Pre-Award, Post-Award and Closure

Abbreviations used in this document

CI - Chief Investigator  ADR - Associate Dean Research
RID - Research institute Director  AR - ACU Research – Grants and Contracts Team
HOS - Head of School  ED - Executive Dean

Pre-award

All external grant applications and consultancies need to be submitted through the ACU Research Grants and Contracts Team (GCT) within the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (ODVCR). In addition to the application further documentation is also required by ACU Research for authorisation, recording and reporting purposes as outlined below.

For Australian Research Council (ARC) and National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) schemes

Expression of Interest to Submit a Research Grant Application/Proposal

Before developing a full application for any ARC or NHMRC scheme, an Expression of Interest (EOI) to submit a Research Grant Application/Proposal is required from the ACU lead Chief Investigator wishing to apply. Prior to the commencement of an application round, an EOI Form will be distributed to Faculties for prospective applicants to complete.

The purpose of this call for EOIs is to allow the ODVCR to plan for anticipated submissions and to catalogue the research activity of Faculties and associated Research Institutes. It also allows the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) to review all proposed research to ensure alignment with the University’s Mission and Research Strategy.

The EOI Form requires basic information about the applicant, a summary of the proposed research, its intended impact and the quality and innovation of the proposal. Career information, research grant success and publications are also documented on the form. Each completed form must be submitted to the relevant ADR for review.

Those selected must be signed, with any supporting documentation attached and submitted to the ACU Research GCT by the appropriate ADR via email to res.grants@acu.edu.au by the deadline advised in the call for EOIs for the specific scheme.
Approval by the DVCR to Develop the Research Grant Application/Proposal

All EOIs submitted will be reviewed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and/or delegate who will make a determination on whether a full application should be developed and submitted to the appropriate funding body. Faculties and researchers will then be notified of the outcome of this review and researchers with approval to develop a full application/proposal will be invited to do so.

Development and Review of the Full Grant Application

Researchers invited to develop and submit a full application should do so in accordance with the relevant scheme guidelines using the prescribed online application system. Faculties are advised to develop internal academic review processes and ensure researchers adhere to scheme guidelines and internal submission deadlines managed and communicated by the ADR.

For Grants Offered by ALL funding bodies

A fully completed and signed Research Grant Coversheet (RGC) is required for each grant application received by ACU Research and should be submitted via email to res.grants@acu.edu.au at the same time as the grant application.

Additional process for ARC/NHMRC applications

Certification: ARC and NHMRC require the DVCR to certify that ACU has obtained written agreement of all parties necessary to allow the applications to proceed through the electronic submission system. The lead CI must obtain written approval using the appropriate form issued by the funding body. The certification/s must be submitted as one pdf document per application to res.grants@acu.edu.au, at the same time as the grant application.

Compliance review: Fully developed, academically reviewed applications (with accompanying RGC and certification, if required) must be submitted to the ACU Research GCT (including electronic submission via the RGMS [NHMRC] or RMS [ARC] systems) for a scheme-specific compliance review against the appropriate guidelines. The internal submission deadline for compliance review is normally ten working days prior to the external funding body submission deadline and allows time for any compliance issues to be addressed by the applicant. Applications submitted to ACU Research GCT less than ten days before the date may not be reviewed and therefore may not be authorised for submission to the funding body.

Submission: ACU Research GCT will assess applications for compliance and submit them to the funding body by the due date.

Note
If ACU is not the administering institution, a RGC is required for each grant awarded.

Note
Some funding bodies permit direct submission of the application by the lead CI, however, ACU Research GCT should always be notified of the submission via a completed RGC.
Recording of the Research Grant Application/Proposal information in ResearchMaster (RM)

The responsible ACU Research GCT member will enter the relevant information of each Research Grant Application/Proposal into RM. The lead ACU Chief Investigator (CI) will be notified by email of the allocated RM number. For ease of communication and reference, the allocated RM number should be quoted in all correspondence with the ACU Research GCT when referring to this application/proposal/funded grant.

**Note**

ACU CIs are responsible for ensuring that the ACU Research GCT is informed of and provided with a copy of all relevant communications received from the external funding body, both during the review process and when notification of a funding outcome is received.
Post-Award

Notification of a successful application and awarding of a grant

Chief Investigators should notify the ACU Research GCT if they are advised directly by the funding body of the outcome of their application. If an application is successful the following process applies.

Research Project Budget Approval Form (RPBAF) or ACU ARC Grant acceptance form (for ARC grants only)

A fully completed and signed RBBAF or ACU ARC Acceptance Form must be completed and submitted to the ACU Research GCT by the lead ACU CI for approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee.

Please note the following:

- The Research Budget Approval Form or ACU ARC Grant Acceptance Form should not be submitted to the ACU Research GCT until all the necessary approvals have been obtained.
- A project account code (G code) cannot be established until the Research Budget Approval Form has been fully approved.
- If ethics approval is required to conduct the research project, the lead CI is responsible for ensuring all necessary ethics approvals are in place before commencement of the research.
- The lead CI is responsible for ensuring that all funding body guidelines and ACU policies and procedures are fully adhered to in conducting the research project.

### Receipt of notification of outcome from funding body
(In instances where the CI submitted the proposal, he/she may receive the outcome advice from the funding body and should notify the ACU Research GCT promptly)

### Request to CI to complete the Research Budget Approval form

### Completion of Research Budget Approval form including signatures

### Submission of completed Research Budget Approval form to the ACU Research GCT

### Ethics Approvals
*Please note that projects should not commence until all necessary Ethics...
Agreements and Contracts

Once a grant application is successful, the funding body and the funding recipient enter into a Funding Agreement that is usually issued by the funding body. In addition to this ‘Head Agreement’, other contracts may be required to conduct the research such as Research Agreements, Collaboration Agreements and Service Agreements etc. The ACU Research GCT is responsible for the review, negotiation and execution (signing) of all research-related contracts ACU issues or is issued. Although researchers may be involved in the development and negotiation of contracts, ACU Research manages the process and researchers are not permitted to sign an agreement on behalf of ACU unless they have the authority to do so. Requirement for a research contract should be communicated to ACU Research GCT as soon as possible to allow the necessary time for development, negotiation and, if required, legal review prior to final execution. The following process occurs for all ACU research funding agreements and related contracts:

A. Identification of Contract Drafting Responsibility

ACU is responsible for drafting contracts relating to a funding agreement for which it is the recipient (e.g. a collaboration agreement). For other contracts not related to a funding agreement, ACU may draft a contract if it is the principal research institution. Please contact the ACU Research GCT for further information.

B. Contract Review or Drafting of a Contract

The responsible ACU Research GCT member drafts and reviews research funding agreements, contracts and variations and where necessary, liaises with the Office of General Counsel through the Senior Manager, Research Grants and Contracts. The lead CI is responsible for advising the responsible ACU Research GCT member of the following information to assist in contract review or drafting:

- Project Start and End Date
- Project personnel including their contact details
- Amount of funding awarded to the project
- Amount of project funds to other parties
- Description of services to be provided under the contract/agreement
- Payment Schedule
- Project milestones and deliverables
- Intellectual Property Arrangements

Note

There may be other research contracts required that are not related to a funding agreement. ACU Research is also responsible for these contracts and should be contacted for advice on what is required.
C. Contract/Agreement negotiation

The responsible ACU Research GCT member in conjunction with the lead CI will liaise with the funding body or research partner(s) to ensure the contract terms are acceptable to all parties. Once the terms and conditions of the contract are agreed to by all parties, the responsible ACU Research GCT member will arrange for a final contract to be prepared for execution.

D. Document Execution

The responsible ACU Research GCT member will arrange for the contract to be submitted for signing in line with the ACU Delegations Policy as well as arrange for the signature of the external parties if the contract was drafted by ACU.

E. Contract Variations

Any changes or variations to research contracts require the necessary University approvals. Lead CIs should contact the responsible ACU Research GCT member to discuss and arrange any contract variations. If a contract variation is initiated by another party, the responsible ACU Research GCT member will manage the process.

F. Recording of Contracts

Contract details are recorded in RM for compliance, audit and ongoing post-award management purposes.
On-going post-award management

The ACU Research GCT should receive copies of any relevant communications received from an external funding body for the duration of the research grant.

The following are also required:

- **Lead Chief Investigators** are responsible for ensuring that all Progress/Milestone and Final Reports are completed and submitted by the due date(s). The ACU Research GCT will submit reports on behalf of CIs where this is required by the funder. In all other instances the lead CI is responsible for submission and should provide the ACU Research GCT with a copy of the report and funding body acceptance of the report.

- **Financial management of research grants** is the responsibility of the lead CI. Project funds are to be spent in accordance with the agreed budget and agreement/contract and may not be used for alternative purposes and must adhere to ACU’s financial policies and procedures. All finance related enquiries including those relating to financial statements and acquittals should be directed to the Management Accountant, Reporting & Research, Irene Nardone (mailto:irene.nardone@acu.edu.au +61 (03) 9953 3360 x3360).

  *For more information on Financial Management, see FACT SHEET on External Research Grant Finance*

- **The ACU Research GCT** should be advised when an externally funded research project has been completed.

**Contract Variations**

Where changes occur that will require a variation to a contract (such as a change in personnel, an extension of the project, a change to milestones, or an increase or decrease in budget) the lead CI should notify ACU Research GCT. Any variations will require an agreement from the funding body and parties involved and in some cases will require a formal amendment of the original research contract.

**Funding Extension Requests**

The lead CI should notify the ACU Research GCT before the project end date if the project is to be extended beyond the date that was agreed to in the contract/agreement.
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<th>Task</th>
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<td>Request to Finance for Account G code</td>
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<td>Communication of Account G code details to CI</td>
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<td>Recording of milestones, deliverables etc. in RM as well as completion of project details based on signed agreement</td>
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<td>Submission of project milestones/reports to the funder (copy also to be provided to the ACU Research GCT)</td>
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<td>Authorisation of expenditure according to the ACU financial delegations and financial management of the project, including ensuring that information in the relevant research G code account is accurate and up-to-date at the end of each reporting period</td>
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<td>Preparation and submission of financial acquittals for the funder</td>
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Closure

The lead Chief Investigator should notify the ACU Research GCT when a project has been completed and ensure that they have provided the ACU Research GCT with copies of all milestone/progress reports and the final report, as well as funding body acceptance of these reports. The Research Finance team will then complete a financial reconciliation of the project account and proceed to close the account according to University policies. The ACU Research GCT will then also close off the record in the ResearchMaster system.

Communication with CI a month before project completion date
Check of all compliance requirements e.g. milestones, deliverables
Financial reconciliation and cost centre closure
Record project closure in RM and communicate to CI