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# ADVANCEMENT COMMUNICATIONS

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## HOW TO ENSURE THE BEST PROPOSALS

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### FACTORS TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR PROPOSAL REQUEST

- What specifically ignites the donor's philanthropic passion?
- What makes our funding opportunity or faculty investigator unique?
- Does the proposal contain single or multiple funding opportunities?
- Will the donor's gift be for endowed or current use? What is the dollar amount of the gift?
- Is there urgency? How will the donor's gift help advance this area?
- Which images, pictures, stories, and statistics will pique the donor's interest? For example, would they respond to quotes from or profiles of faculty or students?
- Does the donor prefer the information presented in a certain way?

### TYPES OF PROPOSALS

- Word document—can be lightly designed and easily changed
- Designed PDF—looks polished but is more difficult to make changes to
- Brochure—requires extra time to design
- PowerPoint presentation—for proposals with minimal text or donors who don't like reading a lot of text
- Digital proposal (website)—can be personalized and include animations, slideshows, and other graphic elements

### TIMEFRAMES FOR REQUESTS

- Standard Word document proposal of 3–4 pages: one to two weeks
- Designed proposals: two to three weeks
- Digital proposals: three to four weeks
- Special printing requests: please add at least three days

### PROPOSAL TEMPLATES

Advancement Communications has a variety of one-pagers that you can present to donors or poach language from. These case statements can be found in the Resource Library at [advancement.northeastern.edu/resources](http://advancement.northeastern.edu/resources).

### BEST PRACTICES

- State the problem and get to the solution quickly—preferably in the first or second paragraph.  
*Remember: The solution lies with the donor.*
  - Make the ask early in the document—and then ask several more times.
  - Elucidate the potential impact of the gift. Demonstrate that the impact comes from the donor.
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