held to the same standards as BU (Federal regulations, Federal policies, BU policies, NOA terms, etc.). These rules and regulations are ‘flowed down’ to the subrecipients via the subaward agreement. Subawards may only be established if approved and allowed by the sponsor. If the need for a subaward was established in the proposal, and the award is received without restrictions, the subaward is considered approved at the time of award.

Subawards are handled by a specialized team within SP, and not your SP RA. Each Department is assigned a specific Sub RA, who will handle issuance of all agreements. Once an award is fully setup, all subawards identified in the setup budget are automatically are sent to the Subaward Team for action. The action is sent to the subaward team the same day you receive your AN. Work on subawards cannot begin prior to this date.

Like awards, each subaward contains a distinct SOW, Budget and Budget Justification. Each subaward must contain all three of these elements, as these are incorporated into the agreement. Subaward periods of performance can only extend as far as the obligation end date of the IO funding the project. Any future funding, additional time periods, rebudgets, SOW changes, etc. are handled via a contract amendment. Subawards can only be issued to the extent to which they are each budgeted on the subaward line of the grant. A rebudget must be submitted if these amounts change.

No expenses may be drawn down from the grant for subawards until the agreement is fully executed. This requires signatures from both a BU signatory and a subrecipient signatory.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Meaning
AN	Award Notification
DA	Department Administrator
IO	Internal Order (also known as SP#)
NOA	Notice of Award
SP – Post	Sponsored Programs Post Award
SP – Post RA	Sponsored Programs Post Award - Research Administrator
PI	Principal Investigator
SA	School Administrator
Sub RA	Outgoing Subaward Administrator, member of SP Subaward Team
SOW	Scope of Work
SP RA	Sponsored Programs - Research Administrator
SPQ	Subrecipient Prequalifying Questionnaire



Process Flow

Proposal Stage:

1. At the proposal stage, the DA/SA works with the PI to identify what subrecipients are included in the application
2. As part of the roles and responsibilities established by the DA/SA and PI for proposal preparation, typically the DA will work with the subrecipient on obtaining and reviewing their **budget, budget justification, scope of work and letter of intent**, along with any other administrative documents needed for the inclusion in the proposal (such as biosketches/CVs, facilities pages, etc).
3. DA/SA inserts final subrecipient budget numbers into the overall BU project budget and uploads other materials into sponsor system, as needed, and sends subrecipient documents to SP as part of the final application materials.

Award Stage:

1. NOA is received in SP and an internal grant account is established by the SP Award Set-Up team, based on the awarded budget (usually aligns with proposed budget)
 - o If any changes have occurred since proposal stage, DA/SA needs to send revised subaward documents to SP RA
2. The SP Award Set-Up team triggers the sub action in the SP Sub team queue
3. DA/SA will be contacted by SP should questions arise during the subcontract drafting process
4. SP Sub Team sends a draft subcontract to PI (with DA/SA on cc) for confirmation of details before sending to subrecipient
5. Upon full execution of subcontract, it is distributed to BU PI, DA/SA, SP RA and SP – Post
6. Subrecipient monitoring, including payment of invoices, by the DA/SA and PI begins

Special Considerations

Subaward Agreements take approximately 30-60 business days to execute.

When the NOA is received, if the funding amount is less than proposed, the grant setup budget will inform SP of any subrecipient budgetary changes.

Subawards are established using the proposed SOW, budget, and budget justification unless:

- New documents are provided to your SP RA
- The budget is cut more than 25% from the originally planned amount. If this is the case, a new budget and justification are needed in order to move forward.
- The subrecipient is receiving more funding than originally planned. If this is the case, a new budget and justification (and possibly SOW) are needed in order to move forward.

The PI and DA will always be contacted by a member of the Subaward Team prior to issuance to confirm amounts, obligation period of the funding, and information regarding Human and animal subjects and Human Subjects data.

Subrecipients must prequalify to do business with BU, which consists of completing a Subrecipient Prequalifying Questionnaire (SPQ). This process is handled by the Sub RA and is generally a quick process, but can turn into a lengthy process for some subrecipients, especially for subrecipients that are determined to be high risk may have additional invoicing requirements. These agreements may take longer to setup as well due to complexity.



Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Department Administrator	Collects required subrecipient documentation at the proposal stage and typically acts as primary contact for communication with the subrecipient. After an award is made, ensures most recent documentation is available to SP RA and Sub RA.
Principal Investigator	At the proposal stage, identifies subrecipient and provides details to DA/SA. At award stage, confirms obligation timeframe and obligated amount of subaward. Also confirms specifics regarding HS and Animal work, as well as data exchange. This is done via email between PI and Sub RA.
SP RA	Acts as primary contact for the DA/SA for all subrecipient issues, works with the Sub RA as needed to ensure subaward issuance is correct.
Sub RA	Prequalifies subrecipients, performs risk assessment, receives documents for inclusion in agreement, request funds obligation from SP – Post, creates subaward document, works with subrecipient to negotiate terms if needed, receives fully executed document, updates SP systems, distributes final version to PI/DA/SP – Post RA/SP RA

Reference Documents

Subaward Overview and FAQ on BU Research Support Site:

<https://www.bu.edu/researchsupport/project-lifecycle/setting-up-an-award/subaward-agreements/>

Subrecipient vs. Contractor on BU Research Support:

<https://www.bu.edu/researchsupport/project-lifecycle/managing-an-award/subrecipients-vs-contractors/>