**Guidelines for Drafting a Statement of Work**

**for Industry Sponsored Projects**

The Statement of Work (SOW) is an attachment to a Sponsored Research Agreement where the work to be performed is described. The SOW should include a description of any tasks to be performed and deliverables expected to be provided to the sponsor. The SOW should also include a timeline for performance of the project.

Preliminary proposals to sponsors, particularly industry sponsors, usually describe project background and objectives sufficiently but lack specificity in describing the tasks to be performed, the details expected in reports, and a measurable timeline for completing tasks and providing deliverables. Contract disputes often occur when there is ambiguity in the agreement and the expectations of the parties are not adequately captured in the SOW. To avoid potential disputes, it is important for the investigator to be specific in defining tasks, deliverables, and any timelines expected by the sponsor. If the performance of the project is dependent on any action to be taken by the sponsor, those obligations of the sponsor should also be specifically defined. Investigators should always avoid “over-promising” in their proposals to industry and should only include tasks in the SOW that they have a reasonable expectation of performing within the proposed project timeline.

Investigators can refer to the following guidance and the separate template provided by the Office of Industry Contracts to define their SOW for a project:

**Project Background**

*Succinctly describe the problem that this research will address (1 or 2 paragraphs is fine). Describe the current scientific and technological state of the art or the developmental status of the field to be advanced.*

**Project Objectives**

*At the beginning of this section, succinctly complete the following sentence:*

*The goal of this project is to…*

*(Complete the sentence with a brief description of the goal(s) and how the goal(s) will be met. Goals can be technical, economic, or social. Please be brief, two to three sentences maximum.)*

**Project Details**

*Summarize the specific tasks to be performed for this project.*

*Poor example:*

*Task 1: Assess class needs for public health awareness.*

*Better example:*

*Task 1: Survey 4 classes of 20 students in asthma awareness. Each class will answer a 25-question survey that assesses their general knowledge of asthma issues as they relate to public health. One reviewer should take about 1 hour with each class to take the survey and another 2 hours per class to assess the data.*

*If there are meetings, conferences, or other administrative requirements of the project, they should also be outlined in this section.*

**Project Deliverables**

*List the anticipated deliverables, which should typically be limited to interim and final reports. Any other deliverables are subject to approval by the Office of Research.*

*Poor example:*

*“PI will be required to give weekly reports of progress during the soybean season with more frequent reports during the height of the season.”*

*The problem with the above example is that it does not specify what needs to be in the reports, what “more frequent” means, and when the “height of the season” is.*

*Better example:*

*“PI will be required to give weekly reports consisting of wind pattern analysis, fungi spore distribution, and potential risk areas. During the height of the season, May 15-July 15, the PI may be required to give bi-weekly reports.”*

**Project Schedule**

*This section provides all key dates for the project. It states dates for the tasks and deliverables. It also covers the dates for the administration portion of the statement of work. The project start date will be defined in the Sponsored Research Agreement.*

*Example:*

*This project is expected to be completed 3 months from project start date.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Tasks*** | ***Estimated Date*** |
| *T1* | *Milestone 1 – Task 1 completed. Interim report delivered.* | *1 Month after Project Start* |
| *T2* | *Milestone 2 – Task 2 completed.* | *2 Months after Project Start* |
|  | *Project End. Final report delivered.* | *3 Months after Project Start* |

**Total Requested Budget**

*Your college pre-award office has a budget worksheet available to help you calculate the project budget. Include all costs, including salary/fringe for the Principal Investigator, for industry sponsored projects. Prepare the internal budget worksheet and allow your college pre-award office to review the line items before you include the Total Requested Budget in your statement of work. Do not include line-item details from your internal budget in your SOW. Include the total budget and a high-level summary of the budget categories included in the budget request.*

**Additional Tips**

* *Define any acronyms used in your proposal or SOW. The proposal/SOW may be reviewed by the sponsor’s business and legal teams, so make sure any terms are clearly defined for non-technical reviewers.*
* *For industry research proposals, keep it simple. Unless required by the sponsor, avoid including technical references or attaching CVs or other unnecessary information to your proposal.*
* *Avoid including proprietary or unpublished technical information in an industry research proposal unless necessary to sufficiently describe the project to be performed. The proposal may be reviewed by multiple people in the sponsor’s organization and unless the sponsor and University have executed a Non-Disclosure Agreement, the sponsor may have no obligation to keep the information confidential. If you must include proprietary or unpublished technical information to sufficiently describe the project to be performed, contact the Office of Industry Contracts to discuss executing a Non-Disclosure Agreement with the sponsor before the proposal is submitted.*

Contact the Office of Industry Contracts with any questions:

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