

## Preparing an Organizational Conflict of Interest Review Request

### Summary:

Some federal sponsors such as the Department of Defense and ARPA-H require disclosure of organizational conflicts of interest (OCI) at the time of proposal submission. [FAR 9.5](#) prohibits those who consult for a government agency from applying for the same funding opportunities to which they provided input. Some RFPs cite [2 CFR 200.318\(c\)](#) for similar reasons. These regulations ensure that the awardee's objectivity is not biased because of present or planned interests which relate to the work and that the awardee does not obtain unfair advantage in the proposal review and award process. In accordance with FAR 9.5/2 CFR 200.318(c), proposers are required to identify and disclose all facts relevant to potential OCIs involving the proposer's organization and any proposed team member. Note that if the sponsor is the Department of Energy, Northwestern is compliant with the Interim Policy on Conflict of Interest and able to comply with the terms of that policy. Ancillary review is not needed to comply with the Interim Policy on Conflict of Interest, but disclosure to DOE may be required if the proposal is funded.

### Scope:

All sponsor solicitations requiring disclosure of OCIs.<sup>1</sup>

### Procedure:

1. Check the funding opportunity announcement (FOA) for organizational conflict of interest language. Usually this will be under Eligibility Information.
2. If the requirements reference FAR 9.5, the principal investigator *and any key personnel, subcontractor, subawardee, or consultant* must identify and disclose all potential OCIs. Research administrators will ask the principal investigator and key personnel the following questions:
  - a) Have you provided Science Engineering Technical Assistance (SETA), Advisory and Assistance Services (A&AS),<sup>2</sup> or similar support to the agency you are proposing to?
  - b) Have you provided specifications, work statements, or evaluation services relative to the solicitation you are applying to?
  - c) Have you had access to proprietary information that could create an unfair advantage?
  - d) [If the RFP requires] Have you provided the above under a current award/subaward or a past award/subaward that ended within one calendar year of the proposal submission date?
3. If the FOA cites 2 CFR 200.318(c) (common with DoD agencies), there is probably no explicit mention of SETA and A&AS activities. Instead, ask your PI to confirm whether or not they have any advisory or consulting relationships of any kind with the funding agency.
4. Initiate an ancillary review request in CERES. Note that the COI office does not require a final budget for our review, but we need to know if there is capital equipment. Please include at least a portion of the budget and any quotes for capital equipment that will be included in the budget justification. *If there are subawards to a faculty startup, please indicate that.* Please attach the FOA as well.

**Add Ancillary Review**

1. \* Select either an organization or a person as reviewer:

Organization: Anc Rvw-Conflict Of Interest ...

Person: ...

2. \* Review type:

COI-Organizational COI

3. \* Response required?

☐ Yes ☐ No [Clear](#)

4. Comments:

5. Supporting documents:

+ Add

Name

There are no items to display

- 1) Select Anc Rvw-Conflict of Interest
- 2) Review type: COI-Organizational COI
- 3) Response required? Yes
- 4) In the comments, indicate the proposal due date or deadline.
- 5) Upload the FOA and a copy of the PI's and (if applicable) key personnel's attestation(s). Upload any forms required by the solicitation.

## Timing:

If the answer to question 2 is NO, then initiate the ancillary review **3 business days** prior to the SR deadline. If the answer to question 2 above is YES, please initiate the ancillary review at least **8 business days** prior to SR's deadline.

1. Note that this guide applies to Organizational Conflict of Interest, which is separate from the review of individual Financial Conflict of Interest. You can request OCI review as soon as you have the answers to question 2 above. There is no need to wait for investigators to complete their FCOI disclosure.
2. Briefly, SETA and A&AS are DoD industry terms to describe work performed for the government in a consulting capacity. It is not allowable for PIs to apply to funding opportunities that they had a hand in creating, so this question is asked in order to identify potential situations in which a PI has served in advisory capacity in the creation of the FOA.