Management of Research Funding Procedure

Version 4 – Approved 12 May 2025

Contents

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

Modern Slavery Act 2018		

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 (including academic adjuncts) and professional staff 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.

1.3. 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 EoIs) or directly negotiated with an external funding body (such as a contract research or research consultancy).

1.4. This procedure does not apply to learning and teaching activities, non-research activities (including Academic Unit managed projects involving the provision of specialist expertise), or private consultancies.

2. Applying for research funding (pre-award)

2.1. <u>Preparation of a research funding application</u>

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) (HoAU) and the University. 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 as well as research sustainability guidance from Academic Units.

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 HoAU prior to the application being submitted externally.

2.1.2. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Candidates are permitted to take the role of Chief Investigator on research funding applications. The primary supervisor, or a member of the supervisory team, must be included on the project application/record and will be responsible for providing appropriate supervision and guidance to the HDR candidate, 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 Preliminary Notification

As soon as a Chief Investigator intends to apply for research funding, they must notify:

a. Their respective HoAU; and

b. The Pre-Award Research Funding team

to ensure that internal Academic Unit and University requirements can be met. Where application deadlines have short timeframes early notification is crucial.

2.2.2 Submission Timeline & Required Documentation

All research funding applications must be submitted via the University's Research Administration System (RAS) to the Pre-Award Research Funding Team at least 10 working days before any external deadline to enable compliance review and HoAU approvals (including University approvals where required).

Required RAS documentation includes but is not limited to:

- Application forms (completed as per funding body guidelines)
- Budget details
- Funding body specific requirements
- UTAS compliance requirements (e.g. foreign interference, conflict of interest).

For complex, multi-party, or high-value projects, Chief Investigators will be required to submit applications earlier than 10 working days of the external deadline due to compliance review and approval processes.

2.2.3 Review Process

Responsibility for the compliance, content, eligibility, alignment, and quality of all applications remain with the Chief Investigator(s) as per section 2.1. Following submission within the prescribed timeframes, the Pre-Award Research Funding Team reviews applications, giving consideration to:

- Higher Education Research Data Classification (HERDC) requirements
- Relevant grant scheme guidelines
- Compliance with UTAS requirements

2.2.4 Late Submissions

Applications submitted outside of the required timeframes:

- will only be accepted in limited circumstances and with the approval of the HoAU and, where applicable, in consultation with the Pre-Award Research Funding Team
- may not be eligible for review
- may impact the Chief Investigators eligibility to submit the application

2.2.5 Major Funding Schemes

Major funding schemes, including the Australian Research Council (ARC), National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), and Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF), Cooperative Research Centres, Research and Development Corporations (e.g. FRDC, GRDC, MLA) require additional submission steps.

For these rounds, Chief Investigators must comply with:

- Intention to Apply processes
- Additional internal deadlines as communicated by the Academic Unit and Research Division.

If these additional requirements are not met, the HoAU will determine if the application is eligible for submission considering:

- quality of the application,
- strategic alignment,
- level of engagement with pre award process,
- prior communication between HoAU and Chief Investigator.

2.2.6 Final approval and submission

It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to seek final approval to submit the application through RAS. Approval includes:

- Preliminary review by Pre-Award Research Funding Team (and other specialists if required such as InVent and Legal)
- Final approval from HoAU.

Approval by the appropriate delegate in accordance with the *General Delegations Ordinance.*

In providing final approval the HoAU is confirming that:

- Applications are aligned to their Research Strategy and that the Academic Unit has the resources (capability, infrastructure, data etc.) to adequately support the proposed research projects
- Project costs (direct and indirect), including any UTAS cash and in-kind commitments, have been correctly included in an associated research project budget
- All project activities, including collaborations, are within the University's Risk Appetite
- and if funded, has accountability for ensuring that:
    (a) Expenditure of research funds will occur in accordance with the approved funding agreement and budget, or relevant funding expenditure guidelines (i.e. NHMRC Direct Research Cost Guidelines)

(b) Expenditure of research funds will be approved appropriately prior to the release of funds in accordance with the *General Delegations Ordinance*.

Once approvals are obtained in RAS, the application will be submitted as required. If approvals are not obtained, the application cannot be submitted.

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 RAS.

3.2 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.

3.3 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*.

3.4 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 Academic Unit.

3.5 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*.

3.6 Where possible, University drafted research contract templates should be used. These are provided by the Post-Award Research Funding team. If the Chief Investigator is negotiating directly with the funder, the Chief Investigator must advise the Post-Award Research Funding team as early as possible. 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 where required, as determined by the initial risk assessment performed by the Post Award Research Funding team.

3.7 Intellectual property arrangements must be consistent with the *Intellectual Property Policy, Management of Intellectual Property Procedure,* and the University's intellectual property requirements as advised by UTAS InVent.

3.8 Where agreement is reached with the funding body, the Chief Investigator and their HoAU must confirm:

a. That they have read, understood, and accept full responsibility for all terms, obligations, and legal advice provided in the agreement.

g. They acknowledge all project compliance and contract risks and agree to implement risk mitigation actions.

b. That they are solely accountable for ensuring all contractual commitments, milestone deliverables, financial and reporting obligations are met in accordance with the contract.

c. That they will comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements, research codes of conduct, guidelines and University policies and procedures fundamental to the responsible conduct of research.

3.9 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.

3.10 Copies of all fully signed contracts will be stored in the University Contract Register, Hewlett Packard Records Manager (HPRM).

3.11 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 Funding Team, and 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 into RAS (and marking the record as 'Successful').

4.2 If required, the Post-Award Research Funding team will notify the Financial Research Support (FRS) team, via RAS, to open a new Research Account in the University's Financial system. Once the account is opened the Chief Investigator will receive notification from RAS and can access the details of the account in the record.

4.3 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 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.

4.4 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.

4.5 For projects with outgoing funds (i.e. Subcontract Agreements), the Post Award Funding team will notify the Financial Research Support team,(via RAS) The Chief Investigator is responsible for arranging a purchase order in accordance with the University's procurement requirements.

4.6 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.

4.7 The Chief Investigator will ensure that all research data has been managed in accordance with the *Research Data Management Procedure*.

4.8 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.

4.9 The Chief Investigator is responsible for confirming (via RAS) when milestones have been completed.

4.10 If a milestone is associated with a payment to be received from the funding body, Financial Services will raise the required invoice.

4.11 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.

4.12 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, a record of the overdue milestone deliverable will be available to the HoAU (on the project record in RAS).

4.13 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.

4.14 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. When the variation details are finalised, the Post Award Research Funding team will notify Financial Services, via RAS, of the negotiated changes to the project.

5 Project Finalisation and Reporting (Post-Award Funding Team, and Financial Services)

5.1 At the completion of a project, the Chief Investigator will action any outstanding Tasks in RAS to ensure all contractual project deliverables have been finalised, which will notify the Financial Research Support team to initiate project finalisation activities.

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, Intellectual Property Policy* and *Management of Intellectual Property Procedure*.

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 Finance Hubs will liaise with the Chief Investigator to close the associated research project account and distribute any remaining funds in accordance with Academic Unit requirements and the *Research Funding Costing Procedure.*

Related procedures

Research Funding Costing Procedure

Risk Management Procedure

Versions

Versions of this procedure and the details of their approval are as per the following table:

Version	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
3	Approved	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Executive Director (Research)	17 May 2024
4	Approved	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Executive Director (Research)	12 May 2025

* Currency of procedures is confirmed annually. For the details of when this procedure was last confirmed as current, visit the version history page.

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..

- The Pre-Award Research Funding 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, including milestone reporting requirements, relating to all research projects in RAS.

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 bodies 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.
  - Coordinating any repayment of funds, as required by the research funding body.
- Finance Hub Accountants 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.
  - Ensuring infrastructure charges (indirect costs) are charged to research funds.
  - Assisting with cost recoveries and re-allocation of costs as required.
  - Ensuring budget figures recorded in Technology One are accurate.
- 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.