

Roles & Responsibilities

University of Rochester Department Administrative Staff

Administrative Staff at the departmental, center or unit level provide administrative support for one or more sponsored projects. Included in the Administrative Staff category is a wide variety of duties and position titles, including administrative director, administrator, FAOs manager staff accountant, bookkeeper, administrative assistant, assistant to, secretary, etc.

With respect to management of sponsored GR FAOs, Departmental Administrative Staff may have signature authority if delegated in writing by the Principal Investigator, or have other functional roles for sponsored programs. Signature authority for the Principal Investigator may NOT be delegated in the case of the University Proposal Sign-Off Form. Functional roles may include the preparation of budgets, completion and processing of financial, procurement, human resource and other electronic and paper transaction documents, etc. Normally, a department will delegate only a few Department Administrative Staff with signature authority, but numerous individuals will have a functional role with respect to sponsored programs.

Because the person with signature authority monitors documents completed by other staff, an “approver” cannot be the same person as a “preparer”. If there is a shortage of Departmental Administrative Staff in a department, “approver” status should be elevated to that of Principal Investigator or Department/Unit Head.

Departmental Administrative Staff report directly to their supervisor(s) in the department (e.g., chair, unit head, unit or departmental administrator, principal investigator, etc.).

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

If the Principal Investigator’s unit lacks Departmental Administrative Staff for proposal preparation or other sponsored programs administration requirements, he/she assumes these responsibilities or seeks support from the respective Department/Unit Head or Dean.

Proposal Budget

Departmental Administrative Staff:

- prepare documents and provide information for the categorized budget and

its justification, and may participate and offer guidance in preparing the proposal budget.

- process requests for approval for cost sharing or matching funds.
- process requests for sharing of F&A recovery.
- maintain databases or files of sources of support for each Principal Investigator in the department (Other Support information, resources and environment statements, and biosketches).
- assist the Principal Investigator in obtaining and reviewing budget information from other collaborating university departments and subrecipients.

Technical Proposal

Departmental Administrative Staff support Principal Investigators in formatting, typing or editing technical proposals, and are familiar with major sponsor proposal requirements, to ensure proposal meets institutional and agency submission requirements.

Regulatory Requirements

Departmental Administrative Staff:

- assist with and ensure the correct and timely preparation of the appropriate forms from the Research Subjects Review Board (RSRB) or the Western Institutional Review Board (WIRB), the University Committee on Animal Resources (UCAR), the Radiation Safety Office and/or the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S), prior to proposal submission (if necessary).
- assist in obtaining additional collegiate or departmental approvals, for example, Clinical Research Center (CRC) review.
- ensure that Principal Investigators complete an Intellectual Property Statement (IPA), and respond to ORPA requests to update departmental IPA listings.
- assist the Principal Investigator in the development of a Small Business Plan, if necessary.

Proposal Routing Process

Department Administrative Staff:

- assist with and ensure that the Principal Investigator has reviewed, fully completed and signed the University Proposal Sign-Off Form.
- complete a final review of the proposal prior to Department/Unit Head's review and signature.
- assist in the circulation of the Proposal Sign-Off Form and ensure that all appropriate signatures are obtained.

Proposal Dissemination and Tracking

Departmental Administrative Staff:

- submit the proposal and required copies along with the appropriate appendix materials to the funding agency via mail service or coordinates with ORPA on electronic submission.
- provide a copy of proposal and Sign-Off Form to the Principal Investigator and department, Co-Investigators and department, and ORPA within five days of submission.
- maintain a system (or use/verify COEUS information) of departmental proposals and current status.

ACCEPTANCE OF AWARD

Pre-award

Departmental Administrative Staff recommend the use of a contingent GR FAO when necessary, may assist in the preparation of the required forms and identify the alternate departmental OP FAO to be used.

Negotiations with Sponsor

Departmental Administrative Staff assist the Principal Investigator, as needed, in negotiations with sponsors on project scope and budget.

Acceptance of Award

Departmental Administrative Staff, in conjunction with the Principal Investigator, review the internal Notice of Award (which stipulates the approved budget and terms and conditions of the award), and will notify ORPA if there are any

comments, questions or corrections.

Department Administrative Staff maintain a departmental award database, or use COEUS for tracking awards.

CONDUCT AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PROJECT

General

Departmental Administrative Staff should reference the Sponsored Programs Compliance web site, attend departmental research administration meetings, or contact the appropriate university offices to obtain information about rules and requirements governing sponsored funding. Departmental Administrative Staff have a responsibility to keep current on and inform department faculty with respect to such rules and requirements (e.g., subscribe to ORPA-L). (In time, Departmental Administrative Staff will maintain CLASP certification by satisfying continuous learning requirements.) If the Principal Investigator's unit lacks Departmental Administrative Staff for project management or other sponsored programs administration requirements, he/she assumes these responsibilities or seeks support from the respective Department/Unit Head or Dean.

Conduct of the Research

Departmental Administrative Staff:

- working with the Principal Investigator, gather information on the conduct of subrecipients and notify the Office of Research and Project Administration and the Office of Research and Accounting Standards (ORPA and ORACS) of any problems that may have arisen with research progress.
- compare subrecipient invoices against the budget, and verify overall accuracy of the invoice and submit to PI for review and approval.
- when notified by ORACS of late or delinquent invoices, will notify and instruct the subrecipient to invoice, if appropriate (e.g., if work has been completed).
- prepare financial documents and provide information for appointment of individuals to the project (and exercise signature authority if delegated).

Develop and Implement a Small Business Plan

Departmental Administrative Staff:

- assist the Principal Investigator and Purchasing Services with the implementation of the Small Business Plan (if required).

- review periodic reports about small business plan goals.

Budget Management: While the Principal Investigator retains primary responsibility for financial accountability, the Principal Investigator or the Department/Unit Head can delegate an authorized representative to act on his or her behalf for GR FAO/project management. Therefore, Departmental Administrative Staff may undertake most of the responsibilities outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities of the Principal Investigator - Budget Management. In any event, GR FAOs must be managed by persons trained in these responsibilities.

Departmental Administrative Staff:

- possess a working knowledge of the UR ledger system and end-user reporting tools.
- possess a working knowledge of expense allowability and prevent inappropriate and untimely charges.
- expedite the documentation of cost sharing and/or matching/in-kind, and maintain such documentation.
- prepare documents, provide information for rebudgeting actions to ORPA and/or ORACS, and maintain justification for rebudgeting (if necessary).
- provide information to ORACS to resolve GR FAOs in deficit.
- provide information to ORACS for interim financial reports (if necessary).
- prepare the documents for cost transfers, and maintain adequate documentation and justification for cost transfers.
- prepare documents and provide information for internal and external purchasing and obtain Principal Investigator signature for purchase requests as appropriate (or as deemed by department policy or best practices).
- conduct financial monitoring, assist with the identification and resolution of errors in the GR FAO in a timely manner and provide regular analysis of expense activity to the Principal Investigator. Ensure Principal Investigators have reviewed monthly ledgers, and document as appropriate.
- for project billings that are based on performance milestones and/or patient case report forms, to prepare and submit to the project sponsor documentation in support of milestone payment.
- upon receipt of clinical trial payments, reconcile with the Principal

Investigators and/or study coordinator that payment is accurate, notify ORPA of receipt of payment with appropriate instructions for modifying the GR FAO, and submit checks to ORACS in a timely manner.

- maintain documentation for purchases, as appropriate.

Program Income

Departmental Administrative Staff:

- prepare and process documents and provide information to ORPA and ORACS for recording program income.
- verify receipt of program income.

Effort Reporting

Departmental Administrative Staff assist with the preparation and verification of documents and provide information to ORACS on effort certification (Plan Confirmation).

Project Closure

Departmental Administrative Staff:

- provide information for the final financial report as required by the University's Financial Close-out Policy.
- review final financial statements or reports provided by ORACS.
- assist with the reconciliation of ledgers after project closure and with appropriate transfer of any GR FAO deficits.

Regulatory Compliance

Department Administrative Staff:

- assist with the annual and ad hoc conflict of interest process and ensure via the Departmental/Unit Head that all investigators have submitted an annual disclosure form.
- are responsible for completion of bi-annual equipment survey for Property Accounting, including tagging of assets on an ongoing basis.
- assist with the preparation of the NIH Salary Cap Forms when applicable.
- assist and complete the periodic space survey, notify and update

Facilities and Planning (and Office of Space Planning at the Medical Center) of changes in space occupation.

- assist in the completion of the annual cost sharing certification (if applicable).
- are responsible for adherence to record retention policy for all financial documentation.
- are responsible for cooperating in the audit process, whether internal or external audit staff is involved.

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