National Science Foundation
Proposal Submission Modernization Update

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Presenters

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Agenda

• Proposal Submission Modernization Initiative and Research.gov Proposal Ramp-up
• Advantages of Research.gov Proposal Preparation
• Recent Research.gov Enhancements
• Research.gov Proposal Capabilities Overview
• Research.gov Proposal Preparation Demo Site and Training Resources
• Research.gov Proposal Tips
• Providing Research.gov Proposal Feedback
• Information Resources for the Research Community
• Research.gov Demo
Proposal Submission Modernization Initiative

Proposal Submission Modernization (PSM) is an initiative to modernize proposal submission capabilities and migrate them from FastLane to Research.gov.

• Research.gov is the custom National Science Foundation (NSF) portal that is tuned for the best user experience and has been developed to replace the aging FastLane portal and infrastructure.

• Research.gov is not the same as Grants.gov, the interagency portal allowing organizations to search and apply for federal funding opportunities for many federal agencies including NSF.

Why is NSF migrating proposal preparation and submission from FastLane to Research.gov?

FastLane, launched in 1994, is built on technology once cutting edge but now considered old and inflexible.

• Research.gov architecture can support current and future improvements and requested features to reduce administrative burden for both the research community and NSF staff (e.g., expanded automated compliance checking)

• Research.gov user interface conforms to modern industry standards and is intuitive and user-friendly
Research.gov Implementation Update – Important Notice No. 147

- Per Important Notice No. 147, NSF is now taking proactive steps to incrementally move the preparation and submission of all proposals from FastLane to Research.gov with a tentative target date for completion by 2022.

- FastLane has already been removed from some solicitations as a submission option and will continue to be incrementally removed from solicitations through the transition.

- Research.gov will be added to solicitations whenever possible as an option, even if FastLane is not yet removed.

- Both solicitations and program descriptions are enabled in Research.gov.

- Funding opportunities clearly specify whether submission via Research.gov is required or available.
Research.gov Proposal Preparation: Advantages for Principal Investigators and Research Administrators

**Features to reduce proposal preparation administrative burden:**

- Improved user experience through intuitive and dynamic interfaces that provide only relevant proposal preparation options
- Immediate feedback within each proposal section and for each document upload rather than at proposal submission in FastLane
- Faster document uploads (a few seconds versus 30-90 seconds for each document upload in FastLane)
- Expanded automated compliance checking utilizing error messages (preventing proposal submission) and warning messages (allowing proposal submission)
  - There are currently 104 compliance checks in Research.gov versus 56 compliance checks in FastLane (new Research.gov checks are added with each proposal type release)
  - Specific, actionable error and warning messages
- Higher quality proposal submissions (e.g., PDF uploads are not altered like in FastLane)
- Minimized Return without Reviews due to some proposal formatting issues
Recent Research.gov Enhancements: Font Warning Changes

• Effective in November 2020, the compliance checks and associated compliance warnings for **font type** and **font size** were **removed** in Research.gov to align with FastLane and NSF policy.

• NSF made these changes per feedback from the research community.

• PAPPG (NSF 20-1) [Chapter II.B.2.a.](#) proposal font requirements must be followed.

• Proposals may be returned without review if the font type or font size are not compliant with the PAPPG.
Recent Research.gov Enhancements: Proposal Types

New proposal types available since March 22:

Additional proposal types and associated automated compliance checks enabled in Research.gov and in the Research.gov demo site:

- Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED)
- Equipment
- Travel

*Note:* All Proposal Types are listed in Research.gov but only those currently supported will be available for selection (i.e., unavailable selections are grayed out). View the [Research.gov Proposal Submission Capabilities](#) for details.
Recent Research.gov Enhancements: Proposal Withdrawal

*New functionality available since March 22:*

- Proposers are able to withdraw both single submission (with and without subawards) and separately submitted collaborative proposals in Research.gov
- New proposal withdrawal FAQs added to the Research.gov About Proposal Preparation and Submission page
Recent Research.gov Enhancements: Training Resources

Training resources on the Research.gov About Proposal Preparation and Submission page available since March 22:

- New 16-minute Research.gov proposal demo video in the Video Tutorials section highlighting key preparation steps including:
  - Setting up a proposal
  - Uploading a document and compliance messaging
  - Preparing proposal file updates/budget revisions
- New How-to Guides section with the first set of topic-specific resources posted. Additional guides will be posted in this section going forward
- New and updated topic-specific FAQs
- New callout box to help proposers quickly see the proposal and submission types currently supported in Research.gov
## Research.gov Proposals: Capabilities Overview

### Current Capabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal Types</th>
<th>Upcoming Capabilities</th>
<th>Future Capabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ <strong>Research:</strong> Single Submissions from One Organization (April 2018)</td>
<td>✓ Conference (Targeting late summer release)</td>
<td>Proposal Types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ <strong>Research:</strong> Single Submission Collaborative Proposals with Subawards (June 2019)</td>
<td>✓ Ideas Lab (Targeting late summer release)</td>
<td>• SBIR and STTR Phases I/II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ <strong>Research:</strong> Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals from Multiple Organizations (March 2020)</td>
<td>✓ Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry (GOALI) (Targeting fall release)</td>
<td>• Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Rapid Response Research (RAPID) (November 2020)</td>
<td>✓ Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) (November 2020)</td>
<td>• Research Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE) (November 2020)</td>
<td>✓ Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED) (March 2021)</td>
<td>• Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Equipment (March 2021)</td>
<td>✓ Travel (March 2021)</td>
<td>Solicitation-specific Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Training</td>
<td>Proposal Features</td>
<td>• Additional specified forms or documents (e.g., DUE Project Data Form)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Withdrawal (Single and Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposal Submissions) (March 2021)</td>
<td>✓ Letter of Intent</td>
<td>• Approved deviations from the PAPPG (e.g., Project Descriptions exceeding 15 pages)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Research.gov Proposal Prep Demo Site (October 2020)</td>
<td>✓ Preliminary Proposal</td>
<td>Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Initial Topic-specific How-to Guides (March 2021)</td>
<td>✓ Full Proposal related to a Preliminary Proposal</td>
<td>• Additional Topic-specific How-to Guides (ongoing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Proposal Preparation Demo Video (March 2021)</td>
<td>✓ Renewal Proposal</td>
<td>• Webinars (e.g., Spring 2021 NSF Grants Conference)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Proposal Types

- **Research:** Single Submissions from One Organization
- **Research:** Single Submission Collaborative Proposals with Subawards
- **Research:** Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals from Multiple Organizations
- Rapid Response Research (RAPID)
- Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER)
- Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE)
- Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED)
- Equipment
- Travel

### Proposal Features

- Withdrawal (Single and Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposal Submissions)
- Research.gov Proposal Prep Demo Site
- Initial Topic-specific How-to Guides
- Proposal Preparation Demo Video

### Submission Types

- Conference (Targeting late summer release)
- Ideas Lab (Targeting late summer release)
- Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry (GOALI) (Targeting fall release)
- Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) (November 2020)
- Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE) (November 2020)
- Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED) (March 2021)
- Equipment (March 2021)
- Travel (March 2021)

### Post Award Actions

- Supplemental Funding Requests

### Notes:

1. Since July 2020, Research.gov is able to support all Research proposals that conform to standard Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) requirements for formatting and document content.
2. Two new proposal types (Planning Proposals and Career Life Balance Supplemental Funding Requests) included in the "For comment" draft of the PAPPG (NSF 22-1) are not listed in this table.
Research.gov Proposal Preparation Demo Site

• Demo site can be used to explore preparing proposals and to check compliance of uploaded proposal documents (e.g., Collaborators and Other Affiliations and Biographical Sketch)

• All demo site users are automatically given the PI role for demo site purposes, in order to perform the proposal preparation functions that a PI can do in the actual system

• Proposal submission capability is disabled

• See the demo site FAQs on the Research.gov About Proposal Preparation and Submission page for information on demo site access and features
Research.gov Proposal Training Resources

- Resources on the [Research.gov About Proposal and Submission](#) page:
  - FAQs by topic
  - Links to video tutorials including new 16-minute demo video highlighting key proposal preparation features and preparing proposal file updates/budget revisions
  - Link to [Automated Compliance Checking of NSF Proposals](#) page to view current Research.gov compliance checks
  - Links to topic-specific how-to guides

- In-line help features in both the Research.gov proposal system and the proposal preparation demo site:
  - Information tool tips
  - Links to the PAPPG
  - Links to FAQs and video tutorials
Research.gov Proposal Tips

• Proposal information cannot be transferred from FastLane to Research.gov and vice versa
• Proposal file updates and budget revisions must be executed in the same system as the proposal was submitted (i.e., Research.gov or FastLane)
• All proposals in a separately submitted collaborative from multiple organizations must be prepared in the same system (i.e., Research.gov or FastLane)
• Proposals submitted in Research.gov are evaluated by NSF in the same way as proposals submitted in FastLane and Grants.gov, and this migration does not affect the merit review process in any way
• Additional technical support is available for those who are new to Research.gov and to those who encounter any issues with proposal preparation and submission:
  ▪ For IT system-related questions, please contact the NSF Help Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) or via rgov@nsf.gov
  ▪ Policy-related questions should be directed to policy@nsf.gov
Research.gov Proposal Compliance Error and Warning Messages

• Automated proposal compliance checks triggering an error message will **prohibit** proposal submission to NSF, whereas checks triggering a warning message will still allow proposal submission.

• Proposers receiving a compliance error or warning message should check the [Automated Compliance Checking of NSF Proposals](#) page and the solicitation for specific proposal requirements.

• Proposers should also review the topic-specific FAQs on the Research.gov [About Proposal Preparation and Submission](#) page:
  - *Uploading Documents* topic includes margin and line spacing FAQs
  - *Proposal Sections* topic includes Cover Sheet and budget FAQs
Providing Research.gov Proposal Feedback

Why?
- Influence the future of proposal submission
- Help NSF continue to build Research.gov

How?
- Feedback may be submitted on the Research.gov Feedback page

- Select “Proposal Preparation & Submission” under the Site Area dropdown menu to provide feedback on the Research.gov Proposal Submission System
- Select "Proposal Preparation Demo Site" under the Site Area dropdown menu to provide feedback on the demo site
Information Resources for the Research Community

- NSF System Updates listserv to receive the latest Research.gov system enhancement information and FastLane news. Sign up by sending a blank email to: system_updates-subscribe-request@listserv.nsf.gov

- Automated Compliance Checking of NSF Proposals page

- NSF Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending Support websites with FAQs, as well as links to SciENcv video tutorials and reference resources with step-by-step instructions and screenshots

- Research.gov About Proposal Preparation and Submission page with FAQs organized by topic, how-to guides, and video tutorials (new information is added on an ongoing basis, so please check back frequently....)

- Research.gov About Account Management page

- NSF Electronic Research Administration (ERA) Forum page

- NSF ERA Forum listserv to receive updates on ERA Forum activities. Sign up by sending a blank email to: NSF-ERA-FORUM-subscribe-request@listserv.nsf.gov
Research.gov Proposal Demo

• Proposal Setup Wizard
• Proposal Main Page
• Document Upload and Compliance Error/Warning Messages
• Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals
• Senior Personnel Documents
• Single-Copy Documents
• Budget
• Proposal File Updates
• Budget Revisions
Thank you for your participation today!
Questions

Ask Early, Ask Often!
Appendix
Research.gov Proposal Preparation Demo Site Tips

- Demo site FAQs are available on the Research.gov About Proposal Preparation and Submission page via the left navigation menu. How-to guides with step-by-step instructions and screenshots are also available.
- The demo site is available both to the research community and to NSF staff.
- An orange "Proposal Preparation Demo Site" banner is at the top of each demo site page to indicate the user is on the demo site.
- The demo site allows users to prepare and edit proposals before preparing them in the actual Research.gov site.
- Demo site proposals are not visible or available in the actual Research.gov Proposal Submission System, and data cannot be transferred between the demo site and the actual proposal system.
- All proposal types available in the actual system are also available in the demo site. As proposal types are added to the Research.gov Proposal Submission System, they will also be added to the demo site.
- All compliance checks enabled in the actual Research.gov Proposal Submission System are also in the demo site. Proposers can use the demo site as a resource to check document compliance before uploading them in the actual system.
Research.gov Proposal Preparation Demo Site Tips (cont’d)

- Proposals created in the demo site will be available for six months and then will be deleted by NSF. Neither NSF nor users will be able to access deleted demo proposal data.

- Demo site does not support proposal submission and will not trigger any system-generated email notifications (e.g., link requests for separately submitted collaborative proposals).

- The organization that you are affiliated with in your NSF account profile will be incorporated when you are in the proposal preparation demo site, but the user role(s) that you have will not be available in the demo site.
  - All users who access the demo site will be given the role of PI and the mock organization “National Science Foundation”
  - This means that users from the research community will have the organization(s) they are affiliated with in their NSF account profile plus the “National Science Foundation” mock organization as available organizations in the demo site.

- The only time other users will be able to view and/or edit any proposals that you create in the demo site is if you add them to the proposal as a co-PI or OAU. If you don’t add any users to the proposal, no one will else will be able to access, view, or edit your demo proposal.
Appendix: Research.gov Demo Screenshots
Demo: Proposal Setup Wizard

- User chooses the applicable proposal type
- The choices shown here will be customized to the funding opportunity

- Indicator shows required proposal setup process steps that address current frustrations with the FastLane Cover Sheet module
Demo: Proposal Main Page

- Inline edit of the title
- Quick view and access to the due date of the proposal
- Conditionally required sections become required after corresponding data is input
- Required and optional sections are driven dynamically based on the funding opportunity selected
- Add and Remove Co-PIs, Senior Personnel, and OAU
- Quick access to link collaborative proposals
Demo: Document Upload and Compliance Error/Warning Messages

- Immediate feedback on compliance of all documents that are uploaded to the system
- Documents are inspected to ensure machine-readable text for analysis
- Documents are stored on cloud-hosted storage to ensure availability of proposals and scalability for future proposals
Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals

### Collaborative Research will be prefixed to the title

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Desktop</th>
<th>Prepare &amp; Submit Proposals</th>
<th>Awards &amp; Reporting</th>
<th>Manage Financials</th>
<th>Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Prepare New Proposal**

1. **Funding Opportunity**
2. **Where to Apply**
3. **Proposal Type**
4. **Submission Type**
5. **Proposal Details**

**Proposal Details**

**What type of proposal are you submitting?**
- Single proposal (with or without subawards)
- Separately submitted collaborative proposal

**What is your role on this project?**
- Lead proposer
- Non-lead proposer

**Proposal Title**

Collaborative Research: This is the Lead Proposal Title. It will be reflected on all non-leads

- Collaborative Research will be prefixed to the title
Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals - Linking

Collaborative Research will be pre-fixed to the title

1. Link/View Collaborative Proposals

2. Collaborative Research

3. Proposal - 15080

Proposal Title: Collaborative Research. It will be reflected on all手续同类.

Research Proposal.

Proposal Type: Collaborate

Collaborative Type: Collaborative Research

Collaborative Proposal: Collaborate

Collaborative Proposal: Collaborate Research
Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals - Non-lead

Upon acceptance of the link request by the non-lead proposal, this proposal will inherit the following information from the lead proposal: Proposal Title, Funding Opportunity, Where to Apply, Proposal Type, Submission Type and Due Date. Give the lead organization your proposal's Temporary ID Number - 15081 so the lead organization can send you an online proposal link request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share Proposal with SPO/AOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Personnel and Subaward Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link/View Collaborative Proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delete Proposal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Status: Not Shared with SPO/AOR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal Sections</th>
<th>Last Updated</th>
<th>Compliance Status [Key]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover Sheet</td>
<td>Form not checked</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget(s)</td>
<td>Form not checked</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget Justification(s)</td>
<td>Document unavailable for check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources</td>
<td>Document unavailable for check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Personnel Documents</td>
<td>Document(s) unavailable for check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optional</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Personnel Biographical Information</td>
<td>Document unavailable for check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Supplementary Documents</td>
<td>Document unavailable for check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Suggested Reviewers (Single-copy document)</td>
<td>Document unavailable for check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Reviewers Not to Include (Single-copy document)</td>
<td>Document unavailable for check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide the lead organization with the temp prop ID
Fewer required sections
Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals - Non-lead

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporary ID Number</th>
<th>Proposal Title</th>
<th>PI Name</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Link request pending</td>
<td>Collaborative Research: This title will be replaced by Lead title</td>
<td>Subaward-PI, Sally</td>
<td>Date inherited from the Lead Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13381</td>
<td>Working Group Demo 1302620</td>
<td>PI, Paula</td>
<td>02/11/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13383</td>
<td>Ment Review Test</td>
<td>PI, Paula</td>
<td>Accepted Anytime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13383</td>
<td>Testing Demo 1-16-2020 Change 2</td>
<td>PI, Paula</td>
<td>Accepted Anytime</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Link requests are automatically at the top.

Once link is accepted, non-lead cannot unlink. Must contact the lead.
Demo: Separately Submitted Collaborative Proposals - Non-lead

Once linked, non-lead will inherit Title, Funding Opportunity, Where to Apply (units of consideration), Proposal Type, Submission Type, and Due Date.
Demo: Senior Personnel Documents

- Subaward Sr Personnel

- All documents required for senior personnel are consolidated on one screen
Demo: Budget

- **Prime Organization**
  - Cornell University: PI Test, Total Requested Amount: $22,105, Compliance Status: Not yet available

- **Subaward Organization(s)**
  - Mainstream Engineering Corporation: Subaward Requested Amount: $100, Compliance Status: Not yet available

*Subaward organization budget listed here*
Demo: Budget

- Rows expand and collapse for easy navigation
- All totals are dynamically summed and the total amount is placed on the Cover Sheet
- Multiple years displayed on one screen

$161,200
Total Requested Amount
Demo: Proposal File Update/Budget Revision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal Title</th>
<th>Submit Date</th>
<th>Proposal Number</th>
<th>Temporary ID Number</th>
<th>PI Name</th>
<th>Proposal Status</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automation test submit ready</td>
<td>01/24/2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>13303</td>
<td></td>
<td>Submitted to NSF (Due Date Passed But Prior to Reviewer Assignment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automation test submit ready</td>
<td>12/12/2019</td>
<td></td>
<td>13297</td>
<td></td>
<td>Submitted to NSF (Due Date Passed or Assigned for Review)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automation test submit ready</td>
<td>12/12/2019</td>
<td></td>
<td>13296</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13295</td>
<td></td>
<td>Submitted to NSF (Due Date Passed But Prior to Reviewer Assignment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automation test submit ready</td>
<td>12/12/2019</td>
<td></td>
<td>13294</td>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automation test submit ready</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13293</td>
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<td>Submitted to NSF (Due Date Passed But Prior to Reviewer Assignment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automation test submit ready</td>
<td>12/09/2019</td>
<td></td>
<td>13282</td>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Prior to Review Assignment
Demo: Proposal File Update/Budget Revision

• Prepare Proposal File Update/Budget Revision
Demo: Proposal File Update/Budget Revision

• Proposal Update Justification is required if there is a change in proposal content, not budget content

• Budget Revision Status
Demo: Proposal File Update/Budget Revision

The Budget Revision for proposal 13297 has been successfully deleted. Please communicate this change to any other personnel that are involved with the preparation of this Budget Revision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal Title</th>
<th>Submit Date</th>
<th>Proposal Number</th>
<th>Temporary ID Number</th>
<th>PI Name</th>
<th>Proposal Status</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Automation test submit ready</td>
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<td>13297</td>
<td></td>
<td>Submitted to NSF (Due Date Passed or Assigned for Review)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Demo: Proposal File Update/Budget Revision

- Prepare Proposal File Update/Budget Revision
Demo: Proposal File Update/Budget Revision

- System will not enforce that the Budget Impact Statement exists if the budget is reduced by 10%