

3/25/19 Answers to Questions about Full Proposals (due April 1)

New questions and answers appear at the end of each section.

Format, Logistics, and Content Questions

1. Could you provide specifics on the length and detail required for a full proposal?
A: Information on the requirements for full proposals are in the RFP, pgs. 7-9. On length, the RFP says: Proposals should be prepared **single-spaced, with one-inch margins, using no smaller than ten-point fonts**. The project summary has a word limit, listed below, and the project narrative (4a through 4e, below) may not exceed **ten pages**. No other parts of the proposal are subject to page or word limits. All sections of the full proposal listed below are required, with the exception of 6d (letters of support), which is only required if the project entails a collaboration with outside organizations or individuals.
2. Are we correct in understanding that the 10-page limit for the project summary and project narrative does not include any reference list?
A: Yes, the 10-page limit applies only to sections 4a-4e on pages 8-9 of the RFP. This does not include the bibliography, which is not subject to a page limit.
3. Is there a page limit for CVs? Would an NIH biosketch format be preferred?
A: There is no page limit for CVs. If you prefer to use the NIH biosketch format, that is acceptable, but not required.
4. How do we submit final proposals?
A: Please email your submission to proposals@ncgvr.org
5. Our plan is combine all of the documents into a single (pdf) application file. Is this ok?
A: Yes, we prefer that you combine all documents into a single pdf, although separate files will also be accepted.
6. For quality assurance on products, I think you're requiring that publications go through some form of peer review, including what's already the norm for scholarly journals? Does this mean that nothing additional beyond the standard peer review process is required, unless we decide to publish in a non-reviewed outlet?
A: You are correct in assuming that we do not require applicants to establish an independent review panel. If you plan to disseminate via peer-reviewed journal articles, the peer-review process may be sufficient; you will have to describe in your proposal how that process addresses the concerns of NCGVR, particularly with regards to avoiding taking or appearing to take advocacy positions. For a non-reviewed outlet, you are correct that the research team will have to ensure that some QA or review process is conducted, but that does not need to entail a full review panel.
7. The RFP states IRB approval is required. Is pending approval acceptable?
A: IRB approval is **not** required at the proposal phase, but applicants should indicate the organization that will conduct the IRB review of their research and its Federalwide Assurance number. Awardees will be required to seek IRB approval before they can begin any work involving human subjects.
8. Does the NCGVR require IRB review for proposals deemed to not involve human subjects?
A: NCGVR does require IRB review to determine that human subjects are not involved in the research. That does not have to be submitted with the proposal, however; you must have plans to *get* IRB review, but the actual review can be completed after funding is awarded.

9. Can we put figures, tables, survey instruments, and the like in an appendix, or must they go in the body of the narrative and contribute to the page limit?
A: Figures, tables, and survey instruments can be in appendices and do not have to count towards your page limit. Reviewers may not read the appendices as thoroughly as the main narrative, so key details about your proposal should be included in the main narrative.
10. Does the NCGVR have any specific expectations regarding power analyses for nonrandomized studies? While our empirical design does make use of important policy changes over our proposed study period, power calculations within this setting obviously take on a different interpretation.
A: We do not have any specific expectations for power analyses beyond what is mentioned in the RFP, but you should make sure to thoroughly explain your approach to the power analyses you do include.

Budget Questions

11. How can we access the budget template?
A: The budget template has been posted online here: <https://www.ncgvr.org/rfp.html>
12. Are we authorized to utilize the NIH guide for salary caps for our project budget?
A: Capping salaries is not required; please propose actual salaries.
13. We typically calculate budget based on percentage effort. Therefore, we would state the person's full salary, % effort, and then the dollars requested.
A: Percent effort numbers are acceptable for the budget.
14. Are applicants allowed to submit a time and materials budget to NCGVR?
A: A time and materials budget is acceptable, but applicants should be prepared to provide backup documentation if requested, to support how the rates were calculated.
15. On the template for fringe, it states *"Include percentage and basis of calculation e.g., 25% on base salaries for full-time and part-time staff, except for graduate students."* We have a composite benefit rate we assess on graduate students. Are applicants able to use that?
A: A composite rate is acceptable, but applicants should be prepared to provide backup documentation if requested to support how the composite rate was calculated.
16. Are there any limits or other indirect cost restrictions?
A: No, there are no limits or restrictions on indirect costs.
17. Can we use the budget template and budget narrative to capture and describe in-kind contributions, along with the support being requested from NCGVR?
A: Yes, this is an acceptable approach.
18. The budget template you have is for 2 years. I did not see any formulas linking to the budget year pages, so can we just make a copy of year 2 and re-label as year 3?
A: Yes, this approach is fine for any project years beyond year 2.
19. Is NCGVR a stand-alone entity? Which organization will provide grant funds to selected awardees?
A: The NCGVR is not an entity at all. The grant to any organization selected by NCGVR will be funded by Schwab Charitable through a donor-advised fund established by RAND on behalf of the NCGVR. Approved research projects will be funded by an agreement that will be between Schwab Charitable and the grantee. RAND is not party to any agreement, it is only administering/supporting the

NCGVR efforts to review, select for award, and manage the grants that will be issued by Schwab Charitable.

Schwab Charitable is a 501(c)(3). <https://www.schwabcharitable.org/public/charitable/home>

20. What are the documentation needs, if any, for our subcontractor institutions for the proposal? Are letters of support or commitment required from our subcontractors?

A: Providing a letter of support/commitment from subcontractors can be provided but is not necessary. Subcontractors shall provide a budget in the same format as the lead organization using the budget template and a budget narrative. The selection committee may request additional information about proposed subcontractors upon reviewing full proposals; however, other than their budget and budget narrative, no other documentation is necessary.

21. Do you require letters of commitment from Consultants named on the proposal? The guide for full proposals in the RFP (section 6d) talks about letters of support or agreement from partners organizations or individuals, but it is unclear whether this includes consultants.

A: A letter of support/commitment from individual consultants should be provided. The letters help NCGVR to confirm that consultants have agreed to be included in the proposal.

22. We are hoping you can reconsider the use of the cap. Absent the cap, our organizations obligate us to use actual salaries, and more funds go to salary support than to grant operations. If you allow us to use the salary cap, we would need a note indicating that use of the NIH salary cap is necessary.

A: Unfortunately, it is too late in the process to begin requiring a salary cap, as it would not allow others to use the cap in the same way. We do not want to do anything that would impact the overall process right now, but do plan to consider this for future RFPs.

Dissertation Proposal Questions

23. Regarding university transcripts, is your preference official or unofficial transcripts?

A: Please submit official transcripts.

24. In the statement describing the dissertation study design, is your preference for the entire statement to be words or are tables acceptable as it is still within the required word count?

A: You can include tables and figures but yes, they will count towards your total word count.