

## PLANT BIOLOGY FAQ for Grant Proposals – as of July 6, 2009

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*Q. What are the current fringe rates?*

A. Fringe rates change every year. Fringe rates are based on annual base salary. Summer RA students do not take classes. As of the above date, **current fringe rates** are as follows:

- Academic appointments (including faculty and Research Associates): 32.3%
- Post-docs: 19.86%
- CS/BU (e.g. Junior Scientists): 37%
- Graduate Students: 16.84% (+8.16% FICA, if you include summer) + \$14.32/credit hour (780 hrs. for 2 semesters, another 260 hrs. if you include summer) (see spreadsheet)
- Undergraduates: there is no fringe for undergrads except FICA of 8.16% in the summer

*Q. What will the graduate stipend levels be for FY10?*

A. For FY10, a 12 month stipend for a regular student will be \$23,899 and a 12-month stipend for a student in the one-credit is still under discussion by the PBS directors. .

*Q. How is indirect cost computed?*

A. A .pdf document summarizing the University's Indirect Cost Agreement can be found at this link [http://www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/groups/ppd/documents/rates/f\\_and\\_a\\_rates.cfm](http://www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/groups/ppd/documents/rates/f_and_a_rates.cfm) . In general, indirect costs are computed at 51% of modified total direct costs. To obtain the base of modified total direct costs, subtract graduate student fringe costs and capital equipment costs from the total direct costs. Some agencies have a cap on indirect costs This should be noted in the PRF. Policy and procedures for negotiating non-standard agreements can be found here: <http://www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/groups/ppd/documents/procedure/Waiverproc.cfm> Please contact your grant administrator with specific questions.

For sub-contracts when the U of MN is the primary contractor, the University will charge F&A (indirect) costs on the first \$25,000 of each subcontract per project period.

*Q. What is the proposal submission process or protocol?*

A. When writing a grant proposal, please

1) Plan to route your Proposal Routing Form (PRF) with ample time to spare so that your proposal can be submitted to your funding source on time. See the information at the end of this section for the minimum length of time that SPA needs *after* your PRF has been completely routed.

2) Route a preliminary budget and budget justification to Lori Nicol for review prior to routing your PRF; 2 or 3 days would be helpful to give us time to check for errors.

3) If it is an NIH proposal, please give SPA the packet for their review (if you do a modular budget for NIH, SPA still needs the detail budget for internal use). Remember that NIH only allows 3% for inflation on multi-year proposals. Make sure you check the eRA Commons for proper transfer of your application to NIH after you receive a tracking email from the NIH Commons. SPA only concerns are "ERRORS" not warnings because your package will go to Review with warnings but not with errors.

If it is an NSF proposal, please give SPA access to your proposal in NSF Fastlane so they can review the budget in a timely manner. For other proposals, please give SPA the budget and whatever other information they need for review

4) Prepare the PRF (<http://egms.umn.edu/>) and provide the approvers with a copy of the budget, budget justification and project summary before or at the same time that you put your PRF in routing. If there are other documents that the sponsor needs, i.e. a work scope or letter of intent, please provide those as well. Cost sharing and matching funds must be outlined in writing and signed by the appropriate administrator of the funding source, i.e. Head or Dean.

Lori can provide you with the chart string to which unpaid effort will be cost shared if the grant is awarded. It is useful to put this information on the PRF so that the award can be set up quicker. This should be put in question 18, part 2 (yes) on the PRF.

5) Once the PRF is approved and ALL parts of the proposal are complete, send an email to [proposal@umn.edu](mailto:proposal@umn.edu) with the PRF#, the agency's name and the PI's name in the subject line. If there are any additional documents that the sponsor needs (usually only for sponsors other than NSF), please attach those to this email as well.

This must be completed **5 days before the agency due date** except for NSF Fastlane for which this only needs to be completed **24 hours** before the due date.

*Q. What is Plant Biology's routing chain for a PRF?*

A. l-nico, vande102, bays001, warne033

If you are a co-PI with another department, you need to get the routing chain from that department and include it to the routing chain. For very large collaborations between multiple departments, please contact Lori to see if there is a work-around.

*Q. How do I get access to NSF Fastlane?*

A. To use NSF FastLane, faculty and staff need an active account with a user name and password. To activate your account, send an e-mail to [eprops@umn.edu](mailto:eprops@umn.edu) with the following information:

- Your role (i.e., PI, co-PI, support staff);
- First name, middle initial, and last name
- e-mail address;
- Phone number;
- Fax number.

If you are a PI or co-PI, please also include the following information:

- Department;
- Highest degree earned;
- Year degree received.

Please allow three days for NSF to validate and activate your account.

SPA will e-mail you when you have been added as a FastLane user. Please call the SPA helpline at 624.5599 for questions about this process.

To access the NSF FastLane, click [here](#).

Q. How do I give Lori access to my NSF Fastlane proposal?

A. In order for me to see your Fastlane proposal, go to "proposals in progress", highlight the proposal you're working on, press the button "assign proposal pin", enter a 4 digit pin number. You need to let me know what the pin number and temporary ID# assigned by Fastlane for that proposal are. Then I can go in to access the budget (and edit other parts of your proposal, if you need me to).

Q. *How do I get NIH e-Commons Access?*

A. To use the NIH eRA Commons, all PIs submitting to NIH will need an active account with a user name and password. To activate your account, send an e-mail to [eprops@umn.edu](mailto:eprops@umn.edu) with the following information:

- First name, middle initial, and last name;
- E-mail address;
- Date of birth;
- Social Security number;
- A current or pending grant number, if applicable, (this allows the eRA system to link your name and registration to any proposals/awards).

If, for security reasons, you would prefer not to e-mail this information to SPA, please call 612.624.9004 and reference *NIH eRA Commons*. The staff member will take the information and forward it to NIH. SPA will destroy this information as soon as you are set up and a confirmation e-mail has been received by SPA from the Commons.

**Once your eRA Commons account has been setup, NIH will send you an e-mail within three days with your user name and a temporary password.**

NIH has notified us that this registration process needs to be completed at least 2-4 weeks prior to the submittal date of any Grants.gov submission. If you have not registered, we suggest you do so immediately.

To access the NIH era Commons, click [here](#).

Q. *How do I apply through Grant.gov?*

A. SPA has detailed information on their web site at:  
<http://www.ospa.umn.edu/GrantGov/Howtoapply.html>

*Q. Who is our Grant Administrator at SPA and how can I contact her/him?*

A. For most of our grant proposals, our grant administrator is:

Sowolo Abdullai, phone: 6-2724, email: [abdu0092@umn.edu](mailto:abdu0092@umn.edu)

For proposals to business and industry:

Laura Williams, phone: 5-9601, email: [willi478@umn.edu](mailto:willi478@umn.edu)

For state of MN proposals:

Brett Carlson, phone: 6-7441, email: [carls234@umn.edu](mailto:carls234@umn.edu)

*Q. Where can I find the official, signed indirect cost agreement document for my primary contractor?*

A. A .pdf document can be found at this [link](#).

*Q. Where can I find a letter of commitment or letter of intent?*

A. A .pdf document can be found at this link:

<http://www.ospa.umn.edu/subaward/documents/SubawardCommitmentForm.pdf>

If you are the subcontractor to another institution, put their name in the Primary Institution location instead of Regents of U of MN.

Q. What do I need if I have a subaward with my grant proposal?

A. <http://www.ospa.umn.edu/subaward/forms.htm>

<http://www.ospa.umn.edu/subaward/>