

# Principal Investigator Handbook

Policies and Procedures for the Development, Submission, and Administration of  
External Awards

*Prepared by the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research*

*Governors State University*

*University Park, IL*

*Our mission is to invigorate and shape the debate within the public square by developing and supporting high quality research and other funded programs that are innovative, relevant, and useful to scholars, practitioners and the community.*

[Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Website: www.govst.edu/ospr](http://www.govst.edu/ospr)

[Institutional Review Board Website: www.govst.edu/irb](http://www.govst.edu/irb)

[Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Website: www.govst.edu/iacuc](http://www.govst.edu/iacuc)

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# Chapter 1: Office of Sponsored Programs and Research

## **1.1 Purpose of the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research**

The purpose of the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research (OSPR) is to help Governors State University (GSU) faculty and staff achieve success in their research and other grant related endeavors. The university community can look to OSPR for assistance throughout the grant application process, from identifying potential funding opportunities to managing the grant. OSPR supports faculty and staff as they pursue external funding for research and [sponsored programs](#)<sup>1</sup> by:

- Developing and communicating policies related to grants and sponsored programs;
- Serving as the central coordination point for all research and sponsored program grants and services;
- Finding funding sources and opportunities, proposal development and review, and submission of proposals;
- Facilitating compliance with university and funding agency policies; and
- Assisting with the processing of the [Notice of Award](#) (NoA), negotiation and execution of contracts, and reporting per contract requirements.

OSPR acts as the link between the investigator, GSU administration and the agency sponsoring the program. OSPR works with the internal institutional compliance committees, the [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) and the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) (IACUC), to ensure that research supported at GSU meets Federal, State, sponsoring agency and GSU requirements regarding the ethical conduct of research with human and animal subjects. OSPR is also responsible for assuring that the university is in compliance with all federal, state, sponsoring agency and institutional policies related to research integrity as well as avoidance of conflicts of interest. OSPR works with Financial Services, Procurement, and Human Resources to ensure full oversight of grants administration and adherence to accountability standards.

## **1.2 Description of OSPR**

OSPR is an organizational unit located within the Office of the Provost. The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research is led by Jennifer Morehead Farmer, the Director. Supporting the office's activities are Ebony Jones, Sponsored Programs Specialist, and Andrea Middleton, Assistant Controller.

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<sup>1</sup> The terms printed in red throughout this handbook are defined in and linked to Appendix A: Grants Terms.

### **1.3 Roles of OSPR, Principal Investigator, and Financial Services**

Developing a winning proposal and securing external funding requires the cooperation and participation of multiple parties; in particular, OSPR, the [principal investigator](#), and Financial Services. Their respective roles are described below.

#### **OSPR Services**

- administrative review and signature approval of all proposals, including incoming subawards, for sponsored (externally funded) projects in research, instruction, and other university related activities;
- the recording, tracking, and reporting of grant submissions, grant related activities, and subawards;
- facilitate compliance with federal and state regulations, the sponsoring agency's guidelines, and with university policy;
- assisting with the submission of grant proposals;
- assisting with the fiscal arrangements upon awarding of a grant or incoming subaward;
- consulting with grant writers regarding grant opportunities, proposal preparation, proposal development and the editing process;
- serving as liaison between the funding agency and the principal investigator in negotiating agreements and resolving grant issues;
- assisting with the proposal budget development and revisions; and
- working with Financial Services to complete the following:
  - assist with setting up new account numbers for awards;
  - assist in compliance reviews of expenditures;
  - assist PI in the financial closeout and termination of sponsored projects; and
  - coordinate all audits conducted by external audit agencies and provide information required during reviews.

#### **Responsibilities of the Principal Investigator**

- developing the idea and knowing the literature;
- writing the proposal;
- notifying OSPR of all pending externally funded proposals, including incoming subawards from foundations, federal agencies, state agencies, corporations and other institutions;
- completing and submitting the Intent to Submit/ Routing Form to OSPR for all proposals with a draft of proposal & final budget for signatures, including incoming subawards prior to submission;

- completing the Financial Conflict of Interest online training offered by the [Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative](#) and the [Financial Conflict of Interest Screening and Disclosure Form](#) prior to proposal or outgoing subaward submission;
- updating the Financial Conflict Interest Screening and Disclosure Form yearly prior to September 1;
- completing any mandatory IRB Human Subjects Research and Animal Research online training offered by the [Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative](#);
- completing and submitting the appropriate Human Subjects Research approval forms located on the [IRB's webpage](#) to the IRB;
- completing and submitting the appropriate Animal Research approval forms located on the [IACUC's webpage](#) to the IACUC;
- determine and obtain estimated cost of project staff, supplies and partnerships that are necessary to complete the project for budget development;
- assist in the completion of the [Subrecipient Commitment Form](#) for all outgoing subawards;
- managing the relationships with project officers and project partners;
- obtaining the letters of support and/or commitment required as well as any authorizations to conduct the project at sites off campus;
- delivering the proposal in the format required by the funding agency and ensuring that the final documents get to OSPR in a timely fashion or per an agreed upon schedule;
- preparing and submitting required grant status reports to the funding agency by due date;
- ensuring all spending is relevant and necessary to the project purpose, reasonable in amount, and in compliance with laws, regulations, university policies, sponsor guidelines, and award terms;
- avoiding over-expenditure of award funds and promptly identifying an alternative source of funds for any inadvertent excess spending;
- ensuring that goods and services are received during the project period;
- contacting OSPR to obtain prior approval for expenditures such as pre-award spending, budget modification, equipment purchase, international travel, and no-cost extension;
- certifying that expenditures made for personnel services are in direct proportion to the time and effort expended on sponsored awards;
- understanding and fulfilling the contractual/agreement requirements;

- being aware of university policies and guidance including, misconduct of research, intellectual property, compensation paid from grants and export controls; and
- keeping OSPR informed of all externally funded research activities so that OSPR can accurately account for the funds GSU is receiving from outside sponsors and the commitments made by the university.

## **Responsibilities of Financial Services**

- set up an account unique to the funded project when a grant or incoming subaward is awarded to be used by the principal investigator and other designated individuals for all related expenditures (new account request form will be generated by OSPR and must have an attached copy of the Notice of Grant Award);
- manage the fiscal aspects of the award;
- prepare and submit required billings and drawdown of all funds under the regulations of the grantor and the university;
- prepare and submit the fiscal reports required by the awarding agency;
- monitor and pursue collection of all unpaid receivables; and
- work with OSPR to complete the following:
  - assist in compliance reviews of expenditures;
  - assist PI in the financial closeout and termination of sponsored projects; and
  - coordinate all audits conducted by external audit agencies and provide information required during reviews.

### ***1.4 Working with the Development Office***

Governors State University solicits two major types of external funding: gifts and grants. The Development Office, which oversees the Governors State University Foundation, is responsible for the processing of gifts and the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research is responsible for the processing of grants. In order to ensure that Governors State University complies with federal, state, and sponsoring agency requirements, the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research and the Development Office work together to coordinate proposal submissions to external sources. Both offices find funding opportunities and provide assistance to faculty and other proposal writers in the proposal development process.

If the grant sponsor is a foundation or corporation, the Development Office will be notified by the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research. The two offices will coordinate the effort, including providing assistance with the budget development and the submission.



Funds obtained from any external source (gift or grant) will be deposited, disbursed, monitored, and reported according to GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) through the appropriate Governors State University financial offices.

## Chapter 2: Developing a Proposal

### 2.1 Define and Refine the Concept

Innovative projects based on solid science and innovative programs based on proven outcomes get funded. It is often helpful for the principal investigator to develop his or her idea in the form of a concept paper before seeking funding or writing the proposal. A concept paper is a short summary of the proposed project that includes statement of the problem, preliminary literature, research questions, procedures, etc. A variety of concept paper templates can be found on the Internet, although specific funding agencies may have required formats. The more developed the concept, the more likely a viable funding source can be found, and the discussions with potential funders are more likely to be informative and useful.

### 2.2 Funding Sources

There are many funding sources—federal agencies, state agencies, private corporation's foundations and other institutions. Among the most comprehensive sources of funding information are the following:

- The [Grants Information Center](#) in the University Library helps faculty, staff, and students with locating funding support, offering a number of resources and databases related to grants writing.
- [Grants Resource Center](#) (GRC) is a subscription service of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. This online application announces new funding opportunities and houses a comprehensive, searchable funding database called GrantSearch. GRC also offers a service that sends specially tailored funding announcements to the email addresses of individual faculty. Another publication of the GRC, DEADLINES, reports the most current federal deadlines and some private foundation deadlines as well. An ID and Password that you can obtain from OSPR is needed to access GRC.
- [Grants.gov](#) is the website that contains funding announcements for most federal agencies. In addition, the website is becoming the one-point submission for almost all federal agency proposals.
- The [Foundation Center](#) offers an online directory of private and corporate foundations. Basic searches of foundations can be made without paying a subscription fee. More detailed searches of foundations can be done through the Grant Resource Center. The OSPR also subscribes to the more comprehensive and detailed foundation profile that provides critical information for those seeking grants.
- [Grant Forward](#) is an online database of federal and private funding programs. Governors State University faculty, staff and students can register and access Grant Forward by using their govst.edu email address and creating a password.

- Sometimes you will collaborate with colleagues at another institution to be a subawardee on their proposal.

Once you locate a promising funding source, make sure to obtain, read and share with OSPR the program guidelines, application forms, and other required information for your project.

## **2.3 Evaluating a Funding Opportunity**

There are many factors involved in evaluating a funding opportunity. Some you should consider are discussed below.

### **Grant Types or Activity Codes**

Some federal agencies classify their grants by codes that describe the grant program. For example, the National Institutes of Health labels research grants directed toward individuals who have considerable experience conducting research in their fields as R01. An R15, however, is an academic research enhancement award, directed to individuals who have not been major recipients of National Institutes of Health research funds. K awards are generally considered as Career Development awards and may be mid-level or senior investigator level. T awards are training grants that usually support students or other “trainees”. F awards are fellowship grants that enhance the training of promising investigators who have the potential to become productive, independent investigators in fields relevant to the missions of the participating agency.

### **Eligibility**

Often funding opportunities are open to selected organizations and/or require a certain level of expertise from principal investigators. It is important to determine whether the funding opportunity is a good fit before proceeding too far in the application process.

### **Institutional Eligibility**

When a grant or subaward is awarded, it is awarded to the university, not to the individual. Look for grant opportunities that are open to public universities or colleges. It may be possible to apply for grant opportunities that are open to private nonprofit entities through the University Foundation.

### **Individual Eligibility**

Funding opportunities often require that the principal investigator has the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed activity. This may mean that the principal investigator has published extensively in the field, has had previous grants, and that the university has ample resources to support the program. Sometimes there are requirements regarding the type of degree held by the principal investigator as well as citizenship status. Frequently underrepresented racial and ethnic groups and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

## **Other Eligibility Criteria**

The funding agency may have additional criteria to narrow the potential field of applicants. For example, the funding opportunity may be open to only those organizations that already have a particular grant or to those institutions that have particular types of accredited degree programs.

## **Matching or Cost Sharing**

Particular attention should be paid when a funding opportunity requires a match or cost share. The match/cost share represents university funds that must be found and devoted to the grant should it be awarded. The principal investigator should work with his/her department chair and Dean to ensure such funds would be available. When OSPR receives a Notice of Intent to Submit Grant/ Routing Form, the office pays particularly close attention to the nature and amount of any match/cost share requirement.

## **Number of Awards**

Sometimes the funding agency expects to award many grants; sometimes only a few. To successfully compete when only two or three grants will be awarded, the proposal must be unique, compelling and clear.

## **Due Dates**

Some funding opportunities have a series of standard due dates such that a proposal could be submitted at several points throughout year. Other funding opportunities offer a one-time opportunity under a very tight deadline. The principal investigator needs to evaluate the time and resources available to respond in a meaningful and effective way to these requirements.

### ***2.4 Contact with Program Officials***

OSPR encourages the potential principal investigator to make contact with agency program managers, whether these are state, federal or private organizations. Communicating with program officers prior to writing a proposal makes for a more successful proposal and saves time in the long run. The researcher can obtain a better grasp of the agency's funding priorities as well as gauge the level of interest at the agency for the researcher's idea. It is invaluable to build a relationship with the program officer and generally, these individuals are pleased to be consulted and asked for their assistance.

### ***2.5 Meet with OSPR and Obtain Approvals***

Approval of your project must be obtained from your department head, Dean or Director, and the OSPR prior to proposal submission for two reasons: 1) so that GSU can assess any commitment required on its part and 2) so that OSPR is alerted to the

date the grant application is due and can ensure that OSPR personnel are available to assist with the submission process.

The approval process involves submitting the Intent to Submit/ Routing Form that is available on the OSPR webpage. Accompanying this form should be 1) a copy of the concept paper, an abstract of the project, a statement of work or a draft proposal and 2) a finalized budget. OSPR can help you prepare the budget. Department chair's and Dean's signatures indicating approval for your grant submission should be obtained and submitted to OSPR.

No proposal, including pending subawards, may be sent off campus prior to full institutional approval. Should a proposal not receive full approval with signatures, OSPR will work with the principal investigator to identify and attempt to resolve the problem. However, depending on the issue, it may be necessary to ask the principal investigator to reconsider the project.

## ***2.6 Writing a Proposal and Preparing the Budget***

### **The Proposal**

Carefully reading and following the guidelines contained in the funding opportunity announcement are absolutely crucial to the preparation of a winning proposal. If you can't follow directions, the funding agency may doubt your ability to conduct a program of research and manage grant activities. OSPR is available to assist in finding the guidelines for a project and interpreting them. Most federal program guidelines and application forms are now available online through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), an application which makes it easy to search for funding opportunities using a number of criteria such as agency name or Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number ([CFDA number](#)).

Innovative ideas based on solid science and proven methods get funded. It is essential that the proposal be technically sound and clearly written. Avoid jargon. The proposal should address the requirements listed in the guidelines and describe the project in the most complete, clearest, and succinct possible terms. Funding agencies generally review and evaluate proposals with reference to five major considerations:

- significance of the results to be obtained from the project;
- resources required to conduct the project in terms of existing and projected commitments of the agency and the university;
- reasonableness of the budget;
- competency of the investigator undertaking the proposed research; and
- protection of human and animal research subjects.

Other criteria may also exist as set by specific granting organizations, and the principal investigator is expected to carefully review the guidelines to determine that his/her

proposal meets all funding criteria. A general guide for what to include in a proposal can be found in [Appendix B: Sample Proposal Format](#).

The [OSPR webpage](#) provides a wide range of resources. If provided enough lead time, OSPR can review the proposal prior to submission to ascertain its completeness and appropriateness. It is always a good idea to have trusted colleague and/or second set of eyes review the proposal.

## The Budget

The budget of a grant proposal is second in importance only to the research or project plan. Although the budget statement is a straightforward discussion of how you plan to spend grant funds, budget preparation needs to comply with the various policies of the university and the funding agency. The OSPR can offer suggestions when preparing your budget and assist with the development of your budget.

If the funding agency provides a specific budget form, it must be used whether this is in hard copy or electronic format. In most cases, special forms are included by the agency as part of the application package.

Although not always required, it is useful to prepare a detailed budget breakdown for your proposal. This detailed budget can help you better understand the total costs of your project. Also, a detailed budget allows for an easier internal review by the university administrators and is helpful in determining the actual extent of any university commitment (matching or cost sharing on a cash or in-kind basis) required by the funding opportunity. Sometimes, you are required to provide only the first year in detail, although this may vary from program to program. A sample budget is included in [Appendix C: Sample Budget](#).

OSPR encourages the principal investigator to seek assistance in developing the budget. All budgets will be checked for accuracy and for appropriate salary levels, fringe benefit percentages, and eligible expenditures. The proposal will not receive OSPR approval until the budget and any university commitment is accurate and in accord with university policy.

The following considerations will help you prepare a comprehensive budget:

- Review the rules and regulations for the budget.
- All costs associated with sponsored program must be reasonable, allocable and allowable. For more information, see [Determining Allowability of Costs Policy Statement](#) on the OSPR Policy Statement website.
  - Reasonable means that costs must be able to withstand public scrutiny, i.e. objective individuals not affiliated with the institution would agree that a cost is appropriate for the project.
  - Allocable means that the costs has been incurred solely to support or advance the work of the project award.

- Allowable means the project costs must be treated consistently as costs for other university accounts and conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth in the guidelines and regulations.
- Calculate the amount of time that you and other professionals involved in the project will have to contribute. How much of this time will the project funds pay for and what does the university have to contribute to make this project “work”? University contributions are match/cost share funds.
- Match/cost share funds can be a concern for the principal investigator and the University. Occasionally, the program will require not just in-kind funds but real cash match/cost share.
- Determine all project expense needs, including employees, supplies, equipment, and consultants. Determine what items can be supplied on campus and what will have to be purchased from off campus vendors. Get accurate quotes on all items. It may be necessary to obtain multiple quotes.
- For new project hires, contact the Human Resources Office to determine the appropriate salary and wage costs for project staff and procedures for hiring.
- For current employees, OSPR will work with Financial Services to obtain salaries and wages.
- OSPR will calculate fringe benefit costs for the budget. For budgeting, fringe benefits are calculated as a percentage of salaries and wages. During the project, fringe benefits are charged as the actual amount of each team member’s fringe benefits equal to the percentage of salary on the project.
- OSPR will calculate facilities and administrative (F&A) costs, also called indirect costs, for the project period. Facilities and administrative costs reimburse the University for the expense of having the project on campus. They are calculated as a percentage of salaries, wages and benefits and added to the direct costs of the project to give a total project cost.

The total project cost includes 1) direct project costs, 2) facilities and administrative (F&A) costs or indirect costs, and 3) any required university commitment including cost share or matching. Only when all of these items are totaled do you have an idea of the real cost of your project.

Usually only the direct and F&A costs are requested from the funding agency. However, it is important to understand that any match/cost share (in-kind or cash) committed by the university does impact the project and must be identified with a value assigned. All costs, funded externally and committed match/cost share, are auditable. Therefore, it is wise not to commit more institutional match/cost share to a project than necessary--the more match/cost share written into a project, the more records needed to meet audit demands.

### ***Direct Costs***

Direct costs include all items that can be categorically identified and charged directly to the specific project. Most sponsors allow direct cost funding for the following categories.

### ***Personnel***

Personnel time is usually the first budget line item and frequently the costliest. Calculate the percent of time spent on the project for each individual and prorate the salary for the proposed implementation period of the grant. All personnel decisions should be cleared with your department head and Dean prior to final budget preparation. Multi-year projects should take into consideration any expected annual increases for salaries and wages. All university personnel regulations, as well as the regulations of the funding agency, must be adhered to regarding advertising the position(s), interviewing and hiring. GSU is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate regarding race, sex, or disability. The following are the types of personnel often associated with grants.

- *Principal Investigator (PI) or project director.* Cost is based on the salary of the selected individual in relation to the percentage of time devoted to the activity. Some programs limit 9-month faculty to receiving only support for the uncovered three-month summer period. Always check your program guidelines to be sure you are computing personnel costs correctly.
- *Faculty* When possible, course buyouts can be used to cover the costs of any function that is part of their job description including administrative, teaching and scholarly activities (research, creative activities and service) proportional to the level of effort on the project.
- *Graduate research assistants* may be employed on sponsored research projects in research or faculty support positions. Pay rates should be determined prior to proposal submission, in accordance with the pay scales of university supported graduate assistants. Graduate assistantships are arranged through the Dean of the College.
  - The purpose of a Graduate Research Assistant opportunity is to provide students with relevant research experience while they are pursuing a graduate degree. Students employed as Graduate Research Assistants on externally funded research grants are eligible for a 50% tuition reduction benefit. The remaining 50% may be covered by the student or by the department/college with proper approvals, if funding is available. Tuition should not be budgeted or paid from grants unless required by the conditions of the grant.
  - In developing an externally funded research proposal, the grant writer should determine if a Graduate Research Assistant will be needed to fulfill the outcomes of the project. If so, the role of the GRA should be written and the stipend budgeted in the grant proposal. During this time, the grant writer can request funding from their department or college for the remaining 50% tuition; providing the student with a 100% tuition reduction benefit.
  - If the grant proposal is funded, notify the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research. OSPR will work with the grant writer to get the account set-up in Financial Services and process any grant paperwork that may need



to be completed. The grant writer is responsible for ensuring that the graduate assistant documentation is completed, including the Graduate Assistant Contract Packet and the Graduate Assistant/Tuition Waiver application. The GRA's tuition reduction will be applied after all documents have been processed.

- Student Workers may be employed through funded projects as student assistants. A student assistant cannot be a College Work Study student on federally funded projects. Although College Work Study Students can provide assistance on federal projects, the students in the College Work Study Program cannot be paid from a second federal source or used to meet the needs of a cost share/match requirement for a federal program. The principal investigator is responsible for the selection and hiring of all student assistants, appointment forms must be processed through Human Resources. The wage will be determined by the current university wage schedule for student workers.
- Technicians, statisticians, coordinators, other professionals, secretarial, clerical, and other personnel
  - The principal investigator should recognize that personnel receive appropriate salary, duties, responsibilities, and benefits comparable to those for individuals in similar positions elsewhere in the university. The principal investigator should consult with the Human Resources Office concerning current or projected salaries for these positions.
  - All personnel hired under a specific award/grant must be informed by the principal investigator that their employment period coincides with the award period, and that the university cannot assure continued employment beyond the period for which grant funds are available.
  - Annual leave accrued by personnel paid solely from grant funds must be taken during the effective period of the grant. Annual increases/raises should coincide with established GSU personnel policy as long as funds exist within the award budget for such raises. If you did not compute raises into your budget for subsequent years of funding, you may have difficulty providing these to your project staff. Sick leave is accrued based on the policy of the university as it relates to the position. Check with Human Resources if you have any questions when building your budget and when putting in place a hiring process for your funded project.

### ***Fringe Benefits***

Fringe benefits accompanying employee salaries paid by the grant must also be charged to the grant. Fringe benefits are budgeted as a percentage of salaries and wages for each employee. Faculty is budgeted at 45% of salaries. Full time staff is budgeted at 58% and part-time staff at 8%. Graduate students are budgeted at 2%. Always check with OSPR to be sure these rates have not changed.

### ***Consultants***

Consultants may be paid through grant funds. GSU does not have set fees and hourly rates for consultants; individual agreements are based on the nature of the consultation.

However, consultants' fees, travel expenses, subsistence, and related expenses must conform to established university policy for reimbursement.

### ***Subcontract/Subaward***

If a subaward is essential to the successful completion of a sponsored program, subaward commitment forms, statement of work, budget, and other forms as necessary should be provided at the time of proposal preparation prior to submission.

### ***Travel***

Expenses incurred for travel will be paid from grant funds and must conform to university travel policies. Detailed and up to date information about travel expenses can be found on the Procurement and Business Services GSU portal pages.

### ***Equipment***

Equipment may be purchased or rented, according to the policies of the grantor under the program guidelines and general university policy. The equipment budget should reflect comprehensive costs, not only purchase, rental, or leasing costs, but freight, installation costs, and maintenance contracts, as necessary.

### ***Supplies and Materials***

Supplies and materials should be itemized providing the number of items and the cost per item.

### ***Stipends or Training Fees***

Stipends or training fees are another category that may be required based on the nature of the award. The stipend may be paid to a participant as compensation for costs incurred in participating in training activities.

### ***Other Direct Costs***

Other direct costs are items that can be identified such as:

- Computers - consult Information Technology for amounts.
- Publication charges, graphics and printing, duplication, media services, final report costs, etc. University regulations apply as do funder guidelines.
- Miscellaneous costs such as postage, telephone, FAX, and any other items necessary to successful project operation that can be reasonably identified.

### ***Indirect Costs***

Indirect costs are also referred to as Facilities and Administrative or F&A, these costs are costs that are difficult to assign to a specific cost area or activity such as utilities, IT support, financial services, human resources, purchasing, building maintenance, janitorial services and legal services. These costs are 'real' costs but because they are difficult to quantify. Always check the language of the guidelines regarding indirect costs so that the correct rate is charged.

To cover the costs of having a funded project on campus, GSU has, through its [cognizant agency](#), negotiated a rate currently set at 54% of salaries and wages. This negotiated rate is used when applying for grants from most federal agencies. For projects that are conducted off site, an indirect cost rate of 27.5% has been negotiated.

In some cases, another F&A or indirect cost rate will be applied to the project depending on the agency or project type. The U.S. Department of Education may require a lower rate for training projects, usually 8% of total direct costs. Many private foundations disallow all indirect costs or allow a small percentage of total direct costs. For State of Illinois grants whose prime funder is a federal agency, the GSU negotiated rate must be applied to the project, unless there are special circumstances. Other State of Illinois projects may not allow an administrative cost. When a rate is written into the program guidelines, that rate is accepted by the institution. When a rate is allowed, whatever that rate may be, the full extent of that rate should be used. Any differential between the negotiated rate and the allowed rate can usually be considered as part of the project match/cost share provided by the institution.

### ***University Commitment***

The university commitment may be called non-federal share, match, or cost share. University commitment is the portion of the project or program costs is not paid by the grant. Federal grants cannot use cost borne for other federal projects as non-federal share, match, or cost share. The university commitment must be treated using the same standards in which expenses paid by the grant are treated, including allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the program. University commitment may come in the form of cash or in-kind. Cash matching is when GSU buys goods and services, including employee's time, that benefit the program. In-kind is when GSU receives goods or services that are used in the program at no cost or at a cost that is less than fair market value. To determine GSU's commitment, a grant writer should work with his/her department and college to define what the university is able to commit to the project. All university cost share is subject to audit just as the grant funds. Accurate records regarding all expenditures and university commitment must be maintained and be made accessible to an auditor upon request.

### ***2.7 Institutional Review Board***

Federal agencies are increasingly requiring that human subjects research being proposed has already been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Certainly, no human subjects research should be undertaken until a protocol has been submitted and approved by the IRB. Information on how to submit a protocol to the IRB is located on the [IRB webpage](#).

### ***2.8 Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee***

Federal agencies are increasingly requiring that animal research being proposed has already been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Certainly, no research should be undertaken until a protocol has

been submitted and approved by the IACUC. Information on how to submit a protocol to the IACUC is located on the [IACUC webpage](#).

## **2.9 Responsible Conduct of Research**

Sponsoring agencies are increasingly requiring that the research being proposed that includes students or trainees also include a Responsible Conduct of Research training plan and expects that researchers will maintain appropriate conduct during the research, reporting, and publishing of their work.

Faculty, staff, and students are expected to commit to maintaining the high standards of integrity in research activities through the responsible and ethical conduct of its faculty, staff, and students. RCR is a widely accepted set of ethical and professional standards for conducting research. RCR training is now part of funding requirements for federal agencies including the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. RCR is increasingly viewed as an essential component of research training, regardless of a researcher's source of funding. The purposes of RCR training are to promote the responsible conduct of research, discourage research misconduct, and discourage questionable research practices.

### **Research Misconduct**

Federal Regulations define Research Misconduct as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research or in reporting research results. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data. However, it is well appreciated by all that responsible conduct, as opposed to misconduct, encompasses many other aspects of ethical behavior in the practice of scientific research.

### **RCR Plan Intent**

RCR plans should foster, integrate and provide RCR training at the highest standard of ethical and professional conduct for the culturally diverse and trans-disciplinary research community at GSU. RCR plans should also provide flexibility in content, delivery and the trainees' career stage. Core areas that can be addressed during instruction include data acquisition, management, sharing and ownership; mentor/trainee responsibilities; publication practices and responsible authorship; peer review; collaborative science; research misconduct; conflict of interest and commitment.

### **Online RCR Training**

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative Program has online RCR training that is recommended to be taken by all students, staff, and faculty involved in research at GSU, regardless of whether the research is funded or non-funded. All graduate and undergraduate students participating in research with a funder that requires RCR training are required to take the RCR training with CITI and participate in mentored instruction to meet the funder's requirements. CITI has a Course Completion Report where you can view your course completion history and obtain completion certificates.

CITI's Responsible Conduct of Research training includes disciplinary course offerings that cover the core norms, principles and rules governing the practice of responsible research. Participants will choose at least one of the disciplines specific courses listed below.

- Biomedical Responsible Conduct of Research Course
- Social and Behavioral Conduct of Research Course
- Physical Science Responsible Conduct of Research Course
- Humanities Responsible Conduct of Research Course

## **NSF RCR Plan Requirements**

NSF requires GSU to be able to verify that undergraduate and graduate students who receive NSF funds for salary or stipends to conduct research on NSF grants will obtain RCR training. NSF anticipates that GSU will develop its RCR training programs in a manner that helps prepare the next generation of researchers, including the consideration of risks or other factors associated with student participation in research.

NSF recognizes that specific training needs may vary depending on specific circumstances of research or the specific needs of students intending to pursue careers in basic or applied science after completing their education. Therefore, it is the responsibility of GSU to determine both the content and the delivery method for the training that will meet GSU's specific needs for RCR training in all areas that NSF provides support. Furthermore, GSU must decide if development of content or pedagogical method is required, or if appropriate content and training can be provided from some existing sources or capabilities, and take appropriate action to implement its decisions.

## **NIH RCR Plan Requirements**

NIH requires that all trainees, fellows, participants, and scholars receiving support through any NIH Research Training Grants, Individual Fellowship Awards, Career Development Awards (Institutional and Individual), Research Education Grants, Dissertation Research Grants or other grant programs with a training component that requires instruction in RCR as noted in the Funding Opportunity Announcement. It is expected that course attendance is monitored and that a certificate or documentation of participation is available upon course completion. NIH does not require certification of compliance or submission of documentation, but expects institutions to maintain records sufficient to demonstrate that NIH-supported trainees, fellows, and scholars have received the required instruction.

### ***Instructional Components***

NIH recognizes that instruction in RCR occurs formally and informally in educational settings and that informal instruction occurs throughout the research training experience. The guidance provided below is directed at formal instruction in RCR. These practices have been incorporated into many of the best regarded programs of instruction in RCR.

## ***Format***

Substantial face-to-face discussions among the participating trainees (fellows, scholars, and participants), a combination of didactic and small-group discussions (e.g. case studies), and participation of research training faculty members in instruction in responsible conduct of research are highly encouraged. A plan that employs only online coursework for instruction in responsible conduct of research will not be considered acceptable, except in special instances of short-term training programs, or unusual and well-justified circumstances.

## ***Subject Matter***

While there are no specific curricular requirements for instruction in responsible conduct of research, the following topics have been incorporated into most acceptable plans for such instruction:

- conflict of interest – personal, professional, and financial;
- policies regarding human subjects, live vertebrate animal subjects in research, and safe laboratory practices;
- mentor/mentee responsibilities and relationships;
- collaborative research including collaborations with industry;
- peer review;
- data acquisition and laboratory tools; management, sharing, and ownership;
- research misconduct and policies for handling misconduct;
- responsible authorship and publication; and
- the scientist as a responsible member of society, contemporary ethical issues in biomedical research, and the environmental and societal impacts of scientific research.

## ***Faculty Participation***

Training faculty and sponsors/mentors are highly encouraged to contribute both to formal and informal instruction in responsible conduct of research. Informal instruction occurs in the course of laboratory interactions and in other informal situations throughout the year. Training faculty may contribute to formal instruction in responsible conduct of research as discussion leaders, speakers, lecturers, and/or course directors. Rotation of training faculty as course directors, instructors, and/or discussion leaders may be a useful way to achieve the ideal of full faculty participation in formal responsible conduct of research courses over a period of time.

## ***Duration of Instruction***

Instruction should involve substantive contact hours between the trainees/fellows/scholars/participants and the participating faculty. Acceptable programs generally involve at least eight contact hours. A semester-long series of seminars/programs may be more effective than a single seminar or one-day workshop because it is expected that topics will then be considered in sufficient depth, learning

will be better consolidated, and the subject matter will be synthesized within a broader conceptual framework.

### ***Frequency of Instruction***

Reflection on responsible conduct of research should recur throughout a scientist's career: at the undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, pre-doctoral, and faculty levels. Institutional training programs and individual fellows/scholars are strongly encouraged to consider how to optimize instruction in responsible conduct of research for the particular career stage of the individual involved. Instruction must be undertaken at least once during each career stage, and at a frequency of no less than once every four years. It is highly encouraged that initial instruction during pre-doctoral training occurs as early as possible in graduate school. Individuals at the early career investigator level, including mentored K awardees and K12 scholars, must receive instruction in responsible conduct of research at least once during this career stage. Senior fellows and career award recipients, including F33, K02, K05, and K24, awardees may fulfill the requirement for instruction in responsible conduct of research by participating as lecturers and discussion leaders. To meet the above requirements, instruction in responsible conduct of research may take place, in appropriate circumstances, in a year when the trainee, fellow, or career award recipient is not actually supported by a grant.

### ***2.10 Faculty Fellowship***

In order to ensure that adequate support is provided to faculty who have been awarded a fellowship and to ensure that the academic division/department can continue to provide instruction as needed, the following procedure will be followed:

When applying for a fellowship award, faculty should plan to coordinate travel with a sabbatical leave. When fellowship supported travel occurs simultaneous with a sabbatical leave, faculty are eligible to receive standard sabbatical pay in addition to a monthly living stipend from the fellowship sponsor.

#### ***Monthly Living Allowance/Stipend***

Fellowship opportunities may not always coincide with the sabbatical timeframe. Faculty who cannot receive a sabbatical leave and who will receive a monthly living allowance/stipend from their fellowship during the academic year will choose one of two options:

- Continue to receive university salary and benefits during the academic year by remitting the full fellowship living allowance/stipend to the university; or
- Request leave without pay for the timeframe covered by the fellowship stipend.

#### ***Fulbright Scholars Without Monthly Living Allowance/Stipend***

In the event that the Fulbright Scholars Program does not provide a monthly living allowance/stipend, the faculty member may be eligible to receive their standard university salary and benefits during the term of their fellowship award. The faculty member's chair, dean, and the provost must approve.

Faculty should consult an appropriate financial advisor about reporting income to the IRS and any other financial implications.



## Chapter 3: Submitting a Proposal

Federal agencies are increasingly relying on the electronic submission of grant applications, although in rare instances paper based applications are permitted. The manner of submission is entirely based on the regulations/requirements of the guidelines for the particular program. Regardless of how the application is submitted, no proposal shall leave the campus without full signoff and approval.

Every proposal sent off the GSU campus is a university submission, not a personal submission, and as such, the signature of the President, or a designate, must appear on each and every proposal. Currently, the Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research has full sign off privileges. The principal investigator should allow one to two weeks for review of their work by OSPR prior to the deadline date. Any proposal submitted under less than sufficient review, or without review, may be in danger of refusal at time of award should the project not be in line with university goals and mission.

### **3.1 Collaborative Proposals**

Collaborative proposals are when persons from different disciplines work together to complete an interdisciplinary proposal. Collaborative proposals may require review/approval by more than one division/department head or Dean as well as approval by an outside collaborator. The principal investigator should anticipate that each outside collaborator or university unit will want to review the proposal and budget. All collaborative projects should be discussed with OSPR to be sure that everyone is working together, the principal investigator knows the requirements for review, and a timeline can be set reflecting those expectations to assure the submission deadline is met.

### **3.2 Due Dates**

Grant due dates are strictly adhered to and only extraordinary circumstances, such as extreme weather conditions or a sponsor's electronic system issue, will warrant any change. Generally, if the due date falls on a weekend or federal holiday, the due date is the first business date after; however, please verify with OSPR or the sponsor before submitting a late proposal. A principal investigator cannot expect to ask for extra time.

### **3.3 Electronic Submission**

The majority of grant applications require an electronic submission. Although the principal investigator is fully responsible for the grant proposal, the actual submission (clicking the "submit" button) is the responsibility of OSPR unless otherwise agreed upon by the PI and OSPR.

There are a number of electronic submission systems. Despite the advantages of electronic submission, all of these applications require a great deal of preparation and organization. Some systems require registration and institutional information including the [DUNS number](#) and Employer Identification Number. GSU's institutional information

is in [Appendix D: Helpful Grant Writing Information](#). These systems are detailed and quite complex; early submission is strongly encouraged so that any mistakes can be corrected in advance of the submission deadline. A description of the major submission systems follows.

- The National Science Foundation uses an electronic submission application called [NSF FASTLANE](#). Through FASTLANE you can develop your proposal, submit your proposal for funding, track the progress of your proposal through the NSF review process, and manage the award once received. Registration is required on two levels—the university and the principal investigator. The university is already registered as a Sponsored Research Office. To register as a researcher with FASTLANE, contact OSPR. The registration process generally requires about two days. Note that some NSF proposals are now being submitted through Grants.gov.
- [Grants.gov](#) is the primary method for electronic submission to all agencies within the Federal government. The university is registered and does not require registration for the individual. Once a proposal is uploaded into the system the [Authorized Organization Representative](#) (the Director of OSPR) will check for completeness making sure that all parts of the proposal have been properly loaded into the system. OSPR will then submit the proposal. Grants.gov also provides a variety of [applicant resources](#).
- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) uses the program, [eRA Commons](#), for proposal submission in conjunction with Grants.gov. This program requires institutional and individual registration prior to use. The proposal is submitted through Grants.gov, and flows through to the eRA Commons where it is reviewed for accuracy in compliance with NIH guidelines for the specific program.

### **3.4 Un-funded Proposals**

If your proposal was not funded, do the following:

- Notify OSPR so that records can be updated.
- Request the reviewer's comments and share with OSPR. These comments are helpful to improve your proposal for re-submission. Only about 30% of proposals are funded and resubmissions are encouraged.
- Discuss the un-funded project with OSPR to determine the best course of action. This may be reapplying at the next deadline under the same program, applying to a new program, or rethinking the entire project.
- Never throw out a proposal. Your work can be recycled and improved.

## Chapter 4: Award Procedures

Post award procedures are the responsibility of the principal investigator, OSPR, and Assistant Controller, and are initiated when a Notice of Award is received. Read the award documents very carefully.

### **4.1 Notice of Award**

The Notice of Award (NoA) may be sent directly to the President, Provost, the principal investigator, or the Director of OSPR. The NoA may be received via letter, email, phone call, or check in the mail. The award notice will be shared with the principal investigator and OSPR.

### **4.2 Award Management Meeting**

To start off the post award process in an informed manner, the OSPR Director may hold a meeting with all interested parties to discuss the budget, setting up the account, process for purchasing materials, travel regulations, etc. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the grant requirements and outline roles and responsibilities. Although seasoned grant recipients may feel this meeting is unnecessary, it frequently makes a great deal of difference in how smoothly a new award gets up and running.

An account number should not be issued prior to this meeting except under special circumstances and with the full approval and knowledge of OPSR.

### **4.3 Account Request**

An Account Request Form is required to establish an account in Financial Services. This form is accompanied by a budget which the Assistant Controller uses to identify legitimate expenditures. The project will be assigned an account number used by the principal investigator and other authorized personnel to access grant funds for purchases, information about expenditures, fund balances, etc.

OSPR will complete the Account Request Form and provide it to the Assistant Controller. The principal investigator will need to let them know which individuals need access to the account. A copy of the fully executed contract, award letter, NoA, or other award documentation indicating the award has been made and the detailed line item budget for the award will be provided to the Assistant Controller.

Once the account number has been assigned, a signature card will be completed and sent to the Procurement Office.

### **4.4 Spending Grant Money**

Funding is provided to the university for the principal investigator to complete the proposed project. The principal investigator, with the assistance of OSPR and the Assistant Controller, is primarily responsible for ensuring the funds provided are spent in the correct manner. All items to be purchased using grant or contract funds must follow the policies and procedures of the university.

- Funds may only be expended for line items approved in the budget.
- Changes to the line items may require approval by the grantor prior to changing the budget. Some awards allow for a certain percentage of the total award, usually 10 to 20 percent of the total funded amount, to be modified without prior approval. You should refer to the award document and funder guidelines as to how changes to the budget may be accomplished.
- The award document and funder guidelines will give all necessary information regarding spending. It is very important this information is carefully read and understood. Failure to manage funds in the appropriate manner may result in the university having to return funds.
- Work with the Assistant Controller in Financial Services to understand how to access and monitor your account using the university's accounting system.
- The wise grant recipient will maintain a separate spreadsheet for all activities and expenditures related to the grant so that there is a comparison method to ascertain the accounting process is correct and no errors have occurred. This is particularly important when the grantee has more than one award to administer.

## **Subawards/subcontracts**

Contact the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research if you have a subaward or subcontract. All awards involving GSU as a receiver of services or products must be approved by one's next immediate supervisor. OSPR will help to determine the relationship, subaward/subcontract or vendor/contract, and will guide the principal investigator through the proper process. If a subaward/subcontract is necessary, OSPR will work with the appropriate office to ensure that all requirements are incorporated into the subaward/subcontract documentation prior to it being sent to the recipient. The [Subaward Contractor Determination](#) that OSPR uses is on the OSPR webpage.

## **Travel**

The university reimburses expenses incurred in making approved trips, according to the following rules:

- Prior approval for travel may be required. Forms and other information about reimbursement limits can be found on the Procurement and Business Services portal page.
- Expenses must be itemized in detail on the weekly travel expense statement.
- Original receipts for hotel bills and other expenses must be attached to the request for reimbursement.
- Automobile travel is reimbursed on a per mile basis (check current mileage rate). Rental cars should be arranged at 'least cost' fees and may be preferable to personal auto use. The university encourages the use of a rental car whenever there is a cost saving possible.

- Commercial transportation (air, rail, and bus) shall be by minimum fare service. Ticket stubs must be submitted as evidence of this expenditure.
- Receipts for meals are not required for reimbursement but should be obtained to verify actual expenditures, per diem rates will be used.
- Taxi fare receipts and other out-of-pocket expenses must be presented for reimbursement.
- Tips are not reimbursed.

## **Procurement of supplies, equipment, services**

Forms, limitations on purchases, need for contracts, etc. must follow established Procurement procedures. The OSPR and Procurement and Business Services will assist in this process.

### ***4.5 Budget Revisions***

When a budget change is to be made for an existing grant or subaward, the PI must work with Office of Sponsored Programs and Research to determine whether or not the university has the authority to re-budget the funds or whether funder approval is required. Most sponsors provide flexibility in re-budgeting grant funds and the budget revision can be approved by OSPR. The university cannot approve revisions which are not in compliance with the terms of the award. Other sponsors provide no flexibility to the university and require sponsor approve all budget changes. The PI's request to transfer funds must include full justification for the transfer. The budget revision must be necessary to the conduct of the research or project and the request must explain why there are excess funds in one category and why they are needed in the second category. Budget revisions strictly to spend funds remaining in the account are not justified. When the revision is approved, OSPR or the PI will notify the Assistant Controller to make the budget revision. Expenses should not be charged against the anticipated budget revision until the re-budgeting has been completed.

### ***4.6 Cost Transfers***

The transfer of expenses from one project/account to another project/account is occasionally necessary to correct bookkeeping or clerical errors in the original charges. Closely related work may be supported by more than one funding source and transfer of costs from one source of funding support to another may be proper, provided that the cost is an allowable charge. Frequent, tardy, or insufficiently justified transfers raise serious questions about the propriety of the transfers themselves, the overall reliability of the grantee's accounting system, the ability of the PI to manage the account, and the adequacy of the internal controls.

Consequently, all such cost transfers must be made promptly after discovery of the errors, and when possible, prior to submission of the final financial reports to the sponsor. The transfer must be supported by documentation which contains an explanation and a justification of the change. The requested transfer must be reviewed and approved by the Assistant Controller. All expense transfers should be completed in

a timely manner consistent with the sponsor guidelines but within 180 days of finding the error. For additional information, see the [Cost Transfer Policy Statement](#) on the OSPR Policy Statement website.

#### **4.7 Over-expenditures and Disallowances**

The PI must work with the Assistant Controller and Financial Services to correct any over expenditures or disallowances as soon as possible after they have occurred. If they have not been corrected in an appropriate amount of time to complete the final financial report, the expenses may be charged to the department or college account of the PI. Appropriate notification of such charges, properly documented, will be made to the PI and other academic offices by Financial Services and the Associate Vice President for Finance.

#### **4.8 Reports**

The number, type, and frequency of reports required vary with each award and can be found in the award document. At a minimum, a financial report is required at the end of the grant period. The general reporting process is described below:

- Programmatic reports are the responsibility of the principal investigator as the activities to be reported have been implemented or organized by the principal investigator. OSPR can help if the report has to be submitted electronically or if the principal investigator wishes to have some editorial assistance.
- Financial reports and invoices are generally prepared by the Assistant Controller and may be submitted directly by the accountant or in conjunction with the programmatic report by the principal investigator. The Assistant Controller will submit the financial report/invoice to the sponsor upon agreement with the PI on the amounts to be reported.
- Time and Effort Reports are required by Federal regulation for all Federal grants and contracts where personnel are involved are a part of the accountability responsibilities of the university. Every person either paid out of grant/contract funds or providing by their time and effort as match/cost share funds for a particular project, must indicate the time spent on the project on a quarterly basis. Questions regarding the Time and Effort Report, which is required quarterly, may be directed to [OSPR staff](#).

Copies of all reports should be sent to OSPR for retention where updated and accurate records are maintained.

#### **4.9 Compliance Requirements**

Every award (grant, contract, cooperative agreement, appropriation, etc.) comes with certain compliance requirements. The compliance issues related to a specific award are in the award document or funder's guidelines. GSU compliance policies may be accessed from OSPR's website. Some of the most significant compliance policies are:

- Records Retention The manner in which records are kept is important but records must be kept for a period of time as specified by university, state and federal law. Where these time periods are inconsistent one with another, records shall be kept to the longest period for the regulations in effect. When audits occur, it is most important that the manner in which records are kept be consistent across the life of the project and across the range of awards. The period of time is five years.
- Human Research Subjects [Policy 53: Policy for Protection of Human Research Subjects](#) should be followed when conducting human subjects research. All research conducted at GSU must be approved by the Institutional Review Board. This means that human subjects research activities, including surveys, must be reviewed by the IRB prior to the start of human subjects research activity. Furthermore, training is required for all researchers (faculty, staff, and students) using human subjects in their research.
- Intellectual Property The [Intellectual Property Policy](#) can be found in the Board of Regulations or on the OSPR website.
- Laboratory Animal Care and Use Policy [Policy 57: Policies and Procedures Pertaining to Research Involving the Use of Animals](#) should be followed when using animals on campus, whether in classroom or in research.
- Financial Conflict of Interest Policy [Policy 68: Financial Conflict of Interest in Externally Sponsored Research and Educational Activities](#) should be followed when receiving any external support for activities using GSU resources. The Public Health Service (PHS) and the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) has published a [regulation concerning financial conflict of interest](#) to ensure that the design, conduct, or reporting of research will not be biased by any conflicting financial interest of the investigators responsible for the research. GSU requires all PIs & Co-PIs to submit a [Financial Screening and Disclosure Form and complete FCOI training through CITI](#).

#### **4.10 Award Extension**

Sometimes an award period may need to be extended due to a programmatic reason that requires additional time to complete the project. All extensions require approval from the sponsor and OSPR must be notified and included in the request for an extension of the award. If there are funds available in the budget to support the additional time needed to complete the project, a “no-cost extension” can be requested from the sponsor. Extensions often require a budget and statement of how the funds will be used during the additional time to complete the project. If additional funds are needed to complete the project, a “supplement” may be requested from the sponsor requesting additional funding and additional time. Supplements may require submission of a new proposal.

## **4.11 Sustainable Projects**

Often grants are awarded with the intent of becoming an activity that is maintained at the university without external funding. When the award has ended the OSPR, PI, and Financial Services will follow the award closeout procedures.

## **4.12 Award Closeout**

Closeout of any award will be accomplished only after all program activities are completed and all financial requirements have been met. Final financial and program reports will need to be completed for the funding agency by the principal investigator and the Assistant Controller, with copies to OSPR. All project files, whether held by the principal investigator, Assistant Controller, or OSPR, will be held in storage until scheduled for destruction as per regulations attached to the award, federal or state, whichever is longest; currently five years.

## **Federal Equipment Disposal**

If equipment was purchased with federal funds, it is the property of the federal agency. There are specific requirements regarding the use of the equipment after the award has ended. The federal agency's guidelines or the program officer should be referenced. Generally, if the equipment is usable, it can be used by the university according the following hierarchy, approval may be needed from the federal agency.

1. First, it may be used for other projects funded by the same federal agency.
2. Second, it may be used for other projects funded by another federal agency.
3. Third, it may be used for other uses.

## **Financial Account**

OSPR will review the financial record of the completed project with the principal investigator and the Assistant Controller. All financial concerns must be addressed and resolved prior to the financial closeout of the award. After all expenses have been posted to the account and all closing entries have been completed, including journal entries and cost transfers. The Assistant Controller must submit any financial reports or invoices that are required for the award.

## **Unused Balance**

If there are unused funds, the disposition of the balance will be in accordance with the sponsor's policies and regulations. Generally, unused funds for federal and state projects are returned to the funder. Balances from Fixed Price Agreements will be retained by the university.

## **Overspent Accounts**

An overspent account occurs when cumulative expenses exceed the amount awarded by the sponsor. There should be no expenditures beyond the amount of the award; however, if there is an "overspent" account at the end of the project, it is the responsibility of the principal investigator to work with Financial Services to resolve the shortfall of funds. The PI may inform FS of an account to absorb the over-expenditures.



If the PI cannot identify an account, the amount may be charged to the PI's department or college/department account. FS will complete the journal entry or cost transfer to remove the shortfall.

## Ongoing Expenses

If there are ongoing expenses, the PI must notify university departments and payroll of an account change for future costs such as printing, telephone, postage and salary/fringe. The PI will promptly, work with Financial Services to transfer all erroneous charges, clearing deficits, and post-term charges.

## Un-posted Expenses and Encumbrances

If there are un-posted expenses or unpaid encumbrances such as open requisitions and unpaid invoices, the PI must notify Financial Services. The PI and FS will promptly work to process open and unpaid items on the account.

## 120 Day Award Closeout Timeline

0 to 30 days after expiration	The PI should notify Financial Services of any transactions that actually occurred during the period of performance that has not posted and any encumbrances that have not been paid. FS will work on resolving the issues.
0 to 60 days after expiration	The PI and FS will review all transactions, un-posted items and unpaid encumbrances on the award. FS will prepare needed adjustments including the clearing of any encumbrances and move any overdraft to an account the PI has indicated, Chair or Dean approval maybe required.
0 to 75 days after expiration	The PI and FS will review the account and ensure all transactions occurring during the period of performance have been posted, all encumbrances have been cleared from the account and the account balance is zero. FS will prepare a draft Final Financial report and send it to the PI and OSPR.
0 to 90 days after expiration	FS will modify the Final Financial report, if necessary, and request PI approval. The PI will submit any technical progress reports to OSPR/Sponsor, depending on the conditions of the award.
0 to 120 days after expiration	FS will submit the final report to the Sponsor. Once FS has ensured the final payment has been received, OSPR and FS will formally close the award according to sponsor guidelines.

The timeline for closing the award will be adjusted based on circumstances and conditions of the award; however, all final reports and documents must be sent to the sponsor by the due date unless a change has been approved in writing from the sponsor.

#### **4.13 Return of Indirect Costs**

##### **Return of Indirect Costs Distribution**

Financial Services maintains records of earned F&A and reports regularly to the principal investigator what amount has been earned and how it has been distributed. Current distribution at GSU for earned F&A is: 50% to the general fund, 20% to the college/administrative unit, and 10% each to the principal investigator, department/division, and Provost.

##### **Use of Return of Indirect Costs**

The use of indirect cost funds is not prescribed in a grant budget and there is room for discretion in how the funds should be spent. OSPR recommends that the return of indirect funds be used to sustain a currently or recently sponsored project and/or develop or sustain other university projects for which external funding is expected to be sought. Appropriate expenses could include:

- Travel
- Supplies
- Equipment
- Publication Costs
- Undergraduate Students
- Graduate Students
- Other non-personnel costs
- Temporary Help

Please note that funds should NOT be used for personnel costs other than for students or temporary help.

##### **Timeframe**

While there is no predetermined time limit to use the indirect cost funds, and funds can roll over into subsequent years, it is important to have an active and productive use of funds at all levels. Unspent funds can be at risk for being re-absorbed by the university. The return of indirect costs accounts will be reviewed by OSPR on a yearly basis to ensure they are being used in a timely manner. A plan for use may be requested if there is no activity in the account for a period of a year.

#### **4.14 Residual Funds on Sponsored Fixed Price and Fee for Service Awards**

Fixed price awards require the University to perform work to sponsor specifications for an agreed upon amount based on an estimated costs. The expectation is that project expenses on fixed price awards will closely match the sponsor's payment. It is important

for investigators to record all project costs to the grant/contract account to ensure that funds from other sources are not subsidizing expenditures made in the performance of fixed price agreements and to ensure that all applicable auditing requirements are satisfied. It is important that the University manage these awards carefully as they can lead to the perception of defective pricing.

If actual costs exceeds the amount payable to the University, the investigator or academic unit will cover the additional expenses necessary for the investigator to complete the work.

If the amount payable to the University exceeds the actual cost, a residual balance remains. Once the performance end date and/or all deliverables have been completed, the residual balance may be transferred to designated 16 accounts after Facilities & Administrative (indirect) costs are applied based on the Negotiated Indirect Rate Cost Agreement. The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research will receive the 10% Department/Division's share. F&A costs will be applied to residual balances regardless of whether or not an F&A waiver was approved through the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research.

The Principal Investigator must request a residual funds transfer via email to the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research. In the subject line of the request, note *Residual Funds Transfer Request* and include the award's grant/contract account number.

The request must include confirmation or documentation of the below information:

1. All the work on the project has been completed;
2. No outstanding items remain open or are in question with the sponsor;
3. All reports have been received and accepted by the sponsor;
4. All costs for the project have been applied to the grant/contract account;
5. All payments for the project have been received from the sponsor;
6. If the residual balance is greater than 25% of the awarded amount, an explanation of the balance is required. A residual balance of this amount may signify a change in scope that may be subject to review by the sponsor and auditors;
7. Account number (16) to which the residual balance will be transferred; and
8. Confirmation that the balance will be used to support general research activities within the designated department.

## Appendix

### **Appendix A: Grant Terms**

Many of these grant terms were taken from the glossary developed by the National Institutes of Health. For more definitions and information, [click here](#).

#### **Authorized Signatory Official/Signing Official/Authorized Organization Representative**

The authorized signatory official is the university representative who can commit the university to a particular course of action. At the present time, the individual who is authorized to sign for grant applications is Jennifer Morehead Famer, Director. The signature of the PI must be on all budgetary and reporting actions including reports of personnel effort on the project. Usually Financial Services accountant signs the fiscal reports.

#### **Certifying Personnel Effort**

All effort, whether paid by grant or provided as match/cost share, must be verified and is auditable. The time and effort of personnel assigned to the project must be certified by the employee and/or the Project Director. The Project Director shall sign the activity reports certifying the level of effort of all personnel assigned to work on the project regardless of whether or not the individual is compensated from the grant funds or is providing services as a match/cost share. Levels of effort charged to the grant should be consistent with the proposed effort on the project.

#### **Cognizant Agency**

The Federal agency which, on behalf of all Federal agencies, is responsible for implementing the requirements of the Single Audit Act which include: reviewing, negotiating, and approving cost allocation plans, indirect cost rate and similar rates; receiving and approving non-federal audit reports; conducting federal audits as necessary; and resolving cross-cutting audit findings.

#### **Competing Applications**

Competing applications are applications that must undergo initial peer review. If an application renewal is noncompeting, its continuance is based on the completion of a progress report.

#### **CFDA Number**

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance is a listing of Federal programs, with each program assigned a number, for which various entities can apply for funding.

#### **Documenting Match or Cost Share**

Matching or cost-sharing contributions indicated on the approved budget must be

documented by GSU and reported to the funding agency on regular expenditure reports. Financial Services Accountant prepares these reports and the Project Director will be asked to certify that the identification of cost-sharing/matching is accurate. Contributions of in-kind goods or services must be documented in accordance with federal regulations and the Project Director is expected to certify to the accuracy of the reports prepared by the Accountant.

## **DUNS Number**

This is a nine-digit number that is uniquely assigned to a business entity by Dun & Bradstreet and often required in Federal grant applications. GSU's DUNS number is 069982130.

## **Appropriation**

A legislative provision that directs approved monies be spent on specific projects.

## **Facilities and Administrative Costs (F&A)/Indirect Costs**

These are costs that are incurred by a grantee for common or joint objectives that cannot be identified specifically with a particular project or program. Routinely included as part of the project budget, these costs are also known as "indirect costs" or an "indirect recovery rate."

## **Federal Wide Assurance Number (FWA)**

This number is associated with the form every institution conducting human subjects research must file with the Office for Human Research Protections—HHS to establish policies and procedures to protect human subjects as required by 45 CFR 46. Most Federal grants require this number to be referenced in the grant application. GSU's number is 00005375.

## **Funding Mechanisms**

- *Grants* are financial assistance mechanisms providing money, property, or both to an eligible entity to carry out an approved project or activity. A grant is used whenever the NIH Institute or Center anticipates no substantial programmatic involvement with the recipient during performance of the financially assisted activities.
- *Cooperative agreements* are support mechanisms used when there will be substantial Federal scientific or programmatic involvement. Substantial involvement means that, after award, scientific or program staff will assist, guide, coordinate, or participate in project activities.
- *Contracts* are award instruments establishing a binding legal relationship between a sponsor and a recipient obligating the latter to furnish a product or service defined in detail.

## **Funding Opportunity Announcement**

This is a description of the grant or cooperative agreement a Federal agency intends to fund through a competitive process. Funding opportunity announcements may be known as program announcements, requests for applications, notices of funding availability, solicitations, or other names depending on the agency and type of program.

## **Grant Types or Activity Codes**

Codes have been developed to classify the different types of grants sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. The general grant categories are fellowships (F), career development awards (K), research contracts (N), program project and research center grants (P), research project grants (R), research-related programs (S), training grants (T), cooperative agreements (U), and interagency agreements (Y).

## **Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

The committee formed within an institution to approve, monitor, and review biomedical and social/behavior research involving humans in order to ensure that the rights and welfare of the research subjects are protected.

## **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)**

The committee formed within an institution conducting animal research to approve, monitor, and review protocols and procedures to ensure their conformity to Federal law, established policies, and best practices.

## **Letter of Commitment**

A letter from an agency or organization that will be part of the project, if funded, that is included with the grant application and describes the resources the entity promises to commit to the project.

## **Letter of Support**

A letter from an agency or organization that will be part of the project or related to the project, if funded, that is included with the grant application and endorses the project, but promises no resources.

## **Matching or Cost Sharing**

The value of in-kind contributions and the portion of costs associated with a funded program not borne by the funding agency.

## **Notice of Award (NoA) or Notice of Grant Award (NGA)**

When a grant application is approved and funded, the Project Director/Project Manager/Program Director/Principal Investigator receives a NoA from the funding agency. The NoA obligates funding and specifies the terms and conditions. Only when the NoA is received, is the project authorized to move forward.

## **Principal Investigator/Program Director/Project Director**

These terms refer to the individual responsible for the proper conduct of the funded project. This individual is accountable to both the grantee institution and the funding agency.

## **Project Start and End Dates**

Expenditures for the project must occur in the current funding period. Invoices and other forms authorizing payment must reflect dates that fall within this period. The account must be cleared and closed out within the time specified in the award. A request for a “**no-cost extension**” of the project end date must be applied for before the end date of the award and approved by the granting agency.

## **Reporting Dates and Requirements**

Completion and timely submission of required reports are the final responsibility of the Project Director. Financial reports must indicate actual expenditures and not amounts estimated in the proposal budget (e.g. fringe benefits). The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research will assist the Project Director if needed. Financial Services will prepare the actual fiscal report and may submit it at the Project Director's request depending on the language of the award document.

## **Special Restrictions**

Equipment for GSU is any item costing over \$5,000 with a useful life of over one year. Items costing less than \$5,000 are considered minor equipment or materials/supplies. This policy is in line with federal determinations of equipment. Entertainment, food (except in very special circumstances and with prior approval), alcoholic beverages and gratuities are not allowable costs and cannot be charged to a grant.

## **Sponsored Programs and Projects**

Research, instruction, or service activities that are funded by an external party, conducted by university staff, about which there are certain expectations regarding outcomes and deliverables.

## **Sub-accounts (budget categories) Funded in the Approved Award budget**

Expenditures billed to the grant project should be in accordance with the budget approved by the awarding agency. Costs charged to the project should be identified by account categories within the assigned account. The Project Director should maintain adequate records identifying all expenditures. If a change is necessary in a line item - advance approval from the funding agency is required for significant deviations from the approved budget. 'Significant' may be defined differently by different agencies but is usually in the range of 10% to 20% of total award. Note: Using grant funds for expenditures not identified in the approved budget must be approved by the funding agency prior to expenditure. Some expenses may not be allowed (advertising, food

costs, etc) under the grant guidelines.

### **Sub-agreements/sub-recipients/subcontracts/subawards**

All restrictions and requirements contained within the original award flow down, in full, to all sub-recipients and must be referenced in all sub-agreements.

### **Unobligated Balance**

The portion of the funds authorized by the sponsor for expenditure by the recipient that has not been obligated by the recipient.



## **Appendix B: Sample Proposal Format**

The following is provided only as a general guide to the basic sections contained in a proposal. Always follow the directions contained in the grant application instructions.

### **Title Page**

This page generally includes the following information:

- Short title that gives a clear indication of the essential nature of the project;
- Name and address of the agency to which the proposal is being submitted;
- Name, title, address, and telephone number of the PI;
- Legal name and address of the University;
- Date of project duration (the starting date should be set no later than the date when the first formal commitment for equipment or personnel will be made);
- Total estimated cost of the project;
- Signature of the PI; and
- Signature and title of the University President or her designate. The President, or designee, is the sole authority for approving and accepting grants at GSU.

### **Abstract**

The abstract should be written in simple, straightforward language. It should include: 1) description of the university, 2) issue or problem to be addressed, 3) objectives to be achieved, 4) kinds of activities to be conducted (methods), and 4) the total cost of the project. Most abstracts for grant purposes run fewer than 350 words and are limited to one double-spaced typed page or less. The abstract may be the first part of your proposal to be read, so it should be well written to interest the reader.

### **Table of Contents**

A separate page showing the major sections of the proposal, with referenced page numbers, is sufficient in most instances. The proposal pages should be numbered sequentially with every page having a number. This protects against confusion if a proposal gets 'out-of-order' somewhere along the way. It is essential in hard copy submissions.

### **Introduction or Description of the University**

The introduction should be a statement containing information about the region, the university, your college, your department, and the student body. It should also include the broad objectives of the project, as well as background information leading into the body of the proposal. It should be no more than two paragraphs in length or more than ½ page of 8.5 x 11-inch paper.

### **Problem Statement or Project Description**

This section includes at least the following elements:

- a statement of the problem and objectives;

- a review of the literature and related research, in terms of need for the project;
- hypotheses to be tested or results expected;
- project design, methodology, and evaluation; and
- benefit of effort (increase in knowledge, new curriculum, etc.).

## **Facilities**

List such items as laboratory equipment and apparatus, laboratory space, field resources, library services, data processing capabilities, and other institutional services. Include an explanation of any equipment you propose to buy with grant funds. Include any university facilities to be utilized in conjunction with the proposed project. If appropriate, discuss handicapped access.

## **Personnel**

Vitae and bibliographic information for the principal investigator and other professionals are necessary in this section. Your vita should be SHORT. This means usually no more than two to three pages. Always put only what is relevant for the particular project you are working on at the moment and leave out everything else! Many agencies are getting very demanding about size of vitae and may allow only a paragraph for your professional information.

Describe the number and academic level of any graduate and undergraduate assistants, as well as secretarial and clerical personnel who will work on the project. Frequently a short description will be appropriate here with full vitae included only for key personnel in the appendix.

## **Project Period**

Describe the activities over the entire length of the project, from anticipated date of award through the final reporting period. Often the entire length of the project extends beyond the period for which initial funds are requested. Time lines, PERT charts, or other means of identifying the activity schedule are valuable in this section. Remember white space is good and helps the reader/reviewer to concentrate.

## **Research Plan/Evaluation Section**

This is an extremely important aspect of your project. This section will decide how you collect data; report your results, whether you have success or failure. Always remember that, in this section, you design the evaluation process and you set the standards for success. Be very careful to not set your standards too high so they are unattainable or so low that the results are meaningless. If you have difficulties in setting up valid evaluation plans reach out to other faculty who may be skilled in this area. A good evaluation can frequently make a project fundable while a poor evaluation plan may kill a very good project. It pays to pay attention to how the results will be gathered and reported.

## **Budget (Line Item)**

The budget must be a carefully considered, accurate estimated cost plan, which is second in importance only to the central project idea. To assure conformity with university and sponsoring agency policies, the budget should be reviewed by OSPR staff prior to finalizing the proposal. Be sure your budget numbers add up!

## **Budget Explanation (Budget Narrative)**

The narrative explains how the costs were estimated and the need for the costs. The budget narrative) explains the distribution of salaries and wages, nature of fringe benefits, prices of equipment, categories of travel expenditures, major supply items, and computation of indirect costs. OSPR will provide assistance in development and format for the budget and budget narrative if requested. Never make your reader guess about how you arrived at a particular amount.

## Appendix C: Sample Budget

Budget Sample					
<b>Personnel</b>					
<u>Key Personnel Name</u>	<u>Project Title</u>	<u>% of Time</u>	<u>Months</u>	<u>Total Salary</u>	<u>Grant Salary</u>
Jane Doe	Principal Investigator	10.0%	1.20		11,433
John Doe	Co- Investigator	5.00%	0.60		4,008
					<b>15,441</b>
<u>Personnel #</u>	<u>Other Personnel Project Title</u>	<u>% of Time</u>	<u>Months</u>	<u>Each Total Salary</u>	<u>Grant Salary</u>
1	Project Manager	50.0%	6.00	43,075.63	21,538
6	Junior Faculty Investigator	10.0%	7.20	8,204.00	49,224
0	Summer Research Fellows			2,500.00	-
1	Graduate Research Assistants	40.0%	4.80	9,000.00	9,000
					<b>79,762</b>
				<b>Total Personnel:</b>	<b>95,203</b>
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>					
Faculty Benefits				45%	29,099.25
Staff Benefits				58%	12,492
Graduate Assistants Benefits				2%	180
				<b>Total Fringe Benefits:</b>	<b>41,771</b>
<b>Travel</b>					
	<u>Trip Purpose, Objective and Location</u>	<u>Trip #</u>	<u>Personnel #</u>	<u>Cost per Trip</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
	Round trip for Faculty, GRA and Project Manager	12	10	46.00	5,520
	Mileage Reimbursement for Advisory Board	4	4	34.50	552
	Association Meetings/meet with Program Officer	0	8	2,500.00	-
				<b>Total Travel:</b>	<b>6,072</b>
<b>Other</b>					
	<u>Item:</u>		<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Cost per Unit</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
	Courses/ Workshops (registration & materials)				10,000
	Project Supplies				2,000
				<b>Total Other:</b>	<b>12,000</b>
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>					<b>155,046</b>
<b>Indirect Costs</b>					
			<u>Indirect Costs Base</u>	<u>Indirect Costs Rate</u>	<u>Total</u>
			136,973.99	54%	73,966
<b>Total Costs</b>					<b>229,012</b>

## ***Appendix D: Helpful Grant Writing Information***

- 1. GSU Legal Name:** GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY
- 2. Authorized Signatory Official:** Jennifer Morehead Farmer, Director
- 3. GSU Mail Address:** One University Parkway, University Park, IL 60484-0975
- 4. DUNS Number:** 069982130
- 5. Department of Human Resources Number:** IDHR# 126181-00 (valid from 05/03/2012 to 05/03/2017)
- 6. FWA Number:** A00005375
- 7. U.S. Congressional District:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Illinois, Robin Kelly
- 8. Illinois General Assembly Senate:** District 40, Senator Toi W. Hutchinson
- 9. Illinois House Voting District:** 80th, State Representative
- 10. Carnegie Status:** Master's L  
(For a complete description of all categories of classification for Governors State University, [click here](#) .)
- 11. Facilities and Administrative/Indirect Costs (F & A)**  
54% salaries and wages only including fringe benefits for on-campus projects.  
27.5% salaries and wages only including fringe benefits for off-campus projects.
- 12. Fringe Benefits:** percentage of "fringeable" salaries and wages  
Faculty: 45%  
Full-time staff: 58%  
Part-time staff: 8%  
Graduate students: 2%
- 13. Travel:** visit Procurement and Business Services website for up to date information

## ***Appendix E: Award Information Form Example***

**Project Director:**  
**Financial Services:**  
**OSPR:**  
**Other (Human Resources, etc.):**

---

**Date:**

**Project Title:**

**Project Director:**

**Grantee:**

**Funding Agency:**

**Award No.:**

**Agency Program Contact Name:**

Phone:                      Fax:                      E-Mail:

**Agency Financial Contact Name:**

Phone:                      Fax:                      E-Mail:

**Amount Funded (include multi-years):**

**Current Funding Period (mm/dd/yyyy to mm/dd/yyyy):**

**Number of Years:**

**Source of Funding:**      Federal \_\_\_\_\_      State \_\_\_\_\_      Private \_\_\_\_\_

**Budget** (attach the detailed project budget approved by the agency):

**Funding Method:**    Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_                      Advance Payment \_\_\_\_\_

**Report Due Dates:**

Financial Reports:

Final Progress Report:

Other reports:

**List Equipment to be Purchased: (description, use, cost)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**List Positions Paid from the Grant: (if any, HR must attend)**

Name/Title	Dates	Percent	Amount
1.			
2.			
3.			

**List Contribution/Match/Cost Share**

**PERSONNEL**

Name/Title	Dates	Percent	Amount
1.			
2.			
3.			

**OTHER (space, materials, etc.)**

Item Description	Source of Funding	Amount
1.		
2.		
3.		

**Note any special restrictions or conditions:**

**Project records are to be retained \_\_\_\_\_ years.**

**Restrictions on publicizing this award? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_**  
Describe here:

## **Appendix F: Responsibilities of the Principal Investigator Agreement**

### **The Principal Investigator\*, to the best of his/her ability**

- Is responsible for the programmatic management of the grant or contract and conducts the project to meet project goals and objectives while adhering to agency guidelines and GSU policies and procedures.
- Is responsible for financial management of the project. Financial Services shall assist with accounting procedures, maintain records, and provide up to date financial reports as required by the regulations of the university, the State of Illinois, the Federal Government and the awarding agency.
- Sign all agency forms/reports, which request the “Principal Investigator” signature.
- Insures that project expenditures are appropriate to the project and necessary to meet project goals and objectives by maintaining adequate oversight of expenses.
- Accepts the responsibility for meeting the match/cost share obligation committed in the budget approved by the agency and GSU and will document by certifying the time and effort of all paid and ‘match/cost share’ personnel as required by the award.
- Shall have no conflict of interest that may conceivably affect the conduct of the project. Any such possible conflict of interest must be reported to the Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research as soon as it is apparent.
- Shall administer this award within GSU policy directives for the protection of human research subjects, laboratory animal care and use, and the use of potentially hazardous materials as these policies may be relevant to the conduct of the project.
- Shall submit all reports required by the grant or contract on a timely basis. To delay reporting may endanger further funding from a given agency/organization.

This document has been read and is accepted as of (date) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Human Resources

\_\_\_\_\_  
Financial Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
OSPR

\*The Principal Investigator is the person identified on the cover sheet of the application for the grant funds.