**TSU College of Agriculture**

**Research Guidelines for Principal Investigators**

These guidelines are designed to make the pre- and post-award processes as smooth as possible for you, the College of Agriculture, and TSU.

**Key Contacts**

* Dr. Fulya Baysal-Gurel, Associate Dean for Research, College of Agriculture
* Pierre Washington and Helen Trimble-Anthony, Budget Office, College of Agriculture
* Drs. Phyllis Danner & Corrine Vaughn, Office of Research & Sponsored Programs (RSP)
* Lawanda Johnson, Grants Accounting Office (GAO)
* Dr. Kumuditha Liyanage, Grants & Technical Reporting Manager, College of Agriculture
* Kelly Sobel, Grant Writer, College of Agriculture

**The Proposal/Letter of Intent Submission Process**

* **Please allow plenty of time** to write/submit your proposal.
  + Last-minute requests may not be able to be accommodated.
* **At least 30 days** before the proposal submission deadline, complete:
  + The College of Ag[Proposal Information Form](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tnstate.edu%2Fagriculture%2Fpolicies_and_procedures%2FProposal%2520Information%2520Form%25209-26.pdf&data=05%7C02%7Cksobel%40tnstate.edu%7C971d3882c8b14e33fd7808dcbc9dd0b1%7C7c539505f12946aea6cfecaf413b8b0d%7C0%7C0%7C638592633194849576%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=udChWaUvIhruTQvT6jfj0Y4cEIWHVOId%2BzNN%2BZSke80%3D&reserved=0) and send it to the Associate Dean for Research and your department head; and
  + RSP’s [Intent to Submit a Proposal Form](https://tnstateu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5oruBn3pVx3BuVn) (this form will be automatically shared with RSP when you click on “submit”).
* **At least 10 days before** the submission deadline, create your proposed budget/budget justification and email it to the Associate Dean for Research for review and approval.
* **At least 5 working days** before the proposal submission deadline (and after you have received approval from the Associate Dean), email your budget/budget justification to RSP for review, and cc the Associate Dean.
* For proposals requiring a cost share or match: you must also submit a description of the project’s institutional cost share, how it will be met, and a letter of support from the Dean and/or Associate Dean of Research indicating support of the cost share.
* **At least 5 working days** before the proposal submission deadline, send your narrative (and any other parts of the proposal you want reviewed) to the Grant Writer for copyediting.
* **After RSP approves your budget,** your proposal can be submitted. RSP (specifically the VP for Research) is responsible for submitting all proposals on behalf of TSU.
  + **At least one day before the deadline**, load your proposal into grants.gov or the funding agency’s portal, then reach out to RSP and ask them to submit it.
    - **Please do not wait until the submission deadline** to make this request.

**The Post-Award Process**

* If your proposal is funded (or if you receive a sub-award), please follow the steps below.
  1. Formal Acceptance of the Award
     + RSP is responsible for formally accepting the award.
     + You are responsible for ensuring RSP has formally accepted the award.
  2. NIFA Project Initiation Process
     + For NIFA-funded grants, you must complete NIFA’s project initiation process and then let the Associate Dean know when you have done so.
       - See p.13 of the REEport User Guide for directions: <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/data/reeport/reeport-user-guide>
  3. Receiving a TSU Account/FOAP
     + Complete an Award Acknowledgement and Budget Form and submit it to the Associate Dean, along with your award letter, budget, and budget justification.
       - To access the form, click on “Restricted Budget Acknowledgement Form” on the RSP post-award support page:

<https://www.tnstate.edu/research-1/postaward/index.aspx>

* + - The Associate Dean will then forward your form to the Grants Accounting Office (GAO), which will assign your project an account number, or FOAP.
    - The GAO will create an account for your project in the Banner system.
      * If the PI doesn’t have access to University networks and systems, [TSU Banner Security Access](file:///C:\Users\ksobel\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\A5HNYRQX\•%09For%20Banner%20access,%20click%20on) needs to be processed.
      * For Banner access, click on “Banner Access Form” on the RSP post-award support page: <https://www.tnstate.edu/research-1/postaward/index.aspx>.
  1. College of Ag Budget Office Requirements
     + When you have a FOAP, email the College of Ag Budget Office to request that they:
       - Designate “approvers” for your account.
         * For all external grants, approvers will include: you, your Department Head, the Associate Dean of Research, and someone from the Budget Office.
* Incorporate “time & effort percentage” data for all personnel funded by the award by submitting PARF(s) in the PeopleAdmin system.
  1. Sub-Award Contracts
     + If your grant includes sub-awards, you are responsible for initiating the process of executing the appropriate contracts for your sub-awardees.
       - Work with the Associate Dean to develop a contract outlining the scope/length of services and compensation.
       - Ask the sub-awardee to sign the contract and to provide W-9 forms.
       - Complete a Contract Routing Form and send it, along with the contract and W-9 forms, to:
         * First, the Associate Dean;
         * Then, the Dean’s Office,
         * And finally, the Office of Academic Affairs, which will have the contract signed by TSU’s Chief Counsel and President.
     + When the signed contract is returned to you, share it with the Associate Dean and with the sub-awardee institution.
       - The sub-awardee can now complete a service and submission invoice and submit it to the TSU Accounts Payable office.

**Reporting and Fiscal Reviews**

Reporting

* It is essential that you submit all required reports and invoices accurately and on time. You are responsible for:
  + Working with the GAO to ensure that grant financial reports/invoices and time-and-effort reports are completed and submitted in a timely and accurate manner.
  + Submitting all progress/annual reports to the funding agency following their guidelines and timelines.
  + Ensuring that all faculty, graduate students, and others funded by the award submit Semester Activity Reports on the project’s progress/accomplishments.

Fiscal Reviews

* The College of Ag Budget Office will perform semi-annual fiscal reviews of your award.
  + Any expenditures made outside the approved award budget may be charged to you as a personal expense.

**Revisions/Changes to Funded Projects**

* + It is imperative that you execute your project as approved by the funding agency.
  + If you must change your work plan, Co-PI, or budget for any reason, you must first receive approval from the Associate Dean and the funding agency.
  + Please note that transferring funds from participant cost, equipment, or scholarships/fellowships is not permitted.
  + Budget Revision Requests
    - Submit a Budget Revision Form to the Associate Dean.
      * Click on “Budget Revision Form” on the RSP post-award page: <https://www.tnstate.edu/research-1/postaward/index.aspx>
    - For capacity grants, only one budget revision per fiscal year is allowed.
  + Co-PI Change Requests
    - Send an email request to the Associate Dean along with: your award letter, a letter from the new Co-PI’s authorized organizational representative, the new Co-PI’s CV, and a “Current and Pending Support” form from the new Co-PI.
    - The Associate Dean and RSP will submit the request to the funding agency.
  + No-Cost Extensions
    - You must make the request **at least 60 days before** your grant expires.
    - Submit an email request to the Associate Dean along with your award letter and no cost extension request form.
    - The Associate Dean will request an SF425 (Federal Financial Report Form) from GAO and share it with RSP, who will submit your request to the funding agency.

*Updated January 2025*