



TRAC-UW

Guide to Proposal Preparation Services

The easiest way to produce a TRAC proposal is to talk to the TRAC staff for preparation, write the proposal, and then let the TRAC staff take the production work off your hands.

We have extensive experience in proposal production and have implemented systems for producing them consistently and efficiently.

This page highlights information that will help you better understand and work with TRAC's production process.

Introduction to TRAC Support Services

TRAC employs professional staff to provide support services including the production of proposals, reports, short course notes, journal articles, and presentation materials. Specifically, TRAC offers its researchers help with

- word processing
- editing
- illustrating
- budget preparation
- production coordination.

An array of software available on both PC and Macintosh computers helps TRAC staff produce accurate, professional looking documents quickly and efficiently.

TRAC has a modest budget for developing proposals for TRAC projects.

Requirements for Producing a Proposal

To produce a proposal, TRAC's staff needs

- 1) information to make your proposal correct and the process run smoothly
- 2) time to produce an accurate and professional looking document.

The following information is critical:

- granting or contracting agency
- date due to the agency
- kind of proposal (draft/final, new/supplement/extension)
- contract effective dates
- budget amount, including category amounts
- production requirements for non-WSDOT proposals.

Advance warning enables the staff to coordinate work loads and staffing needs. When you first anticipate proposing a TRAC project, please tell the TRAC staff.

Time is needed for various proposal production processes:

- TOTAL processing time, from initiation to draft review to budget number (WSDOT project): 8-12 weeks.
- Production of a camera-ready WSDOT proposal (10 to 15 pages) may take us as few as 2 days, including author review and changes but not including copying or signatures (assuming adequate warning so that we can plan staff time and concurrent work).
- Production of a camera-ready NCHRP or SHRP proposal (35 to 50 pages) usually takes at

least 2 weeks, including author review and changes but not including copying or signatures (assuming adequate warning so that we can plan staff time and concurrent work).

- Copying/binding usually takes at least 1 day for a small proposal and 2-3 days for a large proposal.
- The signature process normally takes 2-5 working days.
- Mailing to agencies other than WSDOT requires about a week. Overnight delivery is expensive, particularly for large boxes of proposals such as for NCHRP and SHRP, and TRAC may not have a budget for sending them.

Funding Agencies and the Proposal Production Process

The funding agency affects the proposal production process. TRAC has experience producing proposals for many agencies, including

- Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
- National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

TRAC's involvement in the production of non-WSDOT proposals must be pre-approved by the TRAC director.

WSDOT requires that TRAC review and submit all University proposals to the DOT.

WSDOT has two kinds of proposals, draft and final.

Each WSDOT proposal is sent to WSDOT as a draft for review before it is sent through the University signature process. The review ensures that WSDOT approves the

proposed scope, budget, and work plan.

Once WSDOT has returned review comments, a second and final version of the proposal is sent through the University signature process and on to WSDOT.

The process and documents for proposed supplements or extensions are different than those for regular proposals.

TRAC's Proposal Production Procedure

1. The proposal coordinator accepts your proposal text, graphics, budget information, and other necessary material. She is your central contact for submitting materials and for asking proposal-related questions. She is responsible for distributing proposal work to the other production staff, tracking work progress, and checking the work for accuracy.

You may submit electronic files by e-mail or CD. The final electronic text files will be returned to you.

2. The budget analyst helps you create your budget, or review your own estimate, to ensure that it meets the contracting agency, University of Washington, and TRAC's requirements. She uses an automated budget spreadsheet to ensure that estimates are based on the correct salary rates, raise percentages, and indirect cost rates for each budget category and fiscal year.
3. The editor checks for compliance with the contracting

agency's requirements. She will also edit for clarity, conciseness, grammar, and punctuation. You may ask for a more or less comprehensive level of edit, depending on your needs.

4. Your text is formatted to the contracting agency's specifications by using standardized electronic style sheets. This ensures that TRAC proposals are uniform, readable, and professional looking.
5. Illustrators are available to draw additional figures and graphs for your proposal. They can begin from hand-drawn table, graph, chart, and picture examples; use spreadsheets; or scan examples into a computer for alteration.
6. The coordinator returns the proposal materials (usually an electronic mark-up) to you for revision and approval. After you have approved the work, the proposal is ready for submittal in its draft or final form
7. TRAC fills out the electronic signature pages for final proposals. The UW signature page requires electronic signatures by the principal investigator, the TRAC director, the PI's department chair and college dean, and the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP). We also fill out the electronic GC-1 required by OSP.
8. TRAC makes the necessary copies and coordinates the

electronic signature process. The OSP can send the proposal to the contracting agency, or we can request that it be returned to TRAC so that we can mail or deliver it.

Contact Names and Numbers

Please call any of us for more information:

Proposal editing and production

Amy O'Brien 685-2644

Proposal budget

Bev Green 543-6522

Proposal submittal and tracking

Jane Lybecker 543-8690

Information about TRAC, contracting agencies, RFPs, or upcoming research possibilities

Mark Hallenbeck 543-6261

Leni Oman 360-705-7974

TRAC Mission Statement

The Washington State Transportation Center (TRAC) is a cooperative transportation research organization supported by the University of Washington, Washington State University, and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

TRAC's purpose is to coordinate both state and commercial transportation research efforts and to develop research opportunities nationally and locally. TRAC's objectives are to aid communication between the state, university researchers and the private sector; to serve as a focal point for student involvement in transportation research; and to coordinate resources for research and provide supporting services.