Research and Sponsored Programs
The University of Toledo

Split Credit for Awards

Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) recently released a much-revised Proposal Submission form (RSP 100.2) for use by both campuses. This form, which must accompany all RSP proposal submissions, simplifies the process by combining in one form the old Compliance Form (RSP 125) and previous Proposal Submission forms for each campus. The form also gathers some additional information for use on reports, and this message intends to clarify what is new to some.

This year, annual reports from the RSP office will contain a value of “% Credit”. This value is determined from the %Credit information entered on the Proposal Submission form (RSP100.2) by PIs. %Credit is determined by agreement between the PI, Co-PI and Co-Investigators. %Credit is not the same as effort. Credit must total 100% on each proposal submission. If the PI claims full credit for the grant then our reports will indicate 100% credit to the PI and his/her department. Credit allocation distributes recognition of the investigators and departments as well as indirect cost allocations among investigators and their departments/colleges. Split credit has been used for years at Ohio State University and other research institutions to fairly represent the contributions of investigators from various academic units. The process has been popular (and many feel necessary) to encourage collaborations across departments and colleges by facilitating an equitable distribution on submission and award reports. Such a system also allows recognition of investigators and their departments when program guidelines stipulate that the PI must be a provost or VP.

How Does It Work?

The TOTAL reporting of award and dollar amounts remains exactly the same as before, but is reported by the sum of the investigators/departments/colleges. Credit allocation is determined by the investigators by whatever makes sense – training and equipment grants are quite different from research grants – and only the investigators know how best to allocate credit. The only rule is that it must total 100% per submission. In the example below, investigators from Orthopedics and Bioengineering have chosen to credit the PI with 60% and the co-investigator with 40%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Academic Title</th>
<th>Department/Center</th>
<th>Mail Stop/Wk phone</th>
<th>%Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigator</td>
<td>Smith, Jane</td>
<td>Assoc. Prof.</td>
<td>Orthopedics</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-PI, Co-Investigator¹</td>
<td>Doe, John</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Bioengineering</td>
<td>5678</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Must total 100%, TBD by consensus of the investigators and used to represent investigator/dept./college activity on submission/award reports. Used by Grants Accounting to allocate dept./college indirect cost. For multi-investigator proposals, PIs are directed to UT policy 3364-70-22 “PI/PD responsibilities on sponsored projects” and the Research Forms page (see RSP128) at the Research web site (http://www.utoledo.edu/research/) for guidance on establishing a Multi-PI/PD Leadership plan.

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If the proposal is funded at $100,000, Jane Smith’s portion (and her department and college and campus portion) will be reported as 60% of that, or $60,000. It is understood that this figure is a representation of credit as defined by the investigators, and does not necessarily correlate with spending, salary, or anything but what the investigators determine is a fair representation of participation or contribution.

There is one real monetary component to the % split, however. The department & college portions of the F&A (indirect cost) recovery will be divided according to the % credit split. On the Health Science Campus, 30% of the indirect cost recovery goes to the department, while on Main Campus 30% is split between the department (20%) and college (10%). So in the example above, Orthopedics would get 60% of the 30%, while Bioengineering and the College of Engineering would get the other 40% of the 30%.

Without some arrangement to recognize credit and split indirect costs among investigators and departments, there is a counter-incentive for collaboration. Of course it remains possible for a principal investigator and co-investigators to allot 100% credit to the PI. The only rule is that it is up to the investigators to determine, and the total must be 100%.

**Award Reports Now Show Investigator Credit for Previous Years**

Shared credit data has been collected for many years on Main Campus prior to the merger. Such data did not exist for the Health Science Campus proposals prior to July 1, 2010, but has been added such that reporting for previous award remains consistent with previous reporting, with the PI (and PI department and PI college) credited with 100%. The HSC Research and Sponsored Programs office will update records of % credit when presented with indications of approval by the investigators and their department chairs.