

Management of Research Funding Procedure

Version 3 – Approved 17 May 2024

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Purpose

This procedure documents the processes and key requirements for:

- a. applying for research funding (competitive grants and direct offers of funding for contract research and consultancies), and
- b. managing research funding once received by the University of Tasmania (University).

Applicable governance instruments

Instrument	Section	Principles
<i>Research Policy</i>	3 Research Funding and Costing	Principles 3.1-3.2
<i>Compliance Policy</i>	2 Conflict of Interest 3 Foreign Influence and Foreign Interference	Principles 2.1-2.2
<i>People Policy</i>	3 Consultancy	Principle 3.1
<i>Behaviour Policy</i>	1 Behaviour	Principle 1.1
<i>Procurement Policy</i>		
<i>Intellectual Property Policy</i>		
<i>General Delegations Ordinance</i>		
<i>Risk Management and Business Resilience Policy</i>		
<i>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018</i>		
<i>Modern Slavery Act 2018</i>		

Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The management of research funding refers to a series of phases in the life cycle of a research project from project conception through to its conclusion. This document outlines the key requirements of these research funding phases as managed by the Research Division's Research Funding Office:
 - a. pre-award (research funding and project development and stakeholder engagement), and
 - b. post-award (research contract development and negotiation, contract management, financial management, project management, project finalisation and reporting).
- 1.2. This procedure applies to all University academics, professional staff and their Academic or Divisional Unit who are involved with the development of research funding grants (including Expression of Interest (Eoi), tenders and other competitive research funding opportunities) or in receipt of externally awarded contract research or research consultancy funds. This procedure applies to both UTAS led and externally led research funding applications. Research funding can be sourced either through a competitive funding scheme (facilitated via grants, tenders or Eols) or directly negotiated with an external funding body (such as a contract research or research consultancy). This procedure does not apply to learning and teaching activities, non-research activities or private consultancies.

2. Applying for research funding (pre-award)

2.1. Preparation of a research funding application

- 2.1.1. The first named University researcher (Chief Investigator) is responsible for the preparation of all required documentation for research funding applications and directly negotiated projects, these must be endorsed by the appropriate Head of Academic Unit(s) and, where applicable, College. These responsibilities include ensuring:
 - a. Application quality and alignment with all applicable funding guidelines and University policies and procedures.
 - b. Applications are costed in accordance with the *Research Funding Costing Procedure*, *Procurement Policy*, and any guidelines provided by the funder.
 - c. A project risk assessment is undertaken in accordance with the *Risk Management and Business Resilience Policy* and *Risk Management Procedure*. This should include appropriate assessment of all funding bodies (including risks such as modern slavery and autonomous sanctions), research activities (e.g., ethical considerations, clinical trial, biosafety, biosecurity and defence export control requirements) collaborations, and engagements.
 - d. All appropriate insurance requirements are considered in accordance with *Risk Management and Business Resilience Policy*.
 - e. A Foreign Matters Assessment is completed for all foreign entity arrangements and submitted to the Legal and Audit team (via Service Now), and the outcome provided to the Pre-Award Research Funding team.
 - f. A copy of any externally administered research projects, where the University is a collaborator is provided to and endorsed by the Head of Academic Unit prior to the application being submitted externally.

2.1.2. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students are permitted to take the role of Chief Investigator on Research Funding applications. A primary supervisor must be included on the project application/record and will be responsible for providing appropriate supervision and guidance to the HDR student, approving expenditure on financial accounts associated with awarded projects, being the Chief Investigator on the ethics application and ensuring project completion to acceptable standards.

2.2. Application deadlines

2.2.1. For all research funding applications, all required documentation must be submitted to the relevant Pre-Award Research Funding team at least 10 working days prior to any external deadline to enable sufficient time for processing. Complex, multi-party and high value projects will require additional time. If this timeframe is not adhered to, acceptance of the research funding application (and any associated funding offer) will be at the discretion and approval of the Head of Academic Unit and College.

2.2.2. Provided appropriate internal deadlines have been met the Pre-Award Research Funding team will review applications for external funding for consistency with the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) specifications, grant scheme guidelines, readability, eligibility, compliance, and alignment with internal University requirements.

2.2.3. Additional submission steps and deadlines are required for Australian Research Council (ARC), National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) and other major funding rounds (as identified by the University or a College), Chief Investigators are required to adhere to any additional internal deadlines and requirements (such as an Intention to Apply processes) as communicated by the College and Research Division.

2.3. Approvals to submit

2.3.1. Before submitting a research funding application, all University Chief Investigators listed on the application must obtain endorsement from their Head of Academic Unit and College(s) and the approval of the appropriate delegate (see Section 7.1 of the *General Delegations Ordinance*). Endorsement and approval processes for applications may vary among Colleges but must be consistent with the *General Delegations Ordinance*.

2.3.2. Head of Academic Unit endorsement confirms acknowledgement of their accountability for all pre- and post-award project activities carried out within their unit. This includes ensuring that:

- a. Applications are aligned to their College Research Strategy and that the Academic Unit has the resources (capability, infrastructure, data, etc.) to adequately support proposed research projects.
- b. Project costs (direct and indirect), including any UTAS cash and in-kind commitments, have been correctly included in an associated research project budget.
- c. Expenditure of research funds will occur in accordance with the approved funding agreement and budget.
- d. Expenditure of research funds will be approved appropriately prior to the release of funds in accordance with the *General Delegations Ordinance*.
- e. All project activities, including collaborations, are within the University's Risk Appetite.

3. Funding Outcomes and Contract negotiation (post-award)

- 3.1. All funding outcome notifications must be communicated to the Pre- or Post-Award Research Funding teams, who will update the funding outcome in the Research Administration System. Funding notifications may be received directly by the Pre- or Post-Award Research Funding teams, or the Lead CI may receive direct notification. Upon receipt of a successful outcome notification, a member of the Post-Award Research Funding team will be allocated to the project and will support the Chief Investigator in managing the contractual negotiations and formal acceptance of the funding offer from the external funding body/collaborator.
- 3.2. All funded research projects must be formalised by appropriate research contract documentation, administered through the Post-Award Research Funding team, and executed by an authorised delegate in accordance with the *General Delegations Ordinance*.
- 3.3. The Post-Award Research Funding team will, on behalf of the University and the Chief Investigator, liaise with external funding bodies and collaborators to negotiate an appropriate research funding agreement based on advice from Legal, Risk and Compliance, Financial Services, UTAS Innovation Ventures (InVent), Graduate Research Office, People and Wellbeing, the Chief Investigator and the associated College and Academic Unit (as appropriate).
- 3.4. The form of a research contract will depend on the circumstances and can include an exchange of letters, a research or research consultancy agreement or a grant deed in accordance with the *Collaborative Research Procedure*.
- 3.5. Where possible, University drafted research contract templates should be used. If a funding body's contract is used, it must be reviewed by the Post-Award Research Funding team in consultation with Legal, Risk and Compliance.
- 3.6. Intellectual property arrangements must be consistent with the *Intellectual Property Policy* and the University's intellectual property requirements as advised by UTAS InVent.
- 3.7. Where agreement is reached with the funding body, the Chief Investigator and their Head of Academic Unit must confirm:
 - a. That they have read and understood the agreement, including the terms, obligations and legal advice provided.
 - b. They are aware of all project compliance and/or contract risks and agree to address any risk mitigation actions.
 - c. That they are aware of their responsibilities in accepting the funding, including ensuring that all milestone deliverables, financial and reporting obligations are met as outlined in the contract.
 - d. That they will comply with relevant legal and regulatory requirements, research codes of conduct, guidelines and University policies and procedures fundamental to the responsible conduct of research.
- 3.8. The Post-Award Research Funding team will facilitate Institutional approval by the approved research delegate in accordance with the *General Delegations Ordinance*. This includes appropriate signing of the research contract.
- 3.9. Copies of all fully signed contracts will be stored in the University Contract Register, HP Records Manager (HPRM). Where notification to government is identified as being required (e.g., Foreign Arrangements), the Post-Award Research Funding team will work with the appropriate University teams (i.e., Legal, Risk and Compliance) to ensure appropriate action.

4. Management of project and research funds (Post-Award Team, Financial Services)

- 4.1. Upon execution of a research contract, the Post-Award Research Funding team will formalise the internal record of the project by entering the associated details onto the University's Research Administration System (and marking the record as 'Successful').
- 4.2. If required, the Post-Award Research Funding team will notify the Financial Research Support (FRS) team to open a new Research Account in the University's Financial system.
- 4.3. The Chief Investigator is required to manage the awarded funds throughout the lifecycle of the project in accordance with the associated Funding Agreement, the provisions of the *Research Funding Costing Procedure*, *Procurement Procedure* and any other University requirements.
- 4.4. During the life of the project Financial Services will provide support and guidance to the Chief Investigator in the appropriate management of their research project:
 - a. Financial Research Support will establish new project accounts in the Finance System (used to record and monitor income and expenditure), ensuring all associated invoices are raised in line with executed funding agreements, producing financial acquittals for funders as required and facilitating external financial reporting requirements.
 - b. The management accountants in the College Finance Hubs will provide access to relevant dashboards and other detailed expenditure reports to enable researchers to manage their project's budget and finances, assist with budgeting/costing of research projects, and provide general support in the ongoing management of a project's research budget.
- 4.5. The Chief Investigator will obtain all required ethics approval/s in accordance with the *Research Ethics Procedure*, regardless of whether the Chief Investigator on the collaborative research project is affiliated with the University. The Chief Investigator will also obtain all other required regulatory and legislative approvals including, but not limited to clinical trials (as per the *Clinical Trials Procedure*), biosafety, biosecurity and scheduled substances.
- 4.6. The Chief Investigator will ensure that all research data has been managed in accordance with the *Research Data Management Procedure*.
- 4.7. The Chief Investigator must expend all research funds and retain relevant supporting documentation in accordance with the approved research funding agreement and associated budget and within the timeframes outlined in the research funding agreement and any subsequent variations approved by the funder. They are also responsible for ensuring that all milestone deliverables are submitted to the external funding body/collaborator by the due date in the associated contract.
 - a. A copy of the milestone report and/or confirmation of completion must be provided to the Post-Award Research Funding team who will ensure all completed milestones are closed off against the project record on the University's Research Administration System.
 - b. The Post-Award Research Funding team will support the Chief Investigator with milestone deliverables required to be submitted via external portals, where the administering organisation or funding body requires submission via an external portal..
 - c. If milestone deliverables are not completed by the nominated due date and an extension has not been notified to the Post-Award Research Funding team, the overdue milestone deliverable will be listed on the monthly overdue report that is sent to Heads of Academic Unit and respective College and University Executive teams.
- 4.8. During the course of the project, if milestone deliverables are unable to be met, changes are made to the project team (including departure of University staff or students), or a project is experiencing challenges, the Chief Investigator will notify the Post-Award Research Funding team as soon as

possible to ensure contractual obligations are managed appropriately. This may include negotiating variations to research contracts in consultation with the funding body/collaborator.

- 4.9. If a variation to the project is required, for example a time extension or new milestone deliverables, the Post-Award Research Funding team will negotiate and manage the execution of appropriate agreement to formalise the variation. The variation will be progressed as outlined in Section 4.

5. Project Finalisation and Reporting (post-award, Financial Services)

- 5.1. At the completion of a project, the Post-Award Research Funding team will liaise with the Chief Investigator to ensure all contractual project deliverables have been finalised and will record the project as complete in the University's Research Administration System.
- 5.2. The Chief Investigator will ensure that all project related research data, research outputs and intellectual property obligations have been managed and delivered in line with the *Research Data Management Procedure, Publication and Dissemination of Research Procedure, Open Access Procedure* and *Intellectual Property Policy*.
- 5.3. On delivery of the final contractual milestone, Financial Research Support will work with the Chief Investigator to ensure all financial obligations under the research funding agreement are complete, such as issuing and payment of final invoices, completion of required financial audits and acquittals and the return of unspent funds to the funding body/collaborator if required by the research funding body.
- 5.4. Once all financial requirements and expenditure have been finalised, the Management Accountants in the College Finance Hubs will liaise with the Chief Investigator to close the associated research project account and distribute any remaining funds in accordance with College requirements and the *Research Funding Costing Procedure*.

Related procedures

Clinical Trials Procedure

Collaborative Research Procedure

Conflicts of Interest and Gifts and Benefits Declaration Procedure

Open Access Procedure

Peer Review Procedure

Publication and Dissemination of Research Procedure

Research Data Management Procedure

Research Ethics Procedure

Research Funding Costing Procedure

Risk Management Procedure

Versions

<u>Version</u>	Action	Approved by	Business Owner/s	Approval Date
1	Approved	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Executive Director (Research)	25 May 2022
2	Approved	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Executive Director (Research)	23 May 2023
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Definitions and acronyms can be found at: <https://www.utas.edu.au/policy/policy-definitions>

Related policies and procedures can be found at: <https://www.utas.edu.au/policy>

Schedule A: Summary of Administrative Roles and Responsibilities

Pre- and Post-Award Research Funding Teams

The Pre- and Post-Award Research Funding teams include professional staff located in the College Research Hubs and the centrally located Post-Award Research Funding Team and Manager Collaborative Research.

- The Pre-Award Research Funding Team (including the Manager Collaborative Research) facilitate all pre award processes including application development, the review of applications for readability, eligibility and compliance, and providing support for the endorsement, approval and the submission of applications to external funding agencies (where required).
- The Post-Award Research Funding team manages all the post-award contractual requirements including the review, negotiation, and execution of funding agreements, ensuring University requirements and processes are managed appropriately and institutional endorsement and acceptance of external funding is in accordance with the *General Delegations Ordinance*.
- The Post-Award Research Funding team supports the Chief Investigator in contractual matters relating to all research projects on the University's Research Administration System.

Financial Services

Financial Services includes the Financial Research Support team, the College Financial Services, Accounts Payable and Receivable, and Procurement.

- Financial Research Support are responsible for:
 - Establishing a separate project account(s), for each new research funding agreement, within the finance system, on notification from the Research Funding team.
 - Raising invoices to external funding agencies in accordance with funding agreements and payment schedules.
 - Preparing financial acquittals for Funding Bodies and other Funding Partners as required under research funding agreements.
 - Coordinating independent audits of research funds as required under funding agreements.
 - Ensuring all research funds are linked to an allocated research project in the University's Research Administration System. Coordinating any repayment of funds, as required by the research funding body.
- Financial Research Support are responsible for:
 - Providing project reports (on request) that detail all financial transactions and summarising the financial status of individual research projects.
 - Provide access and training to Research Finance Dashboard.
 - Providing advice with budgeting and eligible expenditure of research funds.
 - Providing advice with managing your research budget.
- Accounts Payable and Receivable, and Procurement teams will:
 - Pay supplier invoices, supported by an approved purchase order, within the required payment terms.
 - Ensure invoices sent to funders are paid.
 - Advise on insurance matters.