

# **OFFICE OF SPONSORED RESEARCH AND GRANTS GUIDELINES FOR GRANTS & CONTRACTS**

Lincoln University encourages faculty and staff to obtain external funding in the form of sponsored grants and/or contracts for various projects and programs. Such funding enhances the capacity of the University to achieve its core mission to provide excellent educational opportunities for a diverse student population in the context of an open enrollment institution. Extramural funding allows the university to carry out its objectives more adequately and to expand and advance the programs of the University.

## **I. General Information**

**Pre-Award** - The Office of Sponsored Research and Grants (OSRG) was established in October 2005 to encourage and support faculty and staff to submit proposals. The Office oversees the submission of all proposals that are in the developing stages before they are submitted. Pre-award services provided by this office include: dissemination of information on potential grant and contract opportunities; assistance with research in support of the proposal; consultation on proposal development; assistance with proposal writing; guidance and assistance in completing external applications consistent with university policies and procedures; and maintenance of a database of all proposals and awards for Lincoln University.

**Post-Award** - Upon receipt of an award, the Grant Accounting Office will assist the Principal Investigator (PI)/Program Director (PD) in administering an award and will provide periodic reports on the project's financial status. The fiscal and programmatic responsibilities rest on the PI/PD and the departmental unit. In addition, the Grant Accounting Office approves all payroll transaction documents and purchase requisitions. Revised 2012 2

## **II. Pre-Award Proposal Review and Submission Process**

Agencies will announce Requests for Proposals (RFPs), Requests for Applications (RFAs) and Notices of Funding Availability (NOFAs) when their funding cycles begin. The latest information on available funds from state, federal, and private agencies may be obtained from the Office of Sponsored Research and Grants. The OSRG will have information on deadlines, agencies requesting proposals, and the university departments that are suitable for respective

announcements. Additionally, funding agencies post opportunities on their websites daily. Once an agency has been identified, application materials can be requested from the Office of Sponsored Programs, or may be obtained by downloading from the agency's websites.

Assistance in proposal preparation is readily available from the Office of Sponsored Research and Grants and/or Grant Accounting Office.

Before a proposal is submitted on behalf of Lincoln University to a funding agency, the Principal Investigator (PI)/Project Director (PD) must:

- **Complete a Proposal Idea Form (PIF)** for approval.
- **The Internal Routing Form (IRF)** along with the proposal must be routed through various administrative channels for review and gain approval before the proposal is submitted to a funding agency. Both the PIF and IRF are internal documents and are not submitted to the funding agency.

In general, the **IRF** documents that the following items have been reviewed:

1. The substance and merit of the proposal and the "buy-in" by the academic and/or administrative university officials;
2. Commitments of faculty and staff time, release time, and if new positions need to be created;
3. Requirements for additional space and facilities;
4. The budget, including verification that all costs, including indirect costs, are provided for, and that all needs are realistically estimated and stated;
5. Requirements for and availability of matching funds/cost share (if any). Revised 2012 3

Once all signatures have been obtained, both the PIF and IRF, along with the proposal should be returned to the Office of Sponsored Research and Grants. No proposal may be submitted to an external agency without final administrative approval through the Office of Sponsored Research and Grants as described above.

**Submission - Allow three (3) working days (minimum)** to process and submit proposals. All proposals must be reviewed to assure that they conform to academic, financial, research conduct, personnel, animal welfare, hazardous materials/waste handling, and human subject health and guidelines imposed on and by the University. Under normal circumstances, completing the review takes time and is often subject to the availability of internal reviewers.

Grants.Gov takes up to 48 hours to validate a proposal before it is forwarded to the sponsor. The sponsor's validation may take up to an additional 48 hours before the proposal is considered received on time. Any revised proposal must be resubmitted through Grants.Gov and validated by the sponsor by the established sponsor deadline date. OSRG will attempt to submit all proposals by the sponsor deadline. PI/PD are responsible for planning their proposal development accordingly.

### **III. Post-Award**

Upon receipt of an award, usually in the form of an award letter, the Grant Accounting Office or the Office of Sponsored Research and Grants will contact the PI/PD. A Award Notification Form will be prepared by the OSRG and submitted to the GAO for assignment of a budget account number.

#### **The Office of Sponsored Research will:**

1. Secure the necessary agency approval for each subcontract and monitor the approval process.
2. Establish liaison relationship between agency and PI/PD.
3. Input data to create and print out an administrative profile of each sponsored project.
4. Use standard distribution lists to forward copies of the information to other administrative support units as appropriate.
5. Collaborate with the GAO to create and maintain project files using unique record identifiers and including source documents and correspondence.
6. Establish and maintain a separate official hard copy and computer file for each subcontract to include the approved proposal and budget, fully executed agreement,

signed sub-agreement, and computer generated print-out of the administrative profile of the project.

**The GAO will:**

1. Review the award document and budget, and will determine applicable standard and special instructions to PI/PD.
2. Discuss with the PI/PD any special terms, conditions, and agency requirements explicit in the award agreement or implied due to the nature of the agency.
3. Consult with PI and/or PD, university official and/or subcontractors as needed for additional information or clarification of any provision of sub-agreement.
4. Review and analyze forms required for technical and financial reporting to ensure that the agreement meets applicable sponsor regulations and requirements.
5. Input data to create and print out a financial profile of each sponsored project.
6. Use standard distribution lists to forward copies of the information to other administrative support units as appropriate.
7. Maintain copies or reference information concerning financial expenditures.
8. Collaborate with the Office of Sponsored Research and Grants to create and maintain project files using unique record identifiers and including source documents and correspondence.
9. Establish and maintain a separate official hard copy and computer file for each subcontract to include the approved proposal and budget, fully executed agreement, signed sub-agreement, and computer generated print-out of the financial profile of the project.

#### **IV. Release Time**

Release time - At the discretion of an academic chairperson, program director, or immediate supervisor and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, a member of the faculty may be released partially or fully released from instructional duties to carry out a special assignment. The amount of the released time granted for a special assignment will be mutually agreed upon in advance by the faculty member, the appropriate chairperson, director, or immediate supervisor and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

#### **Recommended Procedures for Obtaining Release Time:**

1. PI/PD receives approval to request released time from department chair, dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs in advance of writing the proposal via the Proposal Idea Form (PIF).
2. PI/PD completes grant proposal and submits to the OSRG.
3. Project Director, Department Chairperson, Vice President for Academic Affairs and OSRG.
4. Director signs PIF containing pre-approved release time.

#### **When a Proposal is funded:**

1. GAO verifies release time percentages.
2. Department Chairperson completes PTR for released faculty member(s).

**F&A reduction or waiver** - Principle Investigators and Project Directors are encouraged to fully cost proposals unless a waiver is granted by the Sponsored Programs Director. A waiver may be granted when the unique circumstances of a particular project dictate that F&A costs should not be charged at the published rate for that type of project. Certain sponsors, particularly some foundations, have specific written policies that preclude the use of the full F&A rate. Other agencies limit F&A costs for instructional (or training) programs. The university will honor sponsor limitations on indirect cost recovery. However, for waivers of all or part of F&A costs by the university, a written justification from the principal investigator must be submitted to the Director of Sponsored Programs with the signature approval of the Department Chair and the Dean. Budgets with less than full F&A cost recovery must be justified on the basis of their

special value to the university or on the resulting competitive advantage. Some other reasons why a waiver might be granted include:

- The proposal provides seed funds only or is a pilot project that may lead to future funding and greater F&A recovery.
- The grant is small and capped.
- The project is small and cannot be completed with the allotted funds.
- The project involves intellectual property.
- The sponsored project does not fit into one of the standard indirect cost categories.
- The project involves a subcontract.

**F&A Distribution.** The use and distribution of F&A costs is another major benefit to the university. The following is the percentage distribution of F&A funds to be distributed in individually established accounts:

1. **55 percent** – unit sponsoring the funded project. The distribution: Vice President’s office – **5 percent**; department or unit – **5 percent**; dean of the school – **5 percent**; and principal investigator – **40 percent** (for equipment, supplies, approved travel for PI and students, etc.).
2. **15 percent** – Sponsored Programs and Grant Accounting Office, for operation and fixed costs. Funds will also be used for workshops, seed money for research, submission of proposals, assisting faculty with travel; agency visits to consult with program officers; providing mentoring to junior faculty; implementing incentive programs; facilitating collaborative meetings, etc.
3. **30 percent** – President and Chief of Staff. These funds are used at the discretion of the president to improve sponsored research activities, including renovations, construction, equipment, instruction, research and administration.

**Allowable Expenditures of F&A Funds** - F&A funds are needed to offset costs associated with federal, state, and local laws relating to worker health and safety, animal care, hazardous-waste storage, and regulation of human subjects. The use of F&A funds to purchase food is included for activities that involve faculty and staff training and recognition, visiting lecture series, student researcher training, and collaboration meetings. F&A funds may also be used to support graduate research assistantships, for certification programs, toward required facilities expenses, to provide needed staff and record-keeping support in departments conducting sponsored research, to leverage other support for research and scholarly activities in targeted area, to equip laboratories and cover start-up costs for new faculty, to buy specialized scientific equipment, to provide matching funds for grants, to fund lab renovations and classroom technology upgrades, to purchase software licenses, library subscriptions, and equipment, to rent additional research space, to provide faculty with seed grants to develop areas of research not fully provided by external grants, to travel to technical assistance workshops, conferences, meetings, etc., and other reasonable and justifiable costs that support faculty enhancement of research and sponsored programs at Lincoln University.

**Reasonable costs:** are defined as costs incurred by a “prudent” person;

**Justifiable costs:** are those that are permitted (allowable) or not specifically prohibited.