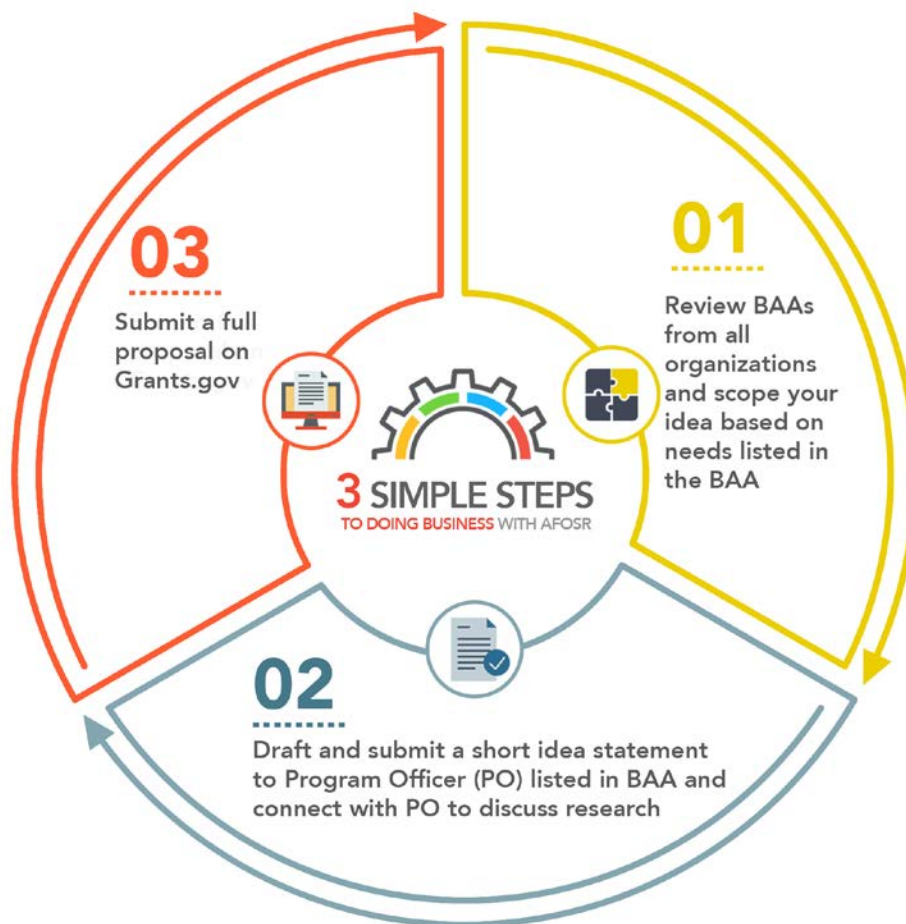


Submitting a Proposal

HOW ACADEMICS CAN WORK WITH AFOSR

The Basics

Roughly 70% of AFOSR's total budget is spent on funding basic research grants with academia. At a high level this is how an interested researcher would approach obtaining funding from the Air Force Office of Scientific Research.



1. Review BAAs & Scope Ideas

In order to find opportunities that match your interests, review Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs) from various organizations. You can search [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), the official source for finding and applying to Federal grants, based on:

- Keyword
- Eligibility
- Category
- Agency

SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

After narrowing down your options, continue to study and keep current with BAAs. You may also wish to contact Program Officers about attending program reviews to understand the directions and needs of any particular AF basic research portfolio of interest.

2. Draft Idea Statement & Contact Program Officer

Next, scope and draft your idea statement. Your idea statement doesn't have to be all-inclusive, but it should address the unique value proposition of the research and be specific enough that it catches the interest of the Program Officer (PO).

With your idea statement ready to go, it's time to reach out to the PO point of contact listed in the AFOSR BAA. After discussing your idea statement with the PO, some will want a specifically formatted white paper, while others may want to have follow-up conversations in-person, over the phone, or via email. If your idea seems promising, the PO will initiate an ongoing dialogue setting up expectations and explaining the process for full proposal submission.

Throughout your working relationship with AFOSR, you can expect an AFOSR PO to take on a number of roles:

- Topical / Program Expert
- Educator / Communicator
- Team Builder
- Advocate
- Evaluator
- Administrator
- Active Member of AFRL, DoD & Scientific Communities

3. Apply for Grant Funding

Before submitting a full proposal, be sure to determine the correct funding mechanism. There are a number of different funding opportunities for universities to obtain basic research grant funding and each has its own purpose and associated requirements.

- Traditional grants
- University Research Initiatives (i.e. MURI, DURIP)
- Special Programs (i.e. HBCU/MSI, YIP)

It is important to note that traditional grants can be awarded year round from the general BAA, while other opportunities may have specific deadlines or qualification criteria.

Once you have worked with your PO to determine the correct funding opportunity, it's time to submit a full proposal.

SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

A good proposal is one that includes:

- Strong technical merit
- Air Force relevance
- Solid budget justification
- Consideration given to every requirement stated in the BAA

AFOSR receives far more good proposals than it is able to fund in a given year. Therefore, POs must factor many other considerations into funding decisions. Those include, but aren't limited to:

- Overlap with program interests, and connecting to DoD labs
- Potential for scientific breakthroughs
- Strategic directions
- Budget realities
- Peer review recommendations

Understanding the Peer Review Process

After receiving a proposal, AFOSR runs it through a vigorous peer review process looking for technical merit, Air Force relevance, and other criteria based on the requirements of the BAA.

TECHNICAL:

Proposal subject area is appropriately addressed in the AFOSR BAA.

- What will be the results of this work and how novel are they?
- How will the results advance the state of the art and how significant will the advancement be?
- Will the proposed approach produce the desired results? What are its strengths and weaknesses?
- Comment on the key personnel's qualifications, capabilities, related experience, and past performance.
- Additional comments and relevant issues?

RELEVANCE & RELATION OF AF:

OTHER CRITERIA:

- Comment of the adequacy and/or availability of the facilities, equipment, hardware, simulation tools and techniques integral to the objectives of the proposed research.
- Comment on the realism and reasonableness of the proposed project cost.

IS THERE AN ASPECT OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH THAT WILL LEAD TO A SIGNIFICANT TRANSFORMATION IN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE STATE-OF-THE-ART? IF SO, PLEASE BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE TRANSFORMATIONAL ASPECT OF THE WORK.

SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

Budget Justification Considerations

- **For Personnel Management:** Discuss realism and reasonableness of the (a) number of personnel, (b) labor mix, (c) level of effort etc.
- **For Permanent Equipment (>\$5,000/unit and useful life > 1 year):** Are all the permanent equipment items special purpose and/or test equipment, interconnected and interdependent, reasonable and acceptable for the work to be performed and of significant value to the project?
- **Consumables and Facility Charges:** Provide JUSTIFICATION and explanation with respect to proposed research. Provide quotations and/or links to the price structure of consumables, materials supplies, and facility charges.
- **Other Direct Costs:** Provide justification for direct costs
- **Travel:** For travel or quantity of trips, (a) rationale for travel, (b) the amount of travel or quantity of trips, and (a) the number of personnel traveling in terms of realism and reasonableness for the work
- **Subcontract:** Discuss (a) rationale for these costs, (b) why it is necessary, (c) what does it add to the research, and (d) why can it not be accomplished by the awardee/grantee.

Get Started & Stay Involved

Once funded, remain engaged and continue with the process by

- Reviewing BAAs
- Attending program reviews
- Collaborating with other PIs in the program

GOOD LUCK AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST!