



Ohio's Research Initiative for Locals

Proposal Formatting & Submission Guidelines

Page 1 of 5

(Updated: August 2019)

Ohio's Research Initiative for Locals (ORIL) is an innovative program designed to investigate the research needs of local transportation agencies in Ohio. Overseen by a Board, ORIL projects are identified, selected, and managed in accordance with the ORIL Standard Operating Procedures, which are available online at:

<http://oril.transportation.ohio.gov>.

The Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) Research Section serves as the contracting agent for ORIL. For more information on the ORIL program or selection process, please visit the website above or contact ODOT's Research Liaison at 614-644-8135.

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 transportation organizations in Ohio. Proposals that merely repeat the posted Request for Proposals (RFP) will be considered non-responsive.

Proposals become the property of the ORIL Board and are treated as privileged documents and will be disposed of by ORIL as deemed appropriate. ORIL retains the right to reject any and all proposals. As the contracting agent for ORIL, ODOT is an equal opportunity employer.

Proposals and budget forms will be submitted using an online system, [Formstack](#). You will complete general information on the form, then attach a MS Word and PDF of the proposal and the Excel budget form. After you click submit, you will receive a confirmation email. Uploads are limited to 14MB per submission (if your upload size is larger, please contact the Research Section.) Please adhere to these instructions. Non-compliance with the submission requirements is cause for the rejection of the submission. Cost estimates for posted projects are not available.

All questions concerning an RFP, including technical clarifications of the project, as well as formatting and submission of application MUST be submitted using the RFP Inquiry form located on the RFP site. While the RFPs are posted, no one outside of ODOT's Research Section is allowed to discuss RFPs. Failure to adhere to this could result in application disqualification. Clarifications will be posted to the [RFP website](#) as they become available, so check regularly for updates.

In order to be considered, each submission must be **received** by ODOT's Research Section by **3:00 PM (ET) on September 27, 2019. Absolutely no extensions will be granted to this deadline.** All items received after 3:00 PM (ET) on September 27, 2019 will **not** be considered. An email confirmation will be sent to the submitter's email address acknowledging that the submission has been received. It is the submitter's responsibility to ensure that the submission has been received by ODOT's Research Section by the stated deadline. The confirmation email is the only acceptable proof that a submission has been made. In the event a submitter wants to challenge whether or not their submission was received by the deadline, the confirmation email will be the only evidence accepted. Failure on the submitter's part to provide a copy of the confirmation email will result in a submission being considered late and therefore ineligible for consideration. It is advised that submitters allow adequate time to submit proposals in the event that firewalls prevent users from submitting proposals using the Formstack website.

ODOT's research program is not a grant program. All research projects are treated as reimbursement contracts for services rendered. To review ODOT's standard research contract, please [click here](#). If your organization is unable to accept the terms of this contract, do not submit a proposal for consideration. Submission of a proposal is considered an acceptance of the standard research contract. All projects are subject to the policies and procedures outlined in the [ORIL Guidebook](#) and the [RD&T2 Manual of Procedures](#).



Ohio's Research Initiative for Locals

Proposal Formatting & Submission Guidelines

Page 2 of 5

(Updated: August 2019)

All posted projects will be funded through ODOT's State Planning & Research, Part B program at a ratio of 80% federal funds and 20% state funds. The projects are expected to begin during fiscal year 2020 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020); a specific start date is not available.

The research program is open to the entire transportation research community, including public and private universities and consultants. ODOT does not prequalify researchers and accepts submissions from out-of-state organizations. Proposals submitted from non-Ohio based organizations must include an Ohio-based organization as a partner or subcontractor that has at least 20% of the total project hours or cost. ODOT is an equal opportunity employer. ODOT reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. All projects are subject to the availability of funding.

Proposals are limited to twenty (20) pages in length, excluding the cover page, table of contents, and appendices; however, shorter proposals are encouraged. **Please be concise.** 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. All proposals must contain, at a minimum, the following sections:

Cover Page

The first sheet of the proposal will 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, the original submission date, and the dates of all previous revisions.

- Project Title (as stated in the RFP)
- RFP Number (as stated in the RFP)
- Name and business address of the proposing organization
- Name, title, address, phone number, and email address of the Principal Investigator(s)¹
- Name, title, address, and phone number of the person(s) who are authorized to bind the agency contractually
- Date of submission
- Requested ORIL funding amount
- Proposed project duration

¹ 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.

Table of Contents

The table of contents should include a complete list of figures, tables, and appendices as appropriate.

Problem Statement

A clear and concise description of the problem to be solved must be provided. This section should justify the need for the research and demonstrate the researcher's knowledge of the topic.

Goals and Objectives of the Study

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.

Research Context

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. An online TRID literature search <<http://trid.trb.org/>> is encouraged. A bibliography and general comments on the results should be provided in an appendix.



Ohio's Research Initiative for Locals

Proposal Formatting & Submission Guidelines

Page 3 of 5

(Updated: August 2019)

Work Plan

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.

If assistance from a local transportation agency is necessary in accomplishing specific tasks (e.g.: traffic control, data collection, use of equipment/vehicles, etc.), the work plan must include a section that details such events.

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 prior approval in order to continue should provide separate schedules based on each phase. The project schedule should be included as an appendix to the proposal.

Proposals containing subcontractor(s) and/or partners 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. ***Proposals submitted from non-Ohio based organizations must include an Ohio-based organization as a partner or subcontractor that has at least 20% of the total project hours or cost.***

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, at a minimum, the following items: (1) testing methodology, (2) deployment strategy, (3) support and upgrade plan, and (4) timeline for development.

Benefits/Potential Application of Research Results

A summary of the benefits anticipated from the research findings must be included. The benefits section provides a description of the benefits Ohio can expect from conducting this research. Both tangible/direct and intangible/indirect benefits should be considered (e.g., quantifiable cost savings; quality improvement, efficiency or safety enhancement; advancement of the state of technology, etc.). Identify who could potentially become the ultimate end users as well as other agencies/parties which could be impacted by the results of this research.

A preliminary discussion on how local transportation agencies may apply the results of the research in order to achieve the benefits described must also be included.

Research Deliverables

All expected products, devices, procedures, licensing, source code and other items that will be provided to ORIL during and at the conclusion of the research must be listed. The submission of required documents and participation in required meetings must be included as follows:

Quarterly Progress Reports - The PI must submit quarterly progress reports in the format specified in ODOT's Research Manual and as depicted on ODOT's 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.

Final Report and Fact Sheet - Unless specified otherwise in the RFP, reports are required for all

projects, in the format specified in ODOT's Research Manual and as depicted on ODOT's Research website, as follows:

- Electronic submission of a draft final report and draft fact sheet are due no later than 120 days prior to the project completion date.
- Two electronic versions of the approved final report and approved executive summary in the following formats are due by the contract completion date: (1) Adobe Acrobat (.pdf), and (2) Microsoft Word (.doc).

Project Article – Upon request, all research projects are to produce one article for inclusion in a newsletter or posting on a website. The text for the article should not exceed two pages. At least one graphic must be provided in JPEG format. ODOT's Research Section will coordinate the due date of the article and will contact the PI as appropriate. Submission of articles should occur electronically.

Participation in Project Start-Up Meeting - 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 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 may include the researcher(s), technical liaisons, FHWA, and ORIL staff. The meeting should last for approximately one hour and is scheduled by ODOT's Research Section.

Participation in Project Review Session – A project review session is a mechanism for updating sponsors and other interested parties on the status of a research project. PIs 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. ODOT's Research Section will coordinate the scheduling of review sessions. At least one formal review session will take place for every 12-month period of a project.

Participation in Research Results Presentation - 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. ODOT's Research Section will coordinate the scheduling of results presentations.

Itemized Budget - A copy of ODOT's Research Proposal Budget Form must be completed and submitted. This form is available on ODOT's Research website and must be submitted as an Excel form along with the proposal.

Costs must be justified by including copies of information used to prepare the budget (e.g., release time contracts, price quotes for all equipment, catalog sheets, etc.). For projects that will be performed in distinct phases, a separate budget for each phase is required. The budget must be established within the guidelines of ODOT's Research Manual (see **Section 5** for additional information). For the development of travel costs, refer to the State of Ohio travel policy <http://ohiosharedservices.ohio.gov>. All proposals must include provisions for a project start-up meeting, annual review sessions, and a results presentation.

Project Schedule - A monthly breakdown indicating the duration of each task and the submission of project deliverables based on tasks must be provided.

Facilities & Equipment - A description or list of the general facilities and equipment at the researcher's disposal that are necessary to conduct the work must be provided.

Qualifications of Research Team – A 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 must be provided. This information must be supplied for the PI and all other research team members (including consultants and subcontractors) participating to a significant degree. Resumes and publication lists may



Ohio's Research Initiative for Locals

Proposal Formatting & Submission Guidelines

Page 5 of 5

(Updated: August 2019)

be included, but are 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.

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

Specific Assurances with Respect to Federally-Assisted Projects

The Ohio Department of Transportation in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, all bidders including disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, low-income status, or limited English proficiency in consideration for an award.