Research Cost Centre Management Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy states the University of Canberra's (University) requirements for the adoption of compliance measures in managing research projects funds provided by external funding bodies to ensure projects are managed responsibly and in accordance with expected research standards.

(2) In developing this Policy, the University has considered the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (the Code). This Policy, the Code and the University's Responsible Conduct of Research Policy should be read together.

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to:

a. all University staff and affiliates (academic, professional, honorary appointments) undertaking research activities; and
b. all externally funded research activities that use the University's resources, unless otherwise expressly stipulated by the external funding body.

Section 3 - Principles

Research Cost Centre Management Principles

(4) Research Cost Centre Management principles include, but are not limited to, the University's requirements and obligations for management of and responsibility for, research cost centres. This Policy assists with providing a standardised system for administration and management of research cost centres, to enable the University to:

a. comply with contractual obligations for financial management, reporting and acquittal requirements for research projects;
b. ensure that systems and procedures are in place to enable the University to accurately account for research funding in a timely manner;
c. facilitate financial management of research cost centres, their processing and accounting requirements by clarifying area roles and responsibilities; and
d. ensure capture of all eligible research funding.

Responsibility for Management of a Research Cost Centre

(5) Responsibility at the University is divided according to the function as follows:

a. Daily accountability for financial and administrative management of a Research Cost Centre is the responsibility of the Cost Centre Owner of the project. The Cost Centre Owner is usually the Chief Investigator of the funded project.

b. Faculty Executive Dean and the Research Services Office have a responsibility to ensure that Research Cost Centres operating within their Faculty or Research Services are managed appropriately and in accordance with Grant conditions and the University guidelines.
c. The Cost Centre Owner should ensure they are fully informed of their obligations under the Research Funding Agreement or Contract.
d. The Cost Centre Owner should not commence incurring expenditure in relation to a research project until the University has entered into a written funding agreement with the Funding body. Should an agreement or contract be entered into with the Funding body without a written funding agreement with the University and in accordance with the University's requirements, the risk for such, including expenditure being incurred, will rest with the Cost Centre Owner.
e. The Cost Centre Owner should ensure that the Research Cost Centre remains in credit and that management control is exercised when requests for expenditure are made to ensure that enough funds are available to cover the payment period required.

Appropriate Use of Research Funds

(6) Grant funding programs providing research and other income to the University are subject to contractual conditions. The University seeks to:

a. manage research grants effectively and efficiently;
b. maintain eligibility for all available future grant funding and ensure the best prospect for obtaining grant income;
c. avoid the unnecessary return of grant income to funding bodies for research and other projects; and
d. avoid the risk of non-compliance to the University's contractual obligations.

(7) The University seeks to achieve this by ensuring compliance with all grant conditions on the part of the University, its employees and representatives.

(8) The Cost Centre Owner is responsible for authorisation of Project expenditure and should ensure that expenditure charged to a project relates specifically to that project, and is in accordance with the project description, approved budget and funding agreement, and that relevant delegations apply.

(9) Authorisation of expenditure against a Research Cost Centre which later proves to be not related to that research project may result in disciplinary action, for example in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement the University has specific responsibilities under the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (the Code), which are outlined at Schedule 6, section 5.1 to 5.4 and Clause 40 of the Enterprise Agreement.

(10) In relation to research projects where all or some activities require ethics clearance, the funds related to these activities will not be released until the required approvals are obtained. It is the responsibility of the Cost Centre Owner of the project to ensure that no work is performed or expenditure incurred against the Research Cost Centre until appropriate ethics clearance has been obtained (as per clauses 9 to 15, and clauses 18 to 20 of the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy). If relevant approvals are not obtained, as required, the Research Cost Centre will be suspended.

Creation of a Research Cost Centre

(11) A Research Cost Centre will only be created for research projects that have been reviewed and administered through the Research Services Office.

(12) Finance & Analytics will only create a Research Cost Centre on receiving a request from Research Services.

(13) A unique Research Cost Centre will be established for each individual research project. This allows easy

identification and reporting of revenue and expenditure relating to a project.

Financial Reporting of Research Cost Centres

(14) Research projects generally require periodic financial reporting to the funding body. In such instances, Finance & Analytics is responsible for preparing the reports and submitting them to the funding body. The Cost Centre Owner is responsible for assisting Finance & Analytics in the preparation of financial acquittals both during and at the completion of a project.

(15) Only financial acquittals prepared and authorised by Finance & Analytics are to be provided to the granting bodies. Cost Centre Owners should not prepare or provide any financial information to granting bodies without Finance & Analytics review and certification.

Transfer of a Research Project to Another Institution

(16) When a Chief Investigator leaves the University part way through a research project it may be relevant for unspent research project funds to be transferred to another institution. The transfer of unspent research project funds to another institution shall conform to the research contract conditions and will require the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Faculty Executive Dean and the Director, Research and the Chief Financial Officer.

At the End of a Project

(17) At the end of a project it is the responsibility of the Cost Centre Owner to verify the transactions recorded in the Research Cost Centre and provide the necessary assistance to Finance & Analytics in order to finalise the project.

(18) In the event that a project goes into deficit, the funds will be recouped from the operating budget of the relevant Faculty. It is the responsibility of the Cost Centre Owner to negotiate with the appropriate authority (Faculty Executive Dean) to transfer funds as required to reconcile the Research Cost Centre.

(19) In instances where a Research Consultancy has involved Research Professional Fees, Finance & Analytics will journal out the value of these fees from the Research Cost Centre to a Research Support Cost Centre upon the receipt of a request from the Cost Centre Owner and authorisation by the Faculty Executive Dean.

(20) If there are surplus funds remaining at the end of a project, Research Services will determine if the surplus needs to be returned to the funding body.

(21) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor may at any time review and seek confirmation that funds credited to the Research Support Cost Centre have been used for research related activities.

Closure of a Research Cost Centre

(22) Finance & Analytics is responsible for the closure of Research Cost Centres. When Research Services receives confirmation from the Cost Centre Owner that a research project has been completed they will request Finance & Analytics to close the Research Cost Centre. Finance & Analytics will only close a Research Cost Centre after it has been reconciled and any surplus or deficit amounts have been transferred or reimbursed as required.

International Research Requirements

(23) For research conducted in foreign countries, with international collaborators, or involving data, materials or participants from foreign jurisdictions will necessitate further checks to ensure compliance with all relevant international legislation, regulation and requirements that are jurisdiction specific, including, but not limited to, their impact on University, local and domestic requirements. Issues for consideration may include foreign research permissions, visa restrictions, sanctions, export controls and specific foreign legislation, compliance or regulation

requirements.

Section 4 - Responsibilities

Who	Responsibilities
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Owner of this Policy
Director, Research	Contact for this Policy

Section 5 - Procedure

(24) Refer to the Research Cost Centre Management Procedure.

Section 6 - Definitions

Terms	Definitions
Acquittal	Statement of Revenue received less Expenditure incurred which results in a remaining unspent balance for the research project.
Chief Investigator	The Researcher identified by the University or named in the relevant Research Grant Agreement or Contract, as taking the lead responsibility for the project.
Cost Centre Owner	This is usually the Chief Investigator and is the person that is identified by Research Services as taking the lead financial responsibility of the project.
Faculty Support Cost Centre	Research Cost Centre created for each Faculty or Research Centre to which funds are, in certain circumstances, transferred from individual Research Cost Centres.
Research Consultancy	The purchase by an external organisation of the services of University Staff in the provision of expert advice, specialist knowledge or objective review within a research field.
Research Contract	A contract to provide funding for a specific research project or set of projects to be undertaken by the University. It may be funded by a company, government body, charity or other body, and will contain terms and conditions governing the conduct of the project, as well as obligations incumbent upon the University and the funder.
Research Cost Centre	A cost centre that relates to a project which is for research purposes as determined by the Research Services. These are recorded on the University's Research Master database and revenue for these cost centres is classified as Category 1 to 4 as per the Higher Education Research Data Collection reporting guidelines.
Research Professional Fees	Amount included in a Research Consultancy budget that represents the value of the research team's time in undertaking the specified project.
Unspent Funds	Funds remaining at the end of a project resulting from either cost saving measures undertaken to reduce project expenses (which have not adversely affected the research outcome), changes to project activities approved by the funding body and/or gains from changes in market rates on budgeted expense items.
Ethics Clearance Due Date	Date specified by the Chief Investigator when Ethics approval should be granted.

Status and Details

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