



The University of Arizona Limited Submissions Process

Introduction

Limited Submissions are funding opportunities in which the sponsor only accepts a limited number of applications from one institution or organization. [Research Development Services](#) (RDS) manages and facilitates limited submissions opportunities for the U of A. Limited submissions are listed on the [Limited Submissions Table](#) (NetID login required) with corresponding internal and external due dates. All correspondence regarding limited submissions should be sent to limitedsubmissions@arizona.edu.

All internal limited submissions competitions are managed through [Arizona Cultivate](#). Only pre-proposals received through this online platform will be accepted for limited submissions competitions unless otherwise noted in an announcement or on the [Limited Submissions Table](#) or [Arizona Cultivate](#) websites. Unless otherwise noted, internal pre-proposals are due on **Wednesdays by 5:00pm AZ**. Occasionally, short turn-around opportunities are due on other days of the week.

RDS designates limited submissions opportunities as either **Upcoming** or **Open**. **Upcoming** limited submissions are funding opportunities with an identified deadline and current internal competition. An **Open** designation means that the internal deadline has passed without any pre-proposals submitted for internal review or that there is insufficient time for an internal competition (see Insufficient Time for an Internal Competition). Once a limited submission is designated as **Open**, the first request for an institutional “Ticket” that RDS receives from an eligible principal investigator (PI) will be accepted as an institutional submission.

All requests for institutional tickets must be sent to limitedsubmissions@arizona.edu, and the date and time stamp for messages received at this email address will determine selection priority. If the sponsor allows more than one application, applicants will be accepted for **Open** limited submissions in the order in which RDS receives them.

Limited submissions noted as **Anticipated** are for **Upcoming** internal competitions that have historically opened during a known time frame but have not yet been released by the sponsor. RDS pro-actively advertises and runs internal competitions for these **Anticipated** opportunities to maximize the time interested applicants have to craft a competitive proposal. If updated sponsor guidelines become available during the internal competition, any changes will be noted on [Arizona Cultivate](#) and in the RDS limited submissions advertisement methods.



Anticipated competitions or PI/team facilitation may be conducted in advance of a solicitation from sponsors known to have narrow windows between announcement and proposal deadline. Every effort will be made to advertise the Anticipated opportunity to campus as well as the listing on the [Limited Submissions Table](#). RDS may use [Arizona Cultivate](#) to facilitate the institutional response through an “**Expression of Interest**.” An Expression of Interest may be used to determine eligibility to submit to a subsequent internal competition. In some cases, only PIs/Teams who submitted a pre-proposal through the Expression of Interest will be eligible to compete in a subsequent internal competition. Eligibility will be clearly stated in the Expression of Interest and any internal competition that results.

It is imperative that U of A PIs/Teams follow the limited submissions process because failure to do so may result in the U of A having applications returned without review or being rendered ineligible to apply to future funding cycles. If the application is submitted through [Sponsored Projects Services \(SPS\)](#), only proposals and PIs identified as having the institutional “Ticket” will be submitted.

Questions?

Contact RDS at limitedsubmissions@arizona.edu with any questions about this process.

Discovery and Advertisement

RDS Discovery and Advertisement of Limited Submissions Opportunities

RDS actively searches for limited submissions funding opportunities and advertises these opportunities to campus using the following methods:

1. Announcement in the Limited Submissions Newsletter. This newsletter is sent to subscribers on Thursdays and lists all current **Anticipated**, **Upcoming**, and **Open** limited submissions available to the U of A campus. New faculty are automatically subscribed to this newsletter. Anyone, including students and staff, may [subscribe](#).
2. Posting on the [Limited Submissions Table](#) and on the [Arizona Cultivate](#) website.
3. Direct communication, if applicable, with the Deans, Center/Institute Directors, Associate/Assistant Deans for Research, and Faculty.
4. Labeling opportunities as limited submissions in the [Pivot Funding Database](#).

Our goal is to advertise limited submissions opportunities at least 12 weeks prior to the sponsor’s deadline, also called the “external” deadline (see Preferred Timeline and Workflow below). Our goal is that internal pre-proposal deadlines are at least eight to ten weeks prior to the external deadline and institutional selections are notified at least six to eight weeks prior to the external deadline (see Workflow below).



Faculty, Student, or Staff Discovery of a Limited Submission

RDS makes every effort to identify limited submissions opportunities well in advance; however, some limited submission funding opportunities may not be discovered through our search methods. If faculty, students, or staff become aware of a limited submission funding opportunity that is not currently listed on the [Limited Submissions Table](#), please notify RDS at limitedsubmissions@arizona.edu before any applications are submitted to the sponsor. Submitting to a limited submission opportunity without notifying RDS may result in an application being returned without review by the sponsor, or worse, returned due to duplicate submissions. If there is any question about limits in the solicitation language, please notify RDS so that a determination can be made. Often this requires engagement between RDS and the sponsor.

Internal Competitions and Arizona Cultivate

Pre-proposal Preparation

RDS attempts to align pre-proposal requirements with those of the sponsor as well as collect sufficient information to ensure a quality internal review. Most internal competitions include text boxes for a summary, significance statement, description of the fit with the sponsor, approach, and expected outcomes. In addition, a Specific Aims page or Project Summary is required for NIH applications or NSF proposals, respectively. Pre-proposals also require agency specific biographical sketch(es) for the PI and Co-PIs (if applicable). In cases where coordination with Deans is essential (e.g., for matching funds), a letter (or email) from the PI's Dean, or designee, is required. Confirmation of match is not required at the pre-proposal stage; however, acknowledgement and commitment to support the cost-share if selected by the institution from the Dean and Department Head (or equivalent) is required.

In cases where faculty are required to be released of teaching and service commitments, a letter (or email) from the faculty member's Department Head is required. Letters (or emails) from the Dean and Department Head should simply be acknowledgements of the commitment. Letters of Support are not required, nor does the letter require letterhead or physical signature. We recommend short emails indicating support for the commitment and support for obtaining the required commitment.

Resubmissions

If your proposal is a resubmission, please enter the following into the optional textboxes: (1) previous review score and (2) how you plan to address reviewer comments. If your pre-proposal is not a resubmission, please leave this field blank.

Peer Review Process

An internal peer review is triggered if the number of pre-proposals received to an internal competition exceeds the sponsor's limit. RDS utilizes U of A faculty and qualified staff to conduct the internal review. A minimum of two reviewers are sought for each competition, although three is preferred. Conflicts of interest are considered during reviewer selection; preference is given to complementary expertise outside of the applicant's department and college. Each reviewer will



normally review all pre-proposals. In cases where a high volume of pre-proposals are received and/or the pre-proposals span numerous fields of study, individual reviewers may review only a portion of submitted pre-proposals. In cases of large multi-investigator applications, external reviewers may be used. In addition, Associate/Assistant Deans for Research, Deans, and U of A Foundation Relations staff (if appropriate to the sponsor) may be solicited for feedback. Review is based on the sponsor's criteria and thus differ for each funding opportunity. Generally, review criteria include:

- The relevance or “match” between the proposed project and the program requirements
- The impact or “significance” of the proposed project.
- PI and investigator team qualifications in the specific funding area, and if applicable, previous success leading multi-disciplinary/multi-institutional team efforts.
- Responsiveness to review comments from a previous submission, if applicable.
- Any other factors relevant and appropriate to the funding program including but not limited to cultural competency, public outreach efforts, inclusion of underrepresented groups, and quality of the evaluation design.

RDS will evaluate the internal peer reviewers' scores/comments and other's input and determine the most competitive pre-proposal(s). Additional criteria that may be considered include:

- The strength and completeness of the proposed team for large, complex proposals.
- Alignment with U of A strategic objectives.
- The impact of proposed cost sharing on the University's extant cost share exposure.
- Any other criteria deemed important for submission of a competitive application.

Notification

Peer review and applicant notification is handled through [Arizona Cultivate](#) and the limitedsubmissions@arizona.edu email address. Notification of authorization to submit is called the “Ticket”. Tickets for the selected applicants will be sent to the applicant, applicant's Associate/Assistant Dean for Research, and research administrator. In addition, [Sponsored Projects Services \(SPS\)](#) Proposal Team is notified and if appropriate for the sponsor, [U of A Foundation Relations](#) staff. Selected applicant names are added to the [Limited Submissions Table](#). Only those applicants listed on the [Limited Submissions Table](#) will be authorized by SPS or the U of A Foundation to submit to the sponsor.

Ideally, proposals are reviewed, and applicants are notified in under two-weeks; however, in some cases (large quantity of applicants or large/complex pre-proposals) additional review and notification time may be required (see Preferred Timeline below).

Because transparency is an important value for our Limited Submissions Process, selected applicants will be publicly noted on the [Limited Submissions Table](#) by first initial and last name.



In some high profile or nationally competitive programs where publicly identifying the PI/Team would be a strategic disadvantage for U of A, the PI/Team will not be publicly added to the [Limited Submissions Table](#) until after the sponsor's deadline has passed. Tickets will be identified as "Confidential" until after the sponsor's deadline.

Exceptions, Special Considerations, or Special Cases

Institutionally Coordinated Limited Submissions

Institutionally Coordinated limited submissions funding opportunities have eligibility or application criteria that must be managed for the institution at-large rather than by individual PIs. **Institutionally Coordinated** could mean there are limits by category, by application track, or by application type (new, renewal, resubmission, etc.) Individual sponsors occasionally add unique limits on opportunities that must be considered. Finally, some limited submissions are high-priority funding opportunities, prestigious programs, or otherwise impact the U of A strategic objectives and must be **Institutionally Coordinated**. To ensure that the institution remains eligible, RDS manages these cases as **Institutionally Coordinated** funding opportunities for the U of A. These atypical cases will be noted in the advertisement methods (see Discovery and Advertisement section above).

Insufficient Time for an Internal Competition

While every effort is made to adhere to the procedures and process listed above, there are instances when the interval between becoming aware of a limited submission and the sponsor's deadline makes it impractical to follow the limited submissions process above. In these atypical cases, broad announcements may not be made, expedited reviews with limited or no feedback comments may be performed, and/or submission slots may be awarded on a first-identified basis. Generally, an internal competition may be held, or the opportunity may be immediately listed as **Open** if there are eight weeks or less remaining before an external deadline. RDS determines if a competition will or will not be held based on the complexity of the sponsor's application requirements, the anticipated interest from campus, or other impacts to the U of A strategic objectives.

Expedited Competitions

For most cases, if there are less than eight weeks between identification of the funding opportunity and the sponsor's deadline, an internal competition will not be held, and the competition will be listed as **Open** or submission permission is awarded on a first-identified basis. On a case-by-case basis, and usually as the result of a narrow window from sponsor announcement to proposal deadline, RDS may hold an expedited internal competition if Office of Research and Partnerships (ORP) Leadership or relevant College leadership determines there is sufficient competitive interest from campus. If this occurs, the internal competition will closely mirror the requirements given by the sponsor to minimize applicant burden. Reviews will be conducted expeditiously, and minimal



feedback should be anticipated. Every effort will be made to advertise the expedited competition to campus as well as the listing on the [Limited Submissions Table](#).

Competitive Renewals

Existing programs or centers with no break in funding will have the opportunity to re compete to the sponsor without internal competition for two funding cycles assuming that the first cycle submission is scored and discussed. If, however, the existing program or center is either not discussed after the first submission or unsuccessful in obtaining its renewal on the third funding cycle an internal limited submissions competition will occur.

Competitive Previously Selected Applicants (Competitive Resubmissions)

Some limited submissions opportunities may hold more than one annual submission cycle or otherwise regularly repeat. For some funding cycles related to RDS-identified U of A strategic objectives, competitive previously selected limited submissions applicants (Competitive Resubmissions) will automatically receive the ticket to submit to the next funding cycle. Selected applicants will be noted on the [Limited Submissions Table](#). The determination of “Competitive” will be based on the scores from an external sponsor’s scoring rubric and in consultation with departmental, college, and ORP leadership as necessary. In general, scores equal to “good” or better (under NSF) and an overall impact score of 45 or lower (under NIH, “medium impact”) are considered competitive. Only a resubmission from the most recently concluded funding cycle by the sponsor can be considered as a competitive resubmission. For example: if a PI applied to a grant which has an annual deadline in 2025 and received scores of “good” or better, then that resubmission could receive the ticket automatically for the 2026 cycle but would have to re compete for the 2027 cycle. If you plan to submit a competitive resubmission, please notify limitedsubmissions@arizona.edu as soon as possible.

Cooperative Extension

Limited submission applications from U of A Cooperative Extension may require the approval of Extension Leadership prior to submission or as part of the internal review process. When this is necessary it will be clearly stated on the [Limited Submissions Table](#) and in any internal competition.

“Institutional Transformation” Projects or Program Tracks

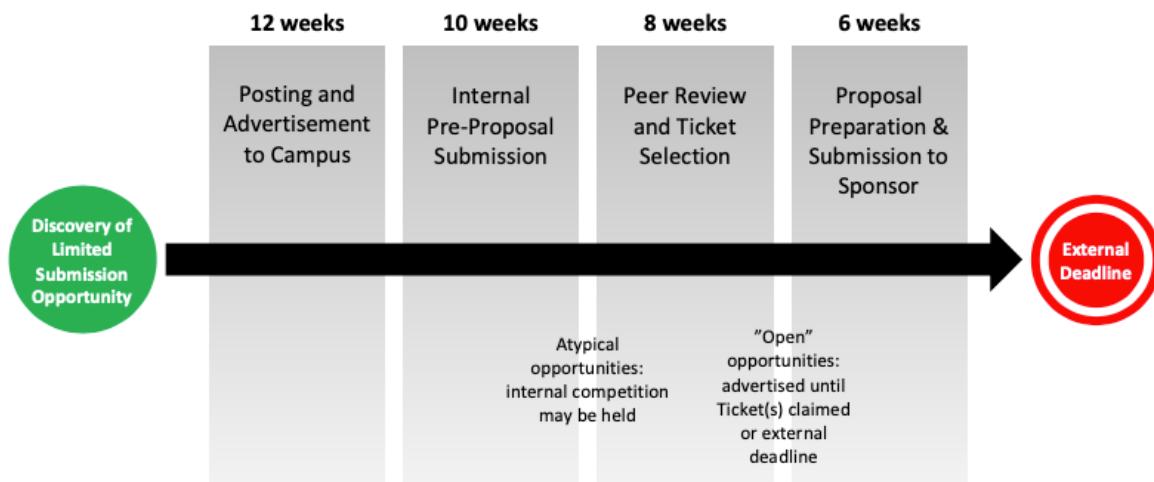
Some sponsors (NSF, NIH, etc.) include limited submissions tracks that support institution-wide structural or systemic changes. The solicitation language describing these types of tracks varies by sponsor and RDS with the ORP Leadership will make the determination regarding tracks that meet this definition. In these cases, a successful submission is only possible through a centrally coordinated submission that requires the leadership of the relevant ORP, Provost, or College-level leadership. For these limited submissions the appropriate leadership office may be selected as the institutional ticket without an internal competition and the designee of the appropriate leadership office will then facilitate a coordinated approach among all interested PIs/Teams.



No Submission

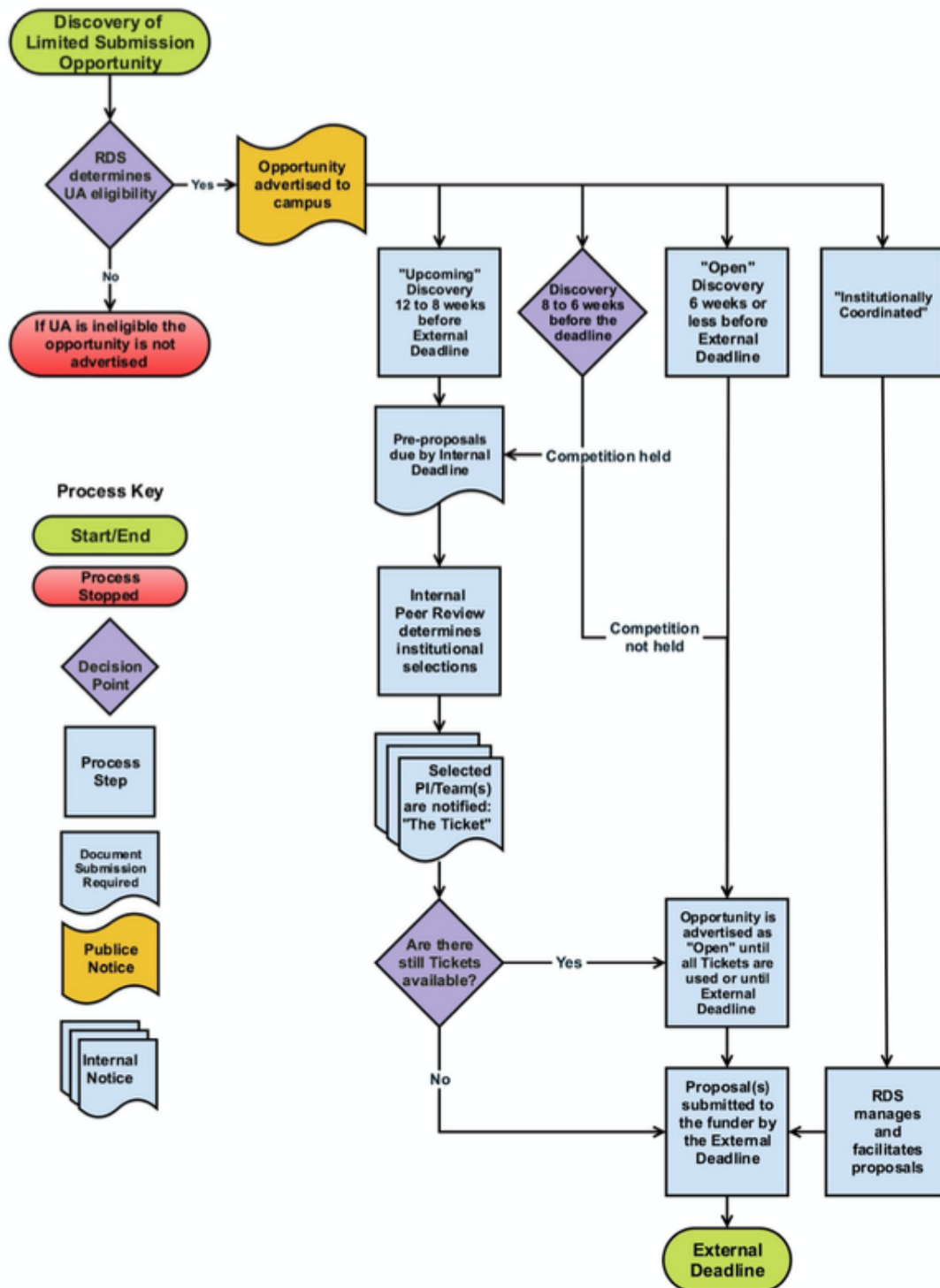
Certain limited submissions opportunities are very competitive at the U of A. If you receive authorization to be an institutional submission (ticket) for a competitive limited submission funding opportunity (i.e., an opportunity where there was internal competition for the application spot) and you choose not to submit, you must notify RDS of your decision within four weeks of the sponsor deadline. **Failure to notify RDS may result in your ineligibility to reapply for future cycles of the limited submissions funding opportunity.**

Preferred Timeline





Limited Submissions Process





Change Log

Date	Change
January 28, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated RII to ORP• Updated URLs• Moved Pre-proposal Preparation, Resubmission, Peer Review Process” and Notification headers under a new header titled Internal Competitions and Arizona Cultivate
January 10, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated URLs• Clarified language on timelines and limits when the limit is more than one• Clarified language regarding matching funds• Added language about not identifying PIs publicly on the Limited• Submissions Table until after the sponsor’s deadline has passed for high profile or designated programs that require confidentiality• Updated SPCS to SPS• Updated scoring examples for Competitive Previously Selected Applicants
September 21, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revised and updated the definition for “Anticipated” opportunities• including the description of an “Expression of Interest”• Revised and updated the definition for “Competitive” resubmission.• Added a special case for Cooperative Extension opportunities• Added a special case for “Institutional Transformation” opportunities• Revised and updated the definition for “Expedited” competitions• Added a statement about transparency in notifications
August 29, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Added Introduction and limited submission process definitions• Added Faculty, Student or Staff Discovery section• Added Resubmissions section• Added Institutionally Coordinated section• Revised and updated Review section• Revised and updated Notifications section• Revised and updated Discovery and Advertisement section• Revised and updated Exceptions & Special Considerations section and added Competitive Previously Selected Applicants section• Revised and updated Preferred Timeline and Workflow graphics
July 1, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated the Pre-proposal requirements and the Exceptions & Special Considerations Section