Budget Development:

The budget is the investigator’s best estimate of the total costs to complete the objectives identified in the proposal. Investigators should contact their Grant Coordinator early in the proposal process so that a comprehensive draft budget may be formulated for inclusion in the institutional routing and final proposal, if applicable. Your Grant Coordinator will provide an initial draft budget and work with you to refine the budget as the proposal is prepared.

It is important to demonstrate that the budget proposed is reasonable. A budget justification should be submitted in order to allow each budget item to be explained relative to the proposed research. The specifics of the sponsoring agency's budgetary guidelines should be followed carefully. Budgets should be prepared for the entire proposed project. Both direct and F & A costs should be identified in the budget. The following categories are generally included in the preparation of a proposal budget.

**Salaries and Wages:**

List all personnel by name, title/position, number of months, or percent of effort or portion of time each person will devote to the project.

**Faculty** - Effort for summer and academic year release should be listed separately. Per state guidelines, nine month faculty cannot receive more than 33% of their annual salary during the summer. **(Some sponsors limit effort to only 2 months’ salary – check with your Grant Coordinator for details.) One course release for is budgeted at 10% of academic year. Academic course releases must be approved by department chair and/or dean.

**Graduate assistants** may be classified by function or purpose and include teaching assistantships (TAs), research assistantships (RAs) and graduate assistantships (GAs).

GA/RA salaries and **tuition** are charged to sponsored projects and are not paid by the University. Full time graduate assistants can expect to work a minimum of 20 hrs/wk in both the fall and spring semester. Federal law generally limits the number of hours that international students can work on campus to 20 hrs/wk in the fall and spring semesters. Assistantships may also be made during the summer semester, depending upon funding availability.

**Student Labor and Other Professionals** – Hourly wage personnel should be budgeted on a per hour basis. The rate per hour and the length of time being spent on the proposal should be provided. The current federal minimum wage is used, but the rate per hour rate may be higher depending on the type of work or skills required for the project.

**Post-Doctoral Research Associate** stipends are set at a minimum of $32,000 and maximum at $60,000 for 12 months. The percent of effort or hours should be listed for these personnel.
Administrative/Clerical Staff costs in this category are in most cases covered under the University's Facilities and Administrative Cost (F&A) rate and are not charged directly to a project unless specifically allowed by the terms and conditions of the award or with prior written approval from the sponsor.

Fringe Benefits and FICA

Georgia Southern University calculates fringe benefits (retirement, insurance and FICA/MED) on actual personnel costs. Contact your Grant Coordinator for assistance in calculating fringe benefits. A Fringe Benefit Calculator is provided to assist in calculating these costs.

Equipment is defined as nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of one year or more and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or greater. Identify each piece of equipment. Procurement and Purchasing sets the Competitive Bid Threshold at $5,000 and above unless goods or services are provided via a statewide, agency contract, other approved source or are exempt. Price quotes or the basis for the projected costs may be required. Capital expenditures, including equipment having a unit cost of $5,000 or greater are exclude from Facilities and Administrative costs.

Travel costs are expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred by employees who are traveling on official business of the University. Domestic and foreign travel should be listed separately. A person traveling on official University business should be familiar with the University’s Travel Regulations.

Materials and Supplies are consumable items having an acquisition unit cost of less than $1,000. These costs should be project-specific, reasonable and based on actual or historical use. It is not necessary to break down each individual item unless required by the sponsor. A general description and amount by general classification should be provided (e.g. glassware, test tubes, or chemicals).

Publication Costs consist of the documenting, preparing, publishing, disseminating, page and reprint charges, and sharing of project findings and supporting material.

Tuition Costs are charged to sponsored programs and is not paid by the University. Unless prohibited by the sponsor, graduate tuition charges should be itemized as a direct cost on all proposal budgets. The tuition charge for graduate assistants budgeted at less than full time will be pro-rated based on the percentage of their appointment. Tuition increases for the outgoing years will be projected at 5%.
**Subawards, Consultants, and Vendors** services are required from time to time on sponsored projects. The PI and the ORSSP are responsible for ensuring that proposed arrangements comply with applicable federal, state, and university laws, regulations, and statutes. Working with the PI, the ORSSP must be involved in all formal negotiations with subawardees and consultants to establish contractual relationships under sponsored projects. The university’s Procurement and Contract Services department handles relationships with vendors. To differentiate between a subawardee, consultant, and vendor, refer to university policy, **RSSP-406-03, “Subawardees, Consultants, and Vendors on Sponsored Projects”**.

The following steps must be taken by the PI and Grant Coordinators in developing a proposal that will involve one or more external entities in a sponsored project at Georgia Southern University:

1. The PI asks each potential subawardee/consultant to complete a **Subcontractor-Consultant Commitment Form** which must be submitted to the grant coordinator before proposal submission. The information will be considered valid for nine (9) months from the date the form is signed by the entity’s authorized official.

2. The PI obtains and includes the following subawardee/consultant documents as part of the proposal:
   - Statement of Work (SOW), including a clear description of the work to be performed timelines, and deliverables;
   - biosketches and current and pending support for key personnel;
   - budget and budget justification, including direct and indirect costs (calculated using the entity’s approved facilities and administrative [F&A] and fringe benefit rates), and verifying any committed cost-sharing.

3. The PI must complete and sign a **Fair and Reasonable Cost Analysis and Sole Source Justification Form**. PIs must support their selection of a subawardee/consultant based on an analysis of past performance, technical resources and financial viability, and an assessment of the reasonableness of the proposed costs in light of the work to be performed. To meet audit requirements, the university is required to retain documentation of this analysis and justification.

Any exceptions to the requirements outlined above should be discussed with the ORSSP grant coordinator. If appropriate and acceptable documentation is not provided in a timely manner, the grant coordinator may be unable to endorse and submit the proposal.

**Other Expenses** - Indicate any other project-related expenses and include the number of units and cost per unit.