

Arts & Science Research Administration Update

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Helpful hints and reminders:

When collaborating with a PI in the **Medical School**, please remember to provide your annualized salary as the base for budgeting your effort.

Example: If your 9-month salary is \$72,000, divide by 9 and multiply by 12 to annualize it to \$96,000 before multiplying by your % of annual effort on the project.

Just a reminder... In offering our support to more departments and programs we may seem less accessible, however we will continue to do our very best to meet your needs.

Our relationship with OSP has also grown over the past year and a half as we work in groups to enhance grant administration on campus. One tangible result of our shared commitment is the creation of the "P.I. Handbook for Sponsored Research" residing on OSP's Website:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~osp/resources/handbook/>

Although written with the inexperienced PI in mind, it is worthy of a quick read, especially since the Appendix is a great resource for quick links to policies and forms.

Another direct result of the OSP working groups worth noting is the website redesign and restructuring of the information layout. Please take a look. We would love to receive comments and suggestions regarding both.

Safe and Happy Holidays,

-Your Research Grant Managers

More than just a Title and Abstract:

It is important to choose the title of your proposal carefully. A well chosen title can direct your grant application to the correct review panel, versus a general title that may direct your application to a general area with fewer funding dollars and a higher volume of competition. Project titles should be clever but not cutesy," say New and Quick in their book, *The GrantSeeker's Toolkit*. "A project title with a clever twist or sound or acronym is easily remembered by a reader," they disclose.

It is equally important to write a clear and defined abstract. The abstract is like a window into your project for the review panel. The following questions should be addressed, including details on research data and methods:

1. What do you intend to do?
2. Why is the work important?
3. What has already been done?
4. How are you going to do the work?

Avoid the quick and simple method of pasting the first one or two paragraphs of your introduction into the abstract section of your application. The first paragraphs usually do not explain the whole project and address only the first two key questions listed above.

Another key reason for choosing your title and abstract carefully: Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) materials produced by universities are subject to FOIA requests. Once an award is made the title and abstract become public information along with the grantee organization and principal investigator. A clear, accurate title and abstract may prevent future questions created by a misinterpreted view of your research by the public, and questions regarding the appropriate use of government funding.

Your title and abstract are the first representation of your proposal and can aid or hinder your application for funding. For more tips on creating your next application visit:

http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/tools_resources/how_to_guides/how_to_get_funding

-Career Development Center for Postdocs and Junior Faculty

POLICY REMINDER:

OSP would like to remind applicants for sponsored projects that department chairs for all personnel listed on a grant application, with 5% or greater effort, must sign the application's Proposal Routing Form. For example, if an application includes personnel from several departments, all department chairs must sign the associated routing form PRIOR to OSP's review of the application.

Changes in NIH submissions and review procedure

As required by the Federal Government, NIH has made plans to transition to the electronic submission of proposals through Grants.gov, using the SF424 application form.

Proposals requiring electronic submission and the SF424 application form:

- December 15, 2005 – Support for Conferences & Scientific Meetings (R13 & U13)
- June 1, 2006 – Small Grant Programs (R03) & Exploratory/Development Research Grants (R21)
- October 1, 2006 – Research Project Grant Program (R01)

Additionally, NIH continues towards its goal of a paperless grants process through the elimination of the following notifications which are currently sent in hard copy:

- Summary Statements
- Peer Review Outcome Letters

Instead, investigators are instructed to use the eRA Commons: <<http://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/>>

NOTE: Some PI's are already finding their scores on the commons sooner than by mail.

Action Item for Investigators – If you don't already have a Commons user name, contact Heather Arnold of OSP and she will set you up.

More detailed information is available in NIH NOT-OD-05-075 and NOT-OD-05-067, and on the Dartmouth OSP website: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~osp/>

BUDGET JUSTIFICATIONS: Helpful suggestions from

<http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/extra/extdocs/gntapp.htm#12>

- * Be realistic. Both "padding" and deliberately under budgeting reflect naiveté, which will be recognized by reviewers.
- * Provide brief descriptions of duties for all positions listed in the budget, with the percentage of effort requested each year and any anticipated fluctuations. Special skills or accomplishments of a designated person may be included if not discussed elsewhere.
- * Try to identify specific individuals for each position requested. "To be named" personnel are very often deleted by reviewers.
- * Justify all equipment purchases. The proposed acquisition of major pieces of equipment is likely to be scrutinized.
- * Break out supply costs into major categories (reagents, disposables, etc.). Provide special justification for any unusual expenses requested.
- * Explain any year-to-year fluctuations in the budget, including the level of effort of personnel, especially if they can not be attributed to routine salary increases. Changes should parallel the research plan and project aims.
- * Be complete but concise. This section has no page limits.

When to use a different Indirect cost rate:

Dartmouth's current on-campus Indirect Cost rate is 59.9%. However, there are times when special rates are used. You should always refer to your program announcement or foundation or corporation guidelines with regards to Indirects. If a special indirect rate or no indirects are allowed by the sponsor, this needs to be noted on the Proposal Routing Form. If a lower indirect rate is requested but not mandatory, it will need to be approved.

The **Off Campus** rate of 26% applies only to activities of significant duration performed in facilities not owned by the College and to which rent is directly allocated. For example, the off campus rate would apply to costs that may occur on an extended field trip, such as housing and meal costs, or hiring some field help. Very rarely will it apply to the PI salary, even while the PI is on a field trip the College continues to maintain the PI office/lab.

The **Other Sponsored Program** rate of 35% is for activities such as outreach programs, regional medical programs and other types of non-research, non-instructional programs.

If you have any doubt as to what rate you should be using, contact your Research Grant Manager. They will be able to assist you. Remember, you can always find the current fringe and indirect cost rates on the online Institutional Profile page: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~osp/resources/profile.html>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Does my collaborator at another institution have to be a subaward or can I pay him as a consultant?

The added cost of the other institution's indirects and the additional paperwork required are often seen as the important factors. However, neither are the determining factors.

If the collaborator will be doing 'substantive programmatic work' then the agreement should be a subrecipient subcontract. A good determining question to ask is, "Will the collaborator contribute to the final technical report?"

A consulting agreement is usually issued for services which are temporary, specialized or highly technical and cannot be provided by existing university personnel, but are not issued to procure 'substantive programmatic work'. They most often participate on a 'work-for-hire' basis, and are task-oriented or provide a deliverable which facilitates the research.

Academic Scientists at Work: Giving It 110% Effort

"With this new grant, 110% of my effort will be covered by research grants. I certainly should get a big raise--after all, what else is the department going to do with the extra money?" you say with exuberance. Your colleague replies, "Congratulations on the new grant, Dr. F. Ort. You really are doing great--this is just what the chair wants." ... But as you talk with your department administrator, you find that there is a problem with your effort allocation. 110% is too much.

To be continued at...

<http://nextwave.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/2004/02/11/9>