

Idaho Transportation Department Research Program RFPs – Frequently Asked Questions

Question: May I contact the research project manager or anyone at ITD outside of the Research Program to ask questions and learn more about the project as I am preparing a proposal?

Answer: No. Please submit all questions in writing by emailing them to research@itd.idaho.gov. All questions must be received by the clarifying questions deadline listed in the RFP and on the [ITD Research Program webpage](#).

Question: What is the maximum budget for the project?

Answer: Please refer to RFP Section 3.4 - Response Content. Item 10 - Budget identifies the maximum budget and provides other details regarding proposal budgets including an example budget template.

Question: Does the peer reviewer mentioned in Section 3.4, item 8.d.i. (under staffing) have to be hired from outside our organization (subcontractor) or can it be someone from within our team?

Answer: The peer reviewer is not required to be from outside the research organization. They should be an individual who is familiar and experienced with the research topic but should be not involved in *any aspect* of the research project. The peer reviewer is responsible for providing an independent assessment of the appropriateness of the methods used and soundness of the analysis performed. The peer review should also assess whether the report findings and conclusions are adequately supported.

Question: Can the report editor mentioned in Section 3.4 8.d.ii (under staffing) have a dual role and be also a researcher from our team?

Answer: Yes, the report editor can be a member of the research project team. We require that the editor familiarize themselves with the [ITD Research Report Style Manual](#) and adhere strictly to the [ITD Research Report Template](#) such that all material in the final report document meets accessibility requirements under [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#). Additionally, the report editor must agree to be the point of contact for ITD questions and comments regarding report language, formatting, etc. As stated in the RFP, the ITD Research Report Style Manual and Research Report Template can be found on the [ITD Research Program webpage](#) by selecting the *Resources for Researchers* drop down menu.

Question: Are the kickoff and closeout meetings required to be in person? Or can they be virtual?

Answer: The kickoff and closeout meeting can be either in-person or virtual. If the researchers opt for in-person meetings, then any necessary travel costs must be included in the budget submitted.

Question: Is there a preferred page layout (margins, line spacing) and font (style, size) that should be used for the response?

Answer: Font size 11 or greater is preferred, otherwise, there are no formatting requirements for proposals.

Question: Does the 10-page limit include the cover page (i.e., cover page + 10 pages or cover page + 9 pages)?

Answer: The 10-page limit does not include the cover page. A cover page + 10 pages of proposal content is acceptable.

Question: Should resumes and any attachments showing previous research history be submitted as part of the PDF or can they be submitted as separate files?

Answer: Resumes and attachments should be submitted as part of a single PDF proposal package. Please do not submit them as separate files. You may include links to web or server hosted files in the proposal PDF if you would prefer attachments to be separate.

Question: Is there a limit on the attached file(s) sizes?

Answer: The Idaho Transportation Department email server permits receipt of file sizes up to 45 MB. If the proposal is larger than the Department email file size limit, the proposer may set up a web- or cloud-based file sharing protocol, but the file sharing platform must be capable of recording a timestamp when the file was uploaded to ensure the proposal was submitted by the deadline listed on the RFP.

Question: Does ITD accept proposal submissions as a zipped folder containing several files?

Answer: No, the proposal should be contained in a single PDF. You may include links to web or server hosted files in the proposal PDF if you would prefer attachments to be separate.

Question: Are there templates for the two charts in Section 3.4 showing personnel breakdown and budget?

Answer: No, there are no templates for tables to itemize personnel and budget. The tables included in the RFP are simply to illustrate examples of how a proposer might choose to effectively present their personnel and budget breakdowns.

Question: What is the process if two institutions are planning to collaborate on the same project?

Answer: The proposal process is the same if two institutions are planning to partner on the project and wish to submit a collaborative proposal. In this instance, one institution should be identified as the lead research entity and that institution will be responsible for submitting invoices for services rendered on the project. Additionally, we encourage proposers to clearly define project team personnel and their respective duties in the collaborative proposals.

Question: Does ITD have any cap on the Indirect Rate (e.g., 25%) for the released list of projects? And if there is no cap on the overhead that, can the research team submit a proposal with a project budget above the total project cost listed in the RFP provided it is reasonable and justified in the work plan?

Answer: Idaho Universities are limited to charging 20% overhead per [Idaho State Board of Education policy \(see item 3\)](#). Other public universities are limited to the federally approved overhead rate for their institutions. The project budget listed in the RFP is the estimated maximum amount for the anticipated work as determined by ITD. If the proposers estimated cost for completing the work outlined in the RFP exceeds the maximum amount listed in the RFP, the proposed work can be modified to fit within the maximum allowable budget. Proposers should identify their modifications to the scope of work that are the result of budgetary constraints.

Question: Can you provide clarification on how the scoring for the budget and cost estimate is based & calculated? Do proposals with lower proposed budgets receive a higher score?

Answer: As indicated in Section 4 of the RFP, cost is one of the four evaluation criteria that will be used to score proposals and will account for 20 percent of the overall scoring. The proposal with the lowest overall cost will receive all available points in this evaluation category and other proposals will receive points proportional to the cost relative to the low-cost proposal as illustrated below.

| | Proposal Cost | Percent of Total Points | Score Received |
|------------|---------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Proposal A | \$150,000 | 100.0% | 200 |
| Proposal B | \$160,000 | 93.8% | 188 |
| Proposal C | \$180,000 | 83.3% | 167 |
| Proposal D | \$190,000 | 78.9% | 158 |
| Proposal E | \$200,000 | 75.0% | 150 |

Question: Can we include students (undergraduate or graduate students) in our project?

Answer: Yes, undergraduate and graduate students can be included in the project.

Question: Are exceptions to the Standard Terms and Conditions allowed to be submitted with the proposal?

Answer: Proposed exceptions to the Standard Terms and Conditions can be submitted with your proposal. Any Modifications to the Standard Terms and Conditions will be considered during contract negotiations and any changes must be mutually agreed to by both parties.

Question: Are there any consultant pre-qualification requirements?

Answer: No, however, the consultant must conform to Insurance Requirements and Standard Terms and Conditions as stated in Section 6 of the RPF, unless amended by mutual agreement.