



The University of Texas
Rio Grande ValleyTM
.....
*Office of Sponsored
Programs*



OSP Handbook

Introduction

Faculty and authorized professional research staff are encouraged to seek external financial support for specific projects undertaken to further the mission of the University in teaching, research and public service. Sponsored projects enhance and expand the educational opportunities available to undergraduate and graduate students at the University, permit research, scholarly inquiry, and the development of new knowledge, contribute to the academic achievement and stature of the institution, and assist the University in fulfilling its responsibilities to the state and the nation.

The primary responsibility for the origination, development and preparation of proposals rests with the Principal Investigator (faculty member with rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or Instructor; or professional research staff with title of Director, Research Scientist/Engineer, and Senior Research Scientist/Engineer). All proposals are expected to be germane to the interests and expertise of the Principal Investigator and shall be consistent with and contribute to the mission of the University. While awards for successful projects are made to the University, the Principal Investigator is responsible for the management, execution, and completion of the project, including submission of all required reports. Information, assistance and technical support are provided to the Principal Investigator during the pre-award process by the Office of Sponsored Programs and during the post-award phase by the Office of Grants and Contracts under the Office of Finance & Public Policy.

As a public institution, the University will not conduct proprietary research, develop exclusive or proprietary data for a sponsor, conduct any "work-for-hire", or permit a sponsor to direct or control research on campus. University facilities and equipment may not be used by a sponsor's employees or for the specific benefit of a sponsor. The purpose of University research is the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge; the University cannot assume the role of an advocate or a social action agency.

Export Compliance

Federal regulations and sanctions promulgated and enforced by various federal agencies including the Department of Commerce - Export Administration Regulations (EAR), the Department of State -International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) and the Department of Treasury — Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) prohibit the unlicensed export of specific technologies and items and payments to certain entities and individuals for reasons of national security or protection of trade. While most research conducted on U.S. college and university campuses is excluded from these regulations under the Fundamental Research Exclusion, university research involving specified technologies controlled under the EAR and/or ITAR, or transactions and exchanges with designated countries, individuals and entities may require the University to obtain prior approval in the form of a license from the

appropriate agency before allowing foreign nationals to participate in controlled research, collaborate with a foreign company and/or share research—verbally or in writing—with persons who are not United States citizens or permanent residents. The consequences of violating these regulations can be quite severe, ranging from loss of research contracts to monetary and criminal penalties for the individual and/or organization violating these regulations.

Publications

Publication of new knowledge developed under sponsored projects is a fundamental responsibility of the University. The University retains the right to publish all work done under sponsored projects and Principal Investigators are encouraged to use all appropriate channels to disseminate the results of their work. Publication delays of a reasonable period are allowed to permit filing of a patent application, to permit review for possible premature disclosure of patent application information and to review for inadvertent disclosure of a sponsor's confidential information. In all cases, the final decision to publish rests with the University.

Cost of Research

The University expects external sponsors to pay the actual costs of conducting the sponsored project. These costs include both the direct and the facilities and administrative cost obligations incurred by the University in the conduct of a project. The direct costs, that is, those costs that are clearly identified with and benefit a specific sponsored project, include salaries, fringe benefits, equipment, supplies, travel and other expenses. The facilities and administrative costs are those institutional infrastructure costs that cannot be readily attributed to an individual project or monitored on an individual basis and include building and equipment use, operations, maintenance and utilities, general, departmental and sponsored projects administration, library, and capital improvements. Each sponsored project is expected to pay its proportional share of these infrastructure costs. This payment is based on the facilities and administrative cost rate that is negotiated between the University and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Since the facilities and administrative cost rate is based on the level of existing facilities and administrative costs associated with research, the facilities and administrative cost income received by the University (and all other institutions of higher education) is a reimbursement for actual costs incurred. All sponsored project budgets should include facilities and administrative costs as determined by this federally negotiated facilities and administrative cost rate. Exceptions to this policy may be considered if the sponsor has an established, written policy applicable to all potential proposers which deviates from these rates. All deviations are subject to UT Rio Grande Valley administrative approval in advance.

Intellectual Property

The development, ownership, management, use and marketing of intellectual property developed at the University are governed by [The Intellectual Property Rule of The University of Texas System](#).

Intellectual property is any invention, creation, discovery, scientific or technological development, computer software, or other form of expression of an idea arising from the activities of personnel covered by System policy. The System policy does not apply to faculty-authored written or visual work, except computer software, produced in the author's professional field, and such faculty-authored work is owned by the creator.

When intellectual property results from work at the University that the creator believes may be of value, the creator must disclose such intellectual property to the University's Office of Research Translation. Additional information regarding the process of invention disclosure is available through the Office of Research Translation.

Negotiations with sponsors relating to intellectual property matters are the responsibility of the Office of Research Translation in consultation with the University of Texas System as appropriate. Licensing agreements for the technology is handled by the Office of Research Translation.

Research Integrity

Scholars and research personnel of the University are expected to adhere to the highest ethical standards for all research and scholarly work. It is the responsibility of every research investigator to maintain the integrity of research projects by keeping accurate, permanent, and auditable records of all experimental protocols, data, and findings. Misconduct in science and other scholarly activities is absolutely incompatible with the standards of the University and all allegations of such behavior will be handled promptly. The University's policy regarding research integrity may be found at the following site: .

Conflict of Interest

This policy is established to comply with the regulations of the Public Health Service (PHS) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the responsibility of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, to promote objectivity in research by requiring that an employee of The University who applies for grants or cooperative agreements from the federal government for research or other educational activities or otherwise submits a proposal for sponsored research funding from any entity insures that there is no reasonable expectation that the design, conduct, and reporting of research will be biased by any Significant Financial Interest of an Investigator responsible for the research or other educational activity. Based upon federal regulations and The University's objective to maintain a research environment that promotes faithful attention to high ethical standards, this policy relating to conflicts of interest is to be administered in conjunction with Texas laws setting forth standards of conduct, Texas Government Code, Chapter 572, and the Code of Ethics of The University of Texas System, Part One, Chapter III, Section 4, Regent's Rules and Regulations (see Attachment One to HOP § 5.11).

Office of Sponsored Programs

The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) serves as the coordinating office for externally funded research projects submitted by The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. The goal of the OSP is to assist faculty, researchers and professional staff in their efforts to secure external funding.

The OSP staff provides technical assistance to Principal Investigators/Project Directors during proposal preparation (budget, special instructions, etc.), serves as an information source for and monitors compliance with applicable University and sponsor policies and requirements, handles all administrative matters with sponsors, and serves as a liaison with the Office of Grants and Contracts during the post-award phases of a project. The staff reviews proposals before submission to the sponsor and advises the Principal Investigators/Project Directors of any omissions, necessary corrections or other items that might strengthen the presentation to the funding agency.

General Information

Mailing Address

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Bursar Office
1201 West University Drive
Edinburg, TX 78539-2909

Web Page URL

<https://www.utrgv.edu/research/index.htm>

Telephone Number

(956) 665-3002

Email

sponpro@utrgv.edu

Areas of Assistance

- Proactively remind principal investigators/project directors of program and proposal submission guidelines, including deadlines;
- Identify opportunity announcements and potential sponsor directories;
- Assist with development of cover letters and special sponsor-required assurances and certifications;
- Assist principal investigators/project directors with budget development;
- Review proposal components for completeness, responsiveness, and spelling/grammar, suggesting edits as necessary;
- Answer principal investigator's/project director's questions based on published agency guidelines and proposal solicitations;
- Contact sponsor's program officer to seek clarification or resolve inconsistencies in published instructions;

- Upload proposal data and documents into Cayuse for internal routing and, for Grants.gov applications, transmission to sponsor (for non Grants.gov, upload proposal data and documents into appropriate portal);
- Notify the Office of Corporate & Foundation Relations (CFR) about faculty/staff plans to submit foundation grant proposals, and assist IA with budgetary aspects of those proposals. IA may have additional information about foundation guidelines or limitations.
- Subcontract/subrecipient agreement award preparation;
- Award notices and processing.

Key Areas of Responsibility for OSP

Assist the University research community in processing research proposals to outside funding sources

- Review of sponsor guidelines
- Review of compliance issues
- Representations and Certifications
- Review budget
- Submit Revised Budget

Serve as liaison between University and sponsor

- Check status of pending proposals
- Notify principal investigator/project director if additional technical information is requested by sponsor

Receive and negotiate incoming awards

- Read and review terms and conditions of incoming awards
- Notify principal investigator/project director of special terms and conditions and obtain approval of final document.
- Enter award information into Post-award Distribution log.
- Forward notice of award and account activation request to the Grants and Contracts Office
- Prepare subcontracts to outside entities.

Serve as liaison between principal investigator and sponsor

- Assist with routine requests to sponsor (no cost extensions, re-budgeting requests, leave of absence of principal investigator, change of scope of work, etc.)
- Remind principal investigators/project directors of specific requirements for submission of progress reports for non-competing award
- Assist principal investigator transferring to another institution with the transfer of active research projects
- Assist in the submission of final reports to sponsor by notifying the principal investigator/project director of delinquent reports

Serve as the repository for information pertaining to research funding

- Provide monthly report of proposals and awards to colleges and organized research units
- Provide annual report of proposals and awards to the Executive Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies, & New Program Development
- Provide annual report of faculty awards to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Prepare and disseminate information to faculty, departments, Colleges, organized research units, etc. as requested.

UTRGV Facts for Sponsored Projects

When applications request	OSP provides the following response
Address for all Official Correspondence	The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Office of Sponsored Programs, ELIBR 1.120 1201 West University Drive Edinburg, TX 78539-2909
Type of Organization	State Related Institution of Higher Education
Congressional District	15 th (Edinburg), 34 th (Brownsville)
Texas Senatorial District	20 th (Edinburg), 27 th (Brownsville)
Texas House of Representatives District	40 th (Edinburg), 37 th (Brownsville)
Authorized University Official for all Proposals and Certifications	Parwinder Grewal , Ph.D. Executive Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies & New Program Development
Officials Authorized to Sign Listed Agreements	Parwinder Grewal, Ph.D. Executive Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies & New Program Development
Financial Contact	Suelema Gonzalez Office of Grants and Contracts Director of Grants and Contracts grantsandcontracts@utrgv.edu Phone: 956-882-7716
Principal Investigator/Project Director	Faculty/Staff Name (or investigator to serve as project correspondent if there are co-investigators)
Employer ID Number	465292740
DUNS Number	069444511
Contractor Establishment Code	
Cage Code	6Y726
FICE	003599
NAICS Code Number	611310
SAM.gov Expiration Date	12/19/2019

When applications request	OSP provides the following response
NIH Human Subjects Assurance Number	FWA# 00000805
NIH Animal Welfare Assurance Number	A4730-01
Cognizant Agency/Audits	Department of Health & Human Services Cost Allocation Services 1301 Young Street, Room 732 Dallas, TX 75202 Phone: (214) 767-3261
Date of Last Negotiation of Indirect Cost Agreement	May 1, 2017

University Resources

Sponsored Projects

Proposals to external funding sources for sponsored projects must be submitted through the Office of Sponsored Programs and awards received must be processed by the OSP when one or more of the following criteria are met. Most frequently these proposals involve research projects but any program requesting support by an external sponsor that satisfies these criteria shall be submitted through the OSP.

- A specific program of work or research is proposed to or required by the sponsor;
- The sponsor requires an authorized institutional signature;
- The sponsor requires or expects one or more progress reports, a final report, financial reports and/or a formal accounting of how the funds were expended;
- There are intellectual property, confidentiality and/or publication conditions associated with the receipt of funds.

Persons Authorized To Be Principal Investigators or Co-Principal Investigators

What is the definition of a Principal Investigator (PI)?

A principal investigator (PI) is the lead scientist for a particular well-defined science or other academic project who takes direct responsibility for completion of a funded project, directing the research and reporting directly to the sponsor.

Is everyone working at UTRGV authorized to be a PI or Co-PI?

No, employment at the University does not confer automatic PI or Co-PI status for everyone.

When the University accepts a grant or contract from an external sponsor, the University assumes responsibility for the proper performance of the stated project, for the fiscal management of the funds received, and for accountability to the sponsor.

Since the institutional responsibility for meeting these obligations is vested in the PI/PD, only individuals in the categories shown below are deemed qualified and are authorized to be PIs/PDs or Co-PIs/Co-PDs for sponsored projects. As outlined in PI Eligibility guide, other individuals may be authorized as PIs/PDs or Co-PIs/Co-PDs, and then only with the prior written approval of the Executive Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies, and New Program Development. Postdoctoral Fellows are eligible for Co-PI status only but status must be requested.

- Tenure or Tenure-track faculty (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Instructor, Research Professor, Research Associate Professor, Research Assistant Professor);
*NOTE: Emeritus faculty do not have automatic PI status and must request PI status via their colleges.
- Directors; Chairs
*NOTE: Associate Directors are not automatically approved.
- Research Scientist/Engineer and Senior Research Scientist/Engineer
- Research Associate
NOTE: The Research Engineering/Scientist Associate (RESA) position does not have automatic PI status and must request PI status via their colleges.

I am qualified to act as a PI and/or Co-PI, but am not eligible for an automatic approval. What do I do next?

A department may request that an individual be granted PI or Co-PI status a) for a specific project. In this instance, authorization will endure for the life of the project. Or b), a department may request that an individual be allowed to seek funding and submit multiple proposals. In this instance, two options are available: the annual authorization will require annual renewal on August 31 or position specific authorizations can be approved for multiple years as long as the individual holds the same appointment at the University (in this case it is incumbent on the requesting department to inform OSP if there is a change in the status of employment required rescission of PI or Co-PI status). The request should make it clear which option is requested.

How do I initiate a request for PI or Co-PI status?

The individual's department (Dean, Associate Dean for Research, Department Director or Chair) must initiate a request to the EVP/OSP. The request must be addressed to the Executive Vice President for Research, New Program Development and submitted via email to: sponpro@utrgv.edu

The request must include:

1. Name of individual requiring PI/PD or Co-PI/Co-PD status, university title and length of appointment, and a copy of their biographical sketch/CV.
2. Type of request
 - a. allowed multiple submissions

- i. Position specific
 - ii. Annually renewable
- b. if project specific, title of proposal associated with request
- 3. Type of status request:
 - a. PI/PD; or
 - b. Co-PI/Co-PD
- 4. Acknowledgement that the proposed PI/Co-PI or PD/Co-PD has read and agrees to abide by the Required Responsibilities for Researchers at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (PDF).
- 5. Statement that the individual seeking PI status is compliant with the University's policy and has:
 - a. Completed **Conflict of Interest training**
 - b. **Submitted their Financial Information Disclosure form**
 - c. Submitted a disclosing statement to the UT System **Outside Activity Portal**

The request as recommended by the appropriate unit head is reviewed by the Executive Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies, and New Program Development and the Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs. When a decision is rendered, all individuals copied on the original request and appropriate staff within the Office of Sponsored Programs will be notified.

Does OSP prompt the departments on an annual basis for PI approval request renewals?

No, OSP does not issue reminders to departments.

Any individuals who must request PI/PD or Co-PI/Co-PD status during an academic year must renew the request to continue PI/PD or Co-PI/Co-PD status during the next academic year (September 1 – August 31) unless the authorization is project-specific or position specific. Project-specific authorizations remain in effect for the duration of the award and position specific authorizations may be approved as automatically renewing to remain in effect as long as the individual is in that position.

A good practice would be for a PI/PD, or their departmental administrator, to prompt their Dean's office to initiate a request for PI/PD or Co-PI/Co-PD approval 30 days before the expiration of the current authorization period.

Once I am a PI/PD (either automatic or by approval), what can I do as a PI/PD?

A PI/PD is authorized to apply for funding or research funding, and to conduct research in an ethical manner after the university has accepted the award on his/her behalf.

A PI/PD or Co-PI/Co-PD is not authorized to accept an award on behalf of the university or to sign contracts/agreements on behalf of the university. Any negotiations associated with an award must be conducted by the OSP staff.

When I am ready to create proposals, how do I send them to the Office of Sponsored Programs for approval and submission?

A PI/PD should submit an **Intent to Submit a Proposal** form to notify OSP staff of their intent to submit, dates and special conditions associated with the funding opportunity, and any other details that OSP staff will need to successfully submit the proposal to the intended sponsor. OSP will respond to the PI/PD within 1 to 2 business days.

If I have PI authorization, does that mean I have to do research?

The Office of Sponsored Programs does not dictate who must conduct research. Those decisions are made at the departmental level and reflect departmental priorities and needs.

If I am a student or Postdoctoral Fellow, can I be authorized to act as a PI?

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley does not allow students or Postdoctoral Fellows to be classified as Principal Investigators. To route proposals through internal systems and to obtain required internal approvals, students and Postdoctoral Fellows must seek a sponsoring PI, who will submit the **Intent to Submit a Proposal** form and all supporting documents for OSP's review and endorsement. Should the proposal be funded, the sponsoring PI will assume budgetary and reporting responsibilities at the university level on behalf of the graduate student or postdoctoral fellow.

PI of Record

Certain sponsors and program guidelines require a graduate student or postdoctoral fellow to act as a Principal Investigator (PI) (i.e., NIH, HRSA, etc.). In such instances, a student will be listed as and will be recognized as a PI in the sponsor's proprietary system, like NIH Commons. Under these circumstances, OSP refers to the graduate student or postdoctoral fellow in The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley's internal systems as a **PI of Record**, meaning the official sponsor record and award documents will reflect the graduate student or postdoctoral fellow as the project PI and will show that the graduate student or postdoctoral fellow has agreed to conduct the proposed research as required by program guidelines.

Proposal Preparation

In the event that the Principal Investigator plans to respond with a proposal to a sponsor's one-time program opportunity (i.e. Requests for Proposal [RFP], Requests for Quotations [RFQ], Broad Agency Announcements [BAA], etc.) a complete copy of the sponsor's document should be sent to the OSP upon receipt by the Principal Investigator.

Proposal Format

Many agencies have prescribed formats for proposal preparation, including the required formats for text, biographical data, and budget. Many agencies also have page, type size and character per inch (cpi) limitations for the body (text) of the

proposal. For agencies which do not have specific formats, the OSP suggests that the Principal Investigator / Project Director organize the proposal as follows:

- Title Page
- Technical Abstract
- Table of Contents
- Statement of the Proposed Research Project
- Review of Relevant Literature
- Brief Description of Proposed Activities or Objectives
- Project Design or Procedures
- Project Evaluation
- Project Management
- Personnel Resources
- Institutional Equipment and Facilities
- Project Budget
- Budget Justification
- Curricula Vitae or Biographical Sketches
- References (literature cited)
- Appendices

Minimum Budget Requirements

Sponsor Requires Detailed Budget

Documents/Information Needed by OSP

If a detailed budget is required by a sponsor, OSP must have a line-item budget for proposal review, as well as an accompanying budget justification/narrative.

Revised Budgets

The PI should be aware that if a proposal is selected for funding, a sponsor may reduce the proposed budget. OSP will work with the PI to make the necessary adjustments to the original budget and will submit a revised budget, and a budget impact statement if required, to the sponsor for review and final approval.

Detailed Budget NOT required by sponsor/solicitation

Documents/Information Needed by OSP

When a sponsor does not require a detailed budget at either the proposal or the award stage, the PI must provide OSP with the following information:

- Direct Costs requested
- Those costs that are exempt from Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs, for example:
 - student tuition,
 - capital equipment and
 - amount for each proposed subaward (NOTE: The university is only allowed F&A on the first \$25,000 of each subaward.)
- F&A/Indirect Costs requested

- Budget justification/narrative sufficient to determine allowability of anticipated costs

NIH Modular Budgets

Documents/Information Needed by OSP

For NIH modular budgets, the PI must provide OSP with the following information:

- Direct Costs requested in \$25,000 increments;
- Costs that are exempt from F&A/indirect costs, for example:
 - student tuition,
 - capital equipment and
 - Amount for each proposed subaward (NOTE: The university is only allowed F&A on the first \$25,000 of each subaward.)
- Budget justification/narrative sufficient to determine allowability of anticipated costs

OSP will calculate the F&A/indirect costs using the information provided by the PI.

Subaward Consideration

Detailed budgets and justifications are required for all subawardees to ensure the appropriate cost principles are applied.

Account Setup and Management

For those projects that have no sponsor requirement for a detailed budget, OSP will accommodate two options for account set up and monitoring.

Option 1

The PI/PD can opt to provide a detailed budget and OSP will monitor costs as allowable, allocable, reasonable and consistently treated.

Option 2

No detailed budget will be required. All direct and overhead-earning expenditures (with the exception of subawards) will be managed in a single subaccount. The 51 subaccount

Preparing the Budget

Importance of Budgeting

Preparation of the budget is, for many researchers, the most difficult section of the proposal. Granting agencies see hundreds of proposals yearly and are proficient at comparing level of funding requested to the research work proposed. Therefore, it is important that the budget section of the proposal reflect, as accurately as possible, the funding needed to carry out the proposed research. The investigator should neither overestimate the funds required nor underestimate budgetary needs. Either

of these strategies may lead to proposal rejection. A budget, accurately detailing the funds necessary to carry out the technical statement of work, can strengthen the total proposal and increase the likelihood of funding. Furthermore, a carefully prepared budget can often identify weak areas in the proposal narrative and result in improvement of the technical proposal.

Personnel in the OSP are experienced in preparing budgets, and encourage investigators to contact them when they have a draft of the budget. The OSP staff can provide expertise in completing a budget request, applying fringe benefits and facilities and administrative cost rates, documenting subcontracts/subrecipient agreements, consultants, and cost-sharing. The OSP will complete sponsor assurances and certifications, and when requested, will assist the investigator in interpreting RFP guidelines.

Direct Costs - Salaries and Wages

To determine total salaries and wages, list the amount of time to be spent by each person who will be working on the project. Time should normally be shown in terms of person-months and a percent of full-time effort. Show breakdown between summer and regular academic year for faculty.

- No employee may be scheduled for activities in excess of 100% of effort in any given month.
- Sponsored activities may not result in any employees receiving compensation at a rate in excess of their authorized salary or academic rate. For multi-year projects, the budget should take into consideration any possible salary increases.
- In accordance with Uniform Guidance ([2 CFR Part 200](#)), the Principal Investigator/Project Director must justify the exceptional need for administrative support costs.

Student Assistantships/Wages – Assistantships are financial support (aid) in the form of student employment, earning compensation for the performance of assigned work such as research, teaching, or course support services to the University while students continue their academic and professional development. Assistantships are paid once per month through University Payroll.

Direct Costs - Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits are a direct cost to a sponsored project, are clearly related to the salaries and wages to be paid, and are shown as a separate entry in the budget. Fringe benefit costs are estimated by OSP using a spreadsheet calculator and vary based on the employee's base salary/wage, except for those assessed on faculty summer salaries and direct wages which are estimated using a flat rate. The actual costs for fringe benefits are charged (billed) to the sponsored project at the time the costs are incurred; the amount charged is the actual rate based on salary, selected benefit package, and other variables applicable to the individual employee.

Direct Costs - Consultants

Normally, consultants are paid a consulting fee plus travel expenses. Many sponsors do not permit payments to consultants and some restrict or limit such payments. If in doubt as to the allowability of consultants or rates paid to consultants, refer to the Sponsor's program literature or contact the OSP. Whenever possible, identify the proposed consultant by name, indicate the number of days of work, daily rate, and provide a curriculum vitae for the consultant in the proposal.

The participation of paid consultants in a sponsored project for periods longer than two weeks should be discussed with the OSP prior to submission of the proposal.

Direct Costs - Capital Equipment

Equipment means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per acquisition. Components, other than on-campus machine-shop labor, used to fabricate an item of capital equipment may be considered as capital equipment for budgeting purposes and should be identified for inventory purposes. The on-campus machine-shop labor component is subject to facilities and administrative costs. Additionally, service/maintenance agreements are not considered a capital equipment charge; therefore, such agreements are subject to facilities and administrative costs. A separate subaccount is required for each capital equipment item being fabricated.

Direct Costs - Expendable Equipment and Supplies

These are items costing less than \$5,000. Normally, a research project will consume expendable supplies such as laboratory items, teaching aids, computer software, and office supplies. A reasonable amount should be budgeted for these items.

Faculty who anticipate the use of a particularly large number of research animals or animals requiring special care should consult with the Laboratory Animal Resources staff to see whether the funds estimated will be adequate and whether the Laboratory Animal Resources Center has adequate facilities to accommodate the animals.

Direct Costs - Publication Costs

Budget the anticipated cost of publishing the results of the research, keeping in mind that page charges may vary from journal to journal. Consider both page charges and reprint costs.

Direct Costs - Travel

If foreign travel is anticipated it must be specified. Proposed travel arrangements must comply with [UTRGV Policy ADM 10-602](#) except those for students, whose travel is governed by UTRGV Policy STU01-300. As per [UTRGV Institutional Guideline](#), in rare circumstances when students are required to travel, an Authorization for

Student Travel form approved by the Dean of Students must be on file. Students are required to travel with a full-time UTRGV employee (faculty or staff) authorized to travel on official UTRGV business. In-Valley mileage should be budgeted using rates in the [UTRGV Institutional Guideline](#); other mileage should be budgeted using [IRS published rates](#), while lodging and meals & incidentals should be budgeted, based on locale, using [GSA published rates](#). Airfare should be budgeted using the Trip Search feature in iTravel.

Federal funds cannot be used to make trips to secure new or additional research support or funds. Submission of a proposal that proposes travel to a country that may have UT Rio Grande Valley/System imposed travel restrictions does not constitute university approval of that travel. Authorization in accordance with the UT international travel policy to restricted regions is still required.

Direct Costs - Computer Time

Computer time costs should be included as a budget item, if appropriate. If non-Sponsor funded computer time is needed, arrangements must be made in advance with your academic department or research unit. Overhead applies to all types of computer time, and to all computer supply budgets.

Direct Costs - Subcontracts/Subrecipient Agreements

When a proposal contemplates a subcontract/subrecipient agreement to a named subcontractor, the subcontractor's statement of work and detailed budget, signed by the subcontractor's authorized institutional representative, should be provided before UTRGV submits the proposal to the sponsor. If the Principal Investigator(s) has any direct or indirect financial or other interest in the subcontractor/subrecipient organization, a disclosing statement must be submitted to the UT System [Outside Activity Portal](#) as well. In the event that the total amount to be subcontracted represents a substantial portion (> 50%) of the proposed direct costs, the Principal Investigator should contact the OSP for guidance.

Direct Costs - Participant Support Costs

Participant support costs (2 CFR 200, 200.75) means direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training projects.

A participant is **not**:

- An employee of UTRGV
- A student or project staff member receiving compensation directly or indirectly from the grant
- A research subject receiving incentive payments
- A recipient of any compensation from any other federal government source while participating in the project (applies only to federal grants)

A participant does not perform work or services for the project or program other than for their own benefit. The participant is not required to deliver anything or provide any service to the university in return for these support costs.

Stipend: A payment made to an individual under a fellowship or training grant in accordance to pre-established levels to provide for the individual's living expenses during the period of the training. A stipend is not considered compensation for the services expected of an employee. Stipends are not issued to employees.

Other Direct Costs

Consider, as appropriate, costs for copying, long-distance telephone calls, postage, reference books and materials, tuition and required fees for participating graduate students, equipment maintenance, and contracted services. Regarding office supplies, postage, local telephone costs, and memberships, these items must normally be treated as indirect (F&A) costs as per [Appendix III to Part 200](#).

Scholarship - A scholarship is an award of financial aid for a student to further their education. Scholarships are awarded based upon various criteria, which usually reflect the values and purposes of the donor or founder of the award. Scholarship money is not required to be repaid.

Facilities and Administrative Costs

Facilities and Administrative (F&A)/indirect costs must be included using UT Rio Grande Valley's federally-negotiated rates unless the federal or not-for-profit sponsor has a statutory policy applicable to all potential proposers which deviates from these rates. All other deviations are subject to UT Rio Grande Valley administrative approval by the Executive Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies, and New Program Development. Sponsor guidelines limiting facilities and administrative costs must be provided with your proposal. Projects funded by the for-profit sector must accrue F&A at the appropriate negotiated rate.

To calculate the facilities and administrative costs for a project, do the following:

- a) Calculate the Total Direct Costs (TDC) which is simply the sum of all direct costs (salaries, benefits, supplies, equipment, etc.)
- b) Calculate the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) base against which the F&A rate will be multiplied by subtracting exempt items. Modified total direct costs shall exclude equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000.
- c) Apply the F&A rate against the MTDC base to calculate the facilities and administrative costs for the project.

d) Add the TDC to the F&A to calculate the Total Project Costs.

Contact the Office of Sponsored Programs, 956-665-3003 or 956-882-7676, for more specific information or assistance with calculating F&A/indirect costs.

Procedure for Routing PI Request for Waiver of Indirect Costs (IDC)

In sponsored research projects where the Principal Investigator or Project Director believes circumstances warrant a waiver of IDC, the PI/PD will route the Request for Waiver to their respective Chair/Director and Dean/VP for review and approvals. If approved, the Request for Waiver should then be routed for approval by the Executive Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies and New Program Development. The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) is available to assist PIs/PDs with this process.

After review and consideration, the Executive Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies and New Program Development will advise the PI/PD and OSP of the following:

- Waiver of IDC is recommended; or,
- Waiver of IDC is NOT recommended, and full IDC must be included in the proposal before submitting it to the sponsor.

The Office of Sponsored Programs handles all matters; e.g., State and Federal funding (including foreign government, the only exception being state-owned foreign oil companies), foundations, and other non-profit organizations.

On and Off-Campus Rates

Off-campus rates are generally used when the Principal Investigator/Project Director or other research staff is actually conducting research away from the campus for a period of no less than one long semester or all three summer months during a funding period and each subsequent funding period for the life of the project. Please note that rates on an individual project may no longer be split between on- and off-campus rates. If more than 50% of a project is performed off-campus, the off-campus rate will apply to the entire project. Otherwise, the on-campus rate applies. Prior to submitting your proposal, please contact the [Office of Sponsored Programs](#) for assistance.

Matching Funds / Cost-Sharing

If sponsor guidelines require cost-sharing or matching funds (cash contribution or donation of in-kind services such as contributed time and effort by the Principal Investigator/Project Director and research group members), complete the [Cost Share Form](#) and provide signed letters of commitment from third-party sources. This form should accompany the proposal package when routed for administrative review and approval. All cost-sharing commitments must be approved in advance by the Manager of the Project (Account) that is the source of the cost share – as well as the Project Manager’s Supervisor – and documented on the [Cost Share Form](#). If a specific cost center (account) cannot be identified at the pre-award stage, then the signatures

should come from the PI's chair/director and dean/VP. If the PI/PD is a dean or vice president, then the final signature should come from their Division Head. The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) is available to assist PIs with this process.

Special Approvals - Animal Welfare, Human Subjects, Radiation/Radioisotopes; Infectious Agents, Human Blood or Extreme Toxins; and Recombinant DNA

Animal Welfare

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley has the responsibility to ensure that experimentation with all animals conducted under its auspices (warm/cold-blooded and vertebrates/invertebrates), except human subjects, follows the regulations and guidelines as established by the [Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations](#), and [Public Health Service Policy](#).

Researchers and/or teaching faculty who are planning projects involving the use of any animal should visit the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#) webpage in the early stages of planning for contact information, IACUC meeting schedules, required forms, and training resources. All IACUC applications and forms must be submitted via email to the Office of Research Support (ORS) at iacuc@utrgv.edu. Call 956-882-7731 for more information.

Proposals involving the use of animals must be reviewed and given preliminary approval for submission for funding by the Office of Laboratory Animal Resources (LAR) prior to being brought to the OSP for processing. Day-to-day supervision and monitoring of all animal related activities on The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley campuses are the responsibility of LAR which administers and supports all research, teaching and studies which require the use of animals.

Human Subjects

UTRGV faculty, staff, students or employees who propose to engage in any research involving the use of human subjects must have prior review and approval of that activity by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). It is UTRGV policy that all protocols involving the use of human subjects be reviewed by the IRB. The IRB is responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of subjects who may be at risk through participation in such activities. These requirements apply to both funded and non-funded research regardless of whether the research is performed at UTRGV or other locations and regardless of whether another IRB has reviewed the protocol. Information about the review process, required forms, agenda deadlines and meeting dates are available from the [IRB](#) webpage or call 956-665-2093.

Recombinant DNA and Hazardous Biological Agents

Recombinant DNA is defined in the NIH Guidelines as; (1) nucleic acid molecules that are constructed outside living cells by joining natural or synthetic DNA segments to DNA molecules that can replicate in a living cell, and (2) DNA molecules that result from the replication of these molecules.

Hazardous Biological Agents (HBA) include infectious organisms classified as BSL-2 or above agents by the NIH (CDC) such as pathogenic bacteria, protozoans, fungi, viruses, etc., including attenuated lab & vaccine strains. Human and primate biological products (cells, fluids, etc.), applicable primary and immortal cell lines, organotypic and tissue cultures involved in research that require universal precautions are also included.

The **Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)** is a federally mandated university committee responsible for reviewing research activities utilizing recombinant DNA (rDNA) and biohazardous materials to ensure that UTRGV principal investigators and lab personnel are adequately trained and utilize best practices when employing biological agents in research. Information about the review process, required forms, and meeting dates are available from the **IBC** webpage.

Administrative Review and Approval of Proposal

Before transmittal to the sponsor, the proposal must be approved sequentially by the following UT Rio Grande Valley administrative levels:

- Principal Investigator
- PI's chair/director
- PI's dean/VP
- the OSP, and

For each sponsor, a proposal should be delivered to the OSP for processing at least five working days prior to the date the proposal must be transmitted to the sponsor. Advise the OSP of any proposal submission deadline (distinguish between "be there" date versus "postmark" date). If you wish the OSP to mail the proposal, supply the appropriate number of copies to be mailed to the sponsor together with the original. Overnight mail delivery is done at the Principal Investigator's expense.

The Office of the **Associate Dean of Research of the UTRGV School of Medicine (SOM)** has set forth guidelines for all externally-funded grant proposals and awarded projects within the SOM. Applications for external funding must be approved by the Office of the ADR prior to submitting the proposal to the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) or the Office of Institutional Advancement.

Proposal Process Checklist

The following is a checklist of information the Principal Investigator should provide to the OSP when submitting a proposal for University administrative review and approval.

- Complete, signed "Original" proposal;
- RFP, RFQ or special solicitation guidelines;

- Notify OSP (to record in Cayuse) if there will be use of Animal Subjects; Human Subjects; Radioactive Material(s), Radiation Producing Devices(s), Recombinant DNA, Biohazardous Chemical(s), Class IIb or IV Lasers, Other certifications of health, safety and/or environmental compliance.
- Notify OSP (to record in Cayuse) if the project will involve (Export Control): participation, collaboration or access to information by foreign nationals, defined as: individuals with foreign citizenship, foreign governments, foreign associations and corporations, or foreign political parties; shipment of equipment, technology, software, materials data or other information; and/or a foreign subcontract or other foreign contractual agreement.
- Additional copies for sponsor if the OSP is to mail;
- IDC waivers as applicable;
- Matching funds/Cost-share letter(s) of commitment as applicable;
- Subcontracts/Subrecipient Agreements documentation as applicable.

The OSP Processing Time

The OSP requests a lead-time of at least five working days to fully process proposals.

Post-Proposal / Pre-Award Administration

Budget Negotiations with the Sponsor

Preliminary budget negotiations are often conducted between the Principal Investigator/Project Director and the technical contact for the sponsor in order to determine an appropriate level of funding for the program proposed by the Investigator. Such preliminary discussions are encouraged. The Principal Investigator should contact the OSP, however, for established rates for fringe benefits, facilities and administrative costs or other budgetary matters that may impact upon the total support required for the project.

The Principal Investigator/Project Director should not attempt to negotiate rates for facilities and administrative costs (or fringe benefits) that are different from the federally-approved rates for the University, nor should it be implied that a reduction in the approved rates would be acceptable to the University. Facilities and administrative costs represent substantial, real expenditures incurred by the institution to support each research program, and if these costs are not fully paid by each sponsor, the University must subsidize them from other institutional resources.

Submitting a Revised Budget

During the course of project negotiations it often becomes necessary to reduce or adjust the budget initially proposed. If this is the case, the Principal Investigator/Project Director should send the revised budget and any other pertinent information (a revised budget explanation or revised statement of work or project duration may be appropriate) to the OSP for processing prior to sending the revision to the sponsor.

Business Negotiations

The OSP reviews the terms and conditions of every award received. Terms and Conditions are negotiated in accordance with UT Rio Grande Valley policies and The Intellectual Property Policy of The University of Texas System.

Federal Awards

- Terms and Conditions are usually predetermined, however, negotiations involving OSP may be required.

Non-Federal Awards

- Normally, most non-Federal projects require negotiations, especially those agreements with industrial sponsors. Such topics as inventions, publication rights, liability, and ownership of research results are usually the subject of negotiation. The negotiations are coordinated between OSP, the sponsor, the Principal Investigator/Project Director, and, as appropriate, the UT System Office of General Counsel.

The Award Process

Award Acceptance and Post-Award Administration

Award documents take many forms depending upon the type of sponsor and project. These documents require review and signature by the official institutional representative authorized to sign on behalf of the institution. The OSP is responsible for award document processing. The Principal Investigator/Project Director is notified of each new award and its terms and conditions and is asked to acknowledge the responsibility for complying with all award and institutional responsibilities and requirements.

Upon receipt of fully executed award documents or other proof of award, the OSP forwards information to the Office of Grants and Contracts (G&C) for account activation in PeopleSoft. Once the Principal Investigator/Project Director receives notification of the project number from G&C, funds may be encumbered or expended against the project.

The Office of Sponsored Programs plays a dual role in the post-award phase of sponsored project activity. The OSP serves as a central point of contact for sponsor grant or contract officers regarding administrative matters throughout the duration of the project. The OSP also serves as facilitator and advocate for Principal Investigators/Project Directors in all matters pertaining to the non-technical management of their grants and contracts. In addition, the OSP coordinates compliance with each sponsor's requirements for interim and final research reports. Principal Investigators/Project Directors are responsible for submission of all required reports in a timely fashion.

If the award documentation is delayed, procedures are available to setup a temporary account for a limited period of time. Contact the OSP with information regarding the amount of credit needed. After the award information is verified by a representative

of the sponsoring agency with the authority to commit funds, overdraft approval may be given. Credit will be limited to emergency expenses. Many Federal agencies allow pre-award costs up to 90 days prior to the start date of a grant. If pre-award costs are required, the above procedures for verification will be followed and pre-award costs may be approved.

Subcontract / Subrecipient Agreement Award Development

The OSP has the overall responsibility for issuing and monitoring subcontracts/subrecipient agreements under sponsored project awards. The OSP will maintain documentation relative to subcontract/subrecipient agreement placement and any modification thereof. The accounting and payment function is performed by the Office of Grants and Contracts.

These agreements will comply with all standard and special provisions of individual awards. After the subcontract/subrecipient agreement is fully executed and work has commenced, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to: 1) review all invoices from the subcontractor/subrecipient to determine if the charges are appropriate; 2)) monitor the progress of the subcontractor/subrecipient and; 3) obtain all required deliverables from the subcontractor/subrecipient.

Post Award Issues

Extensions

One of the most frequently asked questions from Principal Investigators/Project Directors or their assistants is, "What do I need to do in order to extend my project without requesting additional funds?" The answer to that question depends on the source of funding. The following should assist you in answering that question.

Federal Funds

All agency extension requests, including extensions on contracts, must be routed through the OSP. Please contact the OSP to obtain appropriate extension request procedures depending on your particular award.

Some sponsors have an electronic module for submission of no-cost extension requests and others accept extension request letters via email. The request should be in writing and should provide a justification for the extension. The justification should relate to the completion of the scientific objectives, not that funds are remaining. Requests for no cost extensions to NSF must be submitted through [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov). NSF requires that the request be submitted 45 days prior to expiration. Grantee approved no cost extensions must be submitted by OSP prior to the expiration date of the grant. Please note that these requests generally take one to two months to process and approve. Consider the processing time when deciding when to submit your request. Non-Federal Requests for extensions should be submitted in writing and routed through OSP. The requests should include a programmatic justification for the extension. The University has no provision for extending these projects without sponsor approval. As with federal awards, these requests should be made prior to the expiration date and with ample lead-time. A three-month lead-time

is suggested in order to have an approved extension prior to the original expiration date.

No-Cost Extension Letter of Request:

- Includes:
 - Agency assigned project/award number.
 - New end date requested.
 - Technical reasons for the project's delay and need for extension.
 - Estimation of funds remaining at the current end date
 - Plans for expending remaining funds during extension period and how those plans accomplish the original goals of project.
- On EVP's UTRGV Letterhead
- Signed by PI and forwarded to OSP so that letter is countersigned and sent to sponsor.
- The reasons for extension CANNOT be because funds remain. There MUST be technical reasons for extension.

Once notification has been received from the funding agency, a notification will be forwarded to PI and Grants & Contracts Office by OSP.

Reasons **NOT** to request a No-Cost Extension:

- I have money left in my account.
- I want to buy a laptop or other piece of equipment.

Budget Changes

If you want to revise your budget and the sponsor guidelines do not allow for it, you will need to request your revisions in writing. The request must be processed through OSP. If you have questions about what is allowed, please contact the assigned sponsored program accountant in the [Office of Grants and Contracts](#).

Supplemental Funds Requests

Requests for additional funding on an existing project are processed as proposals through OSP. You will need the following items: 1) budget; 2) statement of work for the additional effort; and 3) updated certification for all compliance issues, if necessary.

Change of Principal Investigator/ Project Director

If a change of Principal Investigator/Project Director is required on a project, a letter must be sent to the sponsor. The letter should be endorsed by the current PI/PD, the proposed PI, and OSP. The letter should outline the qualifications of the new PI/PD and must include a CV/Biographical Sketch/Resume of new PI/PD.

Leave of Absence

If you plan to be away from the University for three months or longer and you have a sponsored project, you will need to notify OSP in writing of your absence. Your letter

will need to address how you plan to maintain oversight of your project during your absence. This letter needs to be signed by the PI/PD and the EVP for Research, Graduate Studies and New Program Development.

I am transferring to another institution. How do I take my grant with me?

Transferring a grant to another institution is a complicated process and requires proper timing to allow for the transfer and to allow for start-up at the new institution. Some sponsors have specific forms which must be completed to obtain a transfer. While other sponsors have no formal guidelines for transfers, which may require additional information from the sponsor. There are general procedures that need to be followed to prepare for a transfer. Please note the following steps in preparing for a grant transfer: Select an arbitrary expiration date for your project. In order to relinquish the project, Grants and Contracts must be able to determine the residual funds remaining after all obligations have cleared. It takes at least 30 days after the expiration date to obtain this information.

If you purchased equipment and want to take this equipment with you when you move, you must obtain approval from your Chair, Dean, and the Director from Procurement and the Planning and Operations office. You will need to submit non-competing continuations for the next year's funds through your new institution. Grants from the National Institutes of Health require the completion of an NIH Relinquishing Interests Form.

Grants from NSF require completion of an NSF Grant Transfer Form. Once the grant has been relinquished, the sponsor will re-award the grant to the new institution.

Appendix 1

Non-Compliance Instance	Scale of Severability	HOP/Regulation/OSP or G&C Handbook Reference
Submission of proposal without UTRGV approvals	1	Policy pending approval, OSP handbook
Scholarship Criteria Form – approval of scholarship	1	Grants & Contracts Handbook
Failure of disclosing significant financial interests with outside entities, that may require COI management plan	2	Policy pending approval
Nepotism disclosures, hiring of relatives and/or friends on grants and failing to disclose relationship	2	ADM 04-206: Recruitment and Hiring of Staff Employees, ADM 03-400: Consensual Relationships
Signing of award/grant agreements, contracts, sponsored project agreements on behalf of UTRGV	2	Policy pending approval, Delegation of Authority, OSP Handbook
Failure to communicate the Office of Sponsored Programs and/or Grants & Contracts of approvals such as no-cost extension, budget revisions, after approval is obtained	2	OSP and G&C handbooks
Failure to obtain CPAF approvals prior to allowing an individual to start working on sponsored projects	3	Department of Labor, ADM 04-408: Timecards, Paycheck and Payday
Time & Effort Certification, failure to certify within the certification period	3	ADM 07-103: Managing and Certifying Effort on Sponsored Programs
Delinquency of progress reports to sponsors/agencies	3	OSP Handbook

Mismanagement of funds on sponsored programs	4	G&C Handbook; ADM 10-703: Accounting Policy
Travel without approval	4	ADM 10-602: Travel Policy
Failure of securing IRB approvals before engaging in human subjects work, recruitment, surveying, etc.	5	ADM 07-104: Human Subjects Research
Fraud and/or plagiarism	5	ADM 10-703: Accounting Policy; ADM 07-102: Misconduct in Research and Scholarly Activities
Sexual harassment, discrimination, and harassment	5	ADM 03-300: Sexual Misconduct; ADM 03-301: Non-discrimination and Complaint Procedure