
*GUIDE TO PREPARING TENDERS AND SIMILAR SUBMISSIONS FOR CONTRACT
RESEARCH AT UNSW*

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Contract research results from a request from an industry, government, or semi-government body for a specified research project to be undertaken with identified aims and objectives. It may also result from jointly-initiated research collaborations between the University and an industry, government, or semi-government body or from a competitive bid (a request for tender).

Most Contract Research is awarded in response to a submitted Tender or Proposal. This guide is an advisory for UNSW researchers on how to prepare Tenders and similar submissions for contract research at UNSW and includes information on pricing and other UNSW Policies.

UNSW Research Services acknowledges Business Victoria's 'Tender Advice Website' on which some of what follows was based.

MOST IMPORTANT ADVICE TO SAVE TIME

THE DRAFT CONTRACT

Many Requests for Tender or Proposal (RFT or RFP henceforward RFT) require you to address whether or not your organisation (ie. UNSW) can accept the Contract of Award should your Tender be successful. ***IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WHILST YOU START PREPARING YOUR TENDER THAT YOU FORWARD THIS DRAFT CONTRACT TO UNSW RESEARCH SERVICES FOR APPROVAL AND ADVICE PRIOR TO SUBMISSION.***

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Background IP

If you intend to incorporate background intellectual property (IP) in your project or RFT then please check you are free to do so. You should consult with UNSW Research Services or NewSouth Innovations (NSi) about the use of background IP prior to finalising your submission.

Forward IP

If you think that IP or know-how (including a report or new practice) will be generated from the project or RFT, it is important that the contract protects UNSW's and your ongoing rights to access and/or use this. Again, you should discuss the protection of forward IP with UNSW Research Services prior to finalising your submission. NewSouth Innovations must also be consulted if the forward IP has potential commercial value.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Risk Matters

If the RFT or sponsor requires special conditions or certifications to be provided in advance of submission you should organise these straight away via UNSW Research Services. If you require insurance certificates, advice on Ethics Clearances or referral on matters such as the Child Protection Act, Privacy Act or other Risk assurances you may also need to consult with the UNSW Risk Management Unit or UNSW Ethics Secretariat.

UNSW FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

If the project or RFT requires the use of specialised facilities or equipment you should secure these prior to submitting the tender.

Standard UNSW facilities such as buildings, electricity, gas, water, air conditioning, mechanical and/or IT services should be able to accommodate the project otherwise the use may be considered 'specialised', and thus require permission from your relevant supervisor.

It is also important to understand that unlike ARC and NHMRC grants you should cost recover everything in relation to an RFT or other similar submission. UNSW does not subsidise overhead costs associated with Contract Research such as equipment or use of equipment, laboratory consumables, technical support and provision for use and depreciation on equipment. Please see the UNSW Policy on Competitive Neutrality and Pricing for further advice on this.

*ADVICE ON WRITING/PREPARING TENDERS**What is a tender ?*

A tender is an offer to provide goods and or services for a particular price and to certain specifications.

Tenders can include:

- quotations
- proposals
- offers
- estimates
- prices
- bids

Submitting a tender is common for businesses supplying goods or services to other businesses or the public sector. At a basic level, you expect to quote for a job or to write a letter saying why you should be given the business.

However, more formal tenders often apply to bigger jobs or for supply contracts spread over time. You will find public-sector work in particular, has specific tendering processes. This applies to customers ranging from a local council or hospital to a government department.

Submitting a bid raises your profile with the customer and helps you learn about your customers' needs. Even if you don't win the work this time, writing a tender can clarify your aims, strengths and weaknesses. You can ask for feedback on your bid which will help you with your next tender. UNSW Research Service's Pre-Award Team can assist with Tender preparation, especially budgeting.

Meeting the bid specification

When writing tenders, make sure you match the bid specification and answer all questions.

Summarise your bid and explain why it answers the client's needs. Be prepared to differentiate yourself from your competition. Write this last but put it at the beginning of your tender.

Clients will also expect you to:

- state the purpose and origin of the bid
- summarise your work as a researcher, past experience and credentials for this job
- outline how you'll carry out the work and how and when the client's aims will be achieved
- give greatest attention to demonstrating your abilities in relation to those criteria carrying the greatest weighting
- explain the benefits and value-for-money of your bid
- detail when and how goods and services are to be delivered and provide a timetable
- demonstrate your team's research skills, experience of similar work and their responsibilities if you win the contract
- explain how you will manage the project
- give details of your pricing and any aftercare arrangements within the price, including an explanation of the UNSW overhead charge
- include a covering letter that responds to the bid invitation, summarises your main message and explains how the documents are organised
- submit a complete response

Tender checklist

It is best to work to a checklist when tendering to ensure that you cover all aspects required. Tips to keep in mind during the preparation of the tender document include:

- regularly review and update your checklist throughout the tender period
- use the checklist against your final draft response to ensure it is complete and fully compliant with everything that was asked for

- make sure you keep track of any tender amendments issued during the tender period and ensure these are included - if there are many amendments it's often a good idea to include a list of these as an appendix to the tender response
- check the commercial and contractual aspects of the tender to determine if there are any performance guarantees, warranties, special insurance requirements or other commercial provisions that will require careful consideration. If so, contact UNSW Research Services straight away for legal advice.
- check if there is a recommended payment schedule in the tender, carefully evaluate this against cash flows required in your Department, School or Centre and be prepared to suggest an alternative payment schedule
- think about the schedules for costings and how these are to be presented. It's a good idea to establish a tender costing model on an electronic spreadsheet which will enable prompt updating of the model as information comes to hand
- ensure someone with the authority to bind your business authorises the tender. If you need your senior management or board to approve the budgeted price and tender documents prior to submitting, allow appropriate time for this to happen and for any subsequent amendments to be made to the submission. Only UNSW Research Services has delegated authority to sign off on Research Grant Applications and Tenders.
- A copy of your Tender should be submitted to UNSW Research Services for approval along with a completed internal RA1 form.

Tips on editing your tender

It's well worth spending some time on your tender and paying attention to the presentation. Here are some tips on editing your tender:

- keep sentences and paragraphs short, punchy and business-like
- use bullet points and headings to break up text
- decide on a consistent typeface, layout and type size and make sure it's not too small (12 point font is recommended)
- make sure everything is standardised - are CVs all presented in the same way?
- be careful when cutting and pasting copy to make sure the format stays the same
- make sure you've developed a logical argument and that everything hangs together
- read everything again. Then get a colleague to read it - for meaning, typing mistakes and omissions
- use appendices for supporting additional information such as company reports and brochures
- have a front cover with project title, date, name of your Faculty/School/Centre and University address, and name of the organisation requesting the tender

- include an index or a table of contents
- number paragraphs so material can be easily located
- consider getting it bound at a print shop.

Pricing your Contract Research at UNSW

Under the UNSW Policy on Competitive Neutrality and Pricing (adopted by UNSW Council August 2005) all Contract Research must charge an overhead.

This is a requirement of the Trade Practices Act but more importantly is an essential element of UNSW budgeting so that the University can recover costs for the following expenses incurred in taking on Contract Research:

UNSW Indirect Cost Summary-

At UNSW, the indirect costs for which commercial activities are charged are:

- provision and maintenance of buildings and physical infrastructure
- university-wide information resources and technology
- basic telecommunications
- insurance and legal services
- financial management services
- security
- non-faculty administrative services

The overhead for indirect costs at UNSW is 30% on projects with a total value up to \$500,000. Projects beyond this price must have an overhead but this should be negotiated with UNSW Research Services.

There are exemptions to the Overhead contained in UNSW Policy and in the UNSW Contract Research Pricing Guide. Any other exemption should be claimed through the relevant Faculty Dean's Office and, in some cases the DVC Research, such exemption be in writing from the Dean accompanying all other documentation required to establish an account.

If the Overhead has not been applied and exemption does not apply UNSW will take the Overhead from the awarded amount of the Contract Research.

UNSW's Policy on Competitive Neutrality and Pricing also requires that you fully recover direct costs in any proposed Tender for Contract Research.

Direct costs include:

Direct costs are those costs that are directly attributable to the project, and may include:

- salaries and on-costs of project staff, including the principal investigator/consultant (on-costs include superannuation contributions, payroll tax, worker's compensation insurance, annual leave loading, and provisions for long service leave; on-costs are approximately 26% of base salary, though this may vary depending on the superannuation scheme)
- stipends of research assistants
- specialised computing and database charges
- materials and supplies
- equipment and components
- brokerage and freight
- large volume communication (telephone, fax, courier, postage)
- photocopying, report production
- external consulting services
- workshop, laboratory, and other scientific services
- travel and living expenses

*Further Information on pricing your Contract Research at UNSW refer to:
Operational Guidelines for Pricing your Contract Research at UNSW*

Relevant UNSW Policies:

- UNSW Code of Conduct <http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/employee/codecond.html>
- UNSW Conflict of Interest Policy <http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/employee/conflict.html>
- UNSW Paid Outside Work <http://www.infonet.unsw.edu.au/poldoc/pow.htm>
- UNSW Policy on Competitive Neutrality and Pricing <http://www.infonet.unsw.edu.au/poldoc/cn.htm>

UNSW Research Services

For assistance in developing Tenders:

Preward by Faculty

Jennifer Newton or Hart Devitt – All Faculties bar Medicine, Science and Engineering. #57242 or 56989

Peter Dolnik – Engineering #57235

Jeffrey Saynor – Medicine #57236

Kate Taylor – Science/ADFA #57247

For Assistance with Reviewing Contracts

Lawyers by Faculty

Carla Venturin #55209 – Engineering, Commerce & Economics, Built Environment

Peter Dowdall #57246 – Science, ADFA, COFA, Arts and Social Sciences

Louise Fleck #57736 – Medicine, AGSM, Law

For Advice on applicability of exemptions:

Zep Yaltirakli - #57242