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The University of Texas at Austin
Vice President for Research, Scholarship
and Creative Endeavors

THE PI BOOK

A Principal Investigator's Guide to Conducting Research at The University of Texas at Austin

Last Update: August 15, 2023

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Section 1: Getting Started as a Principal Investigator at UT Austin

All research at The University of Texas at Austin is principal investigator (PI)-driven. UT has assembled a significant research enterprise to support your research initiatives. The UT research enterprise is overseen by Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors Dr. Dan Jaffe. Multiple offices that report to, or work closely with, the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) will be of service to you as a PI as you propose and execute research at UT. These offices and their core research-related functions are outlined below.

OVPR and reporting units: These offices support various aspects of the research enterprise as follows:

Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors

- Oversees supportive research infrastructure on campus
- Provides programming and support services to increase Principal Investigators' competitiveness for securing external research funding

Office of Sponsored Projects	Research Development (RD)	Research Support & Compliance (RSC)	Vice President for Core Facilities
• Proposal submission and funded award oversight for federal, state and foundation-sponsored research	• Proposal development support for complex multi-PI grants, focused on content strategy • Facilitated PI networking groups	• Review and approval of human/animal subjects and biosafety protocols • Financial Conflict of Interest Management	• Provides vision, direction, and strategic oversight of the major core facilities

Other Campus Offices that Support the Research Enterprise: These offices do not report to the vice president for research and have scopes that expand beyond the research enterprise, but do support research and PIs in some capacity, as outlined in the bullets below:

Vice President & CFO (Business Office)	University Development	Vice President for Legal Affairs	Environmental Health and Safety	Texas Global (International Office)	Discovery to Impact
• Service Center agreements and other Service Agreements such as software licensing, facility use, equipment rental • Works with OVPR to establish Core Facilities policies	• Processing of research gifts • Liaise with selected corporate and foundation sponsors of research	• Consultation and authorized signatures for confidentiality, intellectual property, ethics or other agreements • Works with OVPR on Research Misconduct cases	• Ensures safe research environments	• Consults with OVPR on MOU's, exchange agreements with international institutions • Facilitates visa processing for international scholars	• Tech transfer support for inventions generated by UT research • Review and negotiation of research contracts sponsored by industry

Relevant Website:
Office of the Vice President for Research

What is a PI?
A principal investigator (PI) is the lead researcher for a particular, defined scholarly research project who takes direct responsibility for completion of a funded project, directing the research, and reporting directly to the sponsor.

Who can be a PI?
Several titles confer PI/Co-PI status automatically: professor, associate professor, assistant professor, research professor, research associate professor, research assistant professor, some clinical faculty, full/associate/assistant of instruction or practice, research scientist/engineer, senior research scientist/engineer, research associate, dean, associate/assistant dean, associate/assistant vice president, associate/assistant vice provost, executive director or director of a unit, director of a program or academic program. Non-employees, retired/emeritus faculty, faculty instructors, lecturers, librarians and newly hired faculty/researchers do not have automatic PI status and must request PI status via their colleges.

What if my title doesn't confer automatic PI Status?
If your title does not confer automatic PI status, you can request it by having your dean, associate dean for research, department director, or chair initiate a request to the assistant vice president of OSP by following the request for PI status process outlined on the OSP website. Note that several colleges have specific processes for requesting PI status:

Requests for PI or Co-PI status for the College of Liberal Arts must be routed through the relevant department chair, and then the College's Research and Graduate Studies Office (laresearch@austin.utexas.edu) prior to forwarding to OSP.

Requests for PI or Co-PI status from the Dell Medical School must be routed through Murtaza Malbari, director of sponsored projects, Dell Medical School (murtaza.malbari@austin.utexas.edu, 512-495-5500) prior to forwarding on to OSP.

Requests for PI or Co-PI status for the College of Pharmacy must be routed through the Office of the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies (pharmacyresearch@austin.utexas.edu, 512-232-7511) prior to forwarding to OSP.

Relevant Websites:
Principal Investigator Eligibility
Request PI or Co-PI Status

What is the RR Memo?

The Researcher Responsibilities Memorandum (RR Memo) provides guidance for conducting research at UT Austin and is essential for the promotion of a safe, ethical, and productive research environment.

Who has to sign it and how often?

Anyone requesting PI status must read and acknowledge all parts of the RR Memo as a prerequisite for requesting PI status. In addition, active PIs are asked to read and acknowledge the RR Memo at least once per calendar year. You will receive an annual email from the Office of the Vice President for Research reminding you to review and acknowledge the RR Memo.

Where can I find the RR Memo?

The RR Memo is available on the OVPR website.

See Also:

PI Eligibility

Relevant Websites:

Researcher Responsibilities Memorandum

Who is a visiting scholar/researcher?
A visiting scholar or researcher is an individual who has an affiliation to an entity, institution, or organization outside The University of Texas and who is invited (sponsored) by a faculty member or staff researcher to collaborate on a research or scholarly project or activity. The research or scholarly activity may benefit the visitor but must also further the University's mission.

Under what circumstances would I host a visiting scholar/researcher?
- To authorize access to your lab
- To authorize the use of UT resources such as parking, library access, RecSports, etc.
- In circumstances where your collaborator will not receive wages (this title does not allow remuneration for services rendered)

Who is eligible to be a visiting scholar/researcher?
Anyone holding a Bachelor's degree and planning to work or collaborate at UT for at least 2 weeks.

How do I host a visiting scholar/researcher?
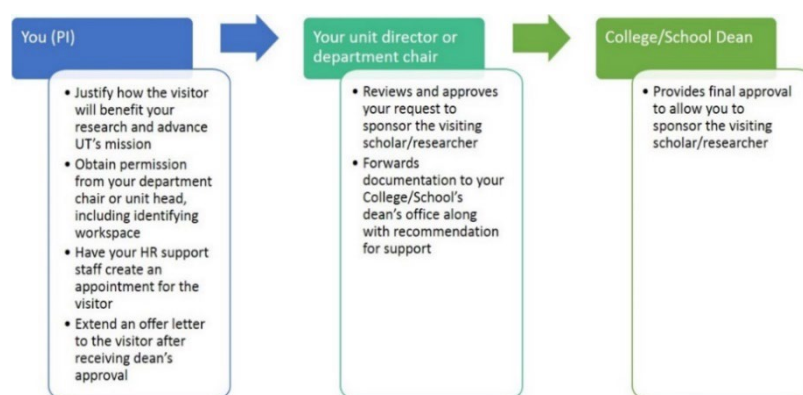
What's required of me when I host a visiting scholar/researcher?
You must follow the appointment procedures outlined on the Visiting Scholar/Researcher website.

You must also provide a workspace, if applicable, and facilitate navigation of UT resources, such as these:

Obtaining an ID card and EID   Keys/room access
Library privileges   Public transportation
UT RecSports membership   Living in Austin
Insurance   Research Affiliate Benefits

Relevant websites:
Research Titles – Handbook of Operating Procedures 7-1020

Who approves staff researcher or non-employee researcher positions?
- For academic departments or organized research units (ORUs) reporting to the executive vice president and provost, the dean is final approver.
- For positions that report directly to a dean, the provost is final approver.
- For ORUs reporting to the OVPR, the VPR is final approver.
- For positions that report directly to the provost or VPR, the president is final approver.

What if I need to terminate an employee before their term is due?
Always consult with your departmental human resources specialist, or contact your UT HR representative before taking any action.

For paid employees:
You may terminate employment for paid research titles under the following circumstances:
- Nonrenewal at 8/31
- Layoff
- Termination for cause

Exception: For postdoc employees, immediate termination requires consultation between the dean's office, if applicable, and the Office of the Executive VP and Provost/Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors.

For non-employees:
Either the incumbent or the supervising researcher may terminate the relationship with research affiliate titles without cause or recourse at a time other than the fixed assignment date:
- At the direction of the regular home institution or sponsoring agency;
- Based on a change in programmatic need; or
- When, in the reasoned judgment of the supervising researcher, the conduct or performance of the incumbent does not justify continuation.

How do I handle grievances?
The Faculty Ombuds Office offers faculty a prompt and professional way to resolve conflicts, disputes, or complaints, including work-related interpersonal conflicts or misunderstandings, as well as academic or administrative concerns.
- For your employees: An employee may present grievances and complaints in accordance with the Classified and Administrative and Professional Grievance Policy (HOP 5-2430).
- For your non-employees: Although this group is not eligible for a formal grievance process within the University, non-employees may present complaints concerning their assignment conditions to the Staff Ombudsperson.

The following tables outline the procedures for hiring researchers (employees and non-employees). In general, your human resources administrative staff who process student appointments will also process research appointments.

Relevant websites:
Research Titles Policy and Procedures (under University)
Postdoctoral Mentorship Guidelines

Paid Positions – Regular (permanent, full-time)

	Title	Job Code	Qualifications/Requirements for Assignment	Salary Requirements	Duration of Assignment	PI Status	Evaluation
Paid Employee Positions - Regular	**Senior Research Scientist**	0701-Employe	Documentation of research accomplishments and professional experience equivalent to that of a full professor, including supervision of research programs/projects as a PI. "Engineer" title requires registration as a professional engineer in the State of Texas.	Minimum $80,004 per year.	One year minimum	Principal Investigator (PI) status - Automatic approval	Annual performance evaluation is required
	Senior Research Engineer	0703-Employee					
	Research Scientist	0702-Employee	Documentation of research accomplishments and professional experience equivalent to that of an established assistant professor or new associate professor. The individual must have an established record as a mature, independent research scientist/engineer.	Minimum $55,008 per year.			
	Research Engineer	0704-Employee					
	Research Associate	0708-Employee	Qualifications comparable to an assistant professor. Must have the professional qualifications to conduct independent research and the potential to become an established researcher. Documentation of the nominee's professional credentials and accomplishments, along with copies of the job posting and letter of offer.	Minimum $50,004 per year.			
	Senior Engineering Scientist	0707-Employee	This title is generally restricted to individuals who are highly qualified in their field but do not hold a terminal degree in their discipline. Bachelor's degree minimum with 10 years of applicable experience.	Minimum $100,008 per year.		PI status subject to approval from the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP)	

Paid Positions – Temporary (Term-Limited)

	Title	Job Code	Qualifications/Requirements for Assignment	Salary Requirements	Duration of Assignment	PI Status	Evaluation
Paid Employee Positions - Temporary	**Senior Research Fellow**	0705-Employee	Ph.D. received more than 3 years ago. At time of initial assignment, a determination should be made as to the appropriate title to use (senior research fellow, research fellow or postdoctoral fellow). An employee cannot move between these titles (except as noted in #5 below). Title can be used for: 1) a visiting scientist/engineer who is regularly based at another institution or in industry and plans to return after a limited stay at UT, 2) a visiting scientist/engineer who is invited to collaborate on University sponsored activities and who is established professionally in their field, 3) a temporary research assignment for individuals whose primary assignment is as a member of the non-tenure track faculty (exception to assignment time limitation), 4) temporary positions that do not fit in one of the other categories due to limited time the position is needed, limited number of hours per week that the position is needed, limited funding, or 5) bridging an assignment into a postdoctoral fellow position prior to receipt of the Ph.D. (exception to no transfer between titles procedure).	Minimum $54,000 per year.	One year minimum, renewable for up to three years.	PI status subject to approval from the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP)	Annual performance evaluation is required
	Research Fellow	0706-Employee		Minimum $47,476 per year.			
	Postdoctoral Fellow	0712-Employee mentoring	PhD degree, within 3 years of completion	Minimum $47,476 per year.	Assignments are for periods of one year but may be renewed on an annual basis up to a maximum of five years	This title cannot request Principal Investigator status; only Co-PI status	Faculty mentors are to conduct annual written progress reviews. The evaluation process should be based on expectations that have been established for the Postdoctoral Fellow and on progress toward overall career goals. These expectations should be developed in writing with the Postdoctoral Fellow at the beginning of the assignment period, with opportunity for review and revision as the assignment progresses. The evaluation process should include the opportunity for the Postdoctoral Fellow to respond in writing to the evaluation.

Paid Positions – Temporary (Term-Limited) and Non-FLSA-Exempt (cannot work overtime hours)

	Title		Qualifications/Requirements for Assignment	Salary Requirements	Duration of Assignment	PI Status	Evaluation
Other Paid Positions - Temporary	Researcher (non exempt)	0710	Defined for use in exceptional cases where a regular paid research title is needed, but the salary is at less than $455 per week. May not work hours in excess of an assigned appointment.	Salary may fall below $455 per week	No limit.	May retain PI status, while in transition in this title	Evaluation process for permanent position applies for the duration of this temporary title.
	Researcher Fellow (non exempt)	0711	Defined for use in exceptional cases where a temporary paid research title is needed, but the salary is at less than $455 per week. May not work hours in excess of an assigned appointment.		No limit.		

Unpaid Positions

	Title	Job Code	Qualifications/Requirements for Assignment	Duration of Assignment	PI Status	Evaluation
Unpaid Positions	**Research Affiliate Postdoctoral Fellow**	A010-Non-Employee Mentoring	Externally awarded fellowship or traineeship	Assignments are for periods of one year but may be renewed on an annual basis up to a maximum of five years	This title cannot request Principal Investigator status; only Co-PI status	
	Research Affiliate Senior Research Fellow	A012-Non-Employee	The specific title used reflects the home institution position. Have been invited to collaborate on University sponsored activities. Non-employee affiliate assignment of researchers who are permanently based at another institution or company (industry) and plan to return to it after a limited assignment at UT Austin. Received Ph.D. more than 3 years ago.	There is no time limit for these titles but the initial assignment should be for no more than two years with a renewal of the assignment at two year intervals.	PI status subject to approval of the Vice President for Research, on a case-by-case basis	Annual performance evaluation is recommended.
	Research Affiliate Research Fellow	A011-Non-Employee				
	Research Affiliate Visiting Scholar/ Researcher	A006-Non-Employee	For visitors seeking to pursue individually defined research or scholarly activities on the University campus. These titles require a University sponsor. Non-employee affiliate assignment of researchers who are permanently based at another institution or company (industry) and plan to return to it after a limited assignment at UT Austin.	Assignments are for periods of two-weeks to one year but may be renewed on an annual basis.	This title cannot request Principal Investigator status	

Implementation of UT Research Management Suite (UTRMS) as the centerpiece electronic research management tool at the University is the culmination of an effort led by the Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Endeavors to modernize our electronic research administration infrastructure. Continuing goals of this effort include greater transparency, streamlined processes, and reduction of administrative burden.

As of mid-2023, the University has fully deployed four integrated modules with an additional two in development:
- Agreements – launched April 2020
- *Animal Operations – coming Spring 2024*
- COI (Conflict of Interest) – jointly launched June 2022
- *IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee) – coming Spring 2024*
- IRB (Institutional Review Board) – launched August 2020
- Grants – jointly launched June 2022

Training resources for researchers, research and administrative support staff, and students and FAQs for all four live modules are available. For more background on the UTRMS Project, visit our project website.

UTRMS-Agreements
UTRMS-Agreements facilitates the creation and submission of requests for Data Use Agreements, Material Transfers, Nondisclosure Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, Master Agreements, Clinical Trials, Subawards, Teaming Agreements and other research contracts. For assistance creating agreements in UTRMS, you can reference the Agreements Guide for the Research Community.

UTRMS-COI
The UTRMS-COI module streamlines the financial interest disclosure review process, and increases the university's capacity to monitor and report on institutional compliance. Phase 1, which launched June 27, 2022, involves all faculty and other researchers. You will receive an email invitation when the initial disclosure is required (entry into the system is not possible without an invitation). The COI module is also the portal for submission and review of Faculty Outside Activities. For more on submitting disclosures, pre-approval requests, and checking your status, you can reference the COI Guide for the Research Community and Notifications for Entry into UTRMS-COI.

UTRMS-Grants
All sponsored project proposals and awards are processed and tracked though UTRMS-Grants. When preparing to submit a new proposal, enter its details by creating a Funding Proposal, or FP. This process allows both your departmental research administrators (if applicable) to assist you and the Office of Sponsored Projects to assign a proposal specialist to aid with your submission. For more on using UTRMS-Grants to create a Funding Proposal, you can reference the Proposal Creation and Submission Guide. For assistance with managing awarded projects in UTRMS, reference the Award Guide for the Research Community.

UTRMS-IRB
The Institutional Review Board (IRB) protects the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in research. UTRMS-IRB is used for the study application and review processes, integration with training records, and centralizing IRB and researcher communications.

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See Also:

[Other Electronic Research Administration Systems](#)

Relevant websites:

[UTRMS-Agreements](#)	[UTRMS-COI](#)
[UTRMS-Grants](#)	[UTRMS-IRB](#)
[UTRMS Project Site](#)	[UTRMS FAQs](#)

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Research Management System

The University's former sponsored projects proposals and awards system—retained in read-only format—is known as Research Management System (RMS) You may need to request access from OSP.

e-Protocol

Outside of UTRMS, the e-Protocol system is currently used for the online submission, review, routing, and tracking of all of the following:

- Animal utilization proposals (AUP or protocol) and Animal Utilization Registration Forms (AURFs)
- Research protocols and/or teaching activities that involve or use recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules (rsNA) and biohazardous agents, materials, and toxins that are registered with the IBC

See Also:

UT Research Management Suite

Financial Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment & Outside Activities

Laboratory Safety and Biosafety

Working with Human Subjects, Animals, or Biohazardous Materials

Relevant Websites:

Research Management System (RMS) (Request Access)

e-Protocol

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Section 2: Finding Funding and Developing Your Idea

The Office of the Vice President for Research maintains a searchable list of funding opportunities that are multi-disciplinary and cross-college in scope. The Open Call list includes sponsor information and links to requests for proposals (RFPs), research areas, researcher eligibility requirements, and important deadlines. It includes funding programs that span the spectrum of research fields across the UT campus. Unlike limited submission opportunities, open call programs have no limits to the number of proposals that UT may submit.

See Also:
Limited Submission

Relevant Websites:
Pivot Grants Database
OVPR Limited Submission Programs Page

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What are "limited submission" opportunities?

Limited submission opportunities are those for which a sponsor limits the number of proposals UT may submit. Often these opportunities allow only one UT submission, but they may allow a limited number of submissions in multiple categories. UT selects its authorized candidates by running an internal competition in which applications are reviewed and ranked by a peer faculty/researcher committee. The authorized candidate(s) or nominee(s) will be the only PI(s) who may submit a proposal for these opportunities.

All applications for internal competitions are submitted through UT's online submission portal, InfoReady Review.

For a list of the current limited submission internal competitions, as well as lists of expected competitions, current candidates, and previous awardees, visit the OVPR's Limited Submission Programs page.

See Also:
Open Call Funding Opportunities

Relevant Websites:
UT's InfoReady Review Site   OVPR's Find Funding Page
Limited Submission Process   Limited Submission Programs
Limited Submission FAQs   OVPR's Open Call Opportunities Page

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OVPR-administered grants are those funded by the Office of the Vice President for Research (or other UT internal funds) and managed by the Office of the Vice President for Research.

Research and Creative Grants (RCGs)
- The RCG program provides support of up to $10,000 for specific projects of individual tenured and tenure-track faculty members.
- The program's overall objectives are to promote research, outreach, and creative activities in all disciplines that will result in publications, patents, recognition, awards, or exhibitions/performances appropriate to the PI's discipline, and/or will improve competitiveness for external funding.
- Please read the RCG request for proposals before submitting a proposal.

Special Research Grants (SRGs)
- SRGs provide up to $1,000 for specific projects for individual tenured and tenure-track faculty members.
- These grants are intended to cover unanticipated costs or special needs and should not be considered a means of supporting ongoing projects.
- SRG awards are funded by the Board of Regents and administered by the OVPR.
- SRG applications are accepted throughout the year. Be aware that SRGs are competitive and funding is limited; applications received earlier in the academic year will have a better chance of being funded.
- Please read the SRG request for proposals before submitting an application.

See also:
Subvention Grants

Relevant Websites:
OVPR-Administered Grants and Awards   University Co-op Research Awards
Hamilton Book Author Awards Program   Subvention Grants
OVPR's Find Funding Page

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The Office of the Vice President for Research offers, on a rolling basis, book subvention grants of up to $5,000. This award is designed to assist faculty authors in the publication of scholarly books. Subvention awards provide financial assistance to faculty members when departments and deans are unable to provide needed support.

Qualifications:

- Requesting author must be sole or primary author and currently appointed at The University of Texas at Austin as a tenured or tenure-track faculty member.
- Excluded from eligibility are staff, students, temporary faculty, individuals whose contracts will not be renewed the following year, or those who plan to resign in the current or subsequent academic year.
- Individuals who will receive a cash advance from the publisher are not qualified.
- Subvention support of more than once in a three-year period is subject to availability of funds and the applicant pool.
- The author and publisher must agree to acknowledge the *Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors of the University of Texas at Austin* for the subvention grant in the acknowledgement section of the book.
- Funds are only paid directly to the publisher; authors may not be reimbursed from the account.
- Publications can be in any language and any discipline.
- Artwork, maps, photographs, permissions and other special production elements are allowed.
- Publication of textbooks, translations of previously published books or book reprints will *not* be supported.
- Routine author activities, such as indexing, or page and reprint costs of articles in professional journals are not covered.
- If the book is not published, the author is expected to return the subvention grant to the University.

Deadline: Ongoing

Relevant websites:
Subvention Grants: Application instructions
University Co-op Research Awards
Hamilton Book Author Awards Program

VPR-Administered Grants and Awards
VPR's Find Funding Page

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What is Pivot?

Pivot is a subscription-based cloud application that makes it easy to find external funding opportunities that are available on a world-wide scale. Funding sources include private and public agencies and support in a wide area of disciplines and types of award. Pivot serves researchers at any stage in their career who seek funding.

How to access Pivot:

You can log into Pivot using your UT EID and by following the steps outlined on our Pivot website.

Can I get help using Pivot?

Yes! Visit our Pivot website to request navigation assistance from a specialized subject librarian or to ask for technical support.

Relevant websites:

UT Austin Pivot website

Pivot log in website

Submit a request for assistance through the Office of the VP for Research

Pivot Start Guide and Knowledge Center

Submit a request for help through Pivot (ProQuest)

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What is "research development"?
Research development is a suite of capacity-building activities designed to increase the competitiveness of individual faculty members and teams of researchers in attracting external research funding. At UT, these capacity-building activities include research team building, supporting UT researchers through internal seed grants and collaborative grants, and major proposal development support.

Who does research development at UT, and what do they provide to researchers?
UT's Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors has a Research Development portfolio that provides the following services and support mechanisms to faculty and researchers:

- Competitive intelligence and tactical proposal development support for major center grants (cross-college, involving >10 PIs) and other major external funding
- Research mentor-pairing (matchmaking) to network faculty across multiple departments/colleges/units
- OVPR-hosted faculty development events focused on finding funding, demystifying the UT research enterprise and leveraging campus resources to get more research done
- Internal funding to support new research directions
- Institutional support for interdisciplinary research collaborations through Bridging Barriers, the campus-wide research grand challenges initiative and Research Interest Groups
- A curated library of UT-specific research and proposal development resources, maintained by the OVPR (UT EID login required to access this site)

Some colleges, schools, and units offer unit-level research and proposal development and proposal submission or grant administration support as well:

- School of Architecture Center for Sustainable Development
- Moody College of Communication
- College of Education Research Administration
- Cockrell School of Engineering (Requires UT Login)
- Jackson School of Geosciences (Requires UT Login)
- College of Liberal Arts Research Support Office
- Dell Medical School Research Support Services
- College of Natural Sciences Strategic Research Initiatives
- School of Nursing Cain Center for Nursing Research
- College of Pharmacy Research Support
- LBJ School of Public Affairs
- School of Social Work Services to Researchers

Relevant websites:
Research Development at UT Austin
Research Administration Support by College/School/Department or Administrative Unit (Requires UT Login)

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OVPR Initiatives

In addition to providing internal funding support for individual investigators, the Office of the Vice President for Research offers signature initiatives designed to foster interdisciplinary research collaborations across campus. Some major OVPR initiatives include:

Research Networks

Bridging Barriers (Texas Grand Challenges)

Bridging Barriers is UT's campus-wide research grand challenges initiative overseen by the Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors. More than 150 PIs representing 15 colleges, schools, and units across UT are engaged in the three grand challenge themes:

- Planet Texas 2050 is ensuring Texas' sustainability in the face of intensifying climate and rapid urbanization.

- Whole Communities – Whole Health seeks to help Central Texas families thrive by providing them with near-real-time health information from new sensors and data platforms.

- Good Systems is designing values-driven artificial intelligence technologies.

Institutional investment such as cash or fundraising support from the OVPR and University Development is provided to each theme to ensure its success. All UT PIs are welcome and encouraged to contribute their expertise to a Bridging Barriers research grand challenge.

Network for Collaborative Research Impact (NCRI)

The Network for Collaborative Research Impact (NCRI) brings together UT researchers with a shared vision of enhancing interdisciplinary research across the campus. Spanning departments, colleges, and units, this community explores dynamic questions, engages in bold research, and provides unique programming. Our aim is to provide a network for collaboration.

Research Interest Groups (RIGs)

RIGs help build interdisciplinary collaborations at UT by convening those who share interest in emerging, convergent research topics that span multiple colleges, schools, or units. Topics, research questions, and goals are all driven by the RIG members. The Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors can assist with administrative hurdles, communication to campus, event coordination, identification of experts to close the knowledge gap in your groups, and connection to resources on campus. RIG activities include but are not limited to member meetings for discussions, campus-wide symposia, seminar series, writing retreats, funding opportunity collaborations, and much more. Join an existing RIG, or if you identify a need at UT, start a new group around a research topic important to you and like-minded peers on campus.

Texas Network for Obesity Research (TeNOR)

The Texas Network for Obesity Research facilitates connections and collaborations to promote obesity research and to disseminate and implement evidence-based programs and policies for Texans across the lifespan, including diverse and underserved populations.

Research Lightning Talk Series

Research Interest Lightning Talk Series is an opportunity to engage with researchers outside your home department or unit. If you would like to present a lightning talk please complete this short survey. Questions? please email: RIG@austin.utexas.edu.

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Research Partnerships
MD Anderson Cancer Center/UT Austin Strategic Collaboration
MD Anderson Cancer Center and UT Austin have launched a strategic collaboration aimed at increasing the number and depth of research alliances between the two institutions. Themes of interest include early-onset colorectal cancer (EOCRC), frontiers of neuroscience, obesity, and population health.

City of Austin/UT Austin Collaborations
UT Austin and the City of Austin have an agreement in place to facilitate collaborative research. Austin City Council approved a Master Interlocal Agreement (ILA) to streamline agreements between City departments who are looking for UT research expertise. he City is especially interested in research projects that will help them achieve the Strategic Direction 2023 goals in the categories of Mobility, Safety, Health and Environment, Culture and Lifelong Learning, Government that Works for All, and Economic Opportunity and Affordability.

Sandia National Laboratories/UT Austin Collaboration
The University of Texas at Austin works with Sandia to solve big problems, sustain and engage human capital, and accelerate adoption of new technology. The research partnership allows UT faculty, researchers, postdoctoral fellows, and students the opportunity to collaborate with Sandia researchers and leverage Sandia capabilities.

Other Initiatives
Associate Professor Experimental (APX)
APX is a design thinking and flash funding faculty retreat that gives newly tenured associate professors dedicated funds and focused time to envision new research directions with colleagues in diverse academic disciplines. APX was created by the Office of the Vice President for Research and the School for Design and Creative Technologies, and is funded by the executive vice president and provost. Participation in APX is by invitation only. The VPR office extends APX invitations to all assistant professors who have been approved for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure each spring, as soon as tenure decisions have been finalized at the University level. The APX retreat takes place during the following fall semester.

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Shut Up and Write: A Distraction-Free Proposal Writing Day

Shut Up and Write is a one-day writing retreat for UT principal investigators (both faculty and staff) who are working toward a confirmed proposal submission deadline. SUAW offers you a dedicated day to focus on your proposal without constant interruptions at your home or office. SUAW day provides you with a distraction-free atmosphere and basic necessities such as a quiet workspace with power strips, meals, beverages and snacks throughout the day, and VPR and OSP support staff on hand to answer your proposal questions. You must be the PI of the proposal with a confirmed proposal submission deadline to register for the event.

Relevant websites:
OVPR Initiatives
Bridging Barriers

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Section 3: Propose Research

Who Signs Off On Proposals?

Most proposals require institutional signature, which is provided by OSP (or in a few cases, by the University Development Office). Institutional signature is obtained during the normal proposal process when you submit your proposal through UT Research Management Suite.

Although research grants are under your direction as PI, the grant or contractual agreement is between UT and the sponsor. Proposals can be signed by only a small number of individuals, known as authorized officials, who have the authority to sign these agreements on behalf of UT. Faculty, deans, and department chairs are not authorized officials.

*Please note that **all** sponsored research at UT must go through OSP; Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact; or the Development Office.*

See Also:
Preparation and Submission

Relevant Websites:
Office of Sponsored Projects
Discovery to Impact
UTRMS

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The University of Texas Foundation, Inc. (UT Foundation) was established by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System in 1967 to accept and manage gifts in support of the System or one of its components. The UT Foundation can accept contributions from funders that must give to 501(c)(3) organizations and will transmit such contributions in full to UT Austin for support of the proposed project.

I want to submit a proposal for funding, but the sponsor only awards funds to 501(c)(3) nonprofit entities. Can I apply?
Most corporations and foundations will make grants directly to UT Austin, which is a tax-exempt agency of the State of Texas under Internal Revenue Code 170(c)(1). Some funders, however, are restricted by law to making grants only to nonprofits with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. In such cases, the Office of Foundation Relations (OFR) in the University Development Office can help you submit your proposal through the University of Texas Foundation.

If your proposal needs to be routed through the UT Foundation, provide a copy to the OFR Office and allow at least two to three days for processing. OFR can provide tax-exempt documentation on behalf of the UT Foundation and additional supporting materials such as transmittal letters, audited financial statements, and Form 990s.

Relevant Websites:
Contact List for Corporate Relations (University Development Office)
Contact List for Foundation Relations (University Development Office)
The University of Texas Foundation

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Proposals submitted by UT Austin principal investigators (PIs) must be submitted to funders/sponsors through the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP). OSP submits approximately 50 proposals daily, campus-wide, to various federal, private, state and other sponsors. To manage the proposal submission workload, OSP uses an electronic queue called the UT Research Management System (UTRMS). To have your proposal submitted by OSP, the following items must be uploaded to UTRMS no later than four (4) business days before the proposal submission deadline.

Subaward documentation (if a subaward is involved)

Final Budget & Justification

Copy of or link to sponsor's RFP

Proposal text (draft is OK)

Submit to OSP at least **4** business days before proposal deadline

Commitment letters from consultants (if consultants are involved)
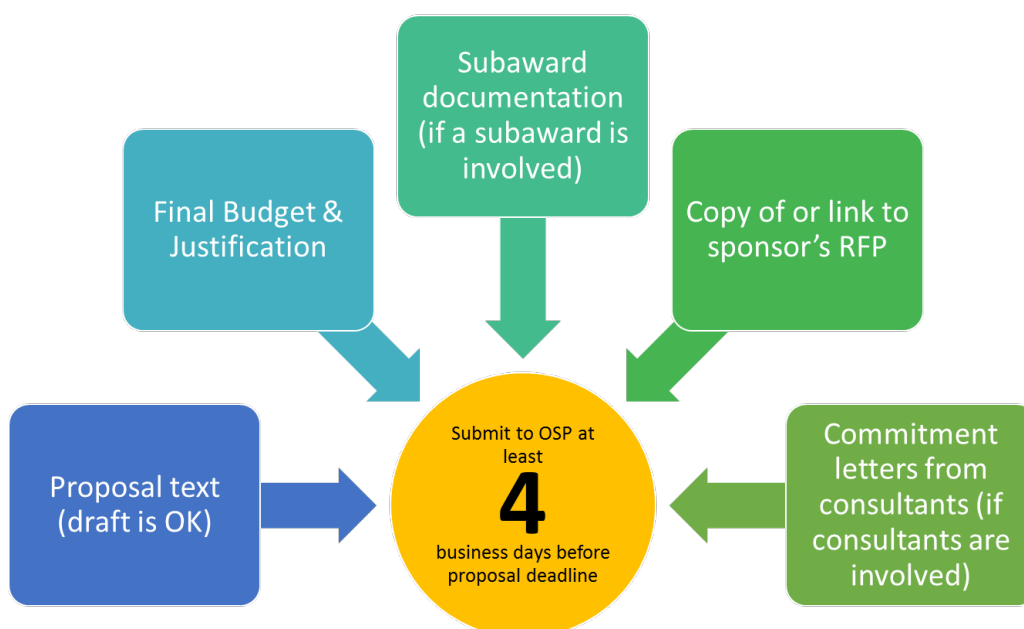
Additionally, some colleges, schools, and units have their own internal deadlines for proposal review, ahead of the OSP 4-business-day deadline. Check with your associate dean for research or college, school, or unit research administrator to determine whether other internal deadlines must be met to submit proposals.

See Also:
Signature Authority

Relevant Websites:
OSP Resource Page for Preparing and Submitting Proposals
How do I process a proposal through UT?
UT Research Management System (UTRMS) – *Go here to put your proposal in the queue for review*

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Campus-wide resources

Your home unit can be a valuable source of information and assistance as you navigate the internal UT and sponsor requirements to successfully submit a proposal. When you first come across a funding opportunity and are weighing whether or not to submit a proposal, seek out the proposal support staff in your department or college and let them know your plans. With adequate lead time, administrative staff can help organize budgets and support documents and coordinate with OSP to ensure your proposal is given a thorough review ahead of the submission deadline.

In recent cycles, some federal funding agencies have begun placing greater weight in their proposal reviews on three areas of proposals and award reporting: Broader Impacts Statements (NSF), Data Management Plans, and Postdoc Mentoring Plans. Thoughtful responses can give you a competitive edge. Several offices across campus dedicate resources and expertise to help you translate your ideas into solid action plans.

Concierge Services: Campus-Wide Proposal Preparation Support

Concierge Services offers in-depth proposal services to campus faculty and staff, including assistance with proposal preparation, proposal guideline review, and individual or small group training.

OVPR Research Development: Proposal Development for Complex/Unusual Proposals

OVPR Research Development offers comprehensive proposal development services to all UT PIs, with priority given to complex (e.g., multi-PI, cross-college) proposals or scholarly work which exceeds your local research support capacity.

Data Management Plans (DMPs)

Data created during the course of research and after a project is concluded must be effectively managed to ensure project integrity, adequate sharing of results, and proper long-term preservation. UT maintains a subscription to DMPTool, a web-based resource for researchers drafting data management plans that conform to various federal agency guidelines.

Additionally, several departments and offices across campus partner to provide internal resources for data management to UT researchers.

- Texas ScholarWorks for archiving and sharing of datasets under 1GB, and papers and publications associated with data.
- Texas Data Repository is an online platform for the publication and archive of digital data developed or used in support of research activities at UT. TDR accepts data under 2GB per individual file in any file type from any research discipline and allows researchers to edit the license governing re-use of the data.
- TACC offers computational and storage resources suitable for terabyte (TB) and petabyte (PB) scale datasets. By completing a simple data storage allocation request, UT employees may obtain up to 5 TB of data storage at no cost. TACC maintains copies of stored data off-site at UT-Arlington to provide additional security. Request a TACC data storage allocation.
- Information Technology Services (ITS) is capable of handling datasets that are larger than 1GB. ITS also offers data management services and hardware to support grant writing and research activities. ITS can provide storage for datasets as large as 100 GB.
- UT Research Cyberinfrastructure offers high performance computing through the Texas Advanced Computing Center, a data repository, and high bandwidth data access.
- REDCap (Research Electronic Data Capture) is a secure, web-based application for building and managing online surveys and databases. Managed by the Population Research Center, it is available for use by all UT faculty, staff, and students.

- **UT Libraries** manages a DMP resources and templates page with current information on agency-specific requirements. The Libraries also provide learning opportunities for using SciENcv to create Biographical Sketches and Current and Pending Support required by some sponsors.

Postdoctoral Mentoring Plans

NSF and NIH (at the proposal stage and award stage, respectively) require that investigators provide mentoring plans for any research that includes a postdoctoral researcher. The UT Graduate School maintains a Postdoctoral Administrator Responsibilities page to advise investigators about policy governing the use of postdocs in research and provide information for the creation of a postdoc professional development strategy.

Submit your proposal

With very few exceptions (some research gifts and graduate fellowships), awards are made to UT rather than the individual researchers responding to a request for proposal (RFP). Because of this distinction, all proposals must be submitted for an internal review at either OSP or its industry-focused support unit, Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact. The primary mechanism for initiating a review is the UTRMS Grant's Management System (UT EID/password required). All UT faculty with PI status can submit a proposal or request than an administrative support staff person in their unit be authorized to create a Funding Proposal on their behalf. Once completed, your proposal will be assigned to a reviewer who will ensure your proposal complies with both UT and sponsor budgetary and compliance requirements.

See Also:

Concierge Services: Campus-Wide Proposal Preparation Support

Relevant Websites:

Research Computing and Data Management Resources	OSP guidance on preparing and submitting proposals
OSP Concierge Services	NIH Mentoring Plan Guide
NSF Mentoring Plan Guidance (PAPPG section i.(i).)	Postdoctoral Mentorship
Discovery to Impact	

The Research Impact Resources provided by the Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors address a wide range of research impact considerations inherent to research and scholarship at UT. This site can guide you on your path to understanding NSF's Broader Impacts criteria, and implications for research impact more globally.

The resources provided include:

- *Consultation Services*

  - Office Hours: book a 30-minute appointment to receive quick feedback and suggestions for campus resources that could support your research impact plans.

  - Proposal Development: more in-depth support for comprehensive proposal development services, hands-on pre-award support, and ways to connect with research and grant support within your specific college/school/unit.

- *Research Impact Tools*

  - Guiding Principles: a step-by-step guide to NSF's Broader Impacts criteria.

  - Research Impact Plan Checklist: a Broader Impacts (BI) Plan checklist to assess completeness of your plan, which can also be used as a guide to assess the impact of any area of research or creative endeavor.

  - Research Impact Partners: a directory of UT partners (and a growing list of external ones) who may be able to help develop your broader participation, evaluation, and outreach efforts.

- *Events and Seminars*

  - Research Impact Workshop Series: check out upcoming events or revisit past presentations and slides that specifically address NSF's Broader Impacts criteria and can be just as effective in other areas outside NSF.

  - PI Skill-Building: an at-a-glance list of upcoming skill-building events that includes panel discussions and information sessions with Principal Investigators sharing best practices for grant application and proposal development.

  - Science Communication: a link to expert subject librarians that can help you navigate the art of science communication and public engagement.

Relevant Websites:

Research Development

Resources for Researchers

Support for PIs in Engineering

Research Collaborations

Support for PIs in Natural Sciences

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Campus-Wide Proposal Preparation Support

Concierge Services is an extension of the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) designed to offer additional hands-on pre-award assistance to UT researchers and research support staff. Concierge Services offers a variety of services including proposal preparation, proposal guideline review, and individual or small group training for new faculty and staff. Training is available with topics such as OSP proposal policies and procedures and electronic research administration systems (including UTRMS, Cayuse, and FastLane/Research.gov).

While the service is available to all UT researchers and staff, it is intended as supplemental resource and was not created to replace the services provided by your college and department. If you have additional questions about the services provided, you can search the FAQs or email Concierge Services directly, and you will receive a response within two business days.

Appointments are available Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. The concierge suite is located on main campus in the Peter T. Flawn Academic Center (FAC), suite 326, and accommodates one-on-one and small group meetings. The staff are also prepared to offer training and assistance in the comfort of your own office or designated space.

Note that proposals submitted through Concierge Services must be requested at least 2 weeks before the sponsor's deadline. If your proposal is due in less than 2 weeks, please contact OSP and submit your proposal through the UTRMS Grant System to obtain prompt assistance.

See Also:
Proposal Preparation Resources

Relevant Websites:
OSP Concierge Services
Request Concierge Services Consultation

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Requirements vary among Requests for Proposals (RFPs) depending on the sponsor and the type of program. However, most proposal guidelines follow a similar formula. Your approach to budgeting should rest on a realistic assessment of your project's direct costs balanced with UT's indirect costs requirements.

Direct and Indirect Costs
Direct costs can be directly allocated to a specific project. If a graduate researcher assigned to a project must conduct field sampling in order to complete research objectives, those expenses are directly allocable to that project and are considered direct costs. Indirect costs (IDC) cannot be directly allocated to a specific project. A typical department will employ staff to manage day-to-day administrative operations of multiple projects tied to a variety of funding sources. Since their work duties involve tasks across all of these projects in any given period, their salaries are not directly allocable to any one project and are considered indirect costs represented in a negotiated institutional rate (F&A rate).

Direct Costs
•Salaries, wages and fringe benefits
•Equipment (5K+ and serviceable for 1 year+)
•Materials & supplies
•Travel
•Computer costs
•Consultant services
•Publications
•Participant support costs
•Tuition & fees for graduate students
•Meetings & conferences
•Facility rental

Indirect Costs
•Facilities operation & maintenance
•Administrative Staff
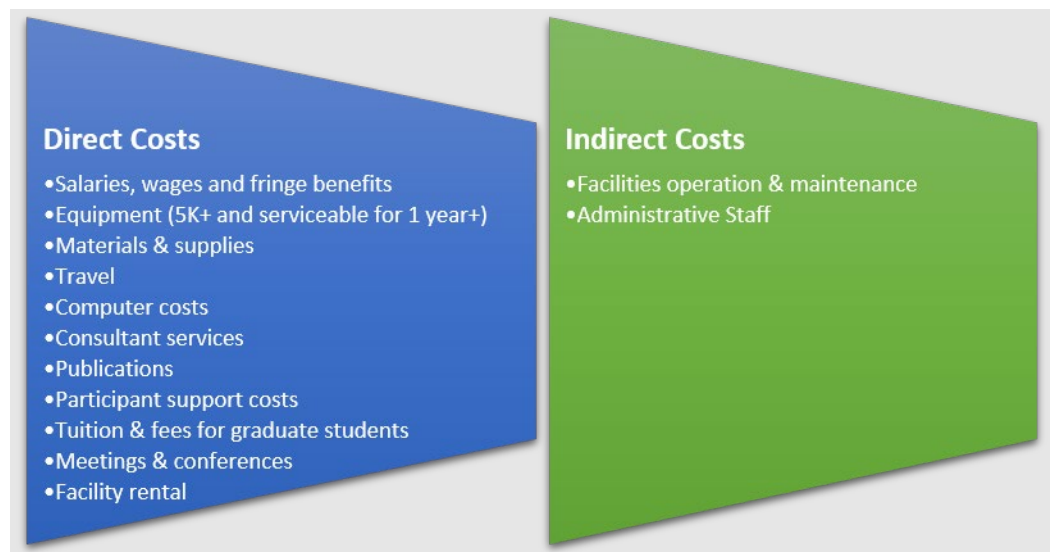
Non-Allowable Expenses
With certain exceptions (and typically only when made explicit in a research agreement), certain costs are considered non-allowable and cannot be charged to a sponsored project. These include:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Entertainment
- New construction
- Land or building acquisition
- Alumni activities
- Fundraising expenses
- Bad debt
- Fines and/or penalties
- Interest payments
- Lobbying
- Losses on other awards or contracts
- Goods or services procured for personal use of project employees

- Commencement or convocations
- Contingency funds
- Depreciation of a high-cost asset
- Institutional Review Board fees
- Investment management
- Losses on project agreements
- Proposal development costs
- State of Texas sales tax
- Scholarships

Budget Justification

A budget justification is a narrative statement that provides clarifying details about your request for funding from a sponsor. This is where you should elaborate on expenses you expect to incur and give the rationale for how you arrived at the cost figures you have provided in your budget. Some sponsors impose limits on the length of a budget justification (e.g., 3 pages), whereas others have no page limit. In general, at least a few sentences describing each major budget category (e.g., personnel salaries, travel, materials/supplies, or participant support) is expected.

Relevant Websites:

Proposal Preparation and Submission - UT's Office of Sponsored Projects
Current UT Austin Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (F&A Memo)

How do I calculate salary?
Salary requests are based on an individual's appointment type (base salary), overall commitment of effort, and the guidelines of the project RFP. Together, these yield a determination of person months.

Base Salary – Most faculty are appointed for 9 months with some exceptions, and staff and student researchers are appointed for 12 months each year. So, your monthly base salary is your annual compensation total divided by 9 or 12, respectively. Use the amount of your faculty/researcher base salary for your salary request from the sponsor. It is not an acceptable practice to inflate this figure in any way except to account for a projected salary increase that will take effect after the beginning of the award performance date. A faculty researcher paid on a 9-month appointment may request summer salary directly from a project sponsor in an amount based upon their 9-month base salary.

Effort – The time devoted to a sponsored project, expressed as a percentage of the total time spent on all activities conducted under the terms of employment with the university.

Percentage of time – The percentage of salaried effort is usually expressed in person-months.

Person-month – The metric for expressing the effort PIs, faculty, and other personnel devote to a single project. It is based on the individual's appointment type. For example: calendar year, academic year, or summer term.

How do I calculate person months?
Multiply the percentage of your effort associated with the project by the number of months of your appointment. For example:
- 25% of a 9-month academic year appointment is equal to 2.25 person months (9 x .25 = 2.25).
- 20% of a 12-month calendar appointment equals 2.4 person months (12 x .20 = 2.4).
- 25% of a 3-month summer appointment equals .75 person months (3 x .25 = .75).

Limits on Effort and Compensation for Sponsored Research
Generally, the National Science Foundation (NSF) limits salary compensation for faculty senior personnel to a maximum of two months of regular salary across all NSF-supported projects in any given year. Case-by-case approvals can be granted for a third month in some instances.

The Department of Health and Human Services caps salaries for all National Institutes of Health (NIH) project personnel. The current cap is $212,100/12 months ($17,675/month). When your monthly salary exceeds the salary cap, the difference must NOT be charged to another federal award. Rather, this difference should be charged to a non-sponsored funding source.

See Also:
Budgets
Cost Sharing

Relevant Websites:
Direct Costs - Salaries   Salary Compensation Reporting
NIH Salary Cap Guidance   NIH Salary Cap Summary (FY 1990 – Present)
NSF Salaries and Wages Policies

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Institutional Base Salary (IBS)

What is institutional base salary?
The *UT Handbook of Operating Procedures* (HOP 7-1010) defines institutional base salary (IBS) as "The total guaranteed annual compensation an individual receives from the University, whether the individual's time is spent on research, teaching, or other activities."

What is included in IBS?
IBS includes your total guaranteed annual salary (academic and summer) in addition to any salary increments or augmentations, including endowments but excluding administrative appointments (see next paragraph).

It **excludes** one-time payroll items such as service awards, bonuses, fellowships, non-service supplements, and overload/overtime payments. It also **excludes** administrative stipends such as those received for serving as a center director, department chair or program director.

Why is it important for me to know my IBS?
Your institutional base salary is the basis for the salary allowed to be charged to sponsored projects and the salary level to be measured against any salary cap. If you fail to accurately propose, charge or document your salary level on sponsored projects, those charges may be rejected by the sponsor, and you can be subject to debarment and financial penalties.

What is a salary cap?
Some sponsors limit the maximum amount of IBS that may be reimbursed. For instance, the federally mandated NIH salary cap is currently $212,100 annually; no personnel, including the PI, may be compensated from an NIH project at an annual (IBS) rate in excess of that amount. Any IBS above that amount must be paid from a non-sponsored account. Other sponsors may have their own salary cap.

See Also:
Salary Calculations
Limits on Effort and Compensation for Sponsored Research
Cost Sharing

Relevant Websites:
OSP Salary Cap Page
Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200.430) on Compensation – Personal Services
NIH Salary Cap Summary (FY 1990 – Present)

OSP Cost Share Guidelines
UT Handbook of Operating Procedures 7-1010 on Effort Certification

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Many UT researchers on a nine-month academic contract choose to expend effort doing research during the summer semesters. Should you choose to do summer research, there are some things to keep in mind:

- You may expend effort on sponsored projects during the summer months of June, July and/or August

- You are limited to 95% effort charged to sponsored projects. The other 5% may be charged to less restrictive, non-sponsored funds. If you wish to charge 100% to a sponsored project during the summer, you would need to complete and submit an Attestation Form.

- If you have a full-time teaching appointment in the Fall Semester, you cannot charge effort to a sponsored project from 8/16 to 8/31. You must charge your summer salary effort from 5/16-8/15.

Relevant Websites:

FAQs Charging Summer Salary to Sponsored Projects

Guidelines for Charging Faculty Summer Salary to Sponsored Projects

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What is a fringe rate?
"Fringe rate" refers to the non-wage expenses paid by an employer on behalf of their employees. These expenses include insurance premium sharing, employer matching, Social Security (OASI) and Medicare, Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and Optional Retirement Program (ORP) matching, as well as assessments for Unemployment Compensation Insurance (UCI), Workers' Compensation Insurance (WCI), vacation, and sick leave. Fringe benefits are a direct cost to a sponsored project and are budgeted as a percentage of the salaries and wages and shown as a separate entry in the budget.

Who determines the fringe rate?
Fringe benefit rates are determined by Accounting and Financial Management, based on yearly analysis of the university's actual fringe benefit costs. UT's fringe rates are negotiated with its cognizant agency (DHHS) and are part of the University's F&A Cost Rate Agreement.

What is the current fringe rate?
The fringe rates for the fiscal year 2023 (FY23) and later are in the table below. The rates beyond August 31, 2023 are estimates and are provided for budgeting purposes. Fringe will be charged at the applicable rate at the time the cost is incurred.

	Approved Fringe Rates		Projections for Planning Purposes
Employee Type	FY23 9/1/22-8/31/23	FY24 9/1/23-8/31/24	Subsequent years
Any benefits-eligible staff (full or part-time staff, including Graduate Research Assistants)	30.0%	30.5%	+ 0.5%
Benefits-ineligible employees	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%

I have an active grant that was awarded a few years ago, and I had budgeted fringe rates that are lower than what's quoted in the table above. What happens now?
UT moved to a pooled fringe rate on September 1, 2018. If your grant proposal was submitted prior to August 10, 2018 and had budgeted for fringe rates lower than the pooled rates, you should consult the fringe rate mitigation plan. OSP is monitoring and will mitigate fringe overdrafts for grants that pre-dated the 2018 pooled fringe policy effective date until August 2024. Questions about fringe mitigation can be directed to: PooledFringe@austin.utexas.edu

Relevant Websites:
Fringe Rates and Guidelines
Current UT Austin Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
(F&A Memo)
UT Austin Payroll

What are Participant Support Costs?

Participant Support Costs are solely for the purpose of enabling participants to attend and receive training at a meeting, workshop, conference, symposium, or other training activity. These can include small stipends, reimbursement of travel expenses, meals during the training, and other expenses incurred for the purpose of participation. Participant support costs are allowed by NSF but may need to be specified as such in the specific funding solicitations of other agencies (e.g., NIH). When allowed, participant costs are exempt from IDC assessment, but the strict interpretation of participant eligibility by most organizations is very closely scrutinized.

Participants do not perform any work or services for the program. Students, scientists, private sector representatives, agency personnel, teachers, national research scholars, and others who attend the training in a non-working capacity are eligible to receive participant support. However, anyone receiving support from a federal grant, or performing research on a grant, cannot claim support expenses for themselves from that grant's Participant Support budget.

Allowable Participant Activities
- Meetings
- Workshops
- Conferences
- Seminars and symposia
- Other training activities

Eligible Participants
- Students and teachers
- National scholars, scientists, and researchers
- Private sector reps
- Agency reps
- Other non-working participants

Allowable PSC Expenses
- Stipends for non-compensated participation
- Travel support
- Meals
- Other participation-related expenses

See Also:
Budgets

Relevant Websites:
Uniform Guidance: Participant Support Costs

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In the course of developing your research plan, you may discover that it is beneficial to expand your team in order to achieve your objectives. If you collaborate with individuals external to UT or with UT employees acting in a capacity outside of their regular university duties who will be paid from project funds, you will be establishing an outgoing contractual relationship that will fall into either a subaward or contractor category, each with its own set of budgetary, compliance, and contractual guidelines.

What is a subrecipient?
A subrecipient is the external partner in a binding agreement with UT where:
- They are responsible for a significant portion of the research activity defined in the work statement.
- They assume full responsibility for the administration and leadership of their defined research responsibilities.
- They agree to UT's contractual terms and conditions as well as those of the sponsor as flowed down from UT's acceptance and negotiation of the award.

How do I determine if my needs are best met by utilizing a subrecipient?
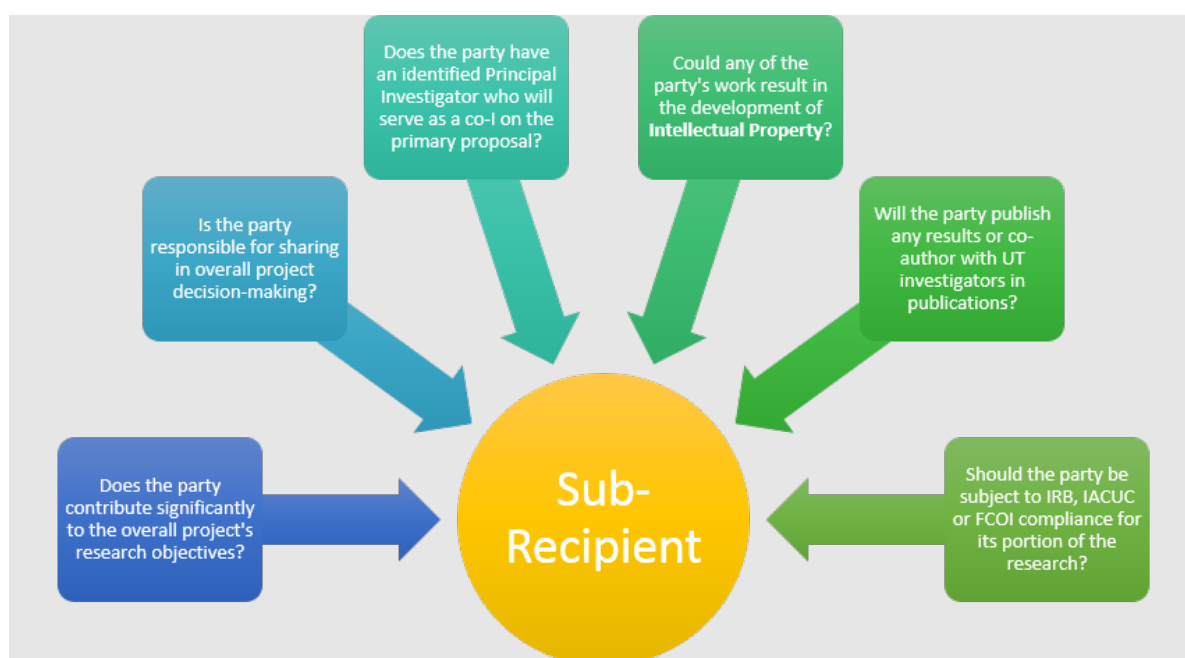
If I determine that my relationship is with a subrecipient, what must I do to ensure their commitment to the project?
OSP requires subrecipients to submit the following items for review during the proposal review:
- Signed Institutional Letter of Commitment: a letter from the subrecipient's sponsored projects office committing the institution to participate as detailed in the work statement if awarded.
- Statement of Work (SOW): a brief description (typically no more than 2 paragraphs) of the subrecipient research-related responsibilities and objectives.
- Subrecipient Budget and Budget Justification: itemized direct and indirect cost categories.
- Negotiated rate agreement (Federal/Federal pass-through funding)

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What is a contractor (also referred to as a consultant or vendor)?

A contractor is any paid consultant, vendor, or service provider who provides goods or services to UT in support of research. Contractors can be:

- Field experts who act in an advisory or consulting capacity to help the project achieve its stated objectives.
- Non-UT employees or UT employees paid for a service outside of their defined work duties.
- Vendors who provide expendable supplies and materials specific and essential to the stated research.
- Vendors who provide high-value equipment or parts for fabricated equipment.

What is the difference between consulting and research?

Research – whether performed under the prime or a subrecipient award – is any work that is quantitatively significant and essential to accomplishing stated project objectives by individuals specifically qualified to achieve the overall project outcomes. Consulting is limited in scope to a narrowly defined task performed by an external expert who provides a specific service that enables the research team to perform research. Researchers are responsible to the sponsor for overall outcomes. Consultants are responsible to the researchers for limited contracted services.

How do I determine if my needs are best met by utilizing a contractor or consultant?
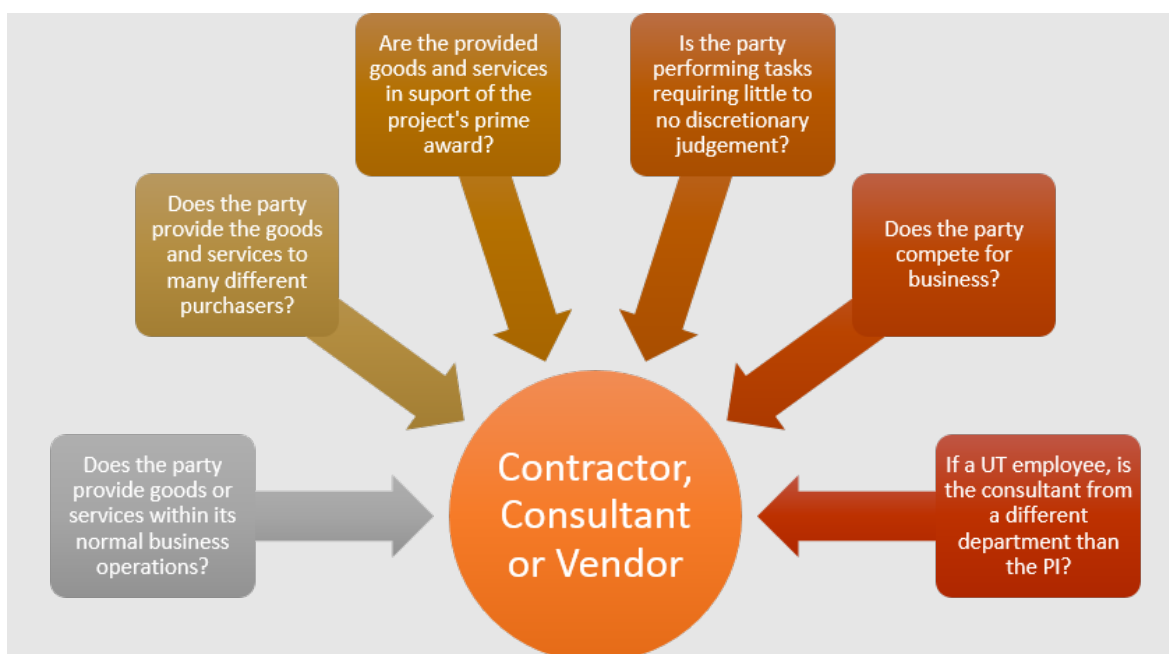
If I determine that my relationship is with a contractor, what must I do to ensure their commitment to the project?

Consultants, contracted service providers, and vendors should be identified by name in either the proposal narrative or budget justification. Additional information about the number of days of work, daily rate, cost of goods and rendered services, and expected deliverables should be included in a contractor letter of commitment. While not all sponsors and programs require contractor commitment letters to be included with proposal submissions, OSP requires all consultants and other contractors to submit a letter of commitment during the formal proposal review period.

Relevant Websites:
Sponsored Projects Outgoing Agreement Guide and Check-list
Electronic Code of Federal Regulations - Uniform Guidance

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The off-campus indirect cost (IDC) rate is applied to projects conducted off-campus that meet the criteria outlined below. This rate is calculated on modified total direct costs (MTDC). UT's IDC rates, including the off-campus IDC rate, are federally negotiated and are audited by the U.S. government (see the current rates).

Who approves use of the off-campus IDC rate?
OSP. All requests for use of the off-campus rate must be received by OSP at least seven (7) business days before the proposal deadline.

What criteria must be met to use the off-campus IDC rate?
- The off-campus portion of the project must take place for at least 90 consecutive days.
- In addition, at least one of the following criteria must be met:
  - The combined proposed effort of all involved UT personnel working off campus must be greater than the combined proposed effort of all involved UT personnel working on-campus. This includes unpaid contributed effort.
  - The budget must include leasing or renting an off-site facility as a direct cost, and the personnel paid from the grant and any equipment must be located at that facility.
  - The total direct costs incurred off campus must exceed the total direct costs incurred on campus.

See Also:
Indirect Cost (IDC) Adjustments and Waivers

Relevant Websites:
Indirect Cost Reductions/Waivers: Policy and Procedures
Current UT Austin Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (F&A Memo)

Indirect costs (IDC), also referred to as Facilities & Administrative (F&A) or overhead (OH) costs, are costs of facilities and administrative resources to support sponsored activities at UT Austin. UT's IDC rates are federally negotiated and are audited by the U.S. government (see the current rates).

These rates apply to all sponsored projects unless:
- A sponsor/funder mandates that a different IDC rate must be used, or
- The VPR office has approved an IDC rate adjustment or waiver for a particular project

Who approves IDC waivers/adjustments?
The OVPR, not OSP, approves IDC waiver and adjustment requests. Any requests must be approved by the OVPR at least seven (7) business days before the proposal deadline.
- The OVPR will not waive or reduce IDC to "make proposals more competitive."
- The OVPR will not waive or reduce IDC for the sake of stretching a proposal's budget.

IDC reduction as a form of cost share: The OVPR only grants this in cases where the sponsor explicitly states that IDC reduction is its preferred form of cost sharing. See the OVPR Cost Sharing Requests page of this guide for more details.

How do I obtain an IDC waiver/adjustment? See below or online:
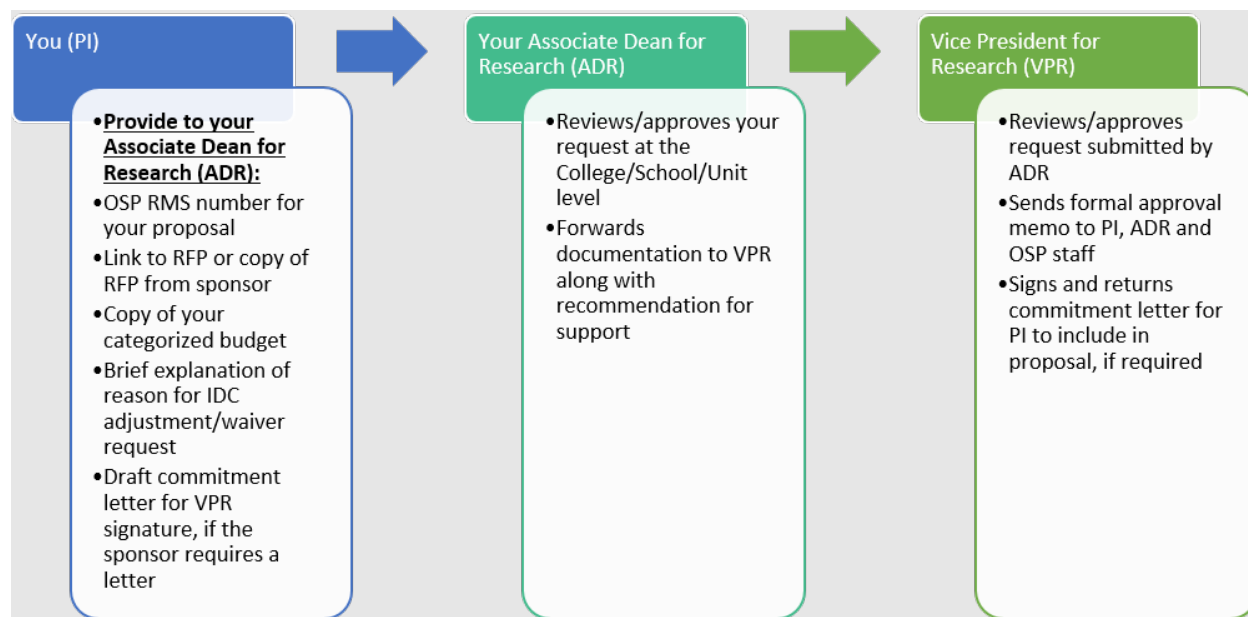
See Also:
Use of the Off-Campus IDC Rate

Relevant Websites:
Indirect Cost Reductions/Waivers: Policy and Procedures
Current UT Austin Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (F&A Memo)

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Cost share is the portion of a project or program cost not borne by the sponsor and represents UT's financial contribution to the project. At UT, cost sharing is discouraged unless it is a requirement stated in the sponsor's request for proposals.

What kinds of costs can be "shared"?
Federal guidelines and rules dictate what kinds of expenses can be counted toward cost sharing. For more information on what's allowed and unallowed, see the UT cost-sharing websites linked below.

Types of Cost Share
Mandatory Committed Cost Share is cost share required by the sponsor as a condition of the award. This must be documented in your proposal budget and will be reported to the sponsor.

Voluntary Committed Cost Share is cost sharing that is not mandated by the sponsor but is included in your proposal budget, budget justification, or narrative. Once proposed, this becomes a binding commitment and must be documented and reported to the sponsor. Voluntary committed cost share is discouraged.

Voluntary Uncommitted Cost Share is cost sharing that is not required by the sponsor and not included in your proposal budget, budget justification, or narrative. Voluntary uncommitted cost share is not reported to the sponsor.

In-kind Contributions are contributions of time, talent, or resources by third parties. The most common type of in-kind contribution committed at UT is contributed (unpaid) PI effort on projects. Other types of in-kind contributions can include real property, equipment, supplies, and other expendable property or goods and services directly benefiting and specifically designated for the project. In-kind contributions should include a brief statement describing the basis for determining the valuation of the contribution. Determining the valuation of equipment is particularly complex. OSP can help answer questions about valuation of in-kind cost share contributions.

Guidelines
- Any committed cost share must be documented on a cost share form at the time of proposal and verified at time of award.
- You cannot commit an individual's time beyond 100% effort.
- Most colleges/schools/units have set a limit on the amount of unpaid research effort that PIs are allowed to commit (e.g., 25% of a 9-month academic appointment for faculty PIs). This limit may affect your ability to contribute in-kind cost share.
- As a general rule, cost share only the minimum amount required.
- Using federal dollars as matching or cost sharing toward another federally sponsored project is not allowed unless you have written authorization from both federal agencies.

Relevant Websites:
UT-Austin Cost Share Guidelines   Cost Share FAQ
UT-Austin Cost Share Form   Cost Share Terms

OVPR Cost Sharing Requests

I'm working on a proposal and the sponsor requires cost sharing. May I approach the VPR to ask for a contribution to meet the cost share?
If cost sharing is a mandatory requirement, you may ask for OVPR support to help you meet the cost share threshold. Keep the following in mind:

- The OVPR's does not contribute to voluntary cost sharing. You will need to provide documentation (e.g., the RFP) that states that the cost sharing is mandatory.

- You should review the Cost Sharing section of this guidebook and visit the websites therein before making a request to the VPR.

- Cost sharing requests must be received in the VPR office at least three (3) weeks before the proposal deadline.

- When making a cost sharing request, PIs must include:
    1. Link to RFP that states that cost sharing is mandatory
    2. OSP RMS number for the proposal
    3. A full proposal draft
    4. Budget draft
    5. Draft commitment letter for VPR signature, if required by the sponsor
    6. Explanation of what the PI team and PI's unit/department/college/school are contributing to help meet the cost share
    7. Commitment memos/letters from all parties making contributions (e.g., department chair, dean)

- *IDC reduction as a form of cost share: The OVPR only grants this in cases where the sponsor explicitly states that IDC reduction is its preferred form of cost sharing. Whenever possible, the VPR's office will make its cost share contribution in cash.*

See Also:
Cost Sharing

Relevant Websites:
UT Austin Cost Sharing Guidelines   Cost Sharing FAQs
Cost Sharing Terms/Definitions

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What is the difference between letters of support and letters of commitment?

Letters of support communicate the **general endorsement or approval** of a project by an entity.

Letters of commitment are declarations of active participation in a project, specifying an **entity's role in fulfilling project goals**, and the **resources** that the entity will commit to the project.

Letters of commitment must:

- Include confirmation that, should the grant be awarded, the entity agrees to provide:
  - Specific services or project work; and/or
  - Specific financial contributions.
- Quantify financial contributions, including amounts, timing, and purpose.
- Be signed by someone authorized to make commitments on behalf of the entity.
- **Contractor/Consultant letters of commitment** should also include information about the number of days of work, daily rate, cost of goods and rendered services, and expected deliverables.

How do I request a letter of support from the VPR office for my proposal? What about a letter of commitment on behalf of UT, signed by the VPR?

If you are requesting a cash commitment from OVPR, then you must follow the guidance outlined in the OVPR Cost Sharing section of the PI Book. If you are requesting an adjustment to the IDC rate, you must follow the guidance outlined in the IDC Adjustments and Waivers section of the PI Book.

To request a general letter of support from OVPR or an "institutional commitment statement" that is required to be signed by the VPR per the proposal guidelines, follow these steps:

1. Draft the support or commitment letter.
2. At least seven (7) days prior to the proposal deadline, send the following to vp-research-sr@austin.utexas.edu:
   a. Full draft of the proposal
   b. Copy of the sponsor's request for proposals (RFP), highlighting the text pertaining to the commitment/support letter requirement. If a commitment or support letter is not required by the sponsor, provide rationale for why the letter is needed.
   c. Draft of the letter to be signed by OVPR
3. Note that the VPR does not automatically provide letters of support or commitment. You will be contacted if further information is needed.

See Also:
Cost Sharing
VPR Cost Sharing
IDC Adjustments and IDC Waivers

Relevant websites:
NIH Letters of Support

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"Research-related agreements" are research agreements other than grants and contracts, such as funded or unfunded memorandums of understanding (MOUs), non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), and data use agreements (DUAs). This table outlines some of the most commonly used research-related agreements at UT.

To help expedite approval of agreements, the UT Board of Regents (BOR) provides standard sponsored research agreement templates, as well as templates for standard academic affiliations, which include international MOUs and educational agreements, that are signed by the Business Contracts Office . The length of the approval process varies depending on the complexity of the agreement, so start the process as early as possible.

Where to go for help:

For academic exchanges related to faculty teaching or lecturing, a dean's request submitted to the Business Contracts Office is required to process an agreement. For student academic exchanges or mobility programs, contact the Texas Global. If in doubt about how to proceed, contact the Office of the VP for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors.

The procedures described below assume a substantial research component and the use of a pre-approved BOR template unless otherwise stated.

Although research grants are under your direction as Principal Investigator, the grant or contractual agreement is between UT and the sponsor. Proposals, contracts, and other binding agreements can be signed by only a small number of individuals, known as authorized officials, who have the authority to sign these agreements on behalf of UT. **Faculty, deans, and department chairs are not authorized officials.**

UT Research Management Suite - Agreements Module
All new funded and non-funded research agreements need to be submitted through the UT Research Management Suite - agreements module. There are many resources available on the UT Research Management Suite – Agreements site. Please get in touch with the project team to schedule training, ask a question, or provide feedback.

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Type of agreement	Description	Examples and Resource Support	Templates
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) involving sponsored (funded) research (a.k.a. memorandum of agreement, letter of intent)	MOU is a bilateral or multilateral agreement that documents the manner in which the parties intend to pursue a common course of action. In this case, action related to the research enterprise.	For MOUs involving funded research, including those with a state or federal government entity or with a foreign government entity: Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP). If MOU involves a for-profit entity or state-owned oil company: Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact.	Sponsored Research Agreements
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for unfunded projects (a.k.a. memorandum of agreement, letter of intent)	MOU is a bilateral or multilateral agreement that documents the manner in which the parties intend to pursue a common course of action. In this case, action related to the research enterprise.	Unfunded MOUs with no specific deliverables, such as materials transfers, data use, or funds transfers: Office of Sponsored Projects.	Unfunded Research MOU Templates: • Domestic • International

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Type of agreement	Description	Examples and Resource Support	Templates
Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs)	If you or your group is disclosing or receiving proprietary information, both parties (you and the external entity) are required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), also referred to as a Confidential Disclosure Agreement (CDA), Proprietary Information Agreement (PIA), or similar title.	Discovery to Impact (D2I), or the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP depending on the type of agreement: • Contact OSP if the NDA is related to government or foundation sponsored research (including SBIR/STTR grants, I-Corps, I/UCRCs) and/or related data use agreements, or material transfers (see MTA section below). • Contact Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact if the NDA is related to industry funded sponsored research (including state owned oil companies and IAPs) and/or related data use agreements • Contact Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact if the NDA is related to intellectual property or technology licenses, • Contact Business Contracts Office if agreement is related to equipment loans, software purchases, facility use, or data use agreements for academic or departmental use.	Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreements

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Type of agreement	Description	Examples and Resource Support	Templates
Materials Transfer Agreements (MTA)	A Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) is a legal contract governing the transfer of proprietary research material, including biological or chemical samples or materials that are infectious, hazardous or subject to special regulations, from one party to another.	Outgoing MTA: use when you provide particular University materials to external entities. If in doubt, contact OSP. Incoming MTA: use when external entities or individual researchers provide materials to you. If in doubt, contact OSP. For compliance issues: Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS).	MTA Templates
Non-Sponsored Related Agreements (Services)	Agreements for procurement of goods or services are considered business contracts and are handled by the Office of the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer's Business Contracts Office.	These agreements cannot be processed via the UT RMS. Complete and sign the Business Contract Review Form (BCRF), then submit them to the Business Contracts Office for approval. Here are examples of service contract agreements.	Business Contracts

Relevant websites:
More About Memorandums of Understanding
UT Research Management Suite

Templates:
Sponsored Research Agreements-Templates
Unfunded Research MOU Templates:
- Domestic
- International
Forms for Inventors
Board of Regents-Approved Standard Affiliation Agreements
Templates (including international MOUs)

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Industrial affiliates programs facilitate the dialogue between academia and industry and the transfer of new knowledge to the public by providing an avenue for industry to contribute to and sustain research and teaching at UT. Companies gain direct access to state-of-the-art research capabilities and other benefits in exchange for annual membership fees that primarily fund basic research for program team members. Each participant receives the same benefits from equivalent membership in the program. Any interested company may join an affiliate program.

Benefits for Members
Benefits can include early access to state-of-the-art technical information and reports, regular group meetings and presentations, and facilitated access to research programs and participating faculty, research staff, and students. IAP members are not granted intellectual property rights, there are no required deliverables, and there are no indirect costs associated with this research.

Benefits for UT
IAPs can provide support for ongoing research, enrich students' and postdocs' educational experience, maintain UT's role as a resource, and contribute to its mission of teaching and research.

Establishing an IAP
An IAP is initiated when a faculty member's research is widely recognized in an industry segment and is of significant interest to certain industry segment members. The process of establishing an IAP is managed by Discovery to Impact's Licensing & Collaborative Research Team. A complete explanation of the process can be found in the UT Policy for Establishing Industrial Affiliates Programs and Instructions for Establishing Industrial Affiliates Programs. For more information on establishing a new Industrial Affiliates Program, please contact Discovery to Impact's Licensing & Collaborative Research team.

See Also:
Who Sets Up Awards: Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact

Relevant Websites:
UT Policy for Establishing Industrial Affiliates Programs
IAP agreement template
Discovery to Impact, Licensing & Collaborative Engagement

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What is the difference between a research gift and sponsored research?

The majority of externally funded research at UT is funded as sponsored research (also referred to as sponsored projects). Under sponsored research agreements, PIs receive funding from an external entity in exchange for performing specific research tasks, performing research within a stated scope of work, investigating specific research questions, or providing some other kind of research output.

In contrast, a research gift is an unrestricted gift of funds, meaning that the external entity providing the funds expects no deliverables or other research outputs. In addition, there can be no constraints on the PI's ability to publish results, no confidentiality or intellectual property restrictions, and no budget restrictions. Research gifts carry no terms or conditions beyond a general statement of purpose.

Who handles research gifts at UT?

University Development (the central development office) processes research gifts. If you receive a check from an external entity in support of your UT research, you should contact University Development to establish an unrestricted account to spend the funds. Keep in mind that research gifts cannot have any strings attached – if the external entity expects you to perform a scope of work, then the agreement is actually a sponsored research agreement and needs to be processed through the Office of Sponsored Projects or Office of Industry Engagement (if the external entity is a company).

I have been talking with a company and they want to provide me with research funds but do not want to pay overhead or indirect costs. Can I have them give me an unrestricted research gift to avoid overhead?

A company may provide funds as a research gift only if they are willing to accept that there can be <u>no</u> expected research outcomes in return, no publication restrictions, no confidentiality restrictions, and no intellectual property restrictions. Research gifts are not subject to indirect costs, but they are not completely fee-free: some colleges, schools, and units, including Engineering, Natural Sciences, and Liberal Arts, have implemented a research gift tax to offset the costs of administering the funds. Check with University Development when processing your research gift to determine whether your college, school, or unit imposes a research gift tax.

If the company expects any kind of specific output from you as PI (e.g., a statement of work, deliverables), then the research agreement is sponsored research and should be processed through the Office of Industry Engagement rather than being funded as a research gift.

How are gift funds managed?

The Office of Financial and Administrative Services offers an overview of research gift fund types, including information on expenditures, gift processing, and other rules and restrictions.

Relevant Websites:

Gift Funds: Financial and Administrative Services

Development Office: Foundation Relations

Gifts: Solicitation, Acceptance, and Management: UT Handbook of Operating Procedures

Research Gift Application Guide

Export control affects three main areas at UT:
1. Research
2. Travel outside the U.S.
3. Shipping

Is my research affected by export control?

Research – If your research is considered to be "fundamental research," it is excluded from U.S. export control laws. However, if your research is fundamental research, but you have a foreign national working with controlled substances (found on the Commerce Control List or the U.S. Munitions List Part 121) or proprietary technology in conjunction with your research project (see Technology Control Plan (TCP) Certification), your research is affected by export control. Also, if you are working on a project that has controlled proprietary technology or the government has placed access controls on the technology, even if you do not have foreign nationals involved in your research, you must have a Technology Control Plan (TCP) in place that limits access to only U.S. citizens and foreign nationals with a green card. For assistance in completing the TCP, contact the Export Controls Officer.

Travel outside the U.S. – Your travel outside the U.S. related to research (e.g., for research abroad or for a conference) is affected by export control laws if you are:
- Taking items with you on a trip in support of your work or conference such as
  - Laptops
  - Encryption products
  - Data/technology
  - Blueprints, drawings, schematics
- Supplying certain technologies/data at a "closed" conference or meeting (not open to all technically qualified members of the public, and attendees are not permitted to take notes)
- Exchanging goods, services, or money in certain countries
- Traveling to sanctioned/embargoed countries
- Doing business with certain people or entities

Shipping – Shipping items outside the U.S. could require a license from OFAC (the Office of Foreign Assets Control), the Department of State, or BIS (Bureau of Industry and Security). Licensing could take anywhere from 2 weeks to 6 months, and shipping without a permit could lead to a fine for you and UT.

Contact David Ivey, Associate Director and University Export Controls Officer, in the Office of Sponsored Projects if you are unsure whether your research, travel, or shipping of items outside the U.S. will be subject to export control laws. The consequences of violating export control regulations can be quite severe, ranging from loss of research contracts and exporting privileges to monetary penalties and jail time for the individual violating these regulations.

Relevant websites:
Export Control: Regulation and Resources

UT's Office of Research Support and Compliance oversees institutional compliance with federal rules governing transparency and objectivity in research as they pertain to financial conflicts of interest (FCOI).

UT follows policy guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Public Health Service (PHS). We require that all Covered Individuals, regardless of funding source, maintain an up-to-date COI Disclosure Profile in the UTRMS system. You will be sent UTRMS notifications by email (from no-reply@utexas.edu) with a link to the COI module when disclosure is required, including:

- within 30 days of initial employment,
- prior to the submission of an application for funding,
- at least annually.

You will also be notified to update your COI Disclosure Profile or certify that your COI Disclosure Profile is up to date:

- when you have a new sponsored project awarded (prior to award activation and account set up), and
- when a new IRB protocol is submitted (where you are identified as a Covered Individual).

You are required to update your COI Disclosure Profile within 30 days of acquisition of a new activity requiring disclosure.

What constitutes a FCOI with research?

A financial conflict of interest exists when an investigator's personal financial interest(s) or compensated outside activities could inappropriately influence (or appear to inappropriately influence) their research activities at UT.

- Note: A conflict of interest is a situation, not a behavior. Having a COI is not considered misconduct or an accusation of misconduct.

A Financial Conflict of Interest determination is very likely to be made when an investigator holds a financial interest that could be affected by their research, or when an investigator's financial interest is in an "Entity" whose financial interest could be affected by their research.

COI Review Process

The COI/Outside Activities team in the Office of Research Support and Compliance reviews disclosed financial interests and proposed research activities (at time of award and/or time of IRB protocol submission) and will communicate with you, as necessary, to determine if there is a financial interest that presents a conflict of interest with your research activities. This process may involve the Objectivity in Research Committee for complex conflict situations. When potential or perceived financial conflict(s) of interest are identified, the COI team will work with you to manage the conflict of interest.

FCOI Training

A Financial Conflict of Interest training module is available in Research TRACKS: RC0410. Once every three years, investigators (Covered Individuals) are required to complete the FCOI training module and certify completion of FCOI training in the UTRMS COI Disclosure Profile.

Relevant Websites:

Conflict of Interest: Financial Interest Disclosure

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If your research involves human subjects, animal research or rDNA and biosafety, the table below will help you navigate the approval process.

Type of research	Oversight Required	Definition	Resources and Submission
Work involving human subjects	IRB	All research demonstrations, developments, or other activities involving the use of human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Research Board (IRB) prior to initiation of the project.	Submit an application for IRB review in UTRMS. Keep in mind IRB meeting dates and deadlines when submitting protocol requests.
Work involving vertebrate animals	IACUC	All researchers utilizing vertebrate animals, cephalopods, and embryonated eggs in research, testing, and teaching activities must obtain written approval from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) prior to ordering animals and beginning work.	Submit an application for IACUC review. Keep in mind IACUC meeting dates and deadlines when submitting protocol requests.
Work involving use of recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules (rNA) research, biohazardous agents, materials and toxins	IBC (rDNA and Biosafety)	Use of recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules (rsNA) and research, biohazardous agents, materials and toxins in all research or teaching activities conducted at or sponsored by the University.	Submit an application for IBC review. Keep in mind IBC meeting dates and deadlines when submitting protocol requests.

Relevant websites:
Office of Research Support and Compliance
Human Subjects and IRB Website

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Registration – As a PI, you are responsible for making sure all lab personnel (including graduate students, undergraduate students, faculty, staff, and visiting scientists/researchers) are registered with Environmental Health and Safety using UT HERD (previously EHS Assistant). Upon termination of a lab personnel member's appointment at UT, you should remove them from UT HERD.

Training – To ensure lab safety, personnel must receive training. EHS provides core (mandatory) training for all lab personnel, plus additional training for specific hazards. You are required to ensure all their personnel receive proper training, to provide Site-Specific Hazard Communication training to personnel who work in labs, and to ensure that all training is properly documented.

Hazardous Materials – PIs, research students, staff, and visiting researchers are responsible for compliance with related Federal and State regulations and University policies and procedures associated with chemical/biological safety, security, and disposal. Shipping hazardous materials requires personnel to be certified by EHS. These hazardous materials can be: biological, chemical, radioactive lasers, radioactive materials, and other radiation-producing devices, and controlled substances (drugs controlled by the Federal Drug Administration and certain precursor chemicals and lab apparatus, which are regulated jointly by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Department of Public Safety).

Select Agents and Toxins – Strict compliance with the regulations is required of all researchers working with these agents. Review the list of Select Agents and Toxins. All use of Select Agents and Toxins must be approved by the IBC prior to the initiation of research activities. Submit an IBC protocol.

Biohazardous Materials – Researchers conducting any research with infectious agents, biological toxins, human cells/blood/tissue, recombinant DNA or other biohazardous materials must have their research approved by the IBC prior to the initiation of research activities. Submit an IBC protocol.

Fire/Life Safety Provisions – In accordance with State law, all public universities are required to comply with the State of Texas Fire Marshal's Office adopted fire codes. To request services such as evacuation training, designing an exit strategy, or portable fire extinguisher training, contact the Fire Prevention Services office at 512-495-3637.

Research Activities Involving Minors – Working with minors (anyone under the age of 18) requires completion of special safety forms for research activities involving minors and approval by the Youth Protection Program. Researchers who plan to have minors in the lab should review the requirements in advance.

Relevant Websites:

Environmental Health and Safety

Green Laboratory Program

Lab Safety Training

IBC Review and Approval

Visitors in Research Laboratories

List of Select Agents and Toxins

Lab Safety Manual

eProtocol IBC Information Center

Fire Prevention

Youth Protection Program

Section 4: Manage Active Projects

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The Notice of Award (NOA) is a legal document from the sponsor that indicates that an award has been made and funds may be requested or expended. NOAs can come in many forms, from a simple letter to a multi-page agreement, and generally state the amount of funding authorized and the budgeted period of performance. They may also contain a specific award number and terms and conditions. An NOA may also be called a Grant Award Notification (GAN) or Notification of Grant Award (NOGA).

OSP will need this document to process your award and set up your accounts. If you receive a hardcopy version, or if you are not sure whether OSP has received a copy, please send it to OSP for processing. Please note that any signatures required will be handled by OSP.

The word "award" seems to have different meanings depending on when it's used. Can you explain?
In research administration, the term "award" can refer to either the grant or contract itself or the process of setting up or finalizing the agreement, either with the sponsor or UT. So one could say this: "NIH awarded [action] the grant [or award, a thing] to UT, and OSP awarded [set up or finalized] the grant [or award, a thing] in UT's Research Management System (UTRMS)." Your funds aren't available to you until your grant has been awarded, i.e., set up in UTRMS.

See Also:
Who Sets Up Awards: Office of Sponsored Projects
Who Sets Up Awards: Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact

Relevant Websites:
Office of Sponsored Projects

The Office of Sponsored Projects negotiates and manages all sponsored grants and contracts for UT with the exception of those agreements funded solely by private industry, which are negotiated and managed by the Office of Industry Engagement.
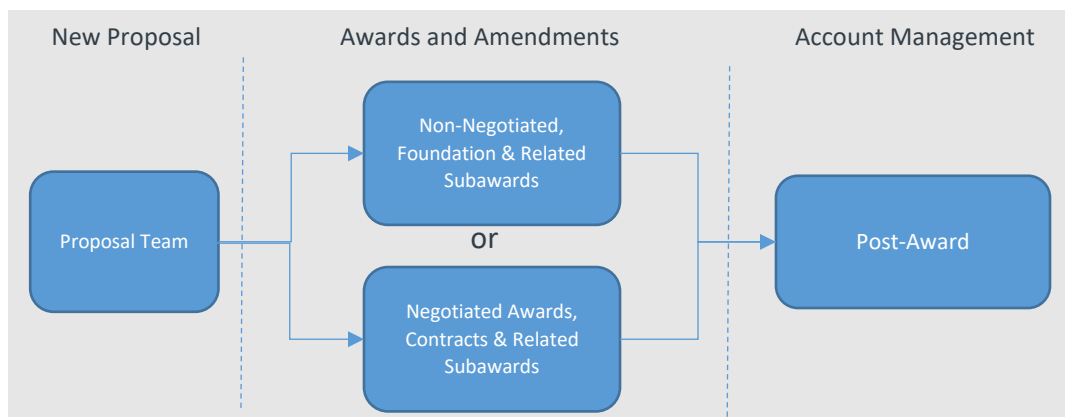
[Locate your Proposal Analyst, Grants Specialist, Contracts Coordinator, and Post-Award Specialist.](#)

Proposal Team. The proposal process begins with the submission of a Funding Proposal through UT's Research Management System (UTRMS), after which you will be assigned a Proposal Analyst to assure that the proposal meets the requirements of the sponsor, the University, and the State of Texas.

Negotiated Awards and Contracts (includes OSP Collaborative Research Resources, i.e., Export Controls, and Material Transfer Agreements). Awards processed by this team are typically more complex and require a process of negotiation before UT will agree to the terms. Related outgoing subawards will be issued and negotiated by the Grants/Awards Team.

Non-negotiated and Foundation Awards Team. This team processes the bulk of the federal grants and private foundation awards at UT. Related outgoing subawards will be issued and negotiated by the Contracts/Agreements and Foundation Awards Team.

Post-Award. Once your Award has been signed by both parties, it is sent to Post-Award for account set up. Post-Award's services include award account (26-account) setup, sponsor billing and collection, financial reporting to sponsors and outside agencies, certain requisition review and approvals, award final closeout, audit response and support, and training.

See Also:
[Who Sets Up Awards: Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact](#)
[Research-Related Agreements](#)

Relevant Websites:
[Prepare and Submit Proposal](#)   [Negotiate Awards & Subawards](#)
[Manage Awards & Subawards](#)   [Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact](#)

[Office of Sponsored Projects](#)   [Lifecycle of the Grant](#)

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The Office of Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact negotiates all UT research contracts funded solely by private industry. OIE offers specialized contractual expertise, with support from you and the Office of Technology Commercialization, to develop various types of agreements and appropriate intellectual property models for sponsored research.

OIE handles the complete proposal, negotiation, and subaward negotiation for all industry-only awards. Upon receiving a signed agreement, Post-Award will manage account set-up, management, and financial reporting.

Industry-Only Proposals	➡	Award, IP, and Subaward Negotiation	➡	Send to OSP Post Award for Account Set-up
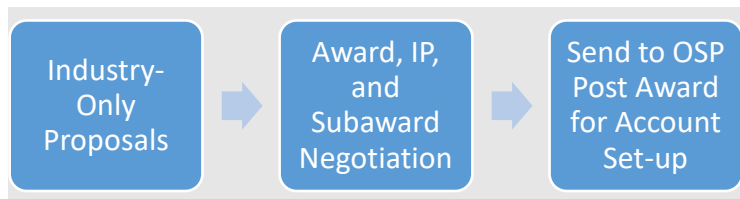
See Also:
Who Sets Up Awards: Office of Sponsored Projects
Who Sets Up Awards: University Development Office
Research-Related Agreements

Relevant Websites:
Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact   Office of Sponsored Projects

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All research gifts are proposed, set-up, and managed by UT's central fundraising arm, the University Development Office (Central Development). The University Development Office can help you submit proposals that don't require OSP oversight, such as requests for general support of an existing program or research project, endowment, construction, scholarships, and other charitable purposes.

See Also:
Research Gifts

Relevant Websites:
UT Foundation Relations Grant Application Guide   UT Development Office: Foundation Relations
Foundation Relations Partnership Interest Form

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The PI Memo is sent to you by an OSP negotiator during the process of negotiation and/or award set-up. It outlines key terms of the agreement for your reference and verifies your willingness to comply with these terms before OSP executes the award.

The PI Memo will be completed on UTRMS and includes questions related to any existing (background) intellectual property (IP) to be used in the project, the likelihood of new IP being developed, foreign travel, export controls and whether the research activity is considered fundamental, financial conflict of interest issues, and recent changes to related contracts or compliance protocol approvals (e.g. Animal, Human, Biosafety, rDNA) – all of which may inform the negotiation process and assist OSP in meeting your research needs. The second part of the PI Memo is sent once the terms of the contract have been finalized and includes the information captured in the both parts of the memo.

See Also:
Who Sets Up Awards: Office of Sponsored Projects
Who Sets Up Awards? Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact

Relevant Websites:
Negotiate Awards and Subawards

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Although research grants are under your direction as PI, the grant or contractual agreement is between UT and the sponsor. Proposals, contracts, and other binding agreements can be signed by only a small number of individuals, known as authorized officials, who have the authority to sign these agreements on behalf of UT. *Faculty, deans, and department chairs are not authorized officials.*

Please note that **all** sponsored research at UT must go through OSP; Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact; or the Development Office.

To obtain an authorized signature for research-related agreements that are not industry-funded, contact OSP.

To obtain an authorized signature for industry-funded agreements, contact Licensing and Collaborative Research, Discovery to Impact.

Relevant Websites:
UT Delegated Signature Authority

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The receipt of a Notice of Award doesn't make funds immediately available to you as the PI. Before being allowed access to grant funds, you must provide all project-related documents needed to set up an award (e.g., budget and statement of work, Cost Share Form) and assure that all related compliance approvals are in place. Depending on the project, these compliance issues may include any of the following:

- Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI)
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Approval (Animal Research)
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval (Human Studies)
- Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) Approval (rDNA; biohazardous agents, materials, and toxins)
- Radioactivity Approval

In particular, if your research involves human subjects, animal research, or rDNA and biosafety, the table under the Compliance section of this guide will help you navigate the approval process.

- Submit an application for IRB review.
- Submit an application for IACUC review.
- Submit an application for IBC review.

See Also:

Financial Conflict of Interest	IRB
IACUC/IBC	Lab Safety/Biosafety

Relevant Websites:

Office of Research Support and Compliance	RSC Conflict of Interest Page
FCOI Training Page	RSC Human Subjects Page
RSC Animal Research Page	RSC rDNA and Biosafety Page
OSP Financial Conflict of Interest Page	Environmental Health & Safety Radiation Safety Page

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Contrary to common expectations, your ability to expend funds on a grant does not depend on our having received a check or transfer of the grant amount. Most awards provide an authorization to spend, within the period of performance, up to the grant or segment total. After you expend award funds, Post-Award invoices the sponsor for the funds spent to date. This is done regularly to limit the time between our expenditure and the repayment by the sponsor.

There are exceptions to this. For certain sponsors, the difficulty involved in recovering payment due makes working on "authority to spend" risky. As a result, UT generally requires payment from industry on sponsored research agreements and from foreign sponsors before allowing PIs access to grant funds. For the same reasons, UT may require up-front payment by sponsors who are small, new, new to UT, or who have little documented history. One final exception to the process outlined above is for those sponsors who prefer to send the entire amount upon agreement. For many of those, it is expected that any unexpended funds left at the end of the performance period will be returned to the sponsor.

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Pre-award spending refers to the ability to expend grant award dollars before the official start date of the grant. Under Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200), the right to pre-award spending is generally not automatic. However, many federal awards allow automatic 90-day pre-award spending authorization, depending on the sponsor's terms and conditions.

If a sponsor or particular award you receive does not allow pre-award spending, or you would like to request authorization to spend beyond Uniform Guidance's 90-day authorization, you can request authorization from the sponsor by submitting a formal request through OSP.

If you have sponsor pre-award spending authorization, but do not yet have a notice of award, you will need to seek credit for your pre-award expenditures by submitting a credit request form to OSP. Along with the form, you will need the sponsor's written confirmation that an award is coming and its expected period of performance.

See Also:
Credit Requests

Relevant Websites:
Credit Request Form

OSP Staff Constituency Lists

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Under certain conditions, it may be necessary to expend award funds without having first received a formal notice of award (NOA). The most common reasons are that UT has approval for pre-award spending or that the start date of the grant or increment has passed without UT having received an NOA. To begin project work in these instances, you must submit a credit request to OSP. The credit request will require the following:

- Submission of a completed credit request memorandum.
- Written confirmation from the sponsor that an NOA is coming, including the anticipated funding amount and period of performance.
- A requested period of performance for the credit based on the expected arrival date of the NOA. Credit can be requested for a maximum of six (6) months and only for the amount necessary to perform during that period of time.
- A budget for the amount requested (note that no credit funds can be used for subawards).
- Verification that all covered individuals have completed their conflict of interest training and have an approved FID form on file.
- Verification that all required compliance approvals (IACUC, IRB, rDNA, etc.) are in place before covered research will be started.
- If applicable, verification that a Technology Control Plan (TCP) is in place.
- A guarantee account number (only in certain high-risk situations, such as foreign or small, unknown sponsors).

Warning: As PI, you will be responsible for all charges incurred should the award funds not come through.

See Also:
Notice of Award
Financial Conflict of Interest
Pre-Award Spending
Obtaining IRB/IACUC/IBC Approvals

Relevant Websites:
Credit Request Memorandum
Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI)
Office of Research Support and Compliance

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Account numbers at UT are 10-digit numbers used for recording accounting transactions. It is made up of the account group, the budget group, and the subaccount.

Account Group – The account group represents the source or purpose of the funds. For most research awards, the account group is 26, which represents sponsored contracts and grants. Other commonly used accounts in research are 30 (from gifts) and 19 (from indirect cost recovery). OSP Post Award staff are organized by department/unit and the phase of your award.

Budget Group – The budget groups are related accounts that are assigned to the units responsible for administering the funds.

Subaccount – Subaccounts divide the budget groups into expense categories, such as salaries, equipment, participant support, etc.

The format of the account number is as follows:

Sponsor Number
e.g., 10 = NSF

XX – XX - XXXX - XX

Account Group
(e.g., 26, 19, 30)

Subaccount
(e.g., 14 – fringe, 75 – travel, 50 – materials & supplies, 12- salaries & wages)
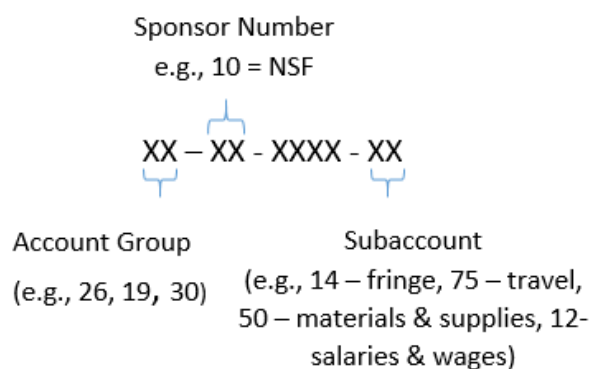
Relevant Websites:
UT Account Group List
OSP Post Award Constituency List
UT Subaccount List

The Letter of Agreement (LOA) is a way of formally allocating control of a portion of the award funds to someone outside the main award PI's college or school. Additionally, the proportional share of IDC return related to the grant will be shared with the college of the PI allocated the LOA funds. The LOA can be thought of as an internal subaward.

To create an LOA, download and complete the Letter of Agreement Request Form and send it to the Office of Sponsored Projects.

Relevant Websites:
Letter of Agreement (LOA) Request Form

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The tables illustrating procedures for hiring researchers (employees and non-employees) can be found in the section of this guide that addresses research positions, under How to Hire Employee and Non-Employee Researchers.

Who to go to for help?
In general, administrative support staff who process personnel appointments for positions you supervise (e.g., graduate students) will also process research appointments.

Relevant websites:
Research Titles Policy and Procedures
HOOP 7-1020 Research Titles Policy, Definitions, and Procedures
Postdoctoral & Graduate Student Resources
NIH Guide to Training and Mentoring
NSF Mentoring Plan Guidance (PAPPG section 2.j.)

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Sponsors expect that PIs are engaged in conducting and overseeing research projects and personnel. If you are away from the facilities or absent from a project for a period of time, the sponsor needs to be aware of and approve the absence. Most sponsors require notification prior to your absence, or as soon as is practical after it is known. It is your responsibility to notify OSP as soon as you are aware that you'll be absent for longer than a few weeks.

When would my absence require notification of the sponsor?

Withdrawal from a sponsored project, an absence from the university of more than three months, a 25 percent (or greater) reduction in time devoted to the project, a significant change in work activity on the part of a principal investigator, project director, or primary individual all require prior approval from a federal sponsor. These thresholds vary from award to award and sponsor to sponsor. Contact OSP for clarification and to submit a request to the sponsor.

If you are actively engaged in a project, even if offsite, such approval is not required. If in doubt, check with OSP for clarification.

See also:
Prior Approvals

Relevant Websites:
University Policy Office: Leave of Absence
Faculty Leaves and Special Academic Assignments

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Effort reporting is UT's way of assuring that faculty and staff have met their commitments to sponsored projects and that salaries charged to projects are reasonable in relation to the work performed. According to UT's Handbook of Operating Procedures, effort is defined as "the amount of time spent on any activity expressed as a percentage of total institutional activities for which an individual is compensated by the University." These activities include the following:

- Research or sponsored projects (i.e., contracts and grants)
- Instruction and non-sponsored research
- Administrative duties
- Other institutional activities/responsibilities

Salary compensation reports will reflect personnel costs on sponsored accounts.

Things to Know:
- Your total effort must equal 100%.
- Effort is not based on a 40-hour workweek or any other standard workweek or predetermined number of hours.
- 100% effort is your total number of hours actually spent on work within the scope of your employment. If you average 50 hours per week during the reporting period and spend an average of 12.5 hours on a sponsored program, that represents 25% effort. The other 37.5 hours, allocated to other institutional activities, represent 75% effort.
- Just as your total effort is not defined by regular business hours, research effort does not necessarily take place only at the University. Research effort at home, at a conference, or in meetings are included in calculating your total effort.
- You must review the personnel costs that are allocated to a project three times a year, following the end of each academic semester, using Salary Compensation Reports.
- UT does not have a standard policy limiting the percentage of time allotted to research. Many colleges limit research efforts to 25% of total effort based on a 9-month appointment. These rules are set by the individual deans. Check with your college or school for clarification.
- In 2020, UT transitioned from Effort Certification and began utilizing *Salary Compensation Reports*.
- Salary Compensation Reports will be provided three times a year, following the end of each academic semester, to provide PIs and departments another tool to review personnel costs on sponsored accounts.

Faculty, staff, and administrators involved in the salary compensation reporting process may wish to consult training slides or complete training in Workday Reporting.

See Also:
Cost Sharing

Relevant Websites:
Salary Compensation Reports
Salary Compensation Reporting Training Slides
UT Handbook of Operating Procedures on Effort Certification
UT's Salary Compensation Reports

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Sponsors generally require reporting during the life of the award, from annual project reports to final equipment reports. Responsibility for these reports varies:

Report	Responsibility
Annual/Interim Progress Reports	Annual/interim progress reports are your responsibility and are generally submitted to the sponsor without OSP involvement or signature. • **NIH-Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR): Are prepared & completed by the PI/DRA within eRA Commons and submitted by your Grants Specialist within the Office of Sponsored Projects.** For any reports requiring the signature of an authorized official, please contact OSP.
Annual/Interim Financial Reports	Submitted by OSP Post-Award
Annual/Interim and Final Cost Share Reporting	Submitted by OSP Post-Award
Final Progress Report	Final Progress Report – Generally your responsibility without OSP involvement or signature. For those requiring the signature of an authorized official, please contact OSP. • Unlike NIH annual progress reports, NIH final progress reports are not routed through OSP.
Equipment Report	Managed and submitted by Inventory Services.
Final Patent Report	Submitted by OSP Post-Award after coordination with you.

See Also:
Signature Authority

Relevant Websites:
UT Inventory Services
How to Submit an NIH Research Progress Report (RPPR)
Award & Subaward Management

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Certain award activities require sponsor approvals before being undertaken. The term "prior approvals" is used to refer to those activities. These requirements vary by sponsor and by award. The list of prior approval requirements for federal awards are found in the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200). Common examples of activities that may require sponsor prior approval include:

- No-cost extensions
- Pre-award spending
- Rebudgeting among budget categories
- Rebudgeting between direct and F&A costs
- Change in scope
- Change of PI
- Issue of subaward
- Foreign travel & Export Control
- Addition of equipment not in approved budget
- Need for additional funding
- Inclusion of unrecovered F&A costs as cost share
- Participant support costs
- Absence from a grant
- Decrease in your effort greater than 25%

If you are not sure if you need to obtain sponsor prior approval for your intended action, contact OSP.

See Also:

Absence from Grant	Effort and Effort Reporting
Pre-Award Spending	Credit Requests

Relevant Websites:
Uniform Guidance Regulations on Prior Approvals (2 CFR 200.407)
Office of Sponsored Projects

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How do I change the PI on my award?

The change of PI is a contractual change that requires a formal request to the sponsor. Contact your OSP Contracts & Grants Specialist and be prepared to provide the following:

- A signed request letter from you to the sponsor that includes the reason for the change and the name of the proposed replacement PI.
- The replacement PI's C.V.
- Please leave space for OSP to add a signature and signature block of the authorized official who will co-sign the letter.

The OSP Grants & Contracts Specialist for the award will submit the request to the sponsor and contact you with the sponsor's response. If approved by the sponsor, OSP will make necessary changes in the UT Research Management System (UTRMS) grants database and update all related accounts.
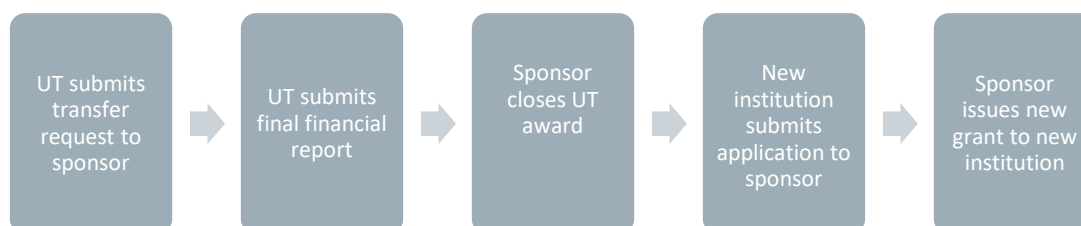
See Also:
PI/Award Transfer

Relevant Websites:
OSP PI/Award Transfer to Another Institution Page
OSP Staff Constituency Lists and Account Assignments

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Grant transfers are a more time-consuming project than most PIs realize. A grant transfer requires closing out the award at the old institution and issuing a new one to the new institution, so turnaround time is often measured in months. For most awards, the transfer process looks like this:

UT submits transfer request to sponsor	→	UT submits final financial report	→	Sponsor closes UT award	→	New institution submits application to sponsor	→	Sponsor issues new grant to new institution

How do I transfer my UT award to my new institution?
For complete transfer instructions, see OSP PI/Award Transfer to Another Institution Page.

PI/Award Transfer Best Practices:
- Because of the long timeline of a transfer, it is important for you to begin the process, both at UT and your new institution, as early as possible.
- Notify the Office of Sponsored Projects of your transfer plans so they may notify the sponsor.
- Stop spending on the award early so that Post-Award may submit a final financial report.
- Subawards complicate and lengthen this process. All subawards must be closed out at UT and reissued at the new institution, so subawardees must be notified as early as possible so that they may close out their award and submit a final financial report to UT. Delay in subaward closeout can delay the grant transfer to the new institution. Contact OSP.
- Many transfer delays that aren't related to late financial reports are related to proposal submission delays at the new institution. Work with your new institution's sponsored projects office as early as possible to prepare and submit a proposal.

Be Aware:
- PIs must be UT employees. Retaining an adjunct UT appointment will not permit you to retain UT PI status.
- When issuing a subaward from your new institution back to UT, you cannot be PI on both the award and the subaward.

See Also:
Change of PI

Relevant Websites:
OSP PI/Award Transfer to Another Institution Page
OSP Information on UT Exit Checklist
UT Exit Checklist

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A cost transfer is an expenditure that is transferred from one account to another after having been recorded in the financial accounting system. They often stem from funds put on an account in error or a need to split shared expenditures across multiple awards. Since unnecessary cost transfers can be a red flag in an audit, avoid using them whenever possible. If necessary, follow these guidelines:

- Expenditures should not be "parked" on one account until money elsewhere becomes available.
- When purchasing an item or transferring a cost, you should ensure that the expenditure will directly benefit the project onto which it will be charged.
- Under Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200 – Subpart E – Cost Principals), the institution must be able to explain and justify all charges transferred onto federal awards, no matter what the source. Any transfers should be completed in a timely manner and with a complete explanation.
- Be aware that for certain sponsors, like NIH, transfers should be accomplished within 90 days of when the error was discovered and be supported by documentation that fully explains how the error occurred.
- Note that items purchased at the end of a project (e.g., within the last 90 days) are subject to even greater scrutiny during an audit.
- Review charges regularly (e.g., monthly) to avoid the need for late transfers.

Once I decide that a cost transfer meets the requirements, how do I transfer costs?
Like other accounting actions, cost transfers are processed by your departmental research administrator or accountant. For transfers more than 30 days after the original account posting, Post-Award will require a written justification for the transfer.

See Also:
Budget
Prior Approvals

Relevant Websites:
Uniform Guidance Cost Principles

When a grant has subawards, you are responsible for monitoring the progress of each subawardee to assure that all required deliverables have been received and spending is reasonable and allowable for the work being done. As PI, you do this by assuring the following:

- Dates match the correct period of performance
- Charges are reasonable and allowable
- The charges fall within the subaward budget and statement of work
- Required deliverables have been received (e.g., progress reports, technical reports, etc.)
- Progress to date is satisfactory

The invoice should be approved quickly and sent to Post-Award for payment as most federal sponsors require that we pay subaward invoices within 30 days of receipt. Additionally, UT can't invoice our sponsor for these costs until the subawardee's invoice has been paid. On certain awards, this can negatively impact the spend rate.

Does UT require any particular format for subawardee invoices?
No. UT accepts our subawardee's standard institutional invoice.

See Also:
Subrecipient Monitoring
Subrecipients and Contractors

Relevant Websites:
Uniform Guidance: Requirements for Pass-Through Entities

Uniform Guidance requires that UT assess and monitor the risk of a subrecipient's noncompliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the subaward. Three key areas of subrecipient monitoring are risk assessment of the subrecipient, subrecipient monitoring, and follow-up on any audit findings or other issues revealed in that process. Although Post-Award manages risk assessment and audit follow-up, you are a key player in subrecipient monitoring. You must monitor a subrecipient's technical and financial progress throughout the entire life of the award by doing the following:

Pre-Award
- Ensure the subrecipient's budgeted costs are reasonable and allowable at the proposal development stage.

After Award
- Monitor the technical progress of a subrecipient's performance as defined in the subaward's statement of work. Identify issues or problems in a timely manner.
- Review and approve subrecipient invoices. Review the subrecipient's expenses in comparison to the awarded budget; review invoices to determine the expenses are in accordance with the subagreement and in line with the work completed to date. Work with OSP to resolve issues.
- Communicate any concerns, whether programmatic or budgetary, to OSP as soon as possible.

At Conclusion of Award
- Receive and review the final technical reports and other deliverables submitted by the subrecipient.
- Obtain all required subrecipient deliverables, patent/invention documentation, or equipment reports.

Do I need to do a risk assessment?
No. OSP will manage that process, and it's generally invisible to you. They will contact you when and if they need information.

See Also:
Subrecipient Invoicing

Relevant Websites:
Uniform Guidance on Subrecipient Monitoring (2 CFR 200.332)

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What should I do if I am contacted about an audit?
Post-Award manages all aspects of audits and will serve as your liaison with the audit entity. Please contact OSP Grants & Financial Management.

See Also:
Subrecipient Monitoring

Relevant Websites:
OSP Web Page on Audits
OSP Grants & Financial Management E-Mail

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Section 5: Transferring Research Output Outside of UT

While policies vary, many sponsors (especially federal and state funding agencies) require research that they fund to be made freely available to the public.

Open access publication
Gold Open Access refers to articles published in an online open access journal. Such journal articles are freely available to the public and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. Some open access journals are funded entirely by article submission fees (typically ranging from $500 to $5000 per article), while others are maintained by institutional subscriptions. UT Libraries maintains relationships with several open access publications that extend to the researcher in the form of member discounts. Please note that NSF guidelines state that archiving in an open access journal is not sufficient. They must be archived in the NSF Public Access Repository (NSF-PAR).

Self-archiving journal articles
Green Open Access refers to articles published in any journal and then self-archived in a freely accessible institutional or specialist online archive, repository, or website. Authors are responsible for abiding by the copyright rules of the journal that published the original article. The free tool SHERPA/RoMEO allows users to search for the copyright and self-archiving rules of specific journals and publishers.

See Also:
UT Publication Offerings

Relevant websites:
Search reputable open access publishers
SHERPA/RoMEO
Additional resources for open access publishing
Guide to NSF Public Access Repository (NSF-PAR)
NSF Public Access Repository (NSF-PAR)
NSF Public Access FAQs
UT Austin Open Access Support

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UT Libraries manages Texas ScholarWorks, an open access, online repository for UT research and scholarship. Additionally, a team of digital scholarship experts is available to assist you with every area of developing your research publications:

- Identifying your subject liaison librarian for research consultations
- Metadata: Melanie Cofield, Head of Access Systems
- Integrating digital scholarship into your course: Allyssa Guzman, Digital Scholarship Librarian
- Research Data Services: Colleen Lyon, Head of Scholarly Communications
- Texas ScholarWorks

See Also:
Publication in Open-Access (OA) Journals

Relevant Websites:
UT Libraries

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UT offers comprehensive data management resources for its research community. These resources are managed by several campus units, including IT Services, UT Libraries, and the Texas Advanced Computing Center (TACC). Some services are free, and others are provided as fee-for-service.

View a full list of data management resources at UT.

Data Management Terms and UT Resources: An Overview

Term	Definition	Available UT Resources
Data Storage	Storage for data that need to be accessed, queried or shared persistently, e.g., for an ongoing active research project	UTBox (unlimited data storage for UT Austin faculty and staff) TACC Cloud Computing resources: • Chameleon TACC Data Storage resources: • Corral
Data Preservation and Archiving	Long-term storage to ensure that data will be available after a project is completed	• UT Libraries Research Data Services Portal (including guidelines for data preservation and access to TexasScholarWorks and Texas Data Repository (TDR)) • IT Services UTBackup (Workstation data back-up) • Ranch (mass archival storage) at TACC
Data Sharing and Publication	Providing access to data and metadata to persons outside UT	• UT Libraries Scholarly Communication Services (including scholarly publishing and open access) • Consulting/Concierge with UT Libraries specialists (listed by research subject) • Texas Data Repository • NSF Public Access Repository (NSF-PAR) • Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (UT is an institutional member. UT Designated Representative is Carolyn Cunningham, 512-495-4382.

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Data Management Plan	Often required by funding sponsors, this is a defined plan for how PIs will store, preserve, grant access to and protect the data that their funded projects generate	• UT Libraries Research Data Services Portal (including data management)
		 • Access to DMPTool: A portal for creating data management plans that comply with research sponsor guidelines (login with UT EID and password)
		 • TACC Data Management resources:
		     o Corral
		
		     o Consult with TACC's Data Management & Collections Group

See Also:
Data Management Plan (DMP)

Relevant websites:
Research Computing and Data Management Resources at UT

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At UT, research discoveries are typically commercialized through a license agreement in which UT grants rights in a specified technology to a third party for a period of years. License agreements require the licensee to meet certain performance milestones and to compensate the University. The University shares this compensation with the inventors. Discovery to Impact (formerly known as the Office of Technology Commercialization) works with inventors to file and pay for patent applications, license technologies on your behalf, collect compensation from the licensees, and disburses the net compensation to you and your co-inventors on a quarterly basis. Under some circumstances, a license can be granted to a startup company formed by you or one of your team members. As PI, you decide how to split license compensation with any current or former investigators who report(ed) to you and who helped to develop the technology, e.g., grad students or postdocs.

What do I do if I have a technology I want to patent or commercialize?

The first step is to file an invention disclosure with Discovery to Impact Intellectual Property (IP) Development team by submitting an invention disclosure form. Specific forms are provided for Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Software, and Copyrightable Works and the IP Development team will work with you to obtain patents or copyrights and license the technology. Even if you think it's too early to disclose a technology, we encourage you to contact the IP Development team, especially if you're planning to present or publish related research discoveries.

Do I have to notify Discovery to Impact whenever I develop something that I think is patentable? What if I'm not sure whether something is patentable?

As a PI, and per UT System Rule 90101: Intellectual Property, you are required for reporting all patentable inventions through the submission of an invention disclosure form to Discovery to Impact before sharing discoveries with any non-UT party. You acknowledge and agree to this annually as part of the Researcher Responsibilities (RR) Memo. If you're unsure whether something is patentable, you can contact the IP Development team at ip@discoveries.utexas.edu, and they can help to determine this by meeting with you and conducting background research. Typically, when you begin writing a journal publication, it's likely you also have everything you need to submit an invention disclosure.

Should I file an invention disclosure before I publish my invention?

Yes. You should submit an invention disclosure at least 60 days before publishing or presenting your invention. Although the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office allows one year from the date of first publication or public disclosure to file a patent, most foreign rights are lost once you've published or otherwise publicly presented your invention. The loss of foreign rights may severely devalue a patent and the commercial potential of your discoveries.

What about software, open source, and copyrights?

The Discovery to Impact IP Development team can assist software creators in selecting the appropriate form of license or other method of publication. Software can be licensed commercially, as open source, or by both mechanisms depending on the use (dual licensing). Contact the IP Development Team (ip@discoveries.utexas.edu) for any questions on licensing of software or copyrightable material.

Who can I talk to If I want to start a company based on a technology I developed?

Discovery to Impact has assisted in the launch of ~100 startups to date and can evaluate business plans, help identify initial management teams, and facilitate introductions to potential funding sources for startups. Discovery to Impact maintains the Navigator which connects UT researchers and students to more than 130 innovation and entrepreneurship resources across campus by centralizing them into one user-friendly search platform. You can also consider reviewing the Entrepreneur's Guide

or taking advantage of the Texas Innovation Center's Startup-In-a-Box resources, which include consultation, support programming, co-working space, and Wet Lab Incubators.

What should I do if I don't know where to start or do next?
If you can't find an appropriate resource via the Navigator, you're always welcome to contact Discovery to Impact's Innovation Concierge who is happy to help connect you to the correct point of contact.

Relevant Websites:

Discovery to Impact (formerly known as UT's Office of Technology Commercialization

Texas Innovation Center

Longhorn Startup

Austin Technology Incubator

Texas Venture Labs

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR/STTR)

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Faculty who are recognized for unique or sustained contributions to their fields resulting in an award, peer society membership, or a medal of distinction may also be promoted in the OVPR Honors Spotlight. If you have recently been recognized for an achievement of distinction, please inform someone on your unit-level staff and contact VPR Communications so they can mention you in the Research Showcase.

Relevant Websites:
VPR Faculty Honors and Recognition Page

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The Office of the Vice President for Research maintains an online listing of campus-wide faculty honors in select award categories considered highly prestigious by the National Research Council or of particular importance in Texas and the surrounding region. If you receive an honorific award or know of a colleague who has been recognized for an honor, please inform both your college and Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors so that you can be included in the listing and your achievement shared with the wider UT community.

Relevant Websites:
VPR Faculty Honors and Recognition Page

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Many federal agencies, as well as the National Academies, maintain advisory boards composed of leading researchers who advise the agency/organization on future agency priorities or research directions. For you as a PI, serving on an advisory board gives you opportunity to network personally with program officers or other agency leaders as well as fellow high-level researchers in your field.

It is vitally important for UT to have a voice in the strategic and policy planning of these organizations and to be well-informed about future directions they are considering. Therefore, the Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative endeavors offers support to help you get appointed to federal advisory boards. The VPR office can assemble nomination packets and submit them, along with a formal recommendation from VPR Dan Jaffe, to the agency/organization on your behalf. Contact the Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors if you would like to be considered for appointment to a federal advisory board.

Relevant Websites:
Federal Advisory Committee Database

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President's Research Impact Award

The University of Texas at Austin established the President's Research Impact Awards in 2023 to recognize faculty and researchers whose scholarly or creative endeavors have changed lives or have changed the way we look at and understand the world around us. Awardees receive a $10,000 prize and medal. A short commemorative video about their work's impact will be shown at the annual President's Research Impact Awards ceremony. Up to four awards will be given each year.

Eligibility
- Nominees must be UT Austin faculty (tenured/tenure-track or non-tenure track) and/or permanent, senior-level staff researchers with a current appointment and with Principal Investigator status at the time of nomination and award.
- Self-nominations are accepted.
- A nomination may be made by any member of the campus community.
- Nominations may be for individuals or teams of principal investigators.

Nominations
- Faculty and staff with Principal Investigator status are eligible to submit nominations.

Review Process
- Nominees will be evaluated by a selection committee composed of UT researchers and leaders with diverse expertise and demonstrated experience translating their research, scholarship or creative activity for public benefit.

For questions regarding the President's Research Impact Awards, please contact honorific-vpr@austin.utexas.edu.

Relevant websites:
Inaugural President's Research Impact Awardee: Jason McLellan

The University Co-op sponsors many grants and fellowships at UT. The ones managed by the Office of the Vice President for Research are awarded via competitive processes. They are:

Career Research Excellence Award: awarded to a faculty member or staff researcher who has maintained a superior research program across many years.
Best Research Paper Award: awarded to a faculty member or staff researcher who was the principal or sole author of a peer-reviewed scholarly paper reporting original research that was published during the preceding calendar year in recognized research outlets in his or her field of study.
Creative Research Award: awarded to a faculty member or staff researcher for outstanding creative achievement and scholarship.

Who can submit nominations?
During the annual nomination period, candidates may apply for any of these three awards using the online nomination system.

Who is eligible to receive these awards?
Faculty members (i.e., tenured and tenure-track faculty, senior lecturers, and lecturers) and members of the research staff (Code 1000 personnel and postdoctoral fellows).

When can I submit a nomination?
All three awards have the same timeline:
- Call for nominations: mid-Fall
- Nomination deadline: early March
- Peer review process: March through June
- Award announcements: early Fall

How do I submit a nomination?
The annual nomination call released via campus-wide email includes instructions and a link to the UT Austin online submission portal, where you may self-nominate. If you are submitting on behalf of someone else, please contact the Office of the VP for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors for proxy submission instructions.

Relevant websites:
University Co-op Awards

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The University Co-op also sponsors the Hamilton Book Awards. A grand prize, a textbook prize, and three runners-up are awarded to five books every year. All books, including scholarly monographs, creative works (e.g., novels and anthologies of poetry), exhibition catalogues, textbooks, and edited collections published by The University of Texas at Austin faculty and full-time staff are eligible to be considered for the Hamilton Book Author Awards Program.

Who can apply?
Current University of Texas at Austin faculty (tenured, tenure-track, senior lecturers, and lecturers) and full-time staff of any classification may apply. UT students are not eligible for this program.

What are the eligibility requirements?
You may submit published works including scholarly monographs, creative works such as, but not limited to novels and anthologies of poetry, exhibition catalogues, textbooks, and edited collections.

When can I submit a nomination?
Nominations are accepted during the Call for Nominations period for books published in the calendar year immediately preceding the award year.

The timeline is as follows:
- Call for nominations: mid-Fall
- Nomination deadline: mid-January
- Review process: January through June
- Award announcements: early Fall

How do I submit a nomination?
The nomination call released via campus-wide email includes instructions and a link to the UT Austin online submission portal.

Relevant websites:
University Co-op Awards

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Section 7: Compliance and Legal

The University of Texas at Austin supports and encourages faculty and professional research staff to engage in outside professional activities that support the University's mission while also being committed to ensuring that conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment do not interfere with the ability to contribute to the advancement of society through education, research, creative activity, scholarly inquiry, and the development and dissemination of new knowledge.

While outside professional activities are encouraged, maintaining transparency through disclosure of these activities is critical. To identify and manage conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment in accordance with the COI, COC, and Outside Activities policy, UT Austin requires:

- Prior approval of outside professional activities to allow the university to determine if activities present a conflict of commitment with university responsibilities.
- Disclosure of financial interests at time of initial employment, at least annually, and within 30 days of obtaining a new financial interest to allow real or perceived conflicts of interest to be identified and managed.

Prior approval of Outside Professional Activities
HOP 5-2011 requires that you request prior approval for outside activities, with some exceptions for pre-approved activities. Engagement in such outside professional activities is limited to 8 hours per week, with some stipulations. See details (including the list of pre-approved outside activities) in Guidelines for Prior Approval and Disclosure of Outside Activities and Financial Interests.

You can find instructions for submitting an outside activity pre-approval request here.

Ongoing disclosure of financial interests and outside activities
Faculty members, PI Eligible staff members and other key research personnel must maintain a current COI Disclosure Profile in the UTRMS system. (See the Section: Propose Research > Compliance Issues > Financial Conflict of Interest with Research, for more information about the UTRMS COI module.)

You can find a summary of outside activity and financial interest disclosure requirements here.

The COI/Outside Activities office in the Office of Research Support and Compliance reviews prior approval requests and annual disclosures, and coordinates with departmental supervisors as needed to manage situations that may compromise your ability to fulfill institutional responsibilities.

Relevant websites:
ORSC homepage for Outside Activities, Conflict of Interest, and Conflict of Commitment
Prior Approval of Outside Activities (ORSC info page)
Guidelines for Prior approval and Disclosure of Outside Activities (for Faculty and PI Eligible staff)
Summary of Disclosure Requirements

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Is Consulting allowed at UT?

Consulting is an activity conducted within or outside UT Austin in addition to your usual job as a faculty member or researcher and can be either paid or unpaid. Involvement in consulting work outside of UT requires prior approval (See the Section: Compliance and Legal > Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment, and Outside Activities). Outside professional activities are often approved if the time commitment aligns with university policy and the activity does not otherwise interfere or prevent the performance of your duties as a faculty member or researcher.

You can find important information about outside employment and consulting agreements here, including:

- Consulting Agreement Guide – An overview of university policies related to outside consulting and common issues with consulting arrangements and other outside activities
- Consulting Agreement Addendum
- FAQs

See Also:

Financial Conflict of Interest
Financial Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment & Outside Activities
Flow Diagram of the Significant Financial Interests (SFI) Disclosure and Review Process

Relevant websites and Resources:

HOP 2-2220: Faculty Consulting and Other Professional Activities (includes information about consulting/additional professional activities within UT Austin)
HOP 5-2011: Conflicts of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment, and Outside Activities
Guidelines for Prior Approval and Disclosures of Outside Activities and Financial Interests
Outside Employment and Consulting Agreements (ORSC webpage with FAQs)

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Relevant websites:

Oversight responsibility: The Office of the Vice President for Legal Affairs

HOP 2-2220: Consulting and Other Professional Activities including Outside Employment

HOP 7-1210 - Promoting Objectivity in Research by Managing, Reducing or Eliminating Financial Conflicts of Interest

Business Contracts Office

HOP 5-2011: Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment, and Outside Activities

BOR Rule 30104: Avoiding Conflict of Interest Activities

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External collaborations, including international collaborations, are an essential part of research and scholarship at UT. You are always encouraged to seek out and nurture research partnerships that further your intellectual goals. As you build these partnerships, you also need to be mindful of the obligation that comes with them. Both our own standards of transparency and the requirements of federal funding agencies make it necessary for you to disclose support, partnership, and involvement that can lead to bias, conflict of interest, or conflict of commitment, or the appearance of any of these.

What do I need to do to appropriately disclose my foreign collaborations or support?
UT's Office of Research Support and Compliance provides comprehensive guidance for disclosing foreign collaborations both to UT and to granting agencies on the Research Security page. Key elements include:

- Sponsors typically have specific guidelines of what to disclose as "Other Support." The Research Security page provides links to some of these rules from major federal agencies. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to ensure that disclosures are made in concurrence with sponsor policies. Disclosures must be made at the time of proposal and as situations change via update and reporting processes.
- Disclose all financial relationships related to your research in all public sharing of your research results, such as in presentations, publications or otherwise. It is important to note that journal disclosure requirements are often broader than UT requirements, which may require additional disclosures.
- Keep your UTRMS COI Disclosure Profile current and accurate, as described elsewhere in the PI Book (Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment & Outside Activities). You must disclose and seek prior approval for:
  - Foreign consulting agreements, academic appointments at foreign institutions or organizations, participation in a foreign talent program, and
  - Involvement in any program that is sponsored, funded, directed, or controlled by a foreign government, foreign agency, or foreign institution that results in an honorary title; employment; grant support; in-kind support, such as research facilities and equipment; or collaborative patents.

I have foreign national graduate students or postdoctoral fellows in my research group. Do I need to disclose this?
You do not need to disclose that you have foreign national graduate students or postdoctoral fellows in your research group, if they are enrolled in a UT program or hold appointments at UT. However, if you are hosting foreign postdocs or grad students who are being paid by their home countries, this should be disclosed in your Current and Pending Support section on your grant applications, and should also be included in your COI Disclosure Profile as "in kind research support not managed by UT." Note also that certain funders and external organizations (e.g., NNSA laboratories overseen by the Department of Energy) restrict participation in their research programs to U.S. citizens. In addition, classified and export-controlled research is subject to foreign national restrictions.

See Also:
Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment and Outside Activities

Relevant Websites:
Research Security (UT site)

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What is a Restricted Region?

A restricted region is a designated area of the world that poses heightened risks to health and safety. New travel guidelines have been issued in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) which may affect restricted region designations; please review the most recent UT Travel Policy to Restricted Regions before taking your next trip.

The International Oversight Committee (IOC) created the UT Travel Policy to Restricted Regions to safeguard the well-being of students, faculty, and staff going abroad.

How does this policy affect me?

- If you are traveling to a restricted region with or without University funding to conduct University business within your capacity as a faculty member, such as participation in research, conferences, or teaching endeavors, you must request permission to travel.
- You do not need to request permission for personal/vacation travel that is unaffiliated with UT.

What steps do I need to follow?

1. Check Restricted Regions list.
2. Complete an RTA (Request for Travel Authorization).
3. Request Restricted Region Travel approval.
4. Register with In Call International for emergency assistance. Note: Travel booked through a UT's travel agency is automatically registered with the emergency assistance provider and does not require additional registration.

Relevant websites:

Faculty Restricted Region Travel Permission Process
Travel Management Services

View or Download Current Restricted Regions List

UT Intellectual Property Policy (Regents' Rule 90101)
Research projects often generate intellectual property (IP). The University of Texas Board of Regents governs IP policy at UT through Regents' Rule 90101, which states that inventors must submit an invention disclosure before disclosing the information to any party outside The University of Texas System, to the general public, through publication, or for commercial purposes.

Moreover, UT owns the IP you develop as a PI, as further defined in The University of Texas System (UTS) Policy 125 – Guidance for Negotiating Research Agreements with Sponsors and Processing Research and Intellectual Property Agreements.

Who is responsible for managing IP at UT and how?
The Discovery to Impact is responsible for managing intellectual property and commercializing research results in which UT asserts an ownership interest, i.e., research results that you obtain while you are a UT employee and/or while working on the UT campus in UT buildings, laboratories, and spaces.

As a PI, you are responsible for reporting all patentable inventions through the submission of an invention disclosure form to OTC. You acknowledge and agree to this annually as part of the Researcher Responsibilities (RR) Memo.

Who decides how to commercialize my invention?
The Vice President for Research and Discovery to Impact, along with the inventor(s), shall jointly decide how, when, and where the intellectual property is to be protected and commercialized. Discovery to Impact will inform you and you co-inventors of relevant deadlines and commercialization activity. Regents' Rules, Rule 90101 states that you may "give reasonable input on commercialization of inventions; provided however, that the president(s) of the applicable institution(s), or his or her designee(s), in his or her sole discretion, will make final decisions concerning whether and how to develop and commercialize an invention."

See Also:
Technology Commercialization

Relevant websites:
UT System Policy 125: Guidance for Negotiating Research Agreements with Sponsors and Processing Research and Intellectual Property Agreements
UT Regents' Rule 90101: Intellectual Property

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I've been asked to have an institutional Ethics Officer sign a Government Ethics Authorization Form. Who signs these at UT?
The Office of the Vice President for Legal Affairs reviews and signs Government Ethics Authorization forms on behalf of UT PIs. You might be asked to sign such a form if, for example, a company is offering to pay for your travel to attend a conference or meeting.

Ethics officers in Legal Affairs review and approve requests from organizations that offer to pay or reimburse UT employees for certain travel-related expenses and that want assurance from a UT Ethics officer that covering those expenses will not violate any applicable gifts or ethics policies.

How do I get an Ethics Officer to review and sign my documents?
Contact Legal Affairs and provide them with the documentation that needs to be signed. Before they will sign, they will also need to know the following:

- Travel and event information –
    o when/where is the event, and what's the purpose of the event
    o who is sponsoring the event
    o copy of the event agenda
    o URL to any event websites
- Whether the event that the outside organization is offering to pay for something that UT would otherwise pay for you to attend as part of your job duties
- Whether you have any role at UT that would create a conflict of interest in receiving support from the outside entity (e.g., Company X is offering to pay for a trip for you, but you are involved in recommending or contracting services from Company X in your role as a UT employee)
- Your estimate of the value of the expenses being covered (e.g., if Company X offers to reimburse you for a flight, estimate the cost of that flight)

Relevant Websites:

UT Handbook of Operating Procedures 7-1210: Promoting Objectivity in Research by Managing, Reducing or Eliminating Financial Conflicts of Interest

UT Handbook of Operating Procedures 5-2011: Conflict of Commitment, and Outside Activities

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UT endorses Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) on its campus and expects its employees and students to abide by pertinent rules, policies, guidelines, and regulations as detailed in the Revised Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP 7-1230), *Research Misconduct*. If you observe or suspect research misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the University's Research Integrity Officer (RIO) or to the accused individual's supervisor. Reports can be made on an informal (oral) or formal (written) basis and should include enough detail to serve as guidance for a preliminary inquiry into the necessity of a possible formal investigation.

If a case progresses to an investigation, the RIO is charged with: appointing an investigative committee; securing experts to evaluate relevant evidence; maintaining confidentiality and security of evidence; maintaining impartiality and fairness of the investigative process; ensuring that the respondent is treated fairly and given an opportunity to defend themselves against allegations; and – in every possible way – protecting the privacy of individuals who make good faith reports of misconduct and protecting them from retaliation as they cooperate with any investigation.

Process for Investigating Research Misconduct

Assessment Phase

Anyone with a reasonable suspicion that research misconduct has occurred at the University may report an allegation to the RIO. The RIO will review each allegation and make an initial determination as to whether the allegation falls within the scope of the university's research misconduct policy (HOP 7-1230) and is sufficiently specific to allow for evaluation. If the allegation falls within the scope of the policy, the RIO will notify the complainant, the respondent, and the appropriate university officials that the case will progress to the inquiry phase. If the allegation does not fall within the scope of the policy, the RIO will document the decision not to progress to an inquiry and close the case.

Inquiry Phase

To conduct an inquiry, the RIO will interview the complainant, respondent, and any other essential witnesses and gather and analyze all available case evidence. Based on the evidence and in consultation with the vice president for research (VPR) and the vice president for legal affairs (VPLA), the RIO will determine whether to close the case at the inquiry stage or proceed to an investigation.

Investigation Phase

If the case progresses to an investigation, the RIO will establish a three-person committee to conduct investigative interviews, review all available evidence, and make a finding regarding the case based upon a preponderance of the evidence. The committee will produce an investigative report outlining the outcome of the investigation and the basis for the finding(s). In accordance with HOP 7-1230, the complainant and respondent will receive a copy of the report for comments. The committee will then consider whether to include an addendum or revise the report based on these comments. After receiving the committee's final report, the RIO will confer with the VPR and VPLA in advance of the report's submission to the executive vice president and provost for final approval.

Provost's Review

The Provost will release a final determination based on a review of all available evidence and the committee's final report, which will include any comments submitted by the respondent. The Provost may request that the committee conduct additional fact finding or analysis before making a decision.

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The RIO will notify all relevant parties regarding the Provost's decision and coordinate any next steps required by the Provost.

Relevant Websites:
OVPR Policy on Research Misconduct
Research Misconduct Incident Report Form
Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)