

# Researcher Guide: Kualo Proposal Development

Welcome to the wonderful world of Kualo! This guide is meant to provide all the information you need as a PI or Co-I of a sponsored research proposal processing through Kualo. If after reading this guide you still have questions or would like additional information, please contact [kr-help@umces.edu](mailto:kr-help@umces.edu).

## Overview

Kualo Research is the electronic research administration system (eRA, in the parlance) selected to be used by all USM institutions. Kualo Proposal Development will replace Cayuse for all proposal preparation, routing and submission by January 1, 2022 (although your unit may make the transition sooner). The post award implementation will begin soon after. For additional information on the background and benefits of Kualo, please visit the [ORAA Kualo Research webpage](#).

As with all implementations, there will be some growing pains; please give your business office and ORAA additional time to process your proposals as everyone gets used to the new system. Here is what you as the researcher need to know about submitting proposals through Kualo:

## Accessing Kualo

To access Kualo Research, go to <https://umces.kualo.co/>. Kualo utilizes SSO (single sign-on) authentication so if you are already logged into your UMCES Google account (email, calendar, etc.) you will automatically be logged into Kualo. If you are not currently logged into your UMCES Google account, you'll need to log in to Kualo using your @umces.edu address and password. If you have any issues entering the system, please contact [kr-help@umces.edu](mailto:kr-help@umces.edu).

## Automatic Notifications

Kualo has the ability to send you notifications and reminders throughout the lifetime of your sponsored project. These notifications come from the sender "UMCES\_KR\_donotreply@kualo.co" or "kr-actionlist-donotreply@kualo.co" and will include a link to take you directly to whatever needs your attention (routing approval, etc.)

## Data Entry Access

Because Kualo will interact with the new financial system being implemented at UMCP (Workday), the ability to enter data into Kualo is more restricted than in Cayuse. The business office at your lab or unit will be responsible for entering your proposal into Kualo. This may be a change for some labs. You will, however, have full view access at all times during the preparation phase, as well as the ability to upload documents and attachments.

## Attachments

There are two statuses for attachments in Kualo, Incomplete and Complete. When a document is uploaded its default status is Incomplete. A proposal can begin the routing process with documents in the Incomplete phase, allowing some additional time for you to make last minute changes. However, all documents must be in the Complete status before ORAA can sign off on the proposal.

Note: You may encounter a warning regarding attachments, such as the example below:

*The uploaded file < null > contains special characters < null > in the file name. Special characters should be avoided in any file name if this proposal is being submitted via Grants.gov.*

This simply means that one or more of your attachments has a character the system doesn't recognize, or a space ("null") in the document title: "CV Lastname" vs "CV\_Lastname." This is only

an issue if your proposal is being submitted via Grants.gov; the warning can be ignored for all other submissions. If you are unsure whether or not it's safe to ignore, contact your proposal prep team.

### Fixed Routing Chain

Unlike Cayuse, where the routing chains could be rearranged to accommodate various scheduling conflicts, the routing chain in Kuali is fixed and cannot be altered. This will be an adjustment for UMCES and will require some degree of planning ahead.

Each unit has developed its own routing chain, consisting of the PI, the Co-I(s) if applicable, the PI's unit administration (business office staff, Lab/Unit Director, etc.), and finally ORAA. Where permitted within Kuali, alternate approvers have been set up to keep proposals routing in the event the prime approver is unavailable (the lab AD for the lab director, for example). However, the PI and Co-I(s) **MUST** be available to review and approve their proposals at the start of the routing process in order for routing to progress. This approval cannot be delegated or moved to a later spot in the routing chain. If you intend to be out of town or in a remote field location, please plan for the routing process to begin before you leave.

Note: ORAA does have the ability to approve on a researcher's behalf. This ability is for emergency situations only and is not appropriate for reasons of convenience.

### Researcher Certification

Because Kuali is a true eRA system rather than a proposal submission and routing tool, there are certain unalterable requirements built into the system. The most apparent difference in this regard is the **Researcher Certification** requirement. In reality, UMCES researchers have always been certifying these statements whether they were aware of it or not, as they are part of the submission process. For example, anytime a proposal was submitted on your behalf, there was a good-faith assumption that the information you were submitting was accurate and true to the best of your knowledge. Kuali brings these behind the scenes assurances out into the open and presents them in an easy table.

Notes on Researcher Certification:

- ❖ **PIs and Co-Is must complete their certifications prior to proposal submission.** Researcher certification can be completed at any time once the Kuali record has been created. It can also be done as part of the researcher's review and approval of the proposal during the routing process. The system will not let a researcher approve the proposal until their certification is complete.
- ❖ **The certification must be completed for every proposal.** Because the answers to the questions can vary based on the nature of the proposed work, this certification is required for each proposal.
- ❖ **Each researcher must complete their own certification.** This task cannot be delegated; because researchers are the people responsible for the proposed work, the certification must be completed by the researchers themselves.

The certification questions are discussed in more detail in Appendix A.

## APPENDIX A: Research Certification Questions

- ❖ Question as it appears on the certification
  - *What it means in practical terms*
- ❖ I have reviewed and verified the activity type for this proposed research.
  - *Did you select the appropriate project type (Basic Research, Development, etc.) on the Notice of Intent to Submit a Proposal (NOI) web form?*
- ❖ I have reviewed and verified the R&D discipline selected for this proposed research.
  - *Did you select the correct field of study/discipline on the NOI?*
- ❖ I have reviewed and verified that all compliance components pertaining to this proposal have been appropriately noted and addressed.
  - *Did you indicate all relevant compliance areas, if any, on the NOI and take the appropriate steps to meet those compliances?*
- ❖ If capital equipment is required for this project, I affirm there is no comparable equipment available on campus for this project. If capital equipment is not required for this project, answer N/A.
  - *The federal government will not pay for the purchase of equipment identical to equipment already purchased on federally sponsored research without substantial justification.*
- ❖ I have conducted lobbying efforts related to this proposal.
  - *Self-explanatory*
- ❖ I have a real or potential conflict of interest related to this work, as defined by the University System of Maryland Policy (III-1.11) and the applicable campus policies and procedures and a disclosure will be made if required.
  - *Examples of real or potential (meaning a reasonable person could construe a potential conflict exists) COIs include: a spouse or family member working with you on the project (including those on subawards to other universities), any stake in the outcome of the research, an overly-cozy relationship with the potential sponsor (such as a family member on the board), etc. Note that the above examples are not necessarily problems in and of themselves. They only indicate the need to document how such relationships will not skew or impact your research in any way. It is always easier to write a brief mitigation plan at the beginning than to try to explain why you didn't down the road.*
- ❖ I attest that this proposal will be submitted to a Public Health Service sponsor/prime sponsor, or a sponsor which follows the PHS Financial Conflict of Interest reporting guidelines and all individuals responsible for the design, conduct, and reporting of the project have, or will, complete his/her Financial Conflict of Interest disclosure in accordance with the University and PHS policies. If this proposal is exempt from FCOI regulations (e.g. SBIR/STTR Phase 1), please select N/A. For your reference, a list of PHS sponsors can be found [here](#). If your proposal is not to a PHS sponsor/prime sponsor, or a sponsor which does not follow the PHS FCOI guidelines, please select No.
  - *This will very rarely apply to us, as the main sponsors following PHS FCOI guidelines are biomedical in nature – NIH, the CDC, the American Heart Association, etc. If you are unsure whether or not your sponsor follows PHS FCOI guidelines, follow the hyperlink to the list of sponsors who do.*
- ❖ I agree to not make any changes to the ORAA-approved proposal's scope, budget, or institutional commitment without first notifying ORAA and will provide a final copy to the central office as needed.
  - *No changes are to be made after the proposal has been routed without rerouting for approval. Since ORAA approves proposals last, this covers all stops on the routing chain.*
- ❖ I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, and/or administrative penalties
  - *Self-explanatory*
- ❖ I accept responsibility for the scientific conduct of this project and will provide required progress reports if the proposal results in a project/award.
  - *Self-explanatory*
- ❖ To the best of my knowledge, the information submitted within the proposal is true, complete, and accurate and this certification constitutes my electronic signature for this application.
  - *Self-explanatory*