

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™

Sponsored Programs Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: MSU Research Community

FROM: Jennifer Easley, Director of Sponsored Programs Administration

DATE: January 15, 2015

RE: Signatures on the Internal Approval Sheet (IAS)



We are seeing an increasing number of Internal Approval Sheets that are not signed by the PI, Department Head, or Dean/Director and instead signed by proxy. This memo is to clarify the implications and responsibilities associated with reviewing, approving, and signing the IAS.

The IAS helps ensure that proposals submitted to external sponsors are consistent with University policies and state and federal regulations. Those signing the IAS should be aware of the certifications to which they are agreeing. Additionally, appropriate authority for proxy signature should be in place prior to anyone signing on another's behalf.

Signatures on the IAS certify the following:

1. **PI / Co-PI** – Certifies the completeness and accuracy of the form, acceptance of responsibility for scientific and technical conduct, and compliance with policies and procedures, including the conflict of interest policy. **Proxy Signatures:** It is very rare that a PI should be delegating authority to sign, and in those cases, it should be clear via email that the PI has prepared or at least seen the completed IAS and approves of the person signing on his or her behalf.
2. **Department Head or Dean/Director** – Approves the IAS, including technical and budgetary content, personnel assignments, equipment, space, foreign sponsors, cost sharing, and conflict of interest concerns. **Proxy Signatures:** A signed authorization on departmental letterhead should be sent to SPA granting signature authority for an individual to sign on the Department Head's or Dean/Director's behalf. An email granting authority will suffice in the case of a one-time approval.
3. **SPA** – Certifies that SPA has reviewed the proposal budget, that fringe benefit and F&A cost rates are correctly applied, and the budget cost categories are correctly presented.

We are happy to provide training on digital signatures or assist with routing of IASs. Please contact me at jeasley@spa.msstate.edu or 662-325-3751 if you need this type of assistance.