

Need for Internal Approvals for Pre- and Post-Award Actions/Use of the Sponsored Project Action Request (SPAR) Form

Purpose: The Sponsored Project Activation Form (SPAR) is used to secure internal approvals for pre- and post-award actions

During the performance of a sponsored project, the Principal Investigator or Project Director may need to request changes in the terms and conditions of the award; for example, approval for an advance account request or pre-award expenditures, no-cost time extensions, equipment purchases, travel changes, issuing of subcontracts, budget revisions, changes in key personnel, modification of the scope of work, cost share changes, etc.

Internal Approvals

The SPAR form is used to initiate the request to modify the award. Internal approvals are given by the concurring signatures of the PI, Chair/Director, Dean, or Vice President as appropriate (for example, Provost approval is required for requests initiated by Deans), with the Associate Vice President for Sponsored Projects at OSP or other authorized signatory providing the institutional approval.

Sponsor Approvals

Federal agencies may delegate “expanded authority” to the University to approve post-award changes, with direct approval required only for major changes such as a change of scope or change of PI. Some non-federal sponsors delegate similar authority to the University. Under such expanded authority, the authorized signatory may approve requests that are allowable under the terms and conditions of the award. If approved, an award modification is issued notifying of the change.

If a request is allowable under the terms and conditions of the award, but requires Sponsor approval, OSP will initiate the request by submitting a letter to the sponsor explaining the circumstances and recommending approval of the change. (Note: although a PI may discuss the request with his/her program officer, the contracts officer is the only individual authorized by the sponsor to provide the approval. Some agencies, like USDOED, the same individual is responsible for both roles. **Change requests should be formally submitted through OSP.** If the request is approved by the sponsor, an award modification is issued approving the change.

If the request is not allowable, the original document will be returned to the submitter with an explanation why the change cannot be approved.

Other correspondence with Sponsors

Faculty may communicate directly with their program officers on program---related activities; however, communications with the sponsor’s authorized/contractual officials should be submitted by/through OSP, not directly by a PI/PD.