FM Research and Benchmarking Institute

Research Application

IFMA
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Institute

Research Application

Introduction

The purpose of designing an FM Research and Benchmarking Institute (RBI) research application is to be transparent to all participants (RBI members, underwriters, sponsors and others alike). This process is built upon years of structured university research processes, models and targeted outcomes.

This document will guide the applicant through the application process – from what information needs to occupy each section, whom to contact should you need assistance and more. This document is a culmination of multiple efforts within the RBI to support the research application process from previous years.

This research application includes 11 sections: abstract, business need, business objectives, critical factors, existing research, timeline, references, funding type, budget, personnel and acronyms. These sections include discussion and planning around multiple areas which each application will be evaluated. If all sections are not completed, this could result in the submission being disqualified.

A. Research Application Program Goals

The research application goals are to:

a) Educate applicant(s) on the RBI research application process;

b) Guide the applicant through a short RBI historical orientation of areas which would complement the research application submitted topical FM areas; and

c) Provide an RBI research application template for completion by any entity wanting to participate with RBI on a proposed research project.

Submitted research applications will be reviewed every four to six weeks (keep in mind the research committee meets the first Wednesday of each month). Applicants will be notified within two weeks after the final decision.

This newly designed research application process will transition online after the first year. Current application processes are being supported via email submission. Future online research application proposal submission processes are being researched in assessing what meets RBI's future needs in streamlining efforts for future applicants.

Core RBI research areas are currently being identified and assessed for inclusion into the top three focus areas. At this time, any facility management topic may be submitted. Once these core areas have been finalized by the RBI board, this focus will be conveyed via an updated research application.

The research application template is located in Appendix A. The research application submissions flow chart showing the RBI research application process is located in Appendix B. This flow chart allows applicants to review the steps the

proposal undergoes in being reviewed, approved, rejected or tabled for later consideration. Appendix C contains the RBI research committee official charter.

B. Research application approval process and scoring

RBI considers the full application, with each application considered independently.

Peer review of proposals focuses on four areas: (1) review of the individual proposal components; (2) review of the individual resources contributed; (3) review of the proposed projects as an integrated effort and the overall merit of the project; and (4) collaborating entities.

In their considerations, two of RBI's research committee members will be guided by the following directives (rotating appointments):

- A two- to five-year total project period is suggested.

- Unless the applicant has requested a shorter duration, component research projects units must be recommended for at least two years.

For each research project, the reviewers will assign an impact/priority score or a rating of "Not Discussed" (ND), which is applied to projects falling in the lower half of the distribution of impact/priority scores. Each project that is deemed to have significant facility management impact will be assigned a descriptor term indicating an assessment of its validity and technical merit based on the criteria outlined within the application questions. The RBI Academic research work-group reviewers will use the following 9-point scale and descriptor terms to access proposal components:

Impact	Score	Descriptor
High Impact	1	Exceptional
	2	Outstanding
	3	Excellent
Moderate Impact	4	Very Good
	5	Good
	6	Satisfactory
Low Impact	7	Fair
	8	Marginal
	9	Poor

Non-numeric score options: NR = Not Recommended for Further Consideration, DF = Deferred, AB = Abstention, CF = Conflict, NP = Not Present, ND = Not Discussed

RBI research policy states that members of a research application review group will score an application as presented in its entirety, and the RBI board char in conjunction with the Executive Director and Director of Research, will be responsible for enforcing compliance with the policy. Under no circumstance may members of an RBI research application review team as a whole:

- Modify their final overall impact scores for an application based on the assumption that a portion of the work proposed and/or budget requested will be deleted or modified according to the RBI Academic workgroup reviewers' recommendations;

- Recommend reducing the complexity of an application and score on the basis of the more meritorious components; nor

- Provide a numerical overall impact score for an application if the identified RBI Academic workgroup review team's vote a portion of the application be Not Recommended for Further Consideration (NRFC). However, an RBI research application reviewer may vote to streamline a component of a multi-component application or deem a component unsatisfactory, and vote a numerical overall impact score for the entire application, taking that component into consideration.

An application may be designated Not Recommended for Further Consideration (NRFC) by the RBI Academic workgroup committee if it lacks significant and substantial merit; presents serious ethical problems in the protection of human subjects from research risks. Applications designated as NRFC will not be considered for resubmission.

If specified in the RBI research application, all applications may undergo a selection process in which only those applications deemed to have the highest merit (generally the top half of applications under review), will be discussed and assigned an overall impact/priority score. Such applications identified in this selection process will be given a rating of "Not Discussed" (ND).

Research projects that are found to lack significant facility management merit may be given the rating ND, which is applied to applications or components falling in the lower half of the distribution of impact/priority scores.

For the overall application, reviewers will assign an impact/priority score based on assessment of the entire application (including all proposed projects and any given a rating of ND in terms of the review criteria specified for the overall proposal). The resulting impact/priority score for the overall research will reflect the reviewers' assessment of the FM merit of the proposed project.

After the reviewers have acted, the RBI Director of Research will prepare a summary statement. The summary statement will indicate the overall RBI Academic workgroup committee's recommendation for each proposal and budget. All critiques are the verbatim written comments of the reviewers.

C. RBI Research Contact Information

The individual to contact should any questions arise is:

Nickalos (Nick) A. Rocha
Nickalos.rocha@RBI.org
Tel: 1-713-993-7633 (Houston, TX)
Central Standard Time

Submission of Application

This section guides the potential applicant through the application process and required information in supporting the submission.

RBI values the importance of a thoughtful planning process that includes the use of available data to identify the strengths, needs and service gaps for specific FM populations. By identifying needs and gaps, RBI can prioritize and establish tailored goals, strategies and measurable targets. In addition, the planning process should provide information on the type and amount of funding this effort will entail.

Project Summary/Abstract - The project summary/abstract must contain a summary of the proposed activity suitable for dissemination to the public. It should be a self-contained description of the project and contain a statement of objectives and methods to be employed. It should be informative to other people working in the same or related fields and insofar as understandable to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader. This summary must not include any proprietary/confidential information. The project summary is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work when separated from the application. Within the summary, state the application's broad, long-term objectives and specific aims, making reference to the FM relatedness of the project (i.e., relevance to the mission of RBI). Describe concisely the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals. Identify if this will be a collaborative effort.

Finally, please make every effort to be succinct. This section must be no longer than 30 lines of text, and follow the required font and margin specifications. An abstract which exceeds this allowable length may be flagged as an error by the RBI research staff upon submission. This would require a corrective action before the application will be accepted. In this section, use plain language that can be understood by a general, lay audience. If the application is approved, the project description will be entered into an RBI research database and made available to future applicants as successful examples and will become public information.

Business Need – State the value of the product/service to the organization(s) and its members, as well as the gap in the FM industry that is filled by this request. Remember "what is the added value, to the applicant's organization and the RBI." Discuss how filling this potential gap(s) in the FM industry will move the FM field forward. What is the added value long term i.e., two to five years?

Business Objectives – Outline the business objectives to be achieved if this request is implemented. How will both parties complete these business objectives? How will these business objectives support advancing the field of FM?

Critical factors – What are the critical factors for the success of this initiative? How best will these critical factors be attained? What steps will be taken?

- What type of corrective action plan would you suggest in resolving these critical factors?

Existing Research – This section consists of identifying any critical research on the subject matter being proposed. It also includes any research which the applicant may have sponsored in the past, present or in the near future (if available). Moreover, this information should be derived from both an applied and/or theoretical approach in the proposed subject matter.

Timeline – Although there are many unknowns, the applicant should provide an ideal timeline with a minimum of five weeks allowed before initial review by the research committee. After further review, the research committee will inform the applicant of their application status.

References and Bibliography - Citations provide a bibliography of any references cited in the project narrative. Ideally, each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers and year of publication, etc. Applicants should be especially careful to follow scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials relied upon when preparing any section of the application. The references should be limited to relevant and current literature. While there is not a page limitation, it is important to be concise and to select only those literature references pertinent to the proposed research.

Funding Type – Refers to the type of funding the applicant is proposing: underwriter, sponsorship, gift or other.

Budget – Pertains to the allocation of proposed funding. This includes a general overview of the budget and any requirement proposed by the applicant.

Personnel – Although very detailed, this information will assist the RBI in documenting the origins of external funding as well as supporting contact information.

Acronyms – Since each area of facility management is acronym intensive, please list acronyms within the applicant submission.

RBI Research Application Form

Project name:		Prepared by:	Date:
New submission, Re-submission, Renewal update, etc:		If re-submitted, how many times:	
Start date of project:		Proposed end date of project:	
Type of industry applicant represents:			
Contact email(s):		Contact number(s):	
1)			
2)			

Introduction	*The research application request is the document of record stating the business need and objectives, critical factors for success, potential resources needed, personnel and the project timeline for the project being presented to RBI Academic workgroup for consideration.* *In addition to completing the requested information below, please include a short (3-pages max) biography for the project principals, as well as any information regarding any research or other significant work that has been done in the field. You must include this information, and attachments as necessary, below. Lastly, please include references and/or a bibliography.*

Project Description	Comments
Abstract – A summary of the proposed activity suitable for dissemination to the public (See above for more detail).	
Business Need – State the value of the product/service to the organization and its members, as well as the gap in the FM industry that is filled by this request.	
Outline the **Business Objectives** to be achieved if this request is implemented by the RBI.	
What are the **Critical Factors** for the success of this initiative?	
Existing research – Provide background research supporting the initial project discussion. Also, provide any/all background research from the applicant's company on purposed issue.	

Project Description (cont.)	Comments
Outline the **Timeline** for the project. Are the deadlines firm? Allow for five to six weeks for the RBI Academic Workgroup to review the application.	
References – Provide supporting literature citations for proposed research.	
Funding Type – Select the type of funding supporting the proposed effort.	Please make appropriate selection : Underwriter Sponsorship Gift Other (clarify below)
Budget – What resources/support will come from the applicant? State what resources, if any, are requested from the RBI. Provide draft budget.	

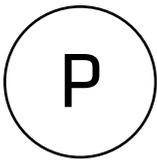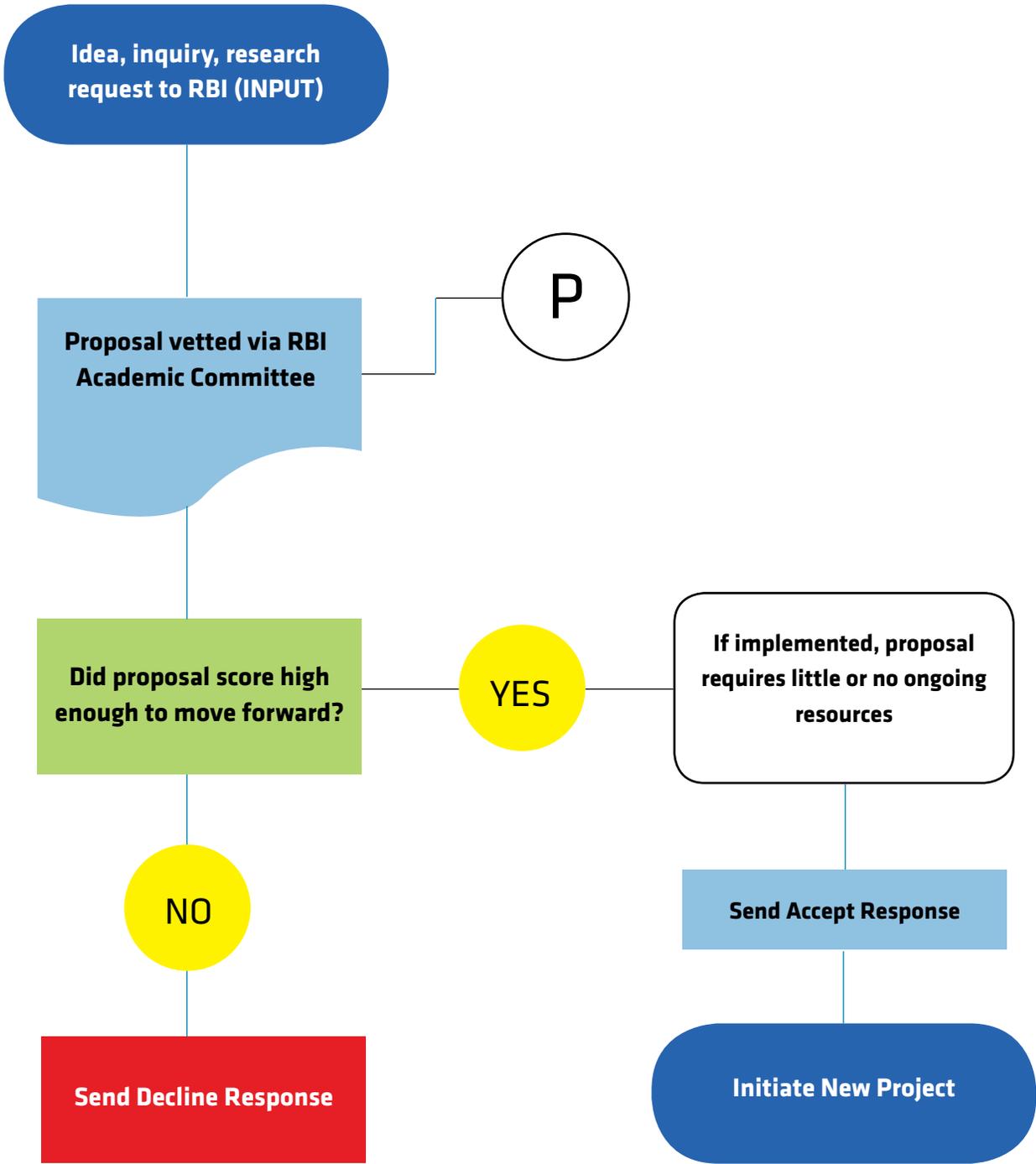|	
Personnel – List senior individual(s) responsible/involved in research application moving forward from the applicant company. Also, if more than one applicant, provide all information for senior individual(s). Attach biographical sketch for all company participants. For questions that are not applicable enter 00. For U.S. applicants identifying which congressional district applicant the employer is presently in, please visit https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members and complete the response (on right side). For foreign applicants (non-US), please include country, province (if applicable) and city. This allows us to measure where applicants are originating from.	Organization Name: First Name: Last Name: Position/Title of Senior Key Person: Department of Senior Key Person: Division of Senior Key Person: Education: (Type of credentials and/or degree): Work Address: County(If applicable): City: State: Zip/post Code: Country: Province (if applicable): Email: Daytime phone number: Fax number (If applicable): Congressional district of applicant(s) (if applicable):
Acronyms - Please identify all acronyms used within this research application.	

Please include any additional information you feel RBI will need to make an informed decision for initiating this project.	

Thank you for your interest in working with the RBI in our mission to advance the facility management profession. Please be assured that your proposal will be given due consideration. If you have any questions regarding the status of your proposal, please contact:

Nickalos (Nick) A. Rocha

Nickalos.rocha@RBI.org

Tel: 1-713-993-7633 (Houston, TX)

Central Standard Time

Idea, inquiry, research request to RBI (INPUT)

Proposal vetted via RBI Academic Committee

(P)

Did proposal score high enough to move forward?

YES

If implemented, proposal requires little or no ongoing resources

NO

Send Accept Response

Send Decline Response

Initiate New Project

(P) Parking Lot: Through the vetting process, RBI product teams have determined that, though the proposal has value, no action can be taken at the current time. A response will be sent asking if RBI can consider this again at a later date.

Appendix A

RBI research application proposal approval process – flow chart

References

Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development – P50 Specialized Research Center Grant Guidelines. Retrieved March 26, 2015, from

https://www.nichd.nih.gov/grants-funding/opportunities-mechanisms/mechanisms-types/research-mecha-nisms/Pages/p50_guide.aspx

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Retrieved March 27, 2015, from www.samhsa.gov