iSchool IT Needs

This guide is intended to assist faculty members who are preparing grant proposals at the School of Information. Preparation and collaboration are key for any IT-related purchases that may need to accompany your grant. To that end, this guide is intended to help provide a common understanding among all iSchool faculty regarding our school’s available IT services, the University’s IT policies, and the time you may need to allot for IT planning, support, provisioning, and procurement.

Website Hosting

Will your grant require a Website either as a requirement of the grantor or to promote your work? If so, please contact the iSchool IT Department as soon as possible so arrangements can be made for your grant. If you need to host a Website please review the following attributes that you will need to identify regarding your site:

- How long will your site need to be hosted?
- How much data storage space with your site require?
- Will you have collaborators who will be working with you on your Website? If so, are they all UT affiliated personnel?
- Will your site be static or dynamic?
- Will you require a content management system or do you have programming needs for this site?
- What kind of network traffic do you anticipate for this site?
- Will your site require logins or provide access to any confidential data?

Software Purchases

Will your grant require the procurement of any software? If so, you will need to identify the software version you need and be ready to answer several questions about its implementation:

1. Will this software run on personal computers or is it server software?
2. Does the iSchool or UT have an existing license for this software?
3. How many licenses will you need for this software and for how long will you need it?
4. Do you or your collaborators have prior experience with this software, and if not, do you have a plan on how to learn how to use it?
5. Are you familiar with the system requirements necessary to run this software?
6. Will you require assistance evaluating alternatives to your selection on software?
7. Will this software run in your existing computing environment or will it require new hardware or computing services to run?

If you need any assistance answering these questions, please consult the iSchool IT department as soon as possible at help@ischool.utexas.edu.

Hardware Purchases

Will your grant include any new IT hardware purchases? If so, you will need to identify precisely what kind of hardware you need, whether or not you need local IT support to assist you in the management of this hardware, and you will need to become familiar with the policies that govern IT hardware on campus. You should be advised that IT hardware purchases at UT have numerous campus policies that govern their purchasing, inventory tracking, information security, networking, and ultimate disposition. Buying University-owned equipment is very different proposition from buying computing equipment in your day-to-day life. Though all purchases are subject to an array of state and federal regulations, we’re afforded a fair amount of departmental discretion when it comes to equipment purchases below $15,000. However, purchases over $15,000 require that we submit a minimum of three bids to the UT Purchasing Office along with an explanation as to which vendor we would prefer to conduct business with. In instances where this sort of informal bid solicitation is not feasible — for instance when a given vendor is the sole provider of a particular device or service — you’ll be required to submit a formal Exclusive Acquisition Justification for review. While this petition and review process is relatively simple, it can often delay the completion of your purchase by anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. Additionally, any individual piece of equipment valued over $500 will be subject to mandatory tagging and tracking by the Inventory Services office and your local departmental inventory coordinator.

1. Are you able to identify precisely what hardware you will need to procure to move forward with your grant?
2. Will your hardware need to run on UT’s network?
3. Will your hardware store confidential data?
4. Are you procuring personal hardware devices or server hardware?
5. Does your hardware have a maintenance or support cost associate with it? (Please note, this may be required for your hardware purchases depending on your support needs!)

If you are preparing a grant that includes the purchase of computing hardware, you should notify the iSchool IT department as soon as possible. We are happy to assist you in the selection of hardware for your grant and advise you on all of the services, costs, policies, and provisioning concerns that you will have to address. If you need any assistance answering these questions, please consult the iSchool IT department as soon as possible at help@ischool.utexas.edu.

Cloud Computing Services

Will your grant include any cloud computing services or contracts? The cloud computing space (e.g. Amazon Web Services, Google Cloud Services, Microsoft Azure, and others) is growing quickly and the University’s place within this space is also rapidly changing. Cloud Services are incredibly exciting from a research standpoint, but they also come with numerous challenges in terms of funding models, contracts, and support. If you are planning a grant that includes use of Cloud Computing Services, you are encouraged to consult with the IT department very early in the process of planning your grant.

Instructions on hardware, software, cloud, or other IT consulting needs for iSchool funded research projects and proposals.