



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

POLICY: STAFF RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION AND MANAGEMENT

Purpose:	To provide academic staff with an application and management process for research grants
Responsible Executive:	Provost
Responsible Office:	Quality Management Office
Contact Officer:	Manager, Quality Management Office
VC Approval Date:	20 th February 2008
Effective Date:	20 th February 2008
Modification History:	First developed August 2006; modified October 2007 (SE); modified June 2008 (SE); modified Oct 2008 & Jan 2009 (SE)
Campus Applicability:	All Campuses

1. Rationale

A primary Object of The University of Notre Dame Australia is the provision of excellence in teaching, scholarship and research within the context of Catholic faith and values. The University's employees are encouraged to engage in research and this is to be undertaken in a specified manner which minimises "risks" to the University.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and its enactment, the following definitions for key words will apply:

"*University*" - shall mean the University of Notre Dame Australia.

"*Funder*" - shall mean an approved organisation or agency external to the University, which provides money for research.

"*Research*" - shall mean an approved systematic inquiry carried out by University staff and which, along with its results, are ordinarily owned by the University.

"*Research Grant*" - shall mean a contribution made by a Funder to the cost of research being carried out by University staff.

"*Collaborative Project*" - shall mean a research project whereby the University works in partnership with another research provider(s) to share equally or proportionately (as contractually agreed), the costs and benefits of the research.

"*Direct Costs*" - shall mean any costs that can be identified specifically in connection with the research activity. This includes consumables, the imputed cost of staff time, purchase or use of equipment, and travel.

"*Indirect Costs*" - shall mean the less obvious costs to the University which are incurred in maintaining an environment and infrastructure for conducting the research activity. This includes utilities, physical facilities, information, technology, and library services, insurance coverage, financial and human resource services, legal support, secretarial and administrative support at School, Centre and University levels.

"*Research Contract*" - shall mean a legal agreement formed when a Funder commissions the University to undertake specific research for the benefit of the Funder. The University may, depending on the terms of the contract, transfer ownership of the results.

3. Principles

- 3.1 This policy specifies procedures for ensuring that the University is not compromised ethically, financially, or legally.
- 3.2 This policy applies regardless of whether the University is the lead institution or a supporting participant in a collaborative project.
- 3.3 Research conducted on behalf of a Funder incurs direct and indirect costs. These direct and indirect costs should be fully recovered from the external funding agent, with the following exemptions:
 - (a) Formal Commonwealth competitive grant schemes, such as those sponsored by the Australian Research Council [ARC], National Health and Medical Research Council [NHMRC], Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation [RIRDC] and other schemes including those nominated within the list of national competitive grant schemes provided by the Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations [DEEWR] are exempt because normally the Research Infrastructure Block Grant from the Commonwealth specifically provides research infrastructure funding for projects funded through such schemes;
 - (b) Bona fide donations to the University;
 - (c) Scholarships for educational and research purposes;
 - (d) Where the grant or contract provides a significant financial or other tangible benefit to the University, such as the retention of intellectual property ownership, support for charitable foundations or not-for-profit organisations and the exemption has been authorised in writing by the Deputy Vice Chancellor;
 - (e) Schemes which specifically prohibit the recovery of overhead costs in their terms and conditions, which must, under this category, have prior approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor.

- 3.4 The University's *Staff Research Grant Preliminary Clearance Form* (found at **G:\Provost\Forms & Templates\Staff Research Grants\Preliminary Clearance Form**) is a critical internal document which has been designed to determine project viability before a research application is prepared or to determine viability for staff involvement in research where UNDA is not the lead institution.
- 3.5 The University's *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template* (found at **G:\Provost\Forms & Templates\Staff Research Grants\Template Staff Research Grant Pricing**) is an integral internal document in the approval process. It has been designed to ensure that both Direct and Indirect Costs have been considered for the proposed research. Its scale for University Overhead Cost Recovery applies to all research including that done in Institutes.
- 3.6 In relation to the Provost/DVC responsibilities outlined in this policy, there may be instances where it will be necessary for the Provosts/DVCs to transfer particular aspects of their responsibilities to their selected respective delegates. This may include delegating signatory authority.
- 3.7 Approval of any application for research funding is according to the procedures in this policy and represents a University commitment, not that of any particular researcher(s). The procedures detailed below are summarised diagrammatically in Appendix 2.

4. Procedures

PRELIMINARY APPLICATION - FOR UNDA CHIEF INVESTIGATORS OR UNDA PARTNER INVESTIGATORS WHO ARE SEEKING TO WORK WITH RESEARCHER(S) FROM ANOTHER INSTITUTION OR ORGANISATION

- 4.1 At the preliminary stage **before** (a) undertaking to prepare a research grant application/expression of interest application as chief investigator with UNDA as the lead institution **or** (b) agreeing to any involvement in a research funding application/expression of interest application involving collaborations with other research providers, University of Notre Dame staff members are required to complete the *Staff Research Grant Preliminary Clearance Form*.
- 4.2 If the applicant wishes to put a case forward for variation to the University's Cost Recovery Factor or wishes to request consideration of a deviation from other (e.g. budgetary, staffing, teaching) set University practices it occurs at this stage in the process and must be made explicit in the appropriate sections of the SRGPC Form (sections 8 & 9 respectively). On the basis of the case presented, the DVC (after consultation with the DVC of the other Campus – to ensure a consistent approach across campuses) *may* vary or waive the requirement.

Where a proposed project involves potential expenditure or additional commitment in relation to the University's physical infrastructure - refurbishment of existing space, provision of new space, relocation of existing activities or facilities, leasing/licensing of space or facilities to third parties - such expenditure/commitment must also be made clear in the appropriate section (7) of the SRGPC Form.

- 4.3 Full completion of the SRGPC Form is required and will entail careful consideration of all the issues specified. Both the Dean of School **and** the Chair of School Research Committee (if the Dean, an appropriate Delegate from the Committee must be assigned) to complete and sign their relevant sections on the SRGPC Form. If required, the Dean and Chair of School Research Committee can seek advice from the Provost/DVC.
- 4.4 **At least 20 working days prior** to a grant application's submission deadline, the completed and signed SRGPC Form is to be submitted to the Quality Management Office (QMO) for Fremantle/Broome staff and to the Office of Quality Management & Research (OQM&R) for Sydney staff.

If there are exceptional circumstances where the timeline cannot be met, the Manager of QMO/OQM&R should be contacted in the first instance. On the basis of the circumstance, Provost/DVC approval will then be sought for a timeline modification.

- 4.5 When the SRGPC Form is sent to QMO/OQM&R, the following supporting documentation must accompany this form:
- relevant background about the grant source organisation/institution including any information relating to its underlying mission, goals, indicators of its value/ethics orientations etc *;
 - the grant source’s application guidelines including any financial & contractual information *;
 - completed UNDA *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template* (indicate ‘Preliminary Review at top of template).

*except in the cases of ARC and NHMRC grants.

QMO/OQM&R reviews the SRGPC Form in the context of the information provided. In circumstances where further clarifications are required it may be necessary for QMO/OQM&R to meet with the applicant.

- 4.6 After QMO review the SRGPC Form and supporting documentation and sent for preliminary legal review by Senior Legal Counsel (signature required on SRGPC Form), for preliminary financial review to the Finance Office/Manager of Financial Services (signature required on Preliminary Review version of *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template*), and then to the Provost/DVC. The Provost/DVC may decide to consult with the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) if there is doubt about the appropriateness of the application.
- 4.7 Provost/DVC sign-off (see 3.6) on the SRGPC Form **and** the *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template* are required for an applicant to proceed with either the preparation of the research application-proper/expression of interest or with potential subsidiary involvement in a research grant application submitted by another institution/organisation (template not required if there are no financial implications for the University).

In the case of the UNDA chief investigator, it must be noted that this Provost/DVC approval is **only for proceeding with the preparation of a grant application/expression of interest application**. The application itself still requires final institutional approval before it can be submitted.

In the case of UNDA having a subsidiary role in a research application which is led by another institution/organisation, if approval to proceed is given via the SRGPC Form and depending on the extent and nature of the collaboration, further documentation for involvement may not be required. UNDA Partner Investigator informs collaborating institution of outcome and any further requirements which may have to be met before the partnership may proceed.

- 4.8 QMO/OQM&R retains the original SRGPC Form and relevant documentation. The applicant is notified of the outcome.

APPLICATION - For UNDA CHIEF INVESTIGATORS

- 4.9 In the case of UNDA being the lead institution, **at least 10 working days** prior to a grant application’s submission deadline, the chief investigator submits to QMO/OQM&R:
- full grant application or the expression of interest;
 - grant source’s completed application form (including School approval signatures but **not** including institutional oversight signatures e.g. Provost/ DVC/VC);
 - UNDA *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template* (indicate final version at top).

If there are exceptional circumstances where the timeline cannot be met, the Manager of QMO/OQM&R should be contacted in the first instance. On the basis of the circumstance, Provost/DVC approval will then be sought for a timeline modification.

- 4.10 The electronic version of the University’s *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template* is used to generate the University’s administrative costings. Other items should comply with the University’s *Staff Research & Development Pricing Guidelines* (see Appendix 1).

Note that the University's Pricing Template is for internal use only so it should not be submitted to the Funder. Also, it is in addition to other budget forms which may be required by the Funder.

- 4.11 The total price indicated on the completed University *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template* should correspond with the total amount requested from the Funder.
- 4.12 Once all of the documentation received is in order, QMO/OQM&R undertakes a full application review involving comparability check with the preliminary review documentation, and further advice/liason/sign-off endorsement with Legal Counsel and Manager of Financial Services as required. Documentation is presented to the Provost/DVC (see 3.6) for **final signatory approval** (sign-off on grant source application forms and *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template* if required).
- 4.13 QMO/OQM&R retains a copy of all the application information and the original of the *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template*.
- 4.14 The original application is returned to the chief investigator who then arranges the submission – except in those cases where the grant source specifies otherwise. Where an institutional contact person or research officer is required, the Manager of QMO/OQM&R should be designated as such on the application.
- 4.15 QMO/OQM&R should be notified by the chief investigator of the outcome of the application.
- 4.16 A “successful” application for a research project is not officially ratified until:
 - (a) Senior Legal Counsel has overseen all contractual arrangements between the University and the Funder and a Research Contract is in place;
 - (b) QMO/OQM&R has checked to make sure that ethics clearance requirements have been fulfilled (HREC);
 - (c) QMO/OQM&R has passed the *Staff Research & Development Pricing Template* on to the Finance Office/Manager of Financial Services and the amount of money received reconciles with University's costing requirements.
- 4.17 QMO/OQM&R informs the chief investigator that the application process is complete.
- 4.18 QMO/OQM&R arranges for the University community to be notified of an application's success through the Public Relations Office.
- 4.19 All grant applications submitted through UNDA are the property of the University and as such, can be used as exemplars for institutional Research Capacity Building.

5. Management

- 5.1 The Finance Office on the Fremantle Campus has overall responsibility for the monitoring and management of staff research income. However, where grant overspending is likely, the involvement of other specified staff will be required (see Appendix 1 under 'Administrative Procedures').
- 5.2 Each successful grant will be issued with a research cost centre account and the principal investigator will be responsible for oversight of the budget and approval of expenditure.
- 5.3 Upon acceptance of a grant or contract or collaborative project, prior to expending any funds, the chief investigator will arrange for the opening of the research cost centre account with the Finance Office.
- 5.4 Research cost centres will be monitored by the Finance Office to verify that they are being used for the stated purpose. Requests for variation to how the funding is spent should be sent to the Finance Office's Manager of Financial Services.
- 5.5 The Research Office on the Fremantle Campus assumes overall responsibility for the reporting of research income to DEEWR.

Appendix 1: Supporting Documentation

Staff Research & Development Pricing Guidelines

Introduction

The pricing of research projects needs to be at a level that will help win research grants and must therefore be competitive. On the other hand, the pricing of research projects must take into account all costs involved in the research project including administration costs that would normally form part of the University's overheads. Without such overhead cost recovery, significant pressure can be placed on the University's finances. The following guidelines have been prepared to help researchers consider all the costs involved in a research project.

Costs of research

Costs include the following-

Direct Costs

- a) **Labour:** Labour costs include salaries and wages plus on-costs being superannuation, payroll tax, workers compensation insurance and leave entitlements. At UNDA on-costs amount to 16.8% of salary costs. Labour costs would also include the costs of outsourced research personnel.
- b) **Materials and Services consumed:** These costs include equipment and maintenance costs, technical and secretarial support, costs of stationery and other consumables and materials, travel, copying etc.
- c) **Third Party Costs:** Costs payable to external consultants or research providers.
- d) **Any specific equipment** which must be acquired to undertake the research.

Indirect Costs

- a) **Capital costs:** Occupation costs of laboratories, offices, car parks, access to library and research resources, computers and other IT use etc
- b) **Human Resources:** Costs of recruitment of specialised staff or replacement staff, staff entitlements such as special leave, parenting leave etc.
- c) **Legal and Central Administration:** Contract development and management, costs of establishing a separate legal entity if required, cost of advice from the Legal Counsel, external legal fees.
- d) **Utilities and maintenance:** Electricity, telephone, postage, depreciation, cleaning, building maintenance, refurbishment costs if facility modifications require a make good at the end of the project.
- e) **Insurance:** Professional indemnity, public risk, Directors' and Officers' buildings, property and equipment.
- f) **Financial:** Raising invoices, accepting and processing payments, manage, management reporting, costs of maintaining accounts for grant acquittal of cost of capital, audit of acquittals and general audits.

All of the above cost factors have to be considered in the costing of a research project or activity, regardless of whether they are actually charged in the research grant. If full cost recovery is not applied on any particular research or other project (for example to win a contract or research grant) the University may need to demonstrate that it is recovering those omitted costs in other ways.

Research Costing Model

Because it is often difficult for academic staff to identify all costs the following model provides a formula that takes into account normal overhead and indirect cost factors. The costing is to be as follows-

Labour/Salary

Advice on the salary of researchers can be obtained from the Staffing Office. General information can be found at **G:\STAFFING\SALARIES & CASUAL RATES**. Salaries must include on-costs so the Total Employment Cost (TEC) should be used. If the research project is for a period of more than one year, likely salary and other increases (generally 5% per year) must be taken into account.

PLUS

Materials and Services Consumed

Direct costs such as consumables, specialised equipment required for the project that would be consumed during the project or have no value at the completion (e.g. computers, software), travel, specialised services etc.

PLUS

Equipment Costs

The cost of purchasing each piece of equipment required for the project must appear as the full cost, regardless of the equipment being of use to the University after the project is completed.

PLUS

Third Party Costs

Costs payable to third party consultants or research providers. These costs are normally incurred where an external expert is engaged to provide professional credibility to the research outcome.

PLUS

School Direct Costs

These are costs incurred directly by Schools such as administration and secretarial services at 16.8% on-costs.

PLUS

Cost Recovery Factor*

This component is to recognise both the variance in grant money received and the general overheads of the University. The following scale is in place for the University's overhead cost recovery and it includes a depreciation charge:

Up to \$10,000 grant	10%
\$11,000 to \$25,000 grant	15%
\$26,000 to \$100,000 grant	20%
Over \$100,000 grant	30%

**Variation: The Provost/DVC of the campus may vary or waive the Cost Recovery Factor.*

Administrative Procedures

1. A two monthly update is provided by the Finance Office to the Vice Chancellor, the Provosts/DVCs, the Associate Provosts, Manager of Research Office, Manager of Quality Management Office, Manager of Office of Quality Management & Research Office – detailing the research grants received and amounts spent to date on each grant.
2. The Finance Office gives immediate notification if a grant is either overspent or predicted to be overspent – regardless of the amount of overspend. This notification should be sent to the Chief Investigator/Project Officer and the Dean of their School). Authorisation required is as follows:
 - **Overspend less than \$5,000** to be sent to the Provost / Deputy Vice Chancellor of the relevant Campus who will liaise and discuss with Project Officer and Dean. The Provost / Deputy Vice Chancellor has power to authorise overspend up to \$5,000.
 - **Overspend greater than \$5,000** must be sent through the Provost / Deputy Vice Chancellor (as per above) and a recommendation made to the Vice Chancellor as to the overspend. Only Vice Chancellor can authorise.
3. When Provost/DVC looks at overspends or potential overspends on research grants, the first imperative is to work with the Dean to identify other budget savings which might offset the overspend. Responsibility for formulating how these financial arrangements could be structured lie with the Dean, but approval authority lies with Provosts / DVCs.

Appendix 2: Summary of General Staff Research Grant Application Process where approval to proceed is granted
 (note that in some instances additional steps may be required)

