

Policy 8 - Communications with Sponsor Agencies on Financial Matters

University Channels to be used on Administrative Matters

Communications between the University and the sponsoring agencies relative to financial management of projects are to be coordinated through Grants and Contracts Accounting. Changes that are required by the agency to the approved budget must be coordinated through the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs to ensure that the Institutional obligations are officially approved by the Authorized Institutional Representative. To facilitate the identification of written correspondence with the applicable award, reference must be made to the Missouri State University account number assigned to the contract or grant.

No-Cost Extensions

Principal Investigators are to monitor progress of externally sponsored projects to ensure that the objectives are achieved and deliverables submitted in accordance with these items in the approved proposal. Whenever it is found that these will not be achievable within the approved grant period, it may be possible to obtain a no-cost extension from the sponsor. These extensions are to complete prescribed work not to use up any unexpended funds. Depending on the sponsor, there may be a formal process and deadline date for requesting a no-cost extension.

If there is a potential need for a no-cost extension, the Principal Investigator is to contact the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs to identify the required process and deadlines. The latter may be up to 90 days in advance of the end of the grant period. This Office will assist the Principal Investigator in preparing the required information for submission to the sponsor. Whenever financial information is required for the request, the Principal Investigator is to coordinate preparation of this material with Grants and Contracts Accounting. The final package will be submitted by the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs after review and approval by the Authorized Institutional Representative. Federal agencies have a prescribed process that utilizes the electronic submission, and coordination with the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs is essential to ensure that these requests are submitted on time.

Leaves of Absence

When a principal investigator is scheduled for a leave of absence, it is essential that written concurrence be obtained from the sponsor(s) involved prior to departure on the leave of absence. Satisfactory arrangements must be made for a substitute principal investigator and continuation of the specified project. The definition of a leave of absence varies from sponsor to sponsor. For example, the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health consider an absence in excess of three months to require advance agency approval. Other sponsors are more restrictive and reserve the right to approve any change in key project personnel. Adherence to sponsor requirements for advance notification and clearance minimizes the chance of problems with and possible costs disallowances by a sponsor. Coordination should be made through the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs who can offer any assistance that may be required.

Should a principal investigator plan to transfer to another university or terminate Missouri State University employment for other reasons, the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs should be contacted relative to sponsor requirements applicable to transfer or termination of an award. For example, the National Institutes of Health requires the submission of "Official Statement Relinquishing Interests and Rights in a Public Health Service Research Grant" when the principal investigator plans to continue the research at another institution. If the principal investigator plans to request the transfer of equipment, Policy No. 10: Equipment Management should be consulted.

Technical communications between principal investigators and their counterparts in the sponsoring agencies are authorized and encouraged, but direct communication between principal investigators and sponsoring agency program directors on matters possibly affecting contractual agreements is to be avoided. Assistance in such matters is readily available from the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs and Grants and Contracts Accounting.