iSchool Grants Overview

Please contact Ida Rahnamai (ida.rahnamai@ischool.utexas.edu) for pre-award sponsored projects submission and post-award funding management.

OSP PI Quick-Start - https://research.utexas.edu/osp/resources/sponsored-research-quick-start-guide/

OSP PI Handbook - https://research.utexas.edu/pibook/


Office for the Vice President of Research - https://research.utexas.edu

Pre-Award:

Ideal Timeline ahead of sponsor deadline -

- 1-2 months – Notify Ida of a potential funding opportunity that you will be applying to or will be a collaborator on. At minimum, the date will be noted and any initial planning can move forward as needed.
- 3 weeks – Development of budget, looking at all the requirements of the RFP, coordinating between any collaborators or co-PIs.
- 7 days – Budget is finalized
- 4 business day – OSP requires a at least 4-business day lead time that a PI is going to apply to a proposal. We will need to submit a FP (a proposal review form) through the university’s UT Research Management System (UTRMS). Ideally, this is done a few days before to allow enough time for OSP to review. If we need to catch any errors or adjust, then this extra time is helpful.
- 1-0 days – Submission! If possible, the recommendation is to submit at least one day before the proposal deadline, so that if any revisions or corrections need to be made, there is enough time to do so.
- Please note that if UT Austin will be a sub-award to another institution, timeline will be moved up a least a week.

How a pre-award research administrator will help PIs –

- Reviews rules and regulations for each sponsor and funding opportunity and program announcement.
- Develops budget with researcher and coordinate what proposal documents will be needed for proposal submission. Create budget and budget justification which you will review and make final edits if needed.
- Can coordinate with subaward for proposal materials
- Prepare grant application via the electronic submission portal for each sponsor and upload the requisite documents as needed, though PI can do so if preferred. We track and retain copies of documents for internal records, so please forward any final applications or budgets for submissions not submitted by iSchool.
- Create a FP in UTRMS, which always will require these items before being submitted to OSP. The FP that is submitted serves as our notification to OSP that we will require their services.
  - Detailed budget
  - Budget Justification
  - Statement or scope of work – this does not need to be elaborate, mostly just a paragraph or so of the work you intend to do. Can use project summaries or description from the proposal application as well.
  - Any consultant letters of commitment
  - Subaward materials: 1) Budget, 2) Budget Justification, 3) SOW 4) Institutional letter of commitment
- Prepare with you budget revisions based on funding or award terms, if necessary
- Prepare and coordinate with you on consultants – Setting up agreement or purchase order, and then later, upon completion, coordinate payment to consultant

General budget development guidelines -

Salary -

- Rates are based on approved salaries for the fiscal year and are derived from the University approved pay plans for the job categories. In accordance with UT Austin budgeting practices, salary rates are escalated by 3% in subsequent years.
- Faculty are budgeted using their 9-month institutional base salary. This rate is extrapolated to a 12- month rate for calculations for summer months.
- Staff are appointed using their 12-month salary rate. Generally, if the scope of their work is meant to be covered by the F&A rate, they should not be budgeted. If you intend to hire an individual as a staff member, we can use a TBD rate.
- Postdoctoral fellows are appointed using their 12-month salary rate for the calendar year. At this time, we are using a $54K - $56K annual base.
- GRAs are appointed depending on semester usually, iSchool does not yet have an official rate but we are basing PhD rates at a minimum of $31K annual ($2583 monthly). Masters GRA rates are set between $24K - $27K. A full-time GRA is considered to a 20-hour per week GRA. Part-time is 10-hours per week.
- Hourly employees and research assistant can be used, depending on the scope of work. If you want to hire a student has an hourly worker, they must not do work that is contributing to research. Here is more information as to what is acceptable for non-academic student employment. Please refer to this link for academic student employee rules.

Fringe -

- The university has current federally negotiated fringe rates, with a 0.5% escalation for the start of each future fiscal year. Fringe rates are applicable to any full time faculty or staff and GRAs. Current FY 22-23 fringe rates are 30% for full time benefits eligible employees. More information on UT Austin fringe guidelines are here.

Tuition –

- Per university policy, iSchool remits tuition for all graduate research assistants working on a sponsored project. The rate depends on the colleges. Tuition costs are escalated for subsequent fiscal years. Ideally, if there is room in the budget, we recommend budgeting full semester tuition for a GRA, regardless whether they are full time or part time, to remain competitive in hiring. However, if you need to cut somewhere, we can prorate tuition based on how much the GRA will be employed.
Indirect cost rate – aka facilities and administration – Current rate effective 9/1/20 is 58.5%. There are exceptions under the F&A rate, i.e., a non-profit foundation sponsor who has set their own rate. More info can be found for UT Austin’s indirect costs policies.

Direct costs - UT OSP page. Examples of other direct costs:

- Participant support
- Consultants
- Sub-awards - Must use their full negotiated IDC rate for any federal or federal pass-through proposal budget submitted to UT. UT’s portion of IDC to be recovered on this subawards is up to the first $25K of each subaward), regardless of the period covered.
- Materials and Supplies – computers, laptops, software, poster printing
- Publication Costs
- Transcription Costs or crowdsourcing
- Workshop and Conference costs
- Computer services
- Travel – depending on sponsor, they may require a breakdown of expenses, are base on university and state travel reimbursement rates. GSA per diem rates are applicable.

Course Buyout – Requires approval from Dean Meyer and ADE before proposal is submitted, email request and record is acceptable. See attached policy.

Course B...2022.pdf

Gift Funding –

If funding will be award as an "Unrestricted gift", then it will be gift funding and does not need to be authorized by OSP before you submit. We keep records of budgets for our department as well as notification to Shannon Hickson (Director of Development) of potential funding. More guidelines for gift sponsored funding here.

Cost-sharing – UT OSP page

If voluntary, this is generally discouraged. Significant cost share resources beyond PI effort requires approval from Dean Meyer before proposal is submitted, email request and record is acceptable. iSchool faculty are allowed to cost share up to 25% of effort per year.

Limited Submissions - https://research.utexas.edu/find-funding/limited-submission-programs/

Award Management:

Financial Conflict of Interest - UT Austin PIs and other covered individuals must submit their Financial Interest Disclosure (FID) to be complete PI status and must update their FID form annually, or within 30 days of acquisition of a new financial interest that requires reporting. Covered individuals include graduate research assistants, click here for further guidance on who is a covered individual. More information on requirements for university covered individuals, and links to submitting and updating your FID form are on the VPR Research Support and Compliance page.

IRB – If your project requires human subjects, a IRB application must be approved before spending can occur. It is the PI responsibility to complete any IRB applications, which must be approved before work can begin. Some funding agencies require some sort of documentation at the time of review (NSF). You can always submit an application even if you don’t know whether this will be funded, especially if the will need participant expenses at the beginning of the project. https://research.utexas.edu/ors/

Award Negotiation – If notified that an award has been made, usually OSP is also notified directly, as most of the institutional letters include OSP contact information. You can always forward or loop Kamar and I in but we can’t do anything with the funding until there is an account set-up, which may take weeks after initial notification to you. If you need to spend money for the research project before the funding actually comes through, a Credit Authorization can be requested through OSP, though an alternative funding source account must be provided (like Start-Up funds). This is usually done for GRA appointments.

Sub-awards and Consultants – this are done usually as in a contracting process.

- If it is a sub-award, this is primarily through OSP but as the PI, we would need to approve itemized budget, justification and SOW. If those change, revisions must be submitted to OSP.
- With most consulting, this is primarily handled on a department level. Once funding is available, we can either set up a “payment authorization” as a purchase order through Purchasing or a business contract through UT Business Contracts office. It will depend on the scope of work.
  - If the amount paid is over $15,000, and you have a specific company or individual you would like to contract with, then we would need to submit an Exclusive Acquisition Justification Form to purchasing, as usually amounts over $15K require a bidding process.