Answers to Questions received about
NCGVR's Request for Proposals
March 13, 2020
Proposals Due May 1, 2020

Please note the new deadline of May 1, 2020 for all research, post-doctoral, and dissertation proposals.

Format, Logistics, and Content Questions

1. 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. For large teams with many CVs that would together be near or above 100 pages, you can submit CVs for the PI and co-PI and indicate that other CVs are available upon request. In that situation, however, you may want to include significant elements of your team's qualifications in the narrative that would otherwise only be found in the CVs.

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 5a-5e on pages 11-12 of the RFP. This does not include the bibliography, which is not subject to a page limit.

3. Should we organize the narrative with the categories from page 11, 5a-5e or with the assessment criteria on page 13? Do the assessment criteria need to have specific sections in the narrative?
   A: You should follow the outline on page 11. The criteria that the proposal will be assessed on will be applied to the overall narrative; you don't need to have specific sections for those items. If you want to include subsections to specifically address any of the assessment criteria, that is up to you, but it's not required.

4. How do we submit final proposals?
   A: All researchers selected to submit full proposals should have received a unique link that you can use to submit your proposal. If you did not receive the link, please email proposals@ncgvr.org.

5. Our plan is to combine all of the documents into a single (pdf) application file. Is this ok?
   A: Yes, as stated on page 11 of the RFP, researchers must combine all documents into a single pdf for submission.

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?

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> **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.

Budget Questions

10. Can we make changes to the budget from our LOI submission?
    > **A**: You are allowed to change the budget total that was submitted with the LOI. The submitted budgets will be assessed by reviewers for appropriateness relative to the work proposed.

11. Is it permissible to add collaborators at other institutions, thereby increasing the budget beyond what was originally estimated in the LOI, if the collaborators contribute uniquely and significantly in ways that are consistent with the overall research aims?
    > **A**: You may add collaborators to the project and you can make changes to the budget; you will of course want to make the argument for any collaborator's role/involvement and for the budget total.

12. How can we access the budget template?
    > **A**: The budget template has been posted online here: https://www.ncgvr.org/rfp.html

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. 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.

16. 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.

17. 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.

18. Do you require letters of commitment from Consultants named on the proposal? The guide for full proposals in the RFP (section 7d) talks about letters of support or agreement from partners organizations or individuals, but it is unclear whether this includes consultants.

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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.

Dissertation Proposal Questions

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

    A: Please submit official transcripts. They can be emailed to proposals@ncgvr.org. If they can only be mailed, please send to Meagan Cahill, RAND Corp., 1200 South Hayes St., Arlington, VA 22202. If a hard copy of your official transcript is being mailed, please also include a copy of the unofficial transcript as part of your pdf submission file.

20. 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.