Office of Grants & Sponsored Research

PRE-AWARD GUIDE

Proposal Writing, Submission, and Follow-Up

January 2018

INTRODUCTION

This guide is intended to provide to faculty and staff seeking grants with an introduction to grant proposal writing, submission, and follow up.

Guide Contents:

A. GRANTSMANSHIP

Grantsmanship is a strategic, organized process to obtain external financial resources for the work of an individual, group or formal unit of the College. It includes development of an idea, finding appropriate funding sources to support the idea, developing a proposal (making the case to the potential funding agency to fund your idea), and ensuring College approval and support of the proposal.

This guidance is designed to guide faculty and staff through the process of developing a competitive proposal and to make the application process as smooth as possible. The OGSR staff is ready to assist in the grantsmanship process and has many resources in place to provide the support needed to submit a grant proposal, assist in the use of office resources (e.g., the Grants Resource Center), assist in finding funding sources, and assist in using TCNJ's internal electronic grant proposal development and management system.

The Grantsmanship Partnership at TCNJ

Grantsmanship at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ or the College) is a partnership among the faculty, staff, administrators, and the Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR). Since all requests for external funds are officially made by either the College or the TCNJ Foundation, each party makes unique, critical contributions to a partnership that represents the College, and that strives to foster an intellectually vibrant environment by seeking external resources from public and private agencies and foundations in support of its academic and scholarly endeavors.

Faculty and staff bring a vast store of knowledge and skill pertaining to their discipline and the particular academic or research project they seek to advance. This expertise goes beyond scholarly knowledge of the area to include related information about professional organizations, leaders in the field, networking opportunities, and the like. Deans, chairs, directors, and other administrators offer leadership, expertise and resources.

OGSR Services

The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR) provides the infrastructure to attract external support to promote scholarship at TCNJ. The dual purpose of this office is to (a) inspire and sustain high expectations within the campus community regarding external grants; and (b) provide direct support of fund-seeking and funded activities to enhance research and learning.

In this capacity, OGSR assists with project idea conceptualization; identification of funding sources; project budget preparation; review of draft proposals; provides official approval of

all proposal requests for grants and sponsored research; reviews and accepts awards on behalf of the institution; ensures TCNJ's compliance with a variety of federal and state regulations; and develops and refines college policies that affect sponsored projects. The Office of the Treasurer establishes accounts for awarded proposals; reviews and approves grant expenditures, monitors program implementation timeline, and prepares required fiscal reports; and officially closes out accounts or awards at the end of the project period.

About OGSR

Mission

To facilitate an institution-wide environment of excellence that fosters learning, scholarship, engagement, innovation, and health through the pursuit of external funding.

Purpose

To inspire the campus community regarding external grants by providing direct support of fund-seeking and facilitate the management of funded activities to enhance research and learning.

Goals

- Advance a culture of grantsmanship at The College of New Jersey
- Maintain a proactive and responsive Office of Grants and Sponsored Research
- Increase positive external awareness of The College of New Jersey

B. RESEARCH AT THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

TCNJ faculty members embrace the teacher-scholar model exemplified by serious and continuing commitment to scholarship that complements and enriches teaching of the first order. The College recognizes a range of scholarly projects, including disciplinary research, applied research, pedagogical research and artistic expression.

For TCNJ faculty, teaching is the primary function of a faculty immersed in the most current knowledge in their fields through basic and applied research and scholarship. Research and scholarly work of the faculty is infused into teaching, directly and/or indirectly, in an unlimited variety of ways.

As the TCNJ community strives to achieve its ambitious goals of becoming a national exemplar in all of its programs, and as state support diminishes, obtaining funding from federal, state, and private agencies becomes critical in attaining those goals. The Office of

Grants and Sponsored Research continues to contribute to support the efforts of the faculty and staff and to provide leadership in developing ever new avenues for funding.

C. PRINCIPLES GUIDING SPONSORED PROGRAMS AT TCNJ

The College of New Jersey is guided by and adheres to the following guiding principles:

1. External funds are awarded to the institution (either TCNJ or the TCNJ Foundation) and not to individuals. Only the Board of Trustees or the TCNJ Foundation Board has the legal authority to apply for and accept grants, contracts and agreements on behalf of the College. This authority is delegated to the President, the Provost, the Vice Provost, the Vice President for Advancement, and the Treasurer who may sign these documents as officially designated institutional signatories. This is done only after the documents have been approved through the College's official external funding proposal approval system.

2. The TCNJ Foundation is a single-purpose entity whose sole mission is to support the College by accepting monies from non-public funding agencies on behalf of TCNJ because it is the 501(c)(3) (charitable according to IRS definition) arm of TCNJ. The role of the Foundation is simply for fiscal designation and in no way effects any other aspect of the research or scholarly work being conducted by the project.

3. As official recipient of awards, The College of New Jersey is obligated to and will comply with all applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations governing institutions of higher education and recipients of public support.

4. The Principal Investigator (PI) or Project Director (or the lead PI, where there is more than one) on a sponsored program is solely responsible for every aspect of the project. Therefore, the PI is expected to know or become knowledgeable about all regulations guiding the project and for ensuring that the commitments made to the funding source are fully met and in compliance with all applicable regulations.

5. Grants are prepared and administered with the concern for accountability to the funding agency in mind. Therefore, from the earliest proposal planning stages to the close of the funded project, careful records are kept to document meticulous compliance with the specifications of the funding source and all applicable regulations.

TCNJ is generally guided by federal regulations for all grants, regardless of funding source, except where the funding source or College regulations are more stringent, in which case the more restrictive regulation is followed.

D. OVERVIEW OF CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL PROPOSALS

Here is a quick look at the basic criteria for developing winning grant proposals:

- begin with a good idea that the potential PI (Principal Investigator) is excited, even passionate about;
- see funding sources as partners in realizing that idea;
- write with the proposal reviewer in mind;
- be clear and direct, making it easy for a reviewer to follow;
- include clearly defined objectives, goals, or hypotheses;
- write as a persuasive document , incorporating general rhetorical principles of persuasion;
- follow the RFP (Request for Proposals) or application guidelines meticulously;
- respond to each item in the proposal review criteria section of the application guidelines, if they have been provided. Consider adapting review criteria from major sponsor application guides (such as NSF) when specific criteria are not provided by the sponsor;
- develop proposal with enough lead time to thoroughly describe the project. An early start is the key to ensuring that a proposal has the best possible chance of success; and
- discuss frequently with a program officer from the funding agency. Whenever possible, discussing the basic concepts of the proposal and strategies for approaching the funding agency improves chances for success.

E. THE IDEA – CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

Successful grant writing begins with a good idea. The idea can manifest itself as a research, scholarly, or artistic project, or as an educational program, or a service initiative. The search for funding sources represents the beginning of an important interactive process in which a well-developed idea provides the basis for identifying potential funding agencies. At the same time the process of reviewing funding opportunities can contribute to new ideas and/or a more focused project. Ideally, concept development is undertaken as a

distinct exercise, separate and apart from writing a proposal in response to a specific grant opportunity. Read more about concept development in the *OGSR Pre-Award Guide to Grantsmanship, Concept Development, and Prospecting*.

F. KNOW YOUR FUNDER AND YOUR OPTIONS

Funder's Focus

A good proposal recognizes and addresses the values and goals of the funding agency, and justifies the claim with appropriate data. Funders have self-interest, i.e., they have missions, visions, and goals, and they use their available funds to engage in activities (grantmaking) to exercise that self-interest. In all cases, a proposed project should align with the mission and goals of your department and school, as well as with the College. It is helpful to think of the search for a funding source as the search for a partner with a common goal. Therefore, proposing a grant project is not entirely about what you can get from a funder (i.e., money), but what you can give in return, i.e., what your project will do to help advance a funder's mission, support its vision, and achieve its goals. This is true for foundation funders and government funders as well. In the latter case, the mission, vision, and goals might ultimately be good for the interest of the general public, but still a government funder will have a unique charge, or a unique niche, in addressing the general good.

A well-crafted proposal presents a detailed, systematic plan for implementing the idea, which usually includes specific and measurable goals and objectives, a work plan and timeline, biographical sketches of the key personnel, an appropriate, transparent budget, and a strong evaluation plan.

Preparation begins with a thorough understanding of the sponsor's mission and goals; and it includes communicating with OGSR from the earliest stages onward in order to tap all available resources.

Contacting a Funder/Program Officer

Contact with a funder prior to the submission of a formal proposal can be beneficial. An investigator may initiate contact to confirm research interests by e-mail, a telephone call, office visit, letter of intent (a brief outline of the project emphasizing the methodology, objectives, and importance of the project), or preliminary proposal. Initial contact can help an investigator determine a sponsor's funding interests.

A sponsor may request that a letter of intent or a preliminary proposal be submitted. These introductory submissions give the sponsor enough basic information about a project to make preliminary recommendations to the proposer, without having to make a formal commitment.

Renewal Applications

If you received a grant and your funded project is nearing close out, you may be thinking, "What next?" In some cases, funders permit the submission of renewal applications. (For example, NIH grants sometimes allow grant renewals. You will find this information in the NIH funding opportunity announcement "Application Types Allowed" section. Renewal applications are requests to continue to pursue the same goals that you were pursuing under your previous award, but with new short-term objectives. So, if your long-term goal remains the same, but you have new objectives to achieve incremental movement toward that goal, then a renewal application (where permissible) might be appropriate.

If you checked your funder's guidelines and have determined that renewal applications are permitted, contact the funder's program officer to discuss submission of a renewal application versus submission of a new application.

Resubmissions

It is not unusual if your first proposal submission to a particular funder does not receive an award. Often, the proposal writing and submission process is an opportunity to help you clarify and strengthen your research agenda and, ultimately, achieve funding success. If you do not receive an award, it is important to secure the reviewer feedback on your proposal to help inform your subsequent submission (to the same funder or another). Funders have different application submissions cycles, e.g., some accept applications only once a year for a given program, while others offer multiple opportunities within a single calendar year to submit an application. Also, resubmissions may be accepted on a schedule different than that for new applications. In any case, there are usually 'second chances' (and, often, third chances) in the grants world.

The key is to focus on refining your research project consistent with the feedback received from reviewers. Talking or meeting with the funder's program officer is also a critically important step that will help to clarify anything in the feedback that is not understandable. It will also show to the funder that you are committed to your research and to doing what is necessary to secure funding to support it.

G. LETTERS OF INTENT, LETTERS OF INQUIRY, AND PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS

Think of Letters of Inquiry, Letters of Intent, and Preliminary Proposals as a chance to make that one first good impression on a funder. These letters and preliminary proposals are not mere formalities; therefore, attention to their requirements is essential. If you have prepared a 'concept development' paper (as discussed above), it should help you in preparing these advance descriptions of your proposed project.

Letters of Intent

Some NSF program solicitations require or request submission of a letter of intent in advance of submission of a full proposal. A letter of intent is not binding. The predominant reason for its use is to help NSF program staff to gauge the size and range of the competition, enabling earlier selection and better management of reviewers and panelists. In addition, the information contained in a letter of intent is used to help avoid potential conflicts of interest in the review process.

A letter of intent normally contains the PI's name and co-PI's name (where applicable), a proposed title, a list of possible participating organizations (if applicable), and a synopsis that describes the work in sufficient detail to permit an appropriate selection of reviewers. A letter of intent is not externally evaluated or used to decide on funding. The requirement to submit a letter of intent will be identified in the program solicitation, and such letters are submitted electronically to NSF.

Failure to submit a required LOI identified in a program solicitation will result in a full proposal not being accepted or returned without review.

Letters of Inquiry

Letters of inquiry are often used by foundation funders. Some are required and often decisions about whether one can proceed to submission of a full proposal depends upon the content of the letter of inquiry. Guidelines are provided for the content of such letters. As in the case of mandatory letter of intent, discussed above, failure to submit a required letter of inquiry identified in a program solicitation will result in a full proposal not being accepted or returned without review.

Preliminary Proposals

Some NSF program solicitations require or request submission of a preliminary proposal in advance of submission of a full proposal. The three predominant reasons for requiring submission of a preliminary proposal are to:

- reduce the proposers' unnecessary effort in proposal preparation when the chance of success is very small. This is particularly true of exploratory initiatives when the community senses that a major new direction is being identified, or competitions that will result in a small number of awards;

- increase the overall quality of the full submission; and

- assist NSF program staff in managing the review process and in the selection of reviewers.

H. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Funding Opportunity Announcements

Most federal and state agencies, and many private agencies, in addition to their general funding areas, solicit proposals on predetermined areas of need through publication of Request for Proposal (RFP) or similarly named document (Request for applications). The RFP requirements normally take precedence over the generic requirements for a funding agency; however, often, both must be followed. It is very important that the guidelines be followed precisely. Most agencies will not consider a proposal that is incomplete, late, or not in compliance with applicator guidelines.

In addition to basic proposal content and format instructions, most RFPs include a section outlining the review criteria that will be followed by reviewers. To ensure a competitive proposal, carefully review and respond to every item in the review criteria section of a proposal preparation guide. This will help you to target your proposal directly to the concerns of the reviewers.

Application Format Guidelines

Proposal format is usually determined by a sponsor's guidelines. The major federal agencies have general guidelines available in print and online. Review these guidelines carefully for requirements such as font size and type, limits on document length (either by page number or word count), line spacing, page margins, pagination, ordering of proposal sections, etc. Uniformity in presentation of proposal format facilitates the review of large numbers of applications by a single funder. While these format guidelines might sound trivial or a mere formality, funders do take seriously adherence to these guidelines.

Common Proposal Elements

Below is an outline of the most common elements of grant proposals and some suggestions for their preparation. This section can be used as a template to create a proposal when specific guidelines have not been provided by the funding agency, or as a guide in completing parallel sections when using specific agency guidelines. For those working from agency guidelines and/or funding announcement, first and foremost, we recommend a careful reading of the application and instructions. The language is usually thoughtfully chosen to guide the applicant in a specific way. It is crucial to pay particular attention to page limitations and budget instructions.

<u>Project Summary</u>

The first sentence of the Project Summary should specify the type of proposal (e.g., research, implementation, workshop, etc.

<u>Project Description</u>

The project description (or project narrative) often has a page limit to ensure a concise presentation. Proposals generally should address such elements as the following:

1. *Importance*

   Generally, a proposal must clearly show how the proposed project addresses a critical need and has the potential for broad impact. The proposal should provide a rationale for how the project will address the identified need. The proposal should address how the proposed project's innovations or approaches differ from existing practices and why the proposed project has the potential to make improvements toward addressing the need beyond what current practice provides.

2. *Research and Development Design*

   The proposal should articulate a plan of work that describes research and development strategies appropriate for attaining its goals consistent with the type of study proposed. Proposals must demonstrate how the work is related to similar research and development. The proposal should also:

   - address how the major design iterations and resulting evidence will be developed to support or question key assumptions underlying the research and development plan;

- identify all measures to be developed or employed in generating evidence of the project's success and provide evidence of or plans to establish the technical quality (e.g., validity and reliability) of each measure; and
- include detailed descriptions of the study goals, design and implementation processes, data collection and quality, and analysis and methods for producing findings.

3. *Mechanisms to Assess Success of the Project*

A proposal often must include appropriate mechanisms to assess success through project-specific external review and feedback processes. These might include an external review panel or advisory board proposed by the project or a third-party evaluator. The external critical review should be sufficiently independent and rigorous to influence the project's activities and improve the quality of its findings. Successful proposals will:

- describe the expertise of the external reviewer(s);
- explain how that expertise relates to the goals and objectives of the proposal; and,
- specify how the PI will report and use results of the project's external, critical review process.

4. *Dissemination*

A proposal often must include a communication strategy for reaching a broad audience for the findings of the project, including, where appropriate, scholars, practitioners, policymakers, and public audiences. While the potential results of the proposed research are expected to be of sufficient significance to merit peer-reviewed and broader publication, approaches that reach broader audiences are usually strongly encouraged. Proposals should identify the key elements of a communication plan, e.g., target audiences and identification of the channels/media/technologies appropriate for reaching specific audiences.

5. *Expertise*

The proposal should include a narrative describing the expertise of personnel and their contributions to the proposed work, including those responsible for the external review.

6. *Broader Impacts*

    This section should provide a discussion of the broader impacts of the proposed activities.

Review Criteria

The following elements are often considered in the review process:

1. What is the potential for the proposed activity to:

    a. Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields; and

    b. Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes?

2. To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?

3. Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?

4. How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?

5. Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

I. DEVELOPING THE PROJECT NARRATIVE

Basic Approach to Writing the Proposal

Writing a grant proposal can be daunting, and the information that you have gathered can look overwhelming. However, if you prepared a carefully composed concept paper prior to writing the actual grant proposal, the task will be much more manageable. There are also some tried and true guidelines to keep in mind as you prepare for and write that proposal. When confusion sets in, revisit these tips to get your bearings again.

1. <u>Stop, think, and organize your ideas</u>. After you have gathered all the information you think you will need, go back and reread the funder's guidelines so that you are

providing exactly the information the funder wants. Next, identify the main point, concept, or theme of your proposal. All of the points that come after will follow logically from that central idea. Write down those broad concepts first.

2. <u>Take the time to write an outline of your proposal</u>. For some writing projects, writing whatever comes to mind first works; however, for a grant proposal, you will save time by carefully outlining what you will write and in the order that you will write it. If you have prepared a "concept paper" in advance of applying for any funding opportunity, you will be an important step ahead at this point. In that case, it will then be a matter of filling out that concept with details.

3. <u>If "writer's block" hits, move on</u>. If you get stuck in one section of a proposal, just move on to another part. You can go back to other sections when you are ready. Having a concept paper prepared in advance can help you avoid, or move more smoothly through, bouts of writer's block or the feeling of being overwhelmed by too much information.

4. <u>Remove jargon</u>. Use language that anyone can understand, not just specialists in your field or people who work at your agency. Jargon is off-putting to readers and often seems pretentious. Write for a 'lay audience' as not all readers/reviewers assigned to evaluate your proposal with have expertise in your particular field.

5. <u>Include clear statements of the potential impact of your project</u>. People, even institutional funders, want to know that they are supporting efforts that will make a positive impact in some way. Even though you must include solid data, try to translate that data into clear statements of the potential impact of your project.

6. <u>Don't exaggerate</u>. Keep the problem and the solutions realistic. Don't let your passion for your project cause you to embellish. Describe problems (needs) that you can reasonably address, and propose solutions that you can reasonably implement.

7. <u>Simplify</u>. The length and complexity of your proposal does not affect the amount of money you receive. Stick to the main points, eliminate wordiness, and present your ideas as concisely as possible. Being short and succinct will serve your interests far better.

8. <u>Revise, edit and clarify</u>. After writing the best draft you can, put it aside. Then, go back later (depending on how much time you have before the submission deadline) and reread the document. Ask yourself if what you have written makes sense? Are there gaps in the information or data you presented? Is the language and grammar appropriate and correct?

Also, go back and read the funder's guidelines again to make certain you have done exactly what they have asked.

J. DEVELOPING THE BUDGET DETAIL AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

The budget planning process should parallel planning for and development of the proposal narrative. This will ensure that the costs associated with the proposed activities do not exceed the maximum allowable request.

Budget Detail

Identify all the costs that are **necessary** and **reasonable** to complete the work described in your proposal. Determine your budget requirements for the program for which you are seeking funding. In other words, figure out how much money you need to implement your program or project.

- *Prepare a draft budget for each year of the project.* Using the information from the budget planning process, prepare a budget for each year of the project. Use the required budget form where possible. For all proposed costs, provide the costs basis, i.e., identify how you arrived at this cost. In most cases, the cost basis will be in the form of an itemization (e.g., unit costs x quantity = total cost).

- *Add any indirect costs.* Calculate indirect costs using the institutional indirect costs rate for the funding agency as directed by the funding opportunity announcement and/or grant application packet.

- *Separate federal from non-federal funds.* In some cases you will be required to identify specifically how the federal and non-federal portions of the budget will be allocated overall and in each year. Record these in the appropriate places on the required forms.

Budget Narrative

The process for developing a budget narrative is essentially the budget planning process in reverse. Thus if the budget planning process is orderly and documented, developing a budget narrative is straightforward. The purpose of the budget narrative is to describe to reviewers how the budget is related to the proposed activities.

Unless otherwise directed by the funding opportunity announcement or grant application package, the budget narrative should include separate statements for each project year.

Within each project year, identify the line items indicated in the overall budget on the required budget form and describe and justify the expenses included in the line item.

For a complete discussion of budget detail and budget narrative development, see the *OGSR Pre-Award Guide to Sponsored Project Budget Planning and Development.*

K. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND REVIEW

After the completed proposal narrative and accompanying proposal budget have received chair, dean, and final OGSR approval, the proposal is ready for submission to the sponsor.

Sponsor Review

In general, large foundations and federal agencies review proposals at three specific levels: (1) independent ad hoc reviews by several investigators; (2) meetings of standard review panels; and (3) evaluation by chief administrators or boards of directors. These levels are incorporated into two basic review systems: internal review and external review.

Obviously, an awareness of the type of review and the criteria for evaluation will contribute to your ability to write a successful proposal. (See sample review criteria above in this guide.)

Internal Review

When an agency's own staff of full-time, trained personnel is responsible for the technical review of proposals, the agency is said to have internal proposal review. These personnel, called program officers, determine which projects will receive funds by considering each proposal's excellence and suitability to the agency's program needs. Several levels of administrators within most agencies must also approve those proposals selected for funding. Sometimes internal reviewers seek outside opinions from other agency scientists, other agencies, and universities.

External Review

When the evaluation of proposals is conducted by professionals not within the agency's employ, the agency is said to have external proposal review. External review is often referred to as peer review since reviewers are chosen from different parts of the country and from special segments of the population of scholars in a particular field.

External reviews may be conducted through the mail or e-mail (reviewers selected by the agency are mailed or e-mailed the proposal for evaluation), through meetings (reviewers meet with agency and staff several times a year to evaluate proposals that have been circulated prior to these meetings), or through a combination of these two methods. External reviewers advise the agency on the appropriateness of the budget and make recommendations for funding; however, final funding decisions often rest with agency officials.

L. FUNDER DECISIONS

The Award/Declination Letter

A significant amount of time can pass between the submission of a proposal and announcement of funding decisions (up to six months is not unusual). Receipt of proposals is frequently acknowledged by a postcard or letter which may specify an application's identifier or processing number. If such an identifier has been assigned, any correspondence with the agency should include the identifier.

An announcement of the expected decision date may be a part of the guideline for application or may be communicated with the acknowledgement of receipt of the proposal. Before contacting the agency to inquire on the status of your proposal, consult with OGSR. Frequent or improper communication with an agency regarding the status of a proposal can lessen the chances of funding and give the prospective sponsor a negative impression of the College.

When any communication is received from the agency, regardless of whether an award has been received or the proposal has been denied funding, OGSR should be notified as soon as possible. Such notification is necessary for the award to be formally accepted or to initiate a search for another funding source. Copies of all communications should be sent to OGSR for inclusion in the official College master file of the proposal and documents relating to it, including correspondence, and letter of award or denial.

Funding Awarded

In some cases, projects are approved with no modifications to the budget or to the project plan. In other cases, the project director is asked to submit a revised budget (which may require a revision of the project plan) or a revised project plan (which may require a revised budget). Contact OGSR for assistance in meeting the agency's requests. All revised project plans or budgets require OGSR approval before they are submitted to the sponsor.

When notification of an award is received, OGSR must be contacted IMMEDIATELY and the original award notice sent to our office. The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research arranges for formal acceptance of the award, sets up the Award Implementation and Management (AIM) Meeting with the PI, and begins processing the appropriate forms to set up the grant account. Even when a proposal has been funded, reviewers' comments should be requested from the sponsoring agency. These comments provide valuable information on strengths and weaknesses of the project. Finally, the PI should thank the sponsoring agency and keep the agency informed of progress in implementing the project by completing all required reports in a timely manner.

Funding Declined

The PI must notify OGSR and send a copy of the letter of denial so that the file is current and alternative sources of support can be investigated. The PI should also contact OGSR to discuss the situation. Frequently, a proposal is declined, not because of any defect or lack of merit, but because the agency received a large number of excellent proposals requesting an amount of funding greater than the amount available.

The letter of denial should be read carefully, searching for reasons why the proposal was not accepted. Will the agency allow a re-submission? The chances of success increase statistically with each re-submission.

When a proposal is denied funding, reviewer comments and assessments are especially important in improving the proposal and preparing it for re-submission. If they are not provided, the PI can write or call the agency and request them. Reviewers' comments should be analyzed carefully and the revised proposal should respond to the reviewer comments appropriately.

M. GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

APPLICATION TYPES

Pre-proposal (preliminary proposal; pre-application) – solicited or unsolicited, a brief presentation by the PI of goals, methods, personnel and budget submitted to a funding agency. Pre-proposals are used by funding agencies to determine the eligibility of the applicant and the suitability of the proposed project for support. The pre-proposal is usually in letter form for private agencies and can be an abbreviated form of the standard proposal format for public agencies. Unsolicited pre-proposals must include a statement

that it is not an official offer and TCNJ reserves the right to submit a full proposal prior to award.

New – A project proposed to a sponsoring agency for the first time.

Non-competing continuation – A request of support for a second or subsequent budget period within a previously-approved project period.

Renewal – A continuation of a project for which the proposal submission is competitive.

Supplement – A request for funding for a new idea related to a funded project, for expansion of the project's scope, or for special purposes which may enhance the progress of the research, such as purchasing a piece of equipment or to support undergraduate and minority students.

AWARD MECHANISMS

The type of award mechanism to be utilized is determined by OGSR based on the requirements of the award, regardless of what it may be called by the Sponsor in the application or award documents. PI's should consult with the Pre-Award Specialist.

Contract – A legally binding agreement to provide expertise to conduct research, training, or other service.

Cooperative Agreement – Legal document that transfers money, property, services or anything of value to the recipient in order to accomplish a public purpose. Substantial involvement is anticipated between the sponsor and the recipient during performance of the activity.

Grant – The purpose of a grant is to request funds from a public or private source to support research, training, outreach, or service.

Subaward (subcontract, subgrant) – A document written under the authority of, and consistent with the terms and conditions of an award (a grant, contract or cooperative agreement), that allocates a portion of the research or substantive effort of the prime award to another institution or organization.

GENERAL DEFINITIONS

Principal Investigator/Project Director (PI or PD) - The individual designated by the grantee institution to direct the project or activity being supported by the grant and who is responsible and accountable to the institution for the proper conduct of the work.

Program Officer - A sponsor's designated official responsible for the technical, scientific or programmatic aspects of the award, including monitoring progress and working with PIs on project-related issues.

Proposal - a formal request for financial support from a specific sponsor for a research, instructional, or public service project. It identifies a need or a problem and offers a persuasive plan to resolve it.

Reassigned Time – Time and effort for an employee who is temporarily reassigned from normal duties to other approved assignments such as, for faculty, research or administrative duties.

Research – Systematic study of an idea directed toward new and/or more complete knowledge and understanding of a particular subject.

Service/Outreach – Providing services to students and to the community at large.

Training – Providing teaching and learning experiences.