

## Cardinal Sheet Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a Cardinal Sheet?

A Cardinal Sheet is the required form used by the Iowa State University Foundation to ensure compliances and secure departmental, college, and university approvals to request external funding from a foundation, corporation, nonprofit, or other non-governmental source. Cardinal Sheets confirm proposals and budgets have been reviewed and approved and the work aligns with university priorities.

2. Why is the Cardinal Sheet process now web-based?

The new web-based system allows for Cardinals Sheets and its required documents to be automatically routed through each college's approval trees. After July 1, 2019 the old Cardinal Sheet will not be accepted for routing.

3. Who uses a Cardinal Sheet?

The Principal Investigator (PI) of a research project or program is responsible for submitting a Cardinal Sheet before submitting a charitable request to a funder.

4. Can I serve as the PI on a proposal requiring a Cardinal Sheet?

Requirements to serve as a principal investigator are set by the university. To confirm your eligibility as a PI, visit [www.vpresearch.iastate.edu/principal-investigator-eligibility-guidelines/](http://www.vpresearch.iastate.edu/principal-investigator-eligibility-guidelines/)

5. When is a Cardinal Sheet needed?

The following situations require a Cardinal Sheet:

- The proposal or other type of request is for \$5,000 or more to a private foundation, corporation, or other nonprofit
- The proposal requires an institutional signature, regardless of the dollar amount of your ask
- The Letter of Intent (LOI) requires a budget
- The Letter of Intent (LOI) requires an institutional signature

6. What types proposals require Cardinal Sheets?

A Cardinal Sheet should be submitted for **new** gifts toward capital projects, administrative/department support, equipment, extension/outreach, faculty and student support, and research. Cardinal Sheets are not required for student organization gifts.

7. Why should I submit a Cardinal Sheet?

The Cardinal Sheet is **required** by the university and the ISU Foundation for several reasons, including:

- a. Ensures the PI's department and college are aware of the project and that any time or cost sharing commitments can be met
- b. Makes certain the PI has the correct compliances in place with the university to carry out the project
- c. Enables ISU Foundation to honor any directions from the donor or prospective donor about the number, timing and coordination of proposals

- d. Allows the ISU Foundation to maintain up-to-date donor and prospective donor records
8. When should I submit a Cardinal Sheet?

To meet the funder's deadline, the PI should submit a Cardinal Sheet **at least five** business days before the proposal due date. It is also strongly suggested that the PI contact the CFR office at [cfr@foundation.iastate.edu](mailto:cfr@foundation.iastate.edu) when preparing to approach a private funder. The Cardinal Sheet will not be approved by the ISU Foundation until your proposal and budget have been reviewed.
9. What materials should I have to fill out and submit a Cardinal Sheet?

The PI must have a draft proposal, final budget, and any other required documents requested by the funder. The Cardinal Sheet routing process cannot begin until these documents are attached to the Cardinal Sheet form. Please note that final documents must be submitted to [cfr@foundation.iastate.edu](mailto:cfr@foundation.iastate.edu) before the Cardinal Sheet will be approved by the ISU Foundation. Final documents are appended to and distributed with the final, approved Cardinal Sheet.
10. What should my budget look like?

The ISU Foundation will only accept a budget in the funder's preferred format. If the funder does not have a preferred format, neither does the ISU Foundation, but industry standard formats (ie: Grant Space and Foundation Center) are required. BOB sheets are not accepted. For more budget information, visit or [www.foundation.iastate.edu/forfaculty](http://www.foundation.iastate.edu/forfaculty)
11. Why can't I use a BOB sheet as my budget?

The BOB sheet is an internal template intended to help you prepare your budget. Funders will receive a budget tailored to their needs. If they do not provide a template, one should use an industry standard (ie: Grant Space and Foundation Center) budget presented in a very straightforward layout that fits on standard letter-sized paper. Visit [www.foundation.iastate.edu/forfaculty](http://www.foundation.iastate.edu/forfaculty) for assistance.
12. What happens after I submit a Cardinal Sheet?

The ISU Foundation will ensure that the Cardinal Sheet is filled out correctly and the required documents that are attached are complete. The approval process then begins through AdobeSign. If any approvers have questions or require changes to the proposal package, they will contact the PI directly. All final documents must be submitted to [cfr@foundation.iastate.edu](mailto:cfr@foundation.iastate.edu) before the Cardinal Sheet will be approved by the ISU Foundation. Once all designees have approved the Cardinal Sheet, you will receive an automated notification through AdobeSign and the proposal may then be submitted by the designated person (as indicated on the Cardinal Sheet).
13. Who needs to approve my Cardinal Sheet?

Cardinal Sheet routing trees have been determined by each college or unit and cannot be altered. The Cardinal Sheet will automatically route to each approver via AdobeSign and will be approved by the ISU Foundation last. The ISU Foundation will not approve

the Cardinal Sheet until any proposal feedback is addressed and all final documents are submitted to [cfr@foundation.iastate.edu](mailto:cfr@foundation.iastate.edu).

14. I have already written a proposal and I have been in contact with the funder. May I apply on my own or do I still need to submit a Cardinal Sheet?

Internal approval and review are needed before submitting a request for external funding, so you should use a Cardinal Sheet and provide the required documentation as you would with any other proposal.

15. How do I know what indirect cost rate to include?

Many private foundations do not support indirect charges/overhead, or they pay a reduced rate. The university and ISU Foundation will honor funder's written policy on allowable rates. When funder guidelines do not specify the allowable amount, the ISU Foundation will rely on documentation received directly from the donor or negotiate with the donor.

16. What is an institutional signature or an authorized official signature and how to I obtain that for my proposal?

Funders often seek the endorsement of various administrators and will require signatures at the proposal stage. For proposals submitted via a Cardinal Sheet, the ISU Foundation's controller must sign. Other signatures, such as the president, provost, or a dean may also be required. The ISU Foundation has processes in place with the offices of our administration to secure these signatures. Cardinal Sheets must be complete before any of these signatures can be obtained.

17. When does a LOI require a Cardinal Sheet?

Letters of Intent or preproposals require a Cardinal Sheet when the following are needed to approach the funder:

- A line-item budget
- An institutional signature