



# ODOT RESEARCH SECTION PROPOSAL FORMATTING & SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A research proposal should be a well-organized document which establishes the need for the research, clearly defines the objectives, provides a detailed description of the work required to achieve those objectives, itemizes all costs and project deliverables, and recommends how the results of the research may be utilized by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). Proposals that merely repeat the posted Request for Proposals (RFP) will be considered non-responsive.

Proposals become the property of the ODOT and are treated as privileged documents and will be disposed of by the ODOT as deemed appropriate. ODOT retains the right to reject any proposal. ODOT is an equal opportunity employer.

**When Responding to a RFP**

- Develop a proposal, budget form and project schedule
- Attachments shall not exceed 14MB
- Submit all questions using the RFP inquiry Form on the Research Website
- Submit all proposals online using Formstack.
- Emailed submissions will not be accepted.

Text should be no less than 10-point font size with 1.5 line spacing and 1-inch margins on all sides. All pages, including appendices must be consecutively numbered.

Proposals submitted after the posted deadline will not be considered. Submission shall follow the format listed herein and non-compliance is cause for rejection.

All submissions must contain the following sections:

## Cover Page

The first page of the submission must include the items listed below. A new cover page shall be furnished with each revision to the proposal and shall include the date of the current revision, and the dates of all previous revisions.

**RFP Response Proposals**

- Project Title (as stated in the request for proposals or determined by the proposer for Student Studies. Student study titles should be descriptive, but brief, 10 words or less)
- RFP Number
- Name and business address of the proposing organization
- Name, title, address phone number, and email address of the PI(s)<sup>1</sup>
- ORCID for the PI(s)
- Name, title address and phone number of the person(s) who are authorized to bind the agency contractually
- Office of Sponsored Programs contact with phone number and email address
- Name and business address of any partnering agency
- Name, title, address, phone number and the email address of the technical contacts at the partnering agency
- Date of submission
- Requested ODOT funding amount
- Proposed project duration

<sup>1</sup> The research is considered to be under the technical direction of the principal investigator (PI) identified in the proposal. If multiple investigators are participating in a project, the PI shall be listed first on the proposal and on all reports. Because the PI is expected to have the primary responsibility for the work, the PI is also expected to be available and actively involved in the research efforts for the full contract period.



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Section Title	Submission Requirements
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Table of Contents should include a list of figures, tables, and appendices as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Problem Statement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A clear and concise description of the problem to be solved. This section should justify the need for the research and demonstrate the researcher's knowledge of the topic.</li> </ul>
<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The technical objectives upon which the research team is expected to focus should be provided. The goals of the research should be clearly identified, and include an explanation of what will be accomplished by conducting this research.</li> </ul>
<b>Research Context</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A brief summary of previous or existing research conducted on the topic must be provided. The proposal should demonstrate that this project is not a duplication of other ongoing or completed work. Enough detail to adequately document the state of the current practice should be provided, but should not be overburdened by a lengthy treatment of this topic. A TRID online literature search <a href="http://trid.trb.org/">http://trid.trb.org/</a> is encouraged. A bibliography and general comments on the results should be provided in an appendix.</li> </ul>
<b>Work Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The work plan shall completely detail the progression of the research including the submission of quarterly reports, a draft final report, and an acceptable final report. It should describe how the study will be structured to meet each objective. To the extent possible, it should identify major operational phases, relate the tasks to manpower requirements, time schedules and cost estimates, and describe how the activities will be carried out. Research methodology shall be described in sufficient detail to permit evaluation of the probability of success in achieving the objectives.</li> <li>If assistance from the Department is necessary in accomplishing specific tasks (e.g., traffic control, data collection, use of equipment/vehicles), the work plan must include a section that details such events.</li> <li>A project schedule must be provided with the proposal. The schedule should depict the following information: (1) a monthly breakdown indicating the duration of each task, (2) indication of overlapping tasks or activities that are to be performed simultaneously, and (3) the submission of project deliverables based on tasks. Projects that are phased and require the approval of ODOT in order to continue should provide separate schedules based on each phase. The project schedule should be included as an appendix to the proposal.</li> <li>Proposals containing a subcontractor(s) as part of the project team must provide a detailed division of work responsibilities in relation to the task(s) identified in the Work Plan. The information provided should clearly depict that the prime/proposing agency is performing the majority of the work.</li> <li>The development or purchase of software for other than a single user or a local application shall be specifically noted. An application architecture overview shall be included in proposals for these projects. The overview shall include (a) a testing methodology, (b) a deployment strategy, (c) a support and upgrade plan, and (d) a timeline for development.</li> <li>All submissions must clearly describe the role of the partnering agency in the work plan. All tasks to be completed by the partnering agency must be detailed in the proposal. Partnership agreements must be established before the proposal is submitted. Signed documents that acknowledge the role(s) of the partner(s) and financial contributions (either cash or in-kind) must accompany the proposal in an appendix.</li> </ul>
<b>Subcontractor and/or Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarize the role of each subcontracting or partnering agency in the proposal. It is required that non-Ohio based agency submissions include an Ohio-based subcontractor or partner having at least 20% of the total cost or labor. Additional documentation for subcontractors and partners is required in the Appendices.</li> </ul>



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<b>Benefits/Potential Application of Research Results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A summary of the benefits anticipated from the research findings must be included. The benefits section provides a description of the benefits ODOT expects from conducting this research. Both tangible/direct and intangible/indirect benefits should be considered (e.g., quantify how much money should be saved; improve quality, efficiency or safety; advance the state of technology). Identify who could potentially become the ultimate end users as well as other agencies/parties who could be impacted by the results of this research.</li> <li>• A preliminary discussion on how ODOT may apply the results of the research in order to achieve the benefits described must also be included.</li> </ul>
<b>Research Deliverables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All expected products, devices, procedures, licensing, source code and other items that will be provided to ODOT during and at the conclusion of the research must be listed. Formats for these documents are available in the Research Manual and on the Research website. The submission of required documents and participation in required meetings must be included as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Quarterly Progress Reports (unless noted otherwise by ODOT in the RFP)</b> The PI must submit quarterly progress reports in the format specified in the Research Manual and as depicted on the Research website. Electronic submission of the quarterly reports must be included in the work plan, depicted on the project schedule form, and acknowledged in the deliverables section.</li> <li><b>Reports and Fact Sheet</b> Unless specified otherwise, reports are required for all projects, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic submission of a draft final report and draft fact sheet due no later than 120 days prior to the project completion date.</li> <li>• Two electronic versions of the approved final report and approved fact sheet in the following formats are also required: (1) Adobe Acrobat (.pdf), and (2) Microsoft Word (.doc).</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Participation in Project Start-Up Meeting</b> In an effort to ensure everyone involved in a research project is informed of the contractual obligations, scope of work, deliverables, project milestones, time table, and appropriate office policies and procedures, a start-up meeting will be scheduled for each new project. This meeting will also provide an opportunity to clarify technical issues or concerns with the project. Invitees to this meeting include the researcher(s), technical liaisons, sponsoring Office Administrator, FHWA, and Research staff. The meeting should last for approximately one hour and is scheduled by the Research Section.</li> <li><b>Participation in a Research Review Session (as requested)</b> Project reviews are a mechanism for updating sponsors and other interested parties on the status of a research project. PIs (or students for Student Studies) will provide a presentation on the project's progress. Technical issues or problems may be resolved at this time, or subsequent meetings may be scheduled for that purpose. The Research Section will coordinate the scheduling of a review session. At the request of the Research Section, there could be at least one formal review session</li> <li><b>Participation in Research Results Presentation</b> Research Results presentations are a platform for providing a final presentation on a research project. An overview of the project will be provided with detailed discussions on the findings and recommendations. These presentations will possess strong technical components and in-depth discussions that focus primarily on the research and implementation. This presentation is only upon request and the Research Section will coordinate the scheduling of results presentations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Appendices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to the items mentioned above, the following information must be submitted as an appendix to the proposal. Links to forms exist where appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Itemized Budget</b> A copy of ODOT's <a href="#">Research Proposal Budget Form</a> must be completed. This form must also</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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be submitted as an Excel form along with the proposal.

A Budget Justification section must be provided in the proposal. Costs must be itemized and justified by including copies of information used to prepare the budget (e.g., release time contracts, price quotes for all equipment, catalog sheets). For projects that will be performed in distinct phases, a budget for each phase is required. The budget must be established within the guidelines of the Research Manual (see [Chapter 5](#) for additional information). For the development of travel costs, refer to the [State of Ohio travel policy](#).

All proposals must include provisions for a project start-up meeting, annual review sessions, and a results presentation.

### ***Project Schedule***

Monthly breakdown indicating the duration of each task and the submission of project deliverables based on tasks. A [project schedule](#) template is available on our web site.

### ***Facilities & Equipment***

Description or list of the general facilities and equipment at the researcher's disposal that is necessary to conduct the work.

### ***Qualifications of Research Team***

Brief description of the academic, industrial, professional, and/or research experiences of the team in the same, or closely related, problem area of the project. This information must be provided for the PI and all other research team members (including consultants and subcontractors) participating to a significant degree. Resumes and publication lists may be included, but limited to **no more than two (2) pages** per individual.

### ***Other Commitments of the Research Team***

Proposals shall demonstrate that the organization and all members of the research team, including subcontractors and partners identified in the proposal, will be able to meet the commitments of the proposal. A comprehensive listing of commitments to other work shall be provided. This shall include staff-hour commitments and/or percentage of time committed to other work for each member of the proposed research team.

### ***Subcontractors/Consultants/Partners***

Letters of support from each subcontractor, consultant or partner must be included. These letters must identify roles and costs for services.

**Additional information may be supplied as an Appendix at the discretion of the proposer.**