Contact the program officer or contact person indicated. Explain your project and seek guidance regarding whether it’s a good match with the funder. This puts your name in front of the funder and helps clarify your project. Also, if you are considering several funding opportunities, a quick visit with the program officer can help you pick the best option for your project.

Follow the guidelines. If the guidelines list specific categories, use them in your proposal. If there are page limits, follow them. The guidelines can provide a blueprint to help you get an initial outline of your project.

Create a timeline toward submittal. Use the deadline and count backward. Keep in mind that you must submit your proposal to ORSP 5 business day days prior to the due date for administrative review and signatures. Contact ORSP early in the process for help.

Have a clear work plan. Make sure you define who will do what, when, where, and how. Consider your project scope—is it reasonable to accomplish your planned activities in the time available?

Make a clear and compelling case that your project can be successful. Funders want to select projects that have the best chance of succeeding.

Justify your budget requests and double check figures. Help funders understand how you reached the amounts you’re requesting. A well-justified budget will also help you when funded. Consider that funds may not be received until many months after you submit a proposal; a detailed budget will help you remember how you reached amounts and ensure the budget is drawn correctly.

Communicate with all stakeholders at the University. This includes ORSP, your college dean, department chair, and any co-investigators.

Share early proposal drafts with colleagues. They can give you excellent feedback on the content/science of your proposal.