Consultancy Management Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The University of Canberra (University) supports the principle that participation in consultancies brings many benefits to the University and staff, including: generation of income for the University; opportunities for partnerships in research and other activities; greater likelihood of the realisation of impact through engagement with external parties; the dissemination of knowledge; enhancement of staff skills and expertise; and advancement of the University's reputation and that of its staff and affiliates.

(2) This Policy sets out the principles for the effective management of consultancy work undertaken at the University.

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to:

a. all staff and affiliates undertaking consultancy work on behalf of the University; and
b. all consultancy projects undertaken on behalf of the University, including, but not limited to, those that meet the definition of research.

(4) Excluded from the Policy is private consultancy work undertaken by staff or affiliates in their own time and using their own resources. Such consultancies are covered by the Secondary Employment Policy.

Section 3 - Principles

University consultancies

(5) University consultancy work refers to a broad range of expert services that University staff or affiliates may provide to external organisations, such as government and industry, for a fee.

(6) Staff or Affiliates who undertake consultancy work on behalf of the University are supported by having access to University resources and facilities, protected by means of University's insurance and utilise University support structures and branding.

(7) In undertaking consultancy work, staff and affiliates must adhere to the Charter of Conduct and Values.

(8) The University is the proper party to a University consultancy, regardless of any reference to individual staff in consultancy agreements and other related documentation.

Costing and pricing

(9) Consultancies must be priced in a manner that complies with the Commonwealth Competitive Neutrality Policy Statement.

(10) Consultancies must be priced at appropriate competitive rates, taking into account all applicable costs detailed in

this Policy and aim to generate a return for the University.

(11) At a minimum, pricing must take into account the value of the work to the funder, costs associated with the conduct of the work including agreed salary costs, and the applicable University levies as per clauses 15, 16 and 17.

Project initiation and approval

(12) Staff members or affiliates wishing to engage in the conduct of consultancy work must first seek the approval of their faculty/university research institute (URI).

(13) Consultancy projects must be covered by an agreement between the external party and the University to ensure clarity on any terms and conditions governing the conduct of the projects as well as obligations incumbent upon the University and the funder.

(14) Consultancy agreements must be signed off by an appropriate authority as per the University Delegations of Authority Policy.

Recouping indirect costs

(15) In supporting consultancy projects, the University incurs real costs, known as indirect costs, that are associated with services including, but not limited to, the use of facilities, administrative support, insurance, and building maintenance.

(16) The University asserts the right to seek the recovery of indirect costs through the imposition of an indirect costs levy on consultancy projects undertaken at the University, as set out in Schedule A.

(17) The specified levy will be charged as funds are received into the consultancy cost centre.

Project completion

(18) At the completion of a consultancy project, confirmation of all direct and indirect expenditure having been appropriately charged against the cost centre will be sought from the cost centre owner.

(19) For consultancy projects with a value equal to or higher than $60,000, Finance & Analytics will undertake an internal financial acquittal.

(20) For all consultancy projects with a value less than $60,000, a financial acquittal will only occur if it is specified as a requirement in the agreement.

Treatment of Surplus and Deficit Funds

(21) Surplus or deficit funds arising from a consultancy project will be transferred to an Academic Consultancy Cost Centre (ACCC) managed by the staff member.

(22) If the value of the amount to be transferred from any one consultancy is greater than $30,000, the approval of the Dean/Director is required.

(23) Surplus funds held in ACCCs must only be used for the conduct of research and research related activities, for activities related to the commercialisation of research and teaching related activities that are conducted on behalf or, for the benefit of or under the name of the University.

(24) Surplus balances accrued in any given year in an ACCC can be carried forward for a period of 2 years following the year in which the funds were transferred to the ACCC.

(25) An agreed plan for budgeting and expenditure of funds held in an ACCC must be in place.

(26) Faculty Deans/URI directors may approve further carry forward of funds, subject to the staff member or affiliate having a detailed expenditure plan in place.

(27) At the end of the 2 year carry forward period, deficit balances in ACCCs that have not been offset by surpluses from other projects will be adjusted to the faculty/URI base operating cost centre.

Staff/Affiliate exit

(28) When a staff member exits the University, the transfer of unspent funds in an active Consultancy project to another institution may be approved by the Faculty Dean/URI director in certain circumstances, subject to the specific nature of the project.

(29) Surplus funds in ACCCs may not be paid out to an exiting Staff member or to another University Staff member, and they may not be transferred to another institution.

(30) After a Staff member has left the University, the treatment of surplus funds will be at the discretion of the relevant Faculty Dean/URI director, but will generally be consolidated into faculty/URI base operating cost centres.

Schedule A: University Levies

Consultancy contract value	Levy*	Financial acquittal
≤ $10,000	0%	Not required, unless specified in the agreement
> $10,000 and < $60,000	25% of the total fee of the consultancy project	Not required, unless specified in the agreement
≥ $60,000	25% of the total fee of the consultancy project	A complete internal financial acquittal

Notes

*Aside from the levy, all applicable direct costs must be charged against the cost centre during the conduct of the project.

Section 4 - Procedures

(31) Refer to the Consultancy Management Procedure.

Section 5 - Definitions

Terms	Definitions
Academic Consultancy Cost Centre	A cost centre created for a specific staff member to temporarily hold surplus and/or deficits issuing from completed consultancy projects.
Affiliates	Those people given Emeritus and Honorary (including Adjunct, Professional Associate and Visitor) appointments in accordance with the relevant University policies and procedures.

Terms	Definitions
Consultancy	The provision of expert advice or specialist knowledge to an external organisation for a fee. Typically, the external organisation directs or determines the scope of the work and owns the intellectual property (IP) derived from the work. Consultancy that can be classified as research income: Services may include specialist knowledge or objective review within a particular research field and/or access to University equipment or facilities to work on a specific project. Such projects are typified as the use of existing knowledge in new ways to generate novel understandings, and income generated through these is reportable in the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) and influences Block Grant allocation. Other consultancy income: Other types of consultancy services that cannot be classified as research income may include routine laboratory and other testing of materials, devices, products or produce; analysis of data; surveys, including market and opinion surveys; quality control; field trials; the provision of professional advice including possible expert witness advice; the provision of professional services such as design, legal, medical and allied health and participation in fee-paying non-award courses.
Deficit	The negative amount remaining once all costs (including direct costs and the applicable indirect costs levy) have been deducted from funds received from an external organisation for a project.
Direct costs	Costs that are integral to the objectives of a project and are charged as project expenditure. Examples include but are not limited to salaries for staff recruited to work on the project (e.g. research assistants, technicians), salary or replacement salary costs of the academic conducting the project, travel expenses, costs of material/equipment required to conduct the work.
Indirect costs	Costs of a project which are the University's overheads and include items such as the operations and maintenance of buildings, use of facilities and libraries, hazardous waste disposal, insurances, regulatory and research compliance and administration of research services. Although they are necessary for the conduct of the project, and although they may be incurred in the course of the project, they are costs that do not directly address the approved objectives of a consultancy.
Internal financial acquittal	An accurate income and expenditure report conducted by Finance & Analytics where all revenue and eligible expenditures for the funded activities, including staffing costs, are accounted for. The primary purpose of the internal financial acquittal is to ensure the correct calculation of the project's balance of surplus or deficit before this surplus/balance can be moved to an ACCC.
Levy	An off-the-top amount to assist in meeting the indirect costs associated with the delivery of a consultancy project undertaken at the University.
Private Consultancy	An arrangement for the provision of services by University staff for an external organisation that is undertaken in their own personal capacity and that does not involve the use of University resources, infrastructure or branding.
Research	Creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge.
Staff	A person who is a member of the staff of the University, whether full-time, part-time, contract, sessional, or casual and includes all academic, professional, technical and administrative officers and employees.
Surplus	The amount available once all costs (including direct costs and the applicable levy) have been deducted from funds received from an external organisation for a project.

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