



## USWBSI's Annual Request for Project Pre-Proposals



### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Pre-Proposal Preparation, Submission and Award Notification**

**Updated: 6/1/11**

The FAQ addresses common mistakes made during both the preparation and submission of individual pre-proposals and proposed research projects (submitted to a Coordinated Project).

#### **A**

##### **Award Notifications**

**When will I know the funding outcome of my submitted pre-proposal(s)?**

Award Notifications are normally distributed in mid-January. Notifications are sent directly to the Principal Investigator (PI). The notification will include the USWBSI's funding recommendation for all proposed research projects/pre-proposals submitted by a PI.

#### **C**

##### **Collaborative Projects - Proposed Research Project (PRP) or Individual Pre-Proposals**

**Individual budget requests for collaborating PIs.**

Individual budget justification forms from all collaborating PIs, along with a combined budget worksheet (Excel file converted to PDF), should be included in the submitted collaborative proposed research project or individual project pre-proposal.

##### **Common mistakes made during preparation and submission of pre-proposals.**

**Budget Page – Intent to attend Forum not indicated (Travel section (F) of Budget and/or Budget Justification).**

PI must indicate his/her intention to attend the USWBSI's Annual Forum to be held during the Award Year by checking either 'Yes' or 'No' in Section F.

**Budget Page – Indirect Cost Rate (IDC) rate not entered into Section J.**

PI must enter IDC rate in designated area in Section J.

**Cover Page for Individual Project Pre-Proposals – no designation of Research Area(s).**

In Box 16, PI must designate one research area for which the submitted pre-proposal best fits.

**Cover Page for Individual Project Pre-Proposals – all currently funded USWBSI projects.**

In Box 13, PI must list all currently funded USWBSI research projects regardless of their relationship to the submitted pre-proposal.

**Collaborative Arrangements - letters of intent missing from pre-proposals (Individual Pre-Proposals only).**

If the proposed work involves collaborative arrangements, letters of intent from collaborators (including letters from Co-Investigators) must be included with the submitted pre-proposals. The letter of intent must include specific details describing the services the collaborator will provide.

**Curriculum Vitae and Publication List - exceeds maximum page limit per scientist.**

A limit of four-pages is allowed for the Curriculum Vitae and Publication List (combined) of PIs and Co-Investigators.

**Exceeding Page Limits.**

Proposed Research Projects - The Plan of Work should not exceed 3 pages in length and begins with the 'Plan of Work' Form as page 1 (text for Plan of Work should begin on page 1 below form fields).

Individual Pre-Proposals - The page limit for the Project Description is 10 pages total (up to five pages for text plus additional pages for graphics i.e. tables, images, graphs). When graphics or tables are inserted throughout the text rather than at the end of the Project Description, PIs sometimes exceed the text limitation (five full pages). The total amount of text in the Project Description can be less than five

pages, but it cannot total more than five pages (even if graphics are included throughout text). The Project Description includes the following sections: Title, Introduction, Rationale and Significance, Research Methods and Materials (includes expected results).

### **Non-conformance to instructions regarding formatting.**

Proposed Research Project - The Plan of Work should be formatted using Times New Roman (Normal type except headings), 12 point or higher with one-inch margins.

Individual Pre-Proposals - The Project Description should be formatted using Times New Roman (Normal type except headings), 12 point or higher with one-inch margins.

All Categories: Bold formatting should only be used for section headings or used minimally to emphasize importance or significance. Conformance to the format requirements will be strictly enforced.

## **Confidentiality**

### **How is my submitted pre-proposal handled so that confidentiality is maintained?**

Pre-proposals submitted to the USWBSI are treated as confidential documents. Pre-proposals are only viewed by the administrative staff of the Networking & Facilitation Office, and Reviewers. The Reviewers are instructed prior to their review that the content of all pre-proposals are confidential and thus should be handled accordingly. The NFO securely stores original pre-proposals for at least two years.

## **Current and Pending Support**

### **Who should submit a Current and Pending Support Page?**

A separate Current and Pending Support page should be submitted by the PI and all Co-PIs.

### **What is the difference between the two columns with subheadings "Total \$ amount" and "PI Allocation."**

Grant awards may be divided among Investigators (PI and CO-PI), whereby the Total amount of the award may be different then the amount allocated each

investigator (including PI). These columns should be used to indicate this type of scenario.

## D

### Deadlines

#### Where can I find important deadlines?

Commodity or VDHR CP-related Proposed Research Projects – Page 21 in Section 1 of RFP. May also be viewed on-line at [http://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy12-rfp\\_section1\\_deadlines.pdf](http://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy12-rfp_section1_deadlines.pdf).

MGMT-CP related Proposed Research Projects – Page 27 in Section 2 of RFP. May also be viewed on-line at [http://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy12-rfp\\_section2\\_deadlines.pdf](http://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy12-rfp_section2_deadlines.pdf).

Individual Research Area Pre-Proposals – Page 36 in Section 3 of RFP. May also be viewed on-line at [http://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy12-rfp\\_section3\\_deadlines.pdf](http://scabusa.org/pdfs/fy12-rfp_section3_deadlines.pdf).

### Deviation Authorization

#### What is the process for requesting authorization of a deviation from the RFP Pre-proposal preparation instructions?

The NFO must authorize any deviations from the RFP instructions in advance of pre-proposal submission. Deviations may be authorized by receiving written approval from the NFO Director ([dvs@uky.edu](mailto:dvs@uky.edu)) or Manager ([scabusa@scabusa.org](mailto:scabusa@scabusa.org)). Requests for deviation of guidelines should be submitted in writing via e-mail to either the Director or the Manager of the NFO (e-mail address' above) prior to submission of the pre-proposal.

## E

### Electronic Pre-Proposal Submission (EPS) System

#### Do I have to submit my pre-proposal electronically?

All individual pre-proposals and supporting documents will be submitted using the EPS system. PIs submitting to a Coordinated Project will upload their supporting documents (i.e. CV/Pubs List and Current and Pending Support Form) to the EPS System.

## **Can I change the title of my pre-proposal after I have completed the Pre-Registration step of the EPS Process?**

In short, yes. The title provided during the Pre-Registration simply acts as a 'placeholder' for the PI's pre-proposal within the EPS system. Forward the confirmation e-mail you received to the NFO with the updated title included.

## **F**

### **Funding**

#### **If my proposed project is awarded funding, how will I receive my award?**

Funding awarded to PIs (only those not affiliated with USDA-ARS) who submitted pre-proposals to the USWBSI comes in the form of an Extramural Agreement between the PIs institution and USDA-ARS. For ARS scientists, the award will be 'deposited' into their CRIS account.

#### **How is approved funding handled on a Collaborative Project?**

If you are part of a collaborative project, and your proposed project is approved for funding, the funding will come in the form of a direct award from USDA-ARS to you and your institution.

#### **What is the USWBSI's funding cycle for this RFP (FY12)?**

All proposed research and budget requests should be based on two years. There are budget related forms for both Year 1 (FY12) and Year 2 (FY13).

## **I**

### **Indirect Cost Rate**

#### **What is the Indirect Cost Rate (IDC) for pre-proposals submitted to the USWBSI?**

The USWBSI's review process focuses on the **competitiveness of total** project costs (direct and indirect). Because Fusarium head blight is such a severe problem for the U.S. wheat and barley industries, the USWBSI has set the indirect costs rate limit at 5%.

## **L**

### **Letter of Intent (LOI) for a Coordinated Project**

#### **Where should I send my Letter of Intent for a Coordinated Project?**

Letters of Intent should be sent (may be sent electronically via e-mail) to the coordinator of the Coordinated Project with a copy going to the Networking & Facilitation Office.

## **P**

### **Pre-Proposal Section (Individual RA Pre-Proposals – Category 3)**

#### **Cover Page – Do I need to complete all sections (i.e. boxes)?**

Sections (i.e. boxes) 1 through 16 must be completed with the exception of Section 13. This section applies only to those PIs who received funding from the USWBSI in FY11.

#### **‘Summary of Progress for Ongoing Funded Projects’ - What information should be included in this section?**

The 'Summary of Progress for Ongoing Funded Projects' applies to progress the PI has made during the current year of funding (i.e. what has been accomplished since the FY11 funding was received). Note that this is a summary and is limited to one page. Detailed data should be included in the 'Introduction' and/or 'Research Methods'.

#### **What information should be included in the "References to Project Description" section of the proposal?**

Reference information is required. Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal/book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. If the document is available electronically, the Website address also should be identified. PIs must be especially careful to follow accepted scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials relied upon when preparing any section of the proposal.

While there is no established page limitation for the references, this section must include bibliographic citations only, and must not be used to provide parenthetical information outside of the project description.

## R

### Rejections

#### **What do I do if my proposed research was rejected for inclusion in one of the Coordinated Projects?**

PIs have the option, if their proposed research has been rejected by a CP, to submit an individual project pre-proposal for consideration by following the instructions for Category 1 (page 17) or Category 2 (page 23) of the FY12 RFP.

### Returned Pre-Proposals

#### **For what reasons does the USWBSI/NFO return a pre-proposal?**

Pre-proposals may not be considered by the USWBSI for the following reasons.

1. The pre-proposal/proposed research project does not meet preparation requirements, such as page limitations, or formatting instructions as specified in the RFP Guidelines.
2. The pre-proposal/proposed research project does not meet the announced deadline date and/or time, where specified.

## S

### Signatures

#### **Does the USWBSI require Authorized Organizational Representative's signature (including electronic) on pre-proposals?**

No. The USWBSI does not require signatures by the Authorized Organizational Representatives (AORs) on pre-proposals, therefore AORs will not be granted access to the EPS system. If a pre-proposal or proposed research project requires approval prior to submission by PIs sponsored programs office, a Cover Page under 'Special Forms' may be downloaded from the FY12 RFP website ([http://scabusa.org/research\\_rfp12#fy12\\_rfp](http://scabusa.org/research_rfp12#fy12_rfp)) for obtaining AORs approval.

## **T**

### **Travel**

#### **Is travel to Canada and Mexico considered Domestic Travel?**

No, travel to Canada and Mexico is Foreign Travel (outside the U.S.).

### **Tuition Remission**

#### **Can tuition remission costs for graduate students be included in the proposed budget?**

Tuition remission is **permitted** under USDA-ARS **extramural agreements** with any type of recipient organization (i.e. universities). If tuition remission is budgeted as a direct cost, it should be included in the "Other Direct Costs" category of the Budget Page (Section H).