

Research Support Contribution Policy for all Research Projects (excluding CRC funded projects) Which do not Contribute to the Research Infrastructure Block Grant (RIBG)

Section 1 - Overview

- (1) Activities other than teaching undertaken by academics include "curiosity-driven" Research, Competitive Research, Commissioned Research (sometimes referred to as commercial research) or Fee-for-Service Consultancy, UNE approved outside paid work and private paid outside work.
- (2) The University of New England (UNE) currently has a Paid Outside Work Policy (under review) which covers Fee-for-Service Consultancies and other Paid Outside Work. These activities are managed via the Development Office.
- (3) Competitive Research and Commissioned Research activities are managed by the Research Services Office. The former count for RTS, IGS and RIBG, whereas the latter only count for RTS and IGS, not RIBG.
- (4) This policy does not relate to CRC-funded research for which a Faculty/Infrastructure fee is factored in as in-kind as specified in the Commonwealth Agreement(s).
- (5) International Competitive Grants do not count for RIBG, but count for RTS and IGS.

Section 2 - Policy

Research Support

- (6) The AVCC has estimated that infrastructure costs of Universities are 0.92 x direct salaries (including on-costs) for non-laboratory based work and 1.25 x direct salaries for laboratory based work (University Research, Some Issues, 1996 and earlier publications). For National Competitive Research Grants (NCRGs) the University receives Research Infrastructure Block Grant (RIBG) funds and additional overheads are not added.
- (7) It is appropriate for infrastructure/facilities (overhead) charges to be added to all other projects. Infrastructure costs are real to the university — use of space, services, payroll administration, libraries, insurance, etc. Organisations which fund research at the University should be prepared to pay the overheads costs. These organisations include not only industry but government organisations and others. In many cases the external organisation expects certain intellectual property rights. It should also be pointed out that supervision costs are often not included when project costs are calculated. The external organisations are getting exceptional value for money. If overheads are not included in costs, the University is effectively subsidising the work from more competitive NCRGs and teaching resources.
- (8) Issues of costing of contract research have become a high priority as the result of the introduction of the National Competition Policy (NCP) in July 1996. There is a legal requirement for full cost recovery in respect to externally funded research.

Contribution

(9) The research support contribution for all research contracts which are not listed in the ACGR register is currently set at 20% of salary/fee component and other costs exclusive of the GST. GST is then added after the overhead costs and other costs are included in the salary/fee component.

(10) The contribution should be included in the funding application or proposal.

(11) Regardless of whether the application has included the required research support contribution, upon receipt of funds for contract research, Research Finance will deduct 20% from the total value of the grant. Distribution of the deduction will occur in accordance with the provisions of Distribution of Research Support Contributions(17,18,19).

(12) Where funds for a research contract are paid by instalments or similar, the research support contribution will be applied to each instalment upon receipt of the payment for that instalment.

Agreements to Forego Distribution Percentage

(13) The 20% contribution is to be paid, as described under Contribution (9,10,11,12) in all cases, regardless of any agreement for an area to reduce or forego its percentage of the distribution of the funds.

(14) Agreements to reduce or forego an area's percentage of the funds are to be made only on a case-by-case basis and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research.

(15) Where an agreement is reached, such agreement must be confirmed in writing and a copy of the agreement submitted to Research Services for placing on the relevant file.

(16) Funds will be available to the grant recipient when, and only when, the research support contribution (where applicable) has been deducted.

Distribution of Research Support Contributions

(17) The contribution collected from contract research will be distributed quarterly.

(18) The contribution will be administered by Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and will be used principally (60%) to support the UNERA scholarship recipients and to enlarge the number of UNERA scholarships on offer each year. The remainder (40%) will be distributed to the institutes, centres and groups in the form of discretionary funding, which must be spent on infrastructure enhancement. The responsibility for allocating these funds will be undertaken by the Research Committee of the Academic Board.

(19) In cases where there is not a close alignment of the person doing the work with a centre/institute, that individuals, through their school, will be entitled, in the same way as a centre/institute, to access the allocation for infrastructure enhancement.

Authority to Reduce Infrastructure Costs

(20) Infrastructure costs are real costs to the University and cover administration, legal services, buildings, services and facilities such as libraries and usually cannot be waived. However, the policy includes some flexibility to allow for exceptional circumstances. An example is where the collaborating organisation has separately provided substantial infrastructure funds to the University, or where the granting body is a recognised charitable institution.

(21) University Institutes and Centres carrying out contract or collaborative research involving outside organisations are NOT exempt from infrastructure/facilities costs.

(22) The only research income routinely exempted from infrastructure charges is income for projects funded by

research sponsors listed on the Australian Competitive Grants Scheme. This exclusion is possible because the University receives infrastructure support for these projects in the form of the Research Infrastructure Block Grant (RIBG).

(23) In cases where work is carried out using the facilities of another organisation, the University will enter into an agreement with the organisation to ensure that infrastructure costs are shared fairly according to the resources contributed by each organisation.

(24) If an organisation will not pay the appropriate amount for the work performed, serious consideration should be given as to whether the project is worth doing. Where guidelines for a granting scheme indicate that the funding body will not pay overheads, this matter should be discussed with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research.

Determination of Category Type Where Uncertainty Exists

(25) If there is uncertainty as to which category the proposal fits into then Research Finance should be consulted for a determination in the first instance (Research Finance staff are located in the Financial Performance and Analytical Services, Ground Floor, Lamble Building).

(26) Where a researcher is dissatisfied with the determination of the Research Finance Officer then the matter is to be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research for final determination.

(27) If a research has applied for a grant which is considered competitive and the granting agency is not listed on the ACGR, then he/she should contact the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and request the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research to negotiate with DEST to have that agency listed on the ACGR. This has been achieved in 2003 by the PVCR for AWI (see listings tagged as 'new').

Establishing Special Cases

(28) Special cases argued not to be subject to the requirements of this policy must be negotiated directly with the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer.

Section 3 - Definitions

(29) "DEST" means the Federal Government's Department of Education, Science and Technology.

(30) "Grant applications" means all applications for funding where the project is counted towards the calculation of the Research Infrastructure Block Grant (RIBG), the Institutional Grant Scheme (IGS) or the Research Training Scheme (RTS). (In the case of Fee-for-Service Consultancy the term "proposal" or "bid" is used to differentiate them).

(31) "Fee-for-Service Consultancy" means the process of using existing knowledge to provide expert advice, opinions, reports and other communicable investigative findings, which may be at a high level, for a client. The primary purpose of the work is to provide the output that the client has engaged the expert to produce, not to add to humanity's stock of knowledge. Funding for this work is non-competitive and is not eligible for research quantum (RTS, IGS, RIBG) from DEST.

(32) "Australian Competitive Research Grant (ACRG)" means any of the funding schemes listed in DEST's Australian Competitive Grants Register List of Funding Schemes, a copy of which is attached in Appendix A.

(33) "Research" means:

- a. Creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications [this is quoted by DEST as the OECD definition of research and development].

- b. Any activity classified as research and experimental development which is characterised by originality; it should have investigation as a primary objective and should have the potential to produce results that are sufficiently general for humanity's stock of knowledge (theoretical and/or practical) to be recognisably increased.
- c. Research includes pure basic research, strategic basic research, applied research and experimental development.
- d. The essential characteristic of research is that it leads to publicly verifiable outcomes which are open to peer appraisal. However, some non-research outcomes, eg. evaluation reports and EIAS may be publicly available for peer appraisal but these do not count as research.

(34) "Contract Research" means funding provided to undertake original work that is intended to increase the stock of knowledge, and which leads to clearly identified outcomes that are capable of peer appraisal, and may be within a defined area of work that is within the interests of the contracting agency. This definition includes all competitive grants not listed on the Australian Competitive Grants Register.

(35) "Research Grant" means funding provided for nationally competitive grants to undertake original work that is intended to increase the stock of knowledge, and which leads to clearly identified outcomes that are capable of peer appraisal.

Section 4 - Appendix A

Australian Competitive Grants Register (ACGR) ([Click here for register](#))

Status and Details

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