**Sponsored project proposal definition**: A sponsored project proposal is a formal request for financial support from an external source. It is also an offer of University resources and employee effort, representing commitments that must be tracked (e.g. investigator and staff effort levels or cost sharing).

**Preliminary (pre-) proposal definition**: a pre-proposal may be called a preliminary proposal, white paper, letter of intent (LOI), concept paper, or a variety of other names. A pre-proposal may include a total cost estimate but does not generally include a line-item budget. When a total estimated project cost is presented to the sponsor it must factor in appropriate F&A (indirect) costs, except in situations where only direct cost totals are requested. A pre-proposal is not expected to result directly in an award. The purpose of a pre-proposal is to allow a sponsor to gauge project viability and to allow the sponsor to assess whether the project fits into their area of interest, so that the sponsor may then request a formal proposal to include a line-item budget, full technical description, and relevant supporting documentation.

**Preliminary proposal processing:**

**A pre-proposal must be routed through** [**VERAS**](https://veras.uidaho.edu) **using the pre-proposal type when any of the following applies. The** [**four-business day rule**](https://www.uidaho.edu/research/faculty/submit-proposal) **does apply to pre-proposals.**

* Authorized Organizational Representative signature is required (this alone does not require VERAS routing – contact your SPA if this is the only condition met from this list);
* Cost share is offered in the preliminary proposals;
* A budget is required;
* The pre-proposal announcement requires acceptance of terms and conditions upon submission (or denotes that upon submission referenced terms and conditions are accepted);
* The pre-proposal must be submitted system-to-system (via VERAS) or through another system in which OSP has submission responsibility (e.g. Fastlane/research.gov, NSPIRES, eRACommons);
* The pre-proposal guidance has limited submission criteria (limited number of applications allowable by entity, PI, or Co-PI);
* The pre-proposal requires certification to specific criteria of eligibility (including reps and certs signed by the AOR)

**Approvals in VERAS**: Only PI, Co-PI(s), and Chair(s) signatures are required in VERAS for approvals of pre-proposals.

**How to enter your pre-proposal to VERAS**: Instructions are posted in the VERAS help tip menu, Section 2. In the VERAS proposal application, select ‘preliminary proposal’ in section 4.1 for pre-proposal branching.