

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

September 9, 2014

## MEMORANDUM

To: Deans, Directors, Chairpersons and Executive Managers

From: Stephen Hsu, Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies *Stephen Hsu*  
Mark P. Haas, Vice President for Finance and Treasurer *Mark P. Haas*

Re: New Sponsored Projects Proposal Submission Deadline

Due to the regular occurrence of last minute sponsored projects proposal submissions, the Office of Sponsored Programs ([OSP](#)) with the concurrence and support of the MSU's Council of Research Deans ([CORD](#)), will adopt a new proposal submission policy. The policy will be effective for deadlines on or after December 1, 2014. The policy will help ensure timely review and equitable processing of sponsored projects proposals.

The change is being made to improve the quality and success rate of MSU sponsored projects applications and create a more sustainable process. The data show that **33% of all MSU proposals** are submitted to OSP on the day they are due. These last minute submittals have resulted in an increase in the number of failed or almost failed submissions. Reasons for failed submissions include proposals containing critical errors that could not be corrected before the external deadline, as well as electronic systems problems causing slow file transfers. Several sponsors have cautioned institutions that they will not make exceptions for missed sponsor deadlines for any reason, including those caused by errors or system problems, and strongly encourage early submission. Not only are late submissions at greater risk for submission failure, but they also cause inequities in proposal review and processing. For example, last minute submissions are consistently given precedence over proposals that were received on-time, causing a delay for those submissions prepared in accordance with OSP stated guidelines.

Therefore, as stated in the attached revised policy, complete sponsored projects proposals must be submitted to OSP **three full business days** prior to the submission deadline. This deadline is one day more lenient than the average internal deadline for Big Ten universities. Meeting the internal submission deadline will provide time for OSP review and time to incorporate necessary revisions into the final application package. Key elements to review include:

- Compliance with the Sponsor's solicitation and MSU's guidelines, including budgets
- Complete and approved eTransmittal routing (MSU's proposal approval form)
- Compliance issues, particularly those to be addressed at the time of proposal



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It is critical that the PI or designee be available during the proposal review, submission, and verification stages in order to assist with revisions and final system verifications.

Some departments and/or colleges have internal policies for proposal submission dates. PI's should continue to follow their internal policies, as long as the internal policy supports departments and colleges meeting OSP's processing dates (further described in the attached policy).

OSP's commitment is to submit on-time proposals (proposals received in OSP **three full business days** prior to the submission deadline), with limited exceptions, one day before the deadline. On-time proposals will take priority over proposals received after the internal deadline. OSP cannot ensure the same proposal service levels for late proposals, which may jeopardize receipt by the sponsor.

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to improve the proposal review, approval, and timely submission process. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact your OSP Proposal Team Manager, Maria Skinner – [skinne51@osp.msu.edu](mailto:skinne51@osp.msu.edu) or Craig O'Neill - [oneillc@osp.msu.edu](mailto:oneillc@osp.msu.edu), or contact Assistant Vice President for Research Twila Fisher Reighley – [reighley@osp.msu.edu](mailto:reighley@osp.msu.edu).

You can also find the published policy on the OSP website, [www.osp.msu.edu](http://www.osp.msu.edu), under the Preaward tab.

Attachment