MANUAL FOR SPONSORED RESEARCH AND PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATION

**OFFICE OF SPONSORED RESEARCH AND PROGRAMS
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE**

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Background - The Office of Sponsored Research and Programs (OSRP) was established in 1992 by the President of UMES to serve as the compliance and administrative office responsible for oversight of sponsored (e.g., external) awards. Administrative responsibility is assigned to the Vice President for Administration. The purpose of the OSRP is to provide faculty, research associates, students and staff with assistance in the preparation and submission of proposals and in the administration of grant and contract awards. This action provides a single focal point for the University community and external agencies and organizations for all activities related to the acquisition and administration of sponsored activities with the exception of the 1890 Land Grant awards.

OSRP is responsible for identifying potential funding sources and communicating such information to the faculty, maintaining contacts with potential sponsors and arranging appointments with such sponsors as requested by the faculty, and helping with the development of proposals to potential sponsors. The OSRP is responsible for proposal processing, ensuring that proposals conform to all agency and organization's requirements, that the proposed financial arrangements are acceptable and consistent with UMES and University System of Maryland (USM) requirements, and that special commitments (e.g. in-kind and matching funds) have had prior internal review and approval. OSRP is responsible for grant and contract administration, functioning as the liaison between the funding organization, the faculty member, and other University offices.

The OSRP is the primary support organization for sponsored programs at the University. As such, it works with the Office of the President, Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Administrative Affairs and other appropriate offices to ensure that sponsored activities are carried out according to the University mission and the sponsoring organization's requirements, and the policies of the USM. All grants and contracts represent legal obligations of the University and as such must be signed on behalf of the University by the President.

The OSRP publishes procedures to ensure that expenditures are made within the regulations and policies of the University, the State of Maryland, USM and the Federal government or other funding source. In addition, the OSRP advises principal investigators (PIs) of any special regulations which may be imposed by the granting organization. Moreover, OSRP provides institutional oversight of grant and contract awards to ensure compliance with OMB circulars, FARS and other federal and state laws, regulations and policies that govern the expenditure of sponsored funds.

OSRP Services - The OSRP provides the following services:

- Identification of funding sources;
- Use electronic databases to identify private/corporate sector sources of support for university faculty, research associates, students and staff (e.g. IRIS);
- Identification of faculty interest using an Internet-based faculty research form;
- Delivery of grants workshops are held periodically. Faculty are encouraged to suggest topics and speakers;
- Consultation on proposal writing and editorial services;
- Coordination of animal welfare (IACUC), human subjects, biohazard, biosafety, recombinant DNA and other related committees;

- All pre-and post- award administration services from pre-proposal through award negotiation to extensions and close-outs;
- Annual reporting to UMES and USM;
- Collection of reimbursable costs; and,
- Coordination of Federal reporting requirements such as OMB A-21, A-110, A-133, Misconduct in Science, R&D efforts, IRB and IACUC compliance, and FARs.
- Security Clearance

The policy sections of the Manual for Sponsored Research and Programs Administration are based on University System of Maryland's university manuals practice for faculty and research associates and others seeking or administering grants/contracts. The contents include the policies and procedures that are to be followed from pre-proposal development through award to final close-out of grants and contracts. It is recommended that you acquaint yourself with the topics covered in this manual.

Internet Site for OSRP - Interested faculty, staff and students can receive additional information and support services from the OSRP homepage located at www.umes.edu/osp. This site contains access to electronic funding databases, reports, grant writing tips, forms, links to funding sources, and other materials designed to support sponsored research activity. This manual is available on the OSRP Website.

CONTACT INFORMATION

OSRP invites you to visit our offices located in the Early Childhood Building, Room 1129. The offices are open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday - Friday. For an appointment call 651-6107.

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Definition of Sponsored Programs - It is necessary to clearly understand the difference between "sponsored program" for "project" and a "gift" or "grant" provided by a donor. The term sponsored project relates only to research, service, or instruction projects that are conducted with support provided by some entity outside the University (e.g. National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Kellogg Foundation).

A sponsored project grant or contract is based on a commitment from the University to carry out a specified activity in keeping with terms and conditions agreed upon by both parties. The sponsored project may require some use of University resources and the sponsor generally receives some benefit as a result of making the award (e.g. reports, manuscripts, data, products and/or services). By contrast, a "gift" from a donor may carry a stipulation as to its use, but there can be no expectation of benefit to the donor; it is donative in its purpose. The differences are based on the purpose of the funds provided and the nature and purpose of the sponsoring or donating entity. The distinction is important for the following reasons: 1) difference in how funds are administered and

accounted for; 2) terms and conditions are generally different; and 3) the expected results are different.

Three relevant University policies approved by the Board of Regents are the Policy on Classified and Proprietary Work, the Policy on Conflict of Interest and the Policy on Misconduct in Scholarly Work. USM search engine for policies and procedures is found at http://www.usmd.edu/Leadership/BoardOfRegents/Bylaws/search.html.

LOCATING FUNDING SOURCES

"According to Susan Peterson, author of *The Grantwriter's Internet Companion,* published by Corwin Press, Inc. in 2001, foundations award an estimated $20 billion annually. Estimates of annual Federal awards may be as high as ten times that amount and growing. There are several strategies for locating potential funding sources (e.g., grant directories, newsletters, printed announcements). These resources are found in most libraries. While the information contained in these publications can be useful, it can also be out of date or incomplete.

The best strategy for finding funding sources is to use the Internet. All Federal agencies and most other funding sources (e.g., foundations, businesses, other private sector sources) are moving their method of interaction with the public to the Internet. The web pages of these organizations contain program announcements (grants) and requests for proposals (contracts), application forms, searchable indexes of awards, grant and contract administration guidelines, library databases, and other important resources and tools for the grantwriter.

Unfortunately, some funding sources have created elaborate and frequently difficult to navigate sites. To ensure that your time is well spent, you need to develop funding-specific searching skills.

Improving Search Skills - Locating funding sites can be frustrating. However, there are some tips that make finding the right funding source easier, or at least less complicated. You can develop better searching skills by using several of the following strategies.

- You should always enter the most important word first when conducting a keyword search.
- Use lower case to ensure that you capture all versions regardless of case.
- Truncate long URLs when a page fails to display.
- Use "+" and "-" signs to target the search.
- Use quotation marks for very specific searches.

An easy strategy is to use Google. For example, "grants for drug abuse prevention" or "grants for environmental science projects."

GrantsForward is a commercial database available from any computer connected to the UMES server. The database contains links to all federal, foundation, and business opportunities. It is updated daily. Access to GrantsForward is located at www.umes.edu/osp.

Several Internet sites provide guides and searching tools that make the most of your Internet searches. Refer to the **Information Sources on the Internet** section at the end of the chapter for additional resources (Bolek and Forsythe, 2003)".

Using the OSRP Website – Located at www.umes.edu/osp, this site provides access to the Foundation Center's researchable databases, the State of Maryland grants database, the Federal grant opportunities system, and IRIS, a commercial database for grant seekers. With the exception of IRIS, the systems are user-friendly. IRIS offers a number of services including an electronic notification system. A tutorial is available on line or from the staff of the OSRP.

Creating an Electronic "Grant in a Can." When you find a funding source, well you can get started by using some grant writers suggestions. "Use bookmarks, favorites or other archiving tools to create a folder called "GRANTS" and subfolders called "FUNDING," "WRITING," "RESUMES," "FORMS," "APPLICATION GUIDELINES," etc. As you conduct your searches, be sure to save sites that may be of importance to you as you begin to prepare an application. File the sites in your subfolders by topic (e.g., budget justification, evaluation).

When you begin the proposal writing process, save the URLs of references, citations, articles, etc. to a file named "PROPOSAL CONTENTS." Continue this practice and you will develop the critical elements needed to prepare a competitive proposal. Of course, use the same naming system for your word processing files. You can neatly integrate the information contained in the two types of files (e.g., Word "funding" and Explorer "funding") as you prepare your application. When you have completed the application process, create a grant file for each proposal. The "grants-in-a-can" approach assists you with subsequent proposal writing efforts. This strategy can reduce the amount of time you invest in your next grant writing effort (Bolek and Forsythe 2003)".

GRANT WRITING TIPS

"Phase I - One strategy for creating your proposal content is to download the application instructions and save them as a word processing file. For example, the funding source provides the following guidelines that you have downloaded from their site:

Phase II - In one sitting, use the "fill in the blank" approach maintaining the funding agency's headings. Even if you can only add a sentence or two in some sections, try to complete a rough draft in one session. Add questions, notes, names and phone numbers of persons you need to contact for letters of support, etc. Complete those sections that are the easiest for you and return to the more complex or demanding sections.

Example of a First Draft.

1. **Title**   Integrating IT into the Classroom
2. **Applicant Organization**   UYT University
3. **Address**   Anywhere, USA
4. **Contact Information**   Dr. A. B. Smith
5. **Abstract** (200 words)   Complete last

6. **Project**
    A. **Significance**   Closing the Digital Divide
    B. **Goal(s)**   Increasing the use of IT among minority youth in grades 7 - 9
    C. **Objectives**
    C.1 Introducing Internet
    C.2 Using E-mail
    C.3 Using PowerPoint Presentations
    C.4 Creating E-Portfolios
    D. **Approach** - A new course entitled "Using Information Technology in the Classroom" will be introduced into the curriculum starting with the Fall of 2002. Students will receive hands-on instruction in Internet basics, use of e-mail to communicate with teachers and fellow students, design of PowerPoint presentations to demonstrate learning, and the creation of E-portfolios. The course will be taught in a 30-seat computer lab (e.g., PC, printers, scanner and Internet connections). The course will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays for a 50-minute period. [Check ERIC for background support for the approach.]
    E. **Timeline**
    Receive Award   June 2002
    Purchase Equipment   July 2002
    Install and Test Equip   August 2002
    Create Lesson Plans   August 2002
    Initiate Classes   September 2002
    Evaluate Project   December 2002 and May 2003
    Evaluation – Pre- and Post-test Assessment (MANOVA), Process Evaluation (historical analysis), Satisfaction Survey (simple frequency).
    F. **Key Personnel and Management Plan -** The Project Director will be responsible for the project including:
    *   All program supervision.
    *   Coordinating the recruitment process with the participating middle schools. In collaboration, with the participating schools will design a recruitment plan including acceptance criteria and selection process.
    *   Selecting the faculty/teachers.
    *   Selecting the tutors.
    *   Arranging for classrooms, materials, books, equipment, etc.
    *   Collecting data for the evaluation.
    *   Preparing the report.
    *   Meeting with program staff and relevant others.
    The faculty/teachers will be responsible for developing lesson plans, test preparation, record keeping and other activities in support of each academic area. Tutors will work with each faculty/teacher to support the learning process for each student.
    G. **Sustainability -** [Check with University administrators regarding future state support.]
7. **Budget -** [Schedule appointment with Budget Director]
8. **Budget Justification**
9. **Appendices**
    A. **Letters of Support -** [Contact PTA, County Commissioners, Board of Education, etc.]
    B. **Resumes -** [Collect project personnel resumes and request updates, if needed.]

Phase III - Continue with the "fill in the blank exercise" until you have completed each section. Have someone carefully edit the proposal including checking the budget and resumes for possible errors.

Phase IV - Route the completed proposal to the OSRP for institutional sign-off (five business day process) and arrange for shipping the proposal to the funder (e.g., Federal Express) before the deadline.

PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Informal Inquiry – Principal Investigators (PIs) are urged to communicate with project officers and directors of sponsoring organizations at the very earliest stages of proposal preparation. The information that may be gained via an early dialogue with potential sponsors will prove useful in structuring the proposal. The OSRP can provide names, addresses and telephone numbers of sponsoring organizations in most cases. A well prepared short prospectus can present the important points of a proposed project. Submitting an informal proposal (pre-proposal) to sponsoring organizations can serve as a starting point for expressions of interest or further comment. An informal proposal does not require campus endorsement; therefore, it does not have to proceed through the formal review and approval procedure. It is suggested, however, that budgetary matters be discussed with your supervisor or with the OSRP in order to avoid confusion or misunderstanding at a later date. Informal proposals are not requested by Federal agencies when the submission is in response to a "Request for Proposals" since that is a competitive contract award process with strict guidelines and deadlines. However, many project officials can provide helpful comments and OSRP recommends the use of a pre-proposal when possible. Pre-proposals should address key elements of the proposed effort (e.g., significance of the proposed work, approach, analytical methods and budget.)

The Formal Proposal - The format and content of any proposal or application will necessarily vary with the requirements of the potential sponsor. An unsolicited grant proposal will differ significantly from a proposal submitted in response to a competitive contract bidding situation, while new, non-competitive continuations or continuation proposals will differ from each other.

Some sponsoring organizations provide instructions for proposals, others require the use of pre-printed forms, and some have prescribed rules. Applications or proposals submitted to some sponsors must meet deadlines while other sponsors will accept proposals at any time. Grant proposals may be submitted concurrently to several organizations; a statement of concurrent submission should be included in such cases stating the names of organizations to which the proposal was submitted. For most federal grants, this is a requirement. For applications to non-federal sponsors, it is recommended that each proposal have as little overlap as possible. Most areas of research are sufficiently specialized that reviewers tend to pick-up on applicants who are shopping for a funding source. This practice can result in negative consequences. The OSRP is available for consultation and editorial services.

PROPOSAL CONTENT[1]

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[1] The following content was adopted from the University of Maryland College Park's Principal Investigators Manual.

A proposal requesting support from any sponsor will most often consist of the following:

Title Page - Generally, the title page will contain the title of the proposed project, name and title of the principal investigator(s), name of the university, period of performance and starting dates and ending dates of the proposed project, total support requested, and name and address of university official responsible for negotiating an award. For those sponsors that do not provide application forms or have other specific requirements, the PI must construct some form of title page.

Table of Contents contains the major project elements (e.g., introduction, statement of the problem target population, approach, methods) with associated page numbers.

Abstract - A brief description covering the purpose, important features, and significance of the project.

Description of the Project - The detailed description of the project (e.g., project rationale, introduction, statement of the needs and problems, goals and objectives of the project, relation of the project to the state of knowledge, significance of the project, procedures, statement of approach, the means by which objectives will be met, sampling frame, problems that are anticipated, methods, how will the data be analyzed, management, organization of the project, project staff and their roles, project schedule, appendices, facilities.

Available facilities and special equipment that will be important to the project should be described. Any additional facilities and equipment to be acquired under the sponsored project, funded either by the University or the sponsor should be described in detail. The importance of these facilities or equipment to the success of the project should be clear.

Personnel - Generally biographical sketches including pertinent publications, 3-5 years professional experience, training, other relevant information of the principal investigator(s) and senior faculty and professional collaborators should be included. Many Federal grants limit the number of pages you can submit (PHS 38 revised limits the number of pages to 25). You may want to take time, early in the preparation process, to design the best biographical sketch, since significant weight is placed on the training and experience of the proposed personnel.

Budget - The budget serves to identify the cost of the project to the sponsor. The budget also serves as a measure of the PI's capabilities, since there must be a reasonable correlation between the project as described and the PI's assessment of the various cost elements. The budget generally contains a listing of the direct costs and the indirect costs. Direct costs are those that can be directly identified as benefiting the project such as salaries and fringe benefits, equipment, supplies, and travel. Indirect costs or overhead are those expenses that are incurred by the University through the cost of facilities and services for common or joint objectives such as general administration, physical plant maintenance and operation, and research administration expenses.

Direct costs may include some or all of the following:

Salaries - This includes all personnel, the percentage of time each will devote to the project (full-time equivalent), the rate of pay, and amount requested from the sponsor to support each person per year (or for the budget period). Faculty who are on a 9, 9.5 month or 10-month academic appointment may receive compensation based on a 12-month calendar year service period if appropriate. To calculation the salary, please contact the Office of Human Resources (x 6404) for the most recent formulae. *A faculty member on a 12-month appointment may not receive additional salary for summer research effort.* Other staff including technicians, secretarial, clerical and administrative staff, and other supporting personnel may be compensated for periods during which these services will benefit the project. Graduate and undergraduate research assistants may be assigned to research duties with the student's time divided between formal study and research. Tuition remission for graduate research assistants on sponsored projects is to be included as a fringe benefit calculation and requested from the sponsor. Amounts and rates for tuition and stipends for undergraduate students are handled by the Office of Human Resources. Note: *Sponsored program funds cannot be used to increase your institutional base pay.* For those PIs on less than 12 month appointments, approval for summer salaries must be obtained from appropriate university officials. *Sponsored programs funds cannot be used to pay for overloads unless there is an approved provision in the terms and conditions of the award and approved in advance by the appropriate university official.*

Fringe Benefits - These include the University's contributions to Social Security, retirement programs, health insurance, unemployment compensation, etc. Where applicable, tuition allowance should be added for permanent full-time employees and dependents, and graduate assistants. Graduate Research Assistants are entitled to full hospitalization benefits and tuition remission; other benefits, generally, do not apply. For undergraduate assistants (hourly workers), no employee benefits apply except during the summer. If the assistants are not attending summer school classes, then Social Security and unemployment compensation are applicable. Permanent part-time employees are entitled to all benefits if employed one-half time or more. Part-time employees who work less than one-half time, temporary personnel, and hourly employees are entitled only to Social Security and unemployment compensation. A table of applicable benefit rates is published and distributed by the Office of Human Resource (X 6404).

Permanent Equipment - Equipment must be itemized and justified. In addition, the PI must determine that the equipment requested is not already available within the University. The cost of equipment generally includes needed accessories, installation, delivery costs, and maintenance. In some cases, the sponsor may provide the equipment directly rather than provide acquisition funds, or short-term rental may be preferred. The equipment becomes the responsibility of the University and cannot be sold, traded or held by the PI. A Federal government report on capitalized non-expendable equipment is submitted to most agencies on an annual basis. PIs are required to maintain this listing and to provide copies to University officials as requested.

Consultants - Consultant fees may be paid only to experts outside the University who provide a unique contribution to the project. University System of Maryland faculty and State of Maryland employees are not eligible to receive compensation for internal consulting services on sponsored projects. Exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis. Federal agencies specifically prohibit the payment of consultant fees from Federally-supported projects to persons employed by the Federal government.

Supplies and Expendable Equipment - These items should be identified and justified. For example, chemicals, glassware, small electronic components, animals and animal rations, office supplies, unusually large quantities of paper supplies as in the preparation and distribution of questionnaires or other brochures and forms.

Travel - The need for PIs to consult with colleagues and disseminate new knowledge through the medium of scholarly meetings is an expected practice and an accepted cost in many projects. There must be a correlation between the project and the purpose of the meeting. Such costs may include transportation and per diem. Most sponsors restrict first class or business class tickets. If the project requires travel to various locations in order to perform the work, these costs should also be identified. An itinerary may be required if travel is a significant portion of the total cost. For example, travel to various localities for the purpose of data collection, sampling, or delivery of services or treatments.

Publication - This should include manuscript preparation, costs of reprints, and page charges to be incurred in publishing articles resulting from the project. The publication costs of a book or monograph are not generally allowed; special permission should be obtained from the sponsor.

Other Direct Costs - A number of other direct costs may have to be identified such as:
- Copying and duplication costs,
- Subcontracts with other entities which provide a substantial programmatic contribution to the project. Specific approval of the sponsor is required, thus the proposal must include documentation (i.e., work statement budget and institutional endorsement) by the subcontractor of the services to be performed, and their cost,
- Renovation of space that is necessary in order to carry out the project,
- Rental of space in those special cases where this is necessary,
- Maintenance of specialized equipment which is necessary to the project,
- Communication costs such as long distance telephone costs, fax and postage charges where large volumes of mailing are required,
- Special costs such as the purchase or lease of airplanes, boats, or other vehicles,
- Stipends for participants in special training programs are allowable when specified by the sponsor,
- Payments made to subjects participating in a study, and
- Laboratory fees for medical tests.

Indirect Costs - Indirect costs are expressed as a percentage of salary and fringe benefit of key personnel costs. The University calculates its indirect cost rates and negotiates these with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Audit Agency. *There is an off-campus (18.5%), an on-campus (55%) indirect cost rate and an IPA rate of (10%)*. These rates are applied depending on where the project is performed and the personnel are located. Projects partially performed off-campus for a period of at least three consecutive months may be apportioned between the two applicable rates. It is the position of the University that all proposals requesting support from any sponsor, either government or non-government, must include a request for full indirect cost recovery. However, some sponsors, particularly some foundations, have specific written policies that preclude the use of the University's full indirect cost rates. The rate or

administrative fee allowed by the sponsor may be used in these cases. PI's cannot negotiate alternative indirect rates. Exceptions to this rule may be necessary in a few instances; PIs should consult the OSRP for further information. Requests for use of indirect costs to support the direct costs of the project must be directed to the Vice President for Administrative Affairs for approval prior to the internal routing of the proposal.

Cost Sharing or Matching - In some cases sponsoring organization may require that the University make a contribution towards the total costs of a project. The amount of such contribution required may vary from less than 5% to 100% of the total project cost. The University's share of such costs may come from several sources: a. other support for the same project; i.e. from non-Federal sources if the project is to be Federally-funded; b. a portion of the faculty member's project time for which no support funds are being requested; c. a portion of the indirect costs may have to be contributed; special approval is required; d. contributed resources from the University. Cost-sharing should be included only where absolutely required by the Federal agency or sponsoring organization. It is never to be assumed to be a voluntary or gratuitous gesture. Cost-sharing imposes a substantial burden on the PI to provide supporting documentation to the Office of Sponsored Program and to Office of Administrative Affairs. Prior permission to commit university funds must be obtained for the University administration before the internal routing process is initiated.

Budget Check List - The following is a listing of possible costs chargeable to a sponsored project. It may be useful in avoiding costly omissions when preparing proposal budgets.

A. SALARIES

Faculty: academic year
Calendar year
Summer months
Other professional research staff
Technicians
Graduate research assistants
Technical assistants (avoid titles like secretary or clerk - pending Federal legislation may forbid the use of funds to support clerical positions.)
Hourly personnel
Adjust for salary increases for budgets that are for more than one year or that cross University fiscal years, generally 3% per year increase.

B.   FRINGE BENEFITS may differ from one employee to another. The Office of Human Resources can provide this information.

C. EQUIPMENT

Non-expendable equipment (computer, furniture)
Accessories
Freight
Installation

D. CONSULTANTS

      Fees/honorarium
      Travel/per diem/local transportation

E. SUPPLIES AND EXPENDABLE EQUIPMENT
      Questionnaire forms
      Animals and animal maintenance supplies
      Chemicals
      Glassware
      Electronic Components
      Brochures and Announcements
      Audio & Video Tapes
      Film and Film processing supplies
      Office supplies

F. TRAVEL
      Domestic and Foreign
      Field Work
      Conferences
      Subsistence costs
      Transportation

G. COMPUTER/accessories

H. PUBLICATION costs

I. SUB-CONTRACTS including subcontractors indirect costs or fees

J. OTHER DIRECT COSTS
      Space Rental
      Equipment Rental
      Alterations and Renovations
      Human Subjects or Informant Fees
      Service Contracts (such as equipment maintenance, or photographic services)
      Duplication Costs
      Communications
      Animal Care
      Stipends for Participants
      Vehicle lease or purchase

K. INDIRECT COSTS

On-Campus	55%	of Salary, Wages and Fringes Benefits
Off-Campus	18.5%	of Salary, Wages and Fringe Benefits
IPA rate	10%	of Salary, Wages and Fringe Benefits

H. COST SHARING/ MATCHING

NOTE: PIs should contact their supervisors prior to initiating the proposal writing process to determine what costs must be shared or matched and the availability of the University to assume these costs.

Where required, OSRP staff can provide assistance with budget preparation and completion of forms.

Number of Copies - Most sponsors require a specific number of copies of the proposal to be submitted along with one or more signature copies. Typical requirements of some major federal agencies for new project proposals are listed below. University printing can assist in the duplication, binding and other copying services.

Deadlines - Planning is a critical element in the grant application process. Many sponsoring agencies have specific deadlines for proposal submission. This information is available directly from the sponsor. Note that all Requests for Proposals (RFP) have strict deadlines that cannot be modified; this information is always in the RFP application package obtainable from the issuing agency.

Classified Research and Restrictions of Publication - The University does not enter into agreements to carry out research if the grant, contract or other award instrument restrains the freedom of the University and its faculty to disclose the existence of the grant or contract, the general nature of the inquiry to be conducted, and the identify of the sponsor. The University reserves for its faculty the right to publish the results of the research without the prior approval of the sponsor.

Avoiding Common Problems and Fatal Flaws in the Application Process
- General Problems
    - Failure to address the mission of funding source.
    - Black box submission with no prior knowledge of the funding sources priorities, eligibility criteria, and requirements.
    - Responding to the general mission of a funding source and not to a specific Program Announcement (grant), cooperative agreement, or request for proposal (contract).
    - Failing to meet the submission deadline (if the funding agency says 3:00 PM on Tuesday, they don't mean 3:01 PM).
    - Failed to follow directions in the published programs announcement or request for proposal.
    - Spelling and grammar errors.
    - Sloppy presentation.
    - Excuses.
    - Assumptions.
    - Jargon.

- Problems with Forms and Instructions
    - Face page
    - No original signature page.

- o Insufficient number of copies.
- o Unacceptable font size.
- o Incomplete entries.
- o Mistakes.

- Abstract Page
  - o Lacking in sufficient detail.
  - o Unclear language.
  - o Content does not relate to proposed work.

- Budget
  - o Arithmetic errors.
  - o No justification.
  - o No clear role for personnel or consultant(s).
  - o Request for equipment in the final year.
  - o Budget exceeds allowable amount.
  - o Budget was insufficient or excessive.
  - o Incomplete forms.

- Personnel (Bibliographic Sketch)
  - o No prior experience.
  - o Unrelated training.
  - o Poorly presented material.
  - o Unrelated material.
  - o Resume not updated since 1978 .
  - o Poor publication record.
  - o Everyone has better training and experience than the PI.
  - o Missing biographic sketches.

- Problems in the Body of the Proposal
  - o Background
  - o No pilot work.
  - o No basis for proposed work.
  - o Uncritical acceptance of referenced literature.
  - o Poor or elderly literature review.
  - o Reliance on non-peer reviewed work.
  - o Citation problems.
  - o Failing to reference critical work of peer reviewers.

- Significance
  - o Failure to discuss applied or theoretical significance of the problem.
  - o Failure to discuss potential contribution to your field of study.
  - o Failure to convince the committee that your approach to the problem was robust.

- Rationale
  - o Failure to support the proposed effort from the literature.

- o Lack of clarity.
- o Failure to convince the committee of the originality of the proposed work.

- Approach
  - o Objectives unclear.
  - o Design is unclear (e.g., why did you select a quasi-experimental design?).
  - o Goals and measurable objectives do not relate to each other.
  - o Failure to determine sample size.
  - o Inadequate recruitment and retention plan (e.g., attrition, replacement).
  - o Failure to discuss alternative approaches.
  - o Inadequate discussion of threats to validity and reliability.
  - o Development of potentially untestable models.

- IRB Issues

  - o Resources and Environment
  - o Resources not related to proposed work.
  - o Resources in a location not discussed in the proposal.
  - o Old equipment.

- Human Subjects
  - o Inclusion criteria faulty.
  - o Risks not adequately addressed.
  - o Missing or inadequate informed consent statements/forms.
  - o No IRB approval.

- Animal Use and Care
  - o No IRB approval.
  - o Risk not addressed adequately.
  - o Non-animal model available.
  - o Problems with rare or endangered species.

- Biohazard, Biosafety, Recombinant DNA
  - o Failure to provide assurances.

- Resumes
  - o Failure to update content.
  - o Failure to demonstrate directly related training and experience.

PROCESSING THE PROPOSAL

Overview
An application requesting support from a sponsoring organization represents an agreement by UMES, acting as an agent of the State of Maryland, to assume financial and project responsibility for any subsequent award. It is necessary, therefore, that any such proposal have the endorsement

of those responsible for carrying out the project, as well as those authorized to commit the University to a legal offer. For proposals, these include the President and occasionally the PI, Comptroller and/or Director, OSRP. UMES has established a formal routing process in order to ensure that proposals or applications for sponsored research or training have been reviewed and endorsed by the various responsible persons and that there is compliance with both sponsor, University, and State policies. All proposals for external support of training, research, or service projects must be submitted to the OSRP for review and processing.

Internal Review
The people or offices involved in the internal review and processing are as follows:

Principal Investigator *is responsible for the budget, technical content, quality and preparation of the proposal, integrity of the content, submission to supervision and copying and delivery/mailing of application.*

Department Chairperson is responsible for certifying to the academic soundness of the project, the compatibility of the project with the PI's other commitments, the availability of space and facilities, cost-sharing commitments, assuring that the project is in keeping with department objectives, and concurring that the proposal should be submitted to the agency named. The Office of Sponsored Research and Programs is responsible for ensuring that there is compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and with University administrative rules. Concurrently, problems of institutional financing, cost sharing, prior acceptance of contractual terms and budget matters may be resolved here. OSRP is also responsible for internal reviews (human subject, animal welfare, biosaftey, recombinant DNA).

The **Offices of the Vice President (i.e., Academic Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Student Affairs, Information Technology based on organizational placement of the PI)** are responsible for ensuring that the content meets with acceptable rules and standards of the University. Academic policy issues that may arise are resolved here. In some unusual instances, a proposal may be presented to the Board of Regents. The Office of the Vice President for Administrative Affairs is responsible for ensuring that all fiscal elements meet the regulations and standards of the University.

The routing form is available on line at www.umes.edu/osp or from the OSRP.

IRB, IACUC AND OTHER COMPLIANCE COMMITTEES

Review of grant and contract proposals may require internal review. Contact information:

Human Subjects	Dr. Clayton Faubion	X6379
Animal Welfare	Dr. Douglas Ruby	X6029
Hazardous Material	Mr. Preston Cottman	X6652
Recombinant DNA	Mrs. Catherine Bolek	X6714

SIGN-OFF AND APPROVAL PROCEDURE

Planning is a critical element in the application process. The University has developed a formal *five business day* routing and approval process for the submission of grants and contract applications. Routing and Approval Forms can be obtained from the OSRP or from department heads. The form must be signed by the PI. This signature is the PI's assurance to the University that the application reflects his or her own scholarship and that the statements contained in the application including appendices are correct and accurate. The department or office director must sign the form. This signature is the assurance that the purpose of the application fits within the mission of the department or office and is an appropriate and approved activity. The OSRP, likewise, reviews the application and determines if all State and Federal requirements have been addressed, reviews the budget to determine if all University regulations have been addressed and forwards the application to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs reviews the application to determine if the contents address the mission of the University and that the necessary facilities and resources are available. Next, the Vice President for Administrative Affairs reviews the application to determine if all fiscal matters are in compliance and forwards the application to the President, the University "official". The PI should plan well in advance of the submission date to initiate the sign-off process. Only completed applications will be routed for sign-off. The process requires that five business days be allowed for completion of this process. The PI is responsible for obtaining the department or office director's signature and hand-carrying the application to the OSRP. The OSRP will complete the process and return the approved application to the PI for copying and shipping/delivery.

Copies of approved applications must be submitted to the PI's immediate supervisor and to the OSRP. When an application fails to obtain approval, OSRP will work with the PI to address deficiencies and to prepare an amended application for approval. Should a PI wait until the last minute to seek approval, there may be insufficient time to allow for the development of an amended application.

OSRP recommends that PIs develop a schedule which will allow sufficient time to complete all phases in the application process. This can be accomplished through contact with prospective sponsoring organizations. These sponsors can, in general, advise you of potential grant and contract opportunities well in advance of the official publication date. Other organizations, such as NIH, have several application deadlines per year.

ETHICS, MISCONDUCT IN SCIENCE AND COMPLIANCE

PIs are responsible for the ethical conduct of research including the training and supervision of students involved in research. The University and the USM are committed to ensuring the integrity of research conducted by University faculty and staff. Faculty involved in research involving human, animals, the use of hazardous material or involving Recombinant DNA must adhere to University policies and guidelines. Refer to the Faculty Handbook for additional information and to the section on Institutional Review Boards.

Federal Regulations and Compliance

A-21 Cost Principles for Educational Institutions

The OMB Circular A-21 establishes principles for determining costs applicable to grants, contracts and other agreements with educational institutions. The principles deal with the subject of cost determination. The principles are designed to provide that the Federal Government bears its fair share of total costs, determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, except where restricted or prohibited by law.

- **Supplant** - Federal grant funds may not be used to supplant state funds – OMB Circular A-21. For example, federal grant funds cannot be used to pay departmental bills unless specifically stated as part of the statement of work and included in the approved award.

- **Institutional Base Pay** – Federal grant funds cannot be used to increase institutional base pay. – OMB Circular A-21.

A-110 –Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and other Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Non-profit Organizations.

The purpose of this circular is to set standards for obtaining consistency and uniformity among Federal agencies in the administration of grants to and agreements with universities.

A-133 Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations

This circular sets standards for the audit of universities expending Federal awards.

In addition to the OMB Circular, the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FARs), governs how UMES administers contract awards.

The FAR is the primary regulation for use by all federal agencies in their acquisition of supplies and services with appropriated funds (i.e. contracts).

Federal regulations govern the administration of awards including the following in order of precedence:

- Award Terms and Conditions
- Special Conditions
- Program Rules
- Agency Rules
- OMB Circulars

State of Maryland and University System of Maryland has established policies.
- Administrative Affairs Manual
- Faculty Handbook (Section VII, Resources for Research pp. 188-231)
- State and USM Audit Policies
- Independent Audit Policies

COMPENSATION FROM AWARDS

Exempt twelve month employees cannot increase their institutional base pay using grant or contract funds. Nine month employees cannot increase their institutional base pay during the academic year. Nine month faculty can receive summer salary at a rate consistent with their nine month salary. Refer to the Faculty Handbook for additional information.

ACCEPTANCE OF AN AWARD

An award to the University from a sponsoring organization serves as a legal document which obligates the University to a financial and/or contractual commitment. An award may be in the form of a letter issued by an authorized agent of the sponsoring organization or it may consist of a complete contractual document. In other cases acceptance by the University and subsequently by the sponsoring organization is required before the award is in force. In other cases, no formal acceptance is required.

The OSRP will consult with a PI if the award differs from the submitted proposal, so that the award may be accepted, modified, or rejected. No charges may be incurred against a sponsored project until such time as the OSRP has received and processed an original award notification from the sponsor, and an account number has been issued to the PI On some occasions, receipt of the actual award documents authorizing expenditures for a project may be delayed. If a delay will seriously impede the course of the project, it is possible to obtain permission to initiate expenditures for a short time in advance of actual receipt by the University of an award document. PI's should contact their department chairman and OSRP to discuss options.

In some cases, an award may be issued by the organization after a series of negotiations which may involve revisions to the scope of the project and/or to the proposed budget. The OSRP will assist the PI and the University's authorized agent to negotiate any required revisions. Faculty researchers are reminded that the acceptance of a revised scope of work or budget is a judgment that only they can make; it is not a judgment or condition that may be unilaterally imposed by the granting organization. If the organization requires the submission of a revised work plan or budget, this must be prepared by the PI and submitted to the OSRP for institutional endorsement and for forwarding to the sponsoring organization. Upon receipt of an official award, the PI will receive a summary statement which contains the account number and any special terms and conditions of award.

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

Upon acceptance of an award, *the PI assumes primary responsibility for the technical conduct and management of the project to assure that contractual conditions are met and to make certain that the program stays within its budget.*

The PI, the department chairperson, and Vice Presidents are expected to exercise responsible judgment in the administration of the project, particularly with regard to the terms of the agreement and University policies. In particular, financial liabilities which result from failure to comply with the grant or contract become the responsibility of the PI, department chairman and University.

RECORDS

A separate account is established for each project. Each account will bear a unique Financial Accounting System (FAS) number assigned by the Office of the Comptroller through the OSRP. This information is sent to the PI, department chairperson, and other administrative personnel through the Summary Statement. The issuance of the account number for the project is a form of credit line against which the PI may charge obligations and expenditures. In reality, sponsoring organizations most often do not pay the University until expenditures are incurred and invoices are submitted to the organization by the Comptroller's Office. Once the account has been established, the PI will receive monthly financial statements showing the status of the account. *The PI is expected to keep internal records of time charged to the project, requests for equipment and supplies, travel and other costs, particularly those budgetary lines which may not be exceeded without special approval. PIs should contact OSRP if any discrepancies appear on the monthly statement.* PIs can access the electronic financial system with permission of the Comptroller. It is highly recommended, that PIs review their accounts at least monthly and report problems to the OSRP as soon as possible. In addition, PIs will be asked to comply with Federal Requirements (e.g. OMB A-21) regarding the reporting of level of effort by project personnel and annual equipment inventories.

BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

Reallocations within awarded budgets are usually possible, but the sponsoring organizations have different restrictions on deviations from the approved budget and *many require prior written approval*. PIs uncertain of the budgetary restrictions imposed by any particular sponsor should consult OSRP.

CHARGES TO THE PROJECT

The PI is responsible for assuring that all approved expenses in support of a project are properly charged. *Charging departmental budgets for sponsored projects is normally not appropriate.* Prompt and accurate reporting to the OSRP will preclude costly department labor needed to effect cost-transfers to rectify errors.

PERSONNEL

Personnel assigned to sponsored projects, like all other personnel, must be appointed and compensated in keeping with State and University personnel rules. Classified staff matters are covered by the Office of Human Resources. Faculty and associate staff policies are covered in the Faculty Handbook; questions may be addressed to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Government regulations (OMB A-21) require that the University maintain records that will substantiate the effort of each individual charged to a sponsored project. Therefore, time records must be carefully maintained. For faculty, associate and classified staff, and graduate assistants effort is recorded on the Personnel Activity Survey form distributed to each PI three times a year by OSRP. Since the majority of costs associated with sponsored projects are attributable to labor charges, it is incumbent upon the University to assure that these records are properly maintained.

TRAVEL

University travel regulations govern travel performed with project funds. In some instances a particular contract or grant may specify travel regulations different from the University policy and these take precedence. Approval for domestic travel outside the State is secured through the Out-of-State Travel Request. Forms are available in department chairs and director's offices or from the Vice President for Administrative Affairs. Where international travel is to be charged to a sponsored project, this request must be approved by the OSRP, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Vice President for Administrative Affairs. Approval will be granted if there is a record of concurrence from the sponsor for the specific international travel requested. PI's should note that most federal agencies have restrictive regulations concerning international travel. In many cases, even though the awarded proposal may have included a line for international travel, such travel must be specifically approved in writing by the organization at the time the travel is actually to take place. Requests for reimbursement of travel expenses will not be honored in excess of the dollar amounts allowed by University policy.

CONSULTANTS

In some cases, a sponsored project may require the use of one or more consultants. Care should be taken that this is an approved expense for the particular project. The PI must comply with University and Federal requirements which apply to the hiring of all consultants.

Employees of the University may not receive compensation for consulting with their colleagues within the University. Consultation with other institutes with the USM must be approved in writing by the President of UMES and an official representative of the originating institution. Refer to the Faculty Handbook for additional information.

EQUIPMENT

The sponsoring organization's award may include provision for the acquisition of special-purpose equipment. The equipment in some cases may be supplied directly by the sponsoring organization, in which case, title to the equipment generally remains with the organization and it must be returned at the completion of the project. In the majority of cases, the approved equipment is purchased through the University. *The PI has the responsibility for (a) assuring that the equipment is not already available within the University,* (b) determining the proper specifications and issuing the requisition for the equipment, and (c) assuring proper receipt, inventory identification, and functioning of the equipment prior to authorizing vendor payments by the University. It should be noted that any equipment that is to be purchased which has not been specifically approved in the award notification often requires authorization in writing by a sponsoring organization official. Such requests by PIs, stating the need for the equipment and the source of funds (additional funds or budget reallocation), must be submitted to the OSRP for institutional endorsement.

CHANGE OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Circumstances may on occasion warrant the designation of a new temporary or permanent PI. A sponsor must be advised and permission obtained before a new principal investigator may be designated. If the PI leaves the University and it necessary to nominate someone, such requests must bear the signed endorsement of the department chairperson and the appropriate Vice President and President. If the request is made by the department chairperson, it must be endorsed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. If the PI is a Vice President, the request should bear the endorsement of the next higher authority.

A request to a sponsoring organization for designation of a new PI will normally state the reasons for such change and will include curriculum vita of the PI-designate. Such requests must be submitted to the OSRP for institutional endorsement, before forwarding to the sponsor.

TRANSFER OF CONTRACT OR GRANT

To Another Institution: A PI who is transferring to another institution may wish to continue his or her sponsored research projects there. Steps may be initiated to transfer the grant or contract only upon concurrence of the department chairperson and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Permission must be obtained from the sponsoring organization for such transfers (transfers are by no means automatically granted by all sponsors); arrangements must proceed through the OSRP. There may be instances in which the University may elect to retain a project and nominate an alternate principal investigator; this also requires agency approval.

From Another Institution: A faculty member coming from another institution may have a sponsored project he or she wishes to transfer to UMES. Such transfer requires the home institution's approval in addition to the approval of the sponsoring organization. A new proposal (or the revised original) with new budgetary information must then be processed at UMES through the normal routing and approval cycle, prior to submission to the sponsoring agency.

PROGRAM INCOME

Income derived from services or goods that form part of a project supported in whole or in part by a sponsoring organization must be reported to the organization, with few exceptions. Such income should be deposited to an appropriate account. Any PI expected to recover income through a sponsored project should discuss this with the Vice President for Administrative Affairs.

COMPUTER EQUIPMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The acquisition of computer equipment and peripherals generally requires prior approval of sponsoring organizations whether government or non-government. The Office of Information Technology serves as the central university facility that provides services and computer time for faculty and students. The need for such services should be discussed with the OTI staff to ensure that the university has the ability to provide essential services. For additional information contact the Help Desk.

NOTE: Computer purchases must be in compliance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) policies. For example, if the university supplies computers as a general practice,

purchasing a computer may not be allowed under OMB regulations even if the item appears in the approved budget. Please check with OSRP prior to making the purchase request.

INVENTIONS AND PATENTS

The University of Maryland Policy Intellectual Property defines the rights and responsibilities of any inventor who is a member of the University. The Policy is intended to safeguard the interests of the inventors, the University, and the public. All inventions must be disclosed to the University. This must be done through an invention disclosure submitted to the Office of Outreach and Commercialization. This office also obtains all required sponsored project invention reports from faculty researchers.

Except in cases of statutory or other legal restrictions the University does not waive its rights to inventions arising from projects performed under its auspices. The University will make every effort to have inventions evaluated, patented, and licensed, so that the results of research can benefit the public. These efforts are carried out through the OTL. PIs should contact OSRP for instructions and assistance. Contact Dr. Ladd Colston for additional information at X8448 or refer to the Faculty Handbook for additional information.

COPYRIGHT

The University Copyright Policy defines and preserves the interest of faculty authors and of the University. The policy is administered by the University; questions may be addressed to the Associate Vice President for Outreach and Commercialization, Dr. Ladd Colston, X 8448.

REPORTING

With few exceptions, every sponsored project will require a number of reports during the life of the project and most certainly at its conclusion. Every PI should be prepared to submit a final technical report. The importance of the submission of such a report on a timely basis cannot be overstated. In a grant or contract arrangement, unlike a gift, the sponsor expects and deserves to be informed of results. Negligence by the PI may substantially impact his or her (and the University's) ability to receive other support from the sponsor; it could also result in a loss of payments to the University for costs already incurred. Such losses could become a liability chargeable to the department and University.

In addition to the technical report(s), other reports may be required relating to inventions (OTL), equipment accountability (physical facilities), fiscal data (Office of the Comptroller), and voucher submissions (Office of the Comptroller).

ACCOUNTING

Primary responsibility for technical and fiscal management of any project begins with the PI. The OSRP is responsible for collection and reporting of revenues associated with grants and contracts with the exception of 1890 Land Grants. The Office of the Comptroller is the entity responsible for recording and facilitating all financial matters relating to expenditures and revenues. The

Comptroller's Office will make no adjustments such as encumbrances, expenditures, or cost transfers without initiation of such adjustments from the PI or his or her designee. In order to transfer incorrect charges from one account to another, the proper form must be filled out, authorized and submitted through the OSRP to the Comptroller's Office.

AUDIT

Financial and other sponsored project records are regularly audited. Such records are maintained primarily by the OSRP and the Comptroller's Office. In addition each department is expected to maintain records at the local level, such as those recording and justifying charges to sponsored accounts for personnel appointments, salaries, payroll documents, purchase requisitions and orders, and other primary documents.

Records at the Comptroller's Office and the OSRP are audited regularly by Federal, State, and other external auditors and by the University's internal auditing staff. No external auditors may examine records or interview staff within any University department or unit without first presenting a letter of authorization to the department chairperson.

The letter of authorization will be issued by the UMES Comptroller, if deemed appropriate and departments will be given advance notice of such audit visits by the Comptroller. The details of this procedure appear in the UMES Administrative Procedures and Policies Manual, "Contracts with Auditors External to the Campus."

These procedures are designed to protect campus departments from audit "fishing expeditions," and from unnecessary and unauthorized audit reviews.

Other Contact Information

Human Resources
To obtain information on personnel issues including hiring policies and fringe benefits, contact Ms. Marie Billie, X6097.

Purchasing
To obtain information on purchasing of equipment, services, etc, contact Ms. Jacqueline Collins, X 6407.

Comptroller
To obtain information on financial reporting, not available through the OSRP, contact Ms. Benita Byrd, X6088.

References:

Bolek, C.S., and Forsythe R.G., Writing Winning Distance Education Teaching and Learning Grants, Best Practices in Online Learning in Electronic Communities - Issues and Practices, Information Age Publishing, April 2003.