

University of Nevada, Reno

Institutional Activity and Proposal Preparation Support Program for Research Faculty Supported 100% by Sponsored Funds

Introduction

At the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) we are committed to supporting the research endeavors of our faculty. A significant aspect of that support is to ensure that as an institution we are adhering to the compliance requirements of our sponsors. We are required to make certain that sponsors are appropriately charged for work that benefited the scope of work that was funded by the sponsor. Since salary and the associated fringe costs generally make up the bulk of a project budget, sponsors are increasingly concerned about the allocability of those charges. Due to our payroll structure faculty, staff and graduate assistants at UNR are required to confirm that the payroll transactions associated with their paychecks were appropriate in relation to the effort expended on the accounts charged at the end of a specific time period. Employees confirm that the payroll distribution (as dictated on the Payroll Action Form) reflected a reasonable estimate of their effort on all Institutional Activities in the Effort Reporting System.

As we have become more aware of the requirements for compliant Effort Reporting, we have identified that Research Faculty whose salaries are paid 100% from sponsored projects (extramural funding) may need institutional support depending upon the effort they expend on activities that would not be allocable to existing sponsored projects. This faculty group typically does not participate in a significant percentage of non-sponsored effort. However, if an employee in this group expends non-sponsored effort, then all of the non-sponsored activity must be moved off the sponsored account(s) via a cost transfer to another source of non-sponsored funds (e.g. state, foundation, and indirect cost recovery (F&A) funds that are intended to finance other institutional activities).

The Institutional Activity and Proposal Preparation Support Program has been created to address the occasion when a 100% research faculty member engages in non sponsored activity. This Program provides two sources of funds, one for institutional activities and the other for proposal preparation. These funds are set aside to enable research faculty to properly account for and report his/her non-sponsored activities. It is limited in its scope and should not be regarded as an infinite source of funds. **The limit of support available for any and all non-sponsored activity is 5% of the researcher's effort in any fiscal year unless approved by the Provost or Vice President for Research.** If it is determined that the non-sponsored activities exceed the limits of this Program, it is expected that the Researcher's department and college will re-evaluate the Researcher's work expectations to determine the mission and scope of the increase in non-sponsored activity. If the non-sponsored activity is determined to be appropriate then it is also expected that the department and/or college will provide the financial resources to pay for the activity.

Prior to starting any non-sponsored activity, the researcher must complete the Request for Institutional Activity and Proposal Preparation Support form and obtain all of the required signatures. **Failure to apply prospectively for support will result in the faculty member**

having to cover all of the costs for the non-sponsored activity from his/her own non-sponsored resources.

Funding for Institutional Activities Not Directly Related to Sponsored Projects

When determining if an Institutional Activity does benefit a sponsored account, a Researcher must first consult the Scope of Work and Budget Justification of the applicable projects to determine if the activities are allocable to the project, e.g., Human Resources requires supervisor training and the budget justification indicates that the Principal Investigator (PI) will be supervising employees, if the PI supervises employees solely because they work on the sponsored project, the training for the PI would be allocable to the sponsored project account. The following activities are more typical of those that would NOT be allocable to an existing sponsored project account:

- Serving on committees within the University
- Offering guest lectures or other instructional activities within the University that are not expected as a deliverable on a sponsored award
- Serving on graduate student committees for students not working on projects supported by the external funding of the faculty member
- Participating in University outreach activities that are not expected as a deliverable on a sponsored award
- Engaging in other University activities that cannot be directly charged to a sponsored project

Requests for Institutional Activity support must be approved by the Office of Provost prior to the commencement of the activity. The limit of the support available for any and all non-sponsored activity is 5% of the Researcher's effort in any fiscal year. If the total institutional effort exceeds the 5% limit, the remaining amount must be covered by the PI, department and/or college.

Funding for Proposal Preparation:

It is extremely rare that proposal preparation is an allocable expense to an existing sponsored account. Researchers who plan to prepare a proposal must submit a request and receive approval for Proposal Preparation support from the Office of the Vice President for Research *prior* to starting work on the proposal. The limit of this support is 5% of the total institutional activity of the researcher in any given fiscal year. If the total effort will exceed the limit, the PI, department, and/or college will be expected to cover the remaining amount. Funds are preferential for those proposals with the full F&A rate.