

Research Administration – Roles and Responsibilities

OVERVIEW

This document, sponsored by the Vice Principal (Research and Innovation) and the Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance), defines the roles and responsibilities of individuals and units, including McGill’s administrative offices and the research community, as these relate to research administration. Researchers, support staff from departments and/or faculties, and central administrative offices must have a comprehensive understanding of one another’s respective roles in order to effectively administer research funds at McGill and to build strong communication channels with each other. This document outlines, **exclusively**, the roles and responsibilities relating to **research administration**. The broader scope of research and its underlying responsibilities, required by the same participants, is intentionally **excluded** from this document. This document will serve as a reference for all existing and new staff and will ensure that individuals and units have the necessary information and training to fulfill their responsibilities in the administration of research funds.

The main participants involved in research administration are:

<u>ACADEMIC</u>	<u>RESEARCHER / PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)</u>
	<u>DEAN / ASSOCIATE DEAN OF RESEARCH (ADR) / DEPARTMENTAL CHAIR AND / OR DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTES¹</u>
<u>FACULTY / DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF</u>	<u>FACULTY FINANCIAL OFFICER (FFO) / DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION</u>
	<u>FINANCIAL SERVICE TEAMS (FST) / OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS AS REQUIRED²</u>
<u>CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION</u>	<u>OFFICE OF SPONSORED RESEARCH (OSR)</u>
	<u>RESEARCH FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES (RFMS)</u>

¹ Deans may opt to delegate the responsibilities noted herein to senior members of their Faculty, namely Associate Dean of Research, Department Chair, Directors of Schools and Institutes. Signature on the OSR Checklist constitutes endorsement of responsibilities noted herein.

² Financial Service Team Managers are available in certain Faculties / Departments and report directly to the FFO. These responsibilities may be shared with other administrative officers in Faculty or Department.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES BY KEY STAKEHOLDER

RESEARCHER / PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)	
Academic	<p>1. Conduct administrative research activities responsibly, with the highest levels of integrity and in compliance with all policies, regulations, and procedures of both the Sponsor and the University (e.g. human participants, animals, laboratory safety, controlled goods, Regulation on Conflict of Interest, Regulation on the Conduct of Research, Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct, Policy on Inventions and Software). Ensure that all supervised staff, students and any person appointed as delegate involved in the conduct or management of the sponsored project, are fully informed and agree to comply with all applicable policies, regulations and procedures of both the Sponsor and the University.</p>
	<p>2. Identify funding opportunities and prepare applications that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the requirements of the Sponsor • Include a budget for all direct and applicable indirect costs • Determine available or required resources to conduct the project, such as space and equipment • Include all necessary documentation, including a completed OSR Checklist • Disclose potential Conflict of Interest for anyone involved in the project
	<p>3. Ensure applications for funding are reviewed and signed by the OSR prior to submission and Sponsored agreements / contracts are reviewed and executed by OSR.</p>
	<p>4. Apply responsible management practices to ensure that required reports are submitted to the Sponsor per their predefined schedule.</p>
	<p>5. Notify appropriate key stakeholders such as Sponsor, OSR, RFMS, Compliance Offices, Department and/or Faculty, of any significant changes to the project that require additional review and consideration; this includes changes in academic status, leaves, departures from the University, budget reallocations, changes to the project that impact ethical or animal care compliance etc.</p>
	<p>6. Exercise financial accountability and responsibility in accordance with McGill’s Fund Financial Manager policy.</p>
	<p>7. Approve all expenditures as reasonable, eligible and allocable to the sponsored activities, consistent with the terms and conditions of the award and ensure they are incurred during the approved project period.</p>
	<p>8. Approve monthly expenditure reports.</p>
	<p>9. Delegate signing authority as needed through Minerva Temporary Delegation of Signing Authority Menu and/or McGill Market Place (MMP).</p>
	<p>10. Retain all applicable technical and financial supporting documentation for easy retrieval as required for compliance, audits and monitoring reviews. Upon departure from the University, technical information may be retained directly by the Researcher but must be made available to the University, upon request. Financial documentation is the property of the University and must be retained by the University. See Record Retention Table</p>
	<p>11. Use due diligence in the management of over-expenditures.</p>
	<p>12. Responsible for ineligible expenses or forfeiture of payments due to non-compliance with the terms and conditions of awards.</p>

Research Administration – Roles and Responsibilities

Academic	DEAN / ASSOCIATE DEAN OF RESEARCH / DEPARTMENTAL CHAIR / DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTES
	1. Communicate and advocate the University’s highest level of integrity and compliance with all relevant administrative policies and regulations, for all sponsored research projects.
	2. Approve teaching, administrative release and/or salary support, when requested by Principal Investigators.
	3. Confirm availability of space and other resources needed for the conduct of the project.
	4. Endorse Departmental and/or Faculty matching or in-kind contributions.
	5. Implement processes and procedures, which safeguard against over-expenditures with the understanding that the Faculty/Department/School/Institute shares responsibility with the Researcher for over-expenditures incurred on sponsored funds.

Faculty / Departmental Administrative and Support Staff	FACULTY FINANCIAL OFFICER (FFO)/DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION
	Coordinate the dissemination and local implementation of research administration policies, procedures and guidelines to Faculty and Departmental staff. Ensure direct reports are conducting responsibilities listed below.
	FINANCIAL SERVICE TEAMS (FSTs) / OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS AS REQUIRED
	1. Act as a primary point of contact for Researchers requiring financial / administrative assistance during the post award management of their research funding.
	2. Communicate University procedures as they apply to research funds to promote compliance with all applicable regulations and policies.
	3. Attend training sessions held by Central Administrative units (Research Administration Network, FST Round Table Sessions) to gain the necessary knowledge required to roll out new systems, processes, or other tools, which will facilitate research administration and promote compliance with Sponsor requirements and institutional policies and procedures.
	4. Provide relevant training to researchers and other unit-based administrative and research staff; act as a help desk where collaboration is necessary to roll out new systems, processes, or other tools which will facilitate research administration and promote compliance with Sponsor requirements and institutional policies and procedures.
	5. Review fund balances and expiry dates in collaboration with RFMS and OSR for planning purposes and ensure continuity / renewal of FOAPAL accounts where applicable.
	6. Validate expenditures for compliance with applicable Sponsor terms and conditions and University policies.
	7. Promote sound record retention practices to PIs to facilitate ease of access and compliance with all regulatory policies for retention of documents.
8. Liaise with RFMS for assistance with resolution of fund over-expenditures , filing of financial reports to Sponsors and other relevant information related to research fund activities.	
9. Remind PIs of reporting deadlines to ensure smooth research activities.	
10. Assist with the correction of ineligible expenditures charged to grants or other research funds.	

Research Administration – Roles and Responsibilities

Central Administration	OFFICE OF SPONSORED RESEARCH (OSR)
	1. Identify funding opportunities and promote them to the research community.
	2. Liaise with funding agencies and partners on behalf of Researchers and the University.
	3. Assist with development and preparation of applications for research funding.
	4. Review and sign research proposals on behalf of the University or as a delegate of the University Principal to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all Sponsor and University requirements have been met • Confirm eligibility of Researchers according to Sponsor guidelines • Verify that required signatures are included on all documents related to research funding applications
	5. Communicate results of funding applications to applicants, Departments, Faculties and Senior Administration.
	6. Review, negotiate and sign contracts and agreements with Sponsors and partners.
	7. Instruct RFMS to open Funds upon receipt of award notification or funding agreement and confirmation that all applicable Sponsor and University requirements have been met, inclusive of necessary ethical certifications.
	8. Identify and communicate award parameters and Sponsor terms and conditions to Researchers, RFMS, FSTs and other administrative staff.
	9. Provide ongoing support in the management of grants and agreements through their entire lifecycle by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirming ongoing eligibility of Researchers to hold research funds according to Sponsor eligibility requirements • Providing assistance to Researchers and staff on post-award administrative processes • Liaising with Sponsors to ensure compliance with guidelines and to resolve conflicts and concerns (where applicable) • Initiating and managing partnership agreements, sub-awards and sub-contracts with external collaborators • Approving additional budget installments and/or supplements or any other changes to award parameters • Ensuring compliance certificates are valid through the life of the project
	10. Manage University research funding database (InfoEd) and report research activity to University, governmental bodies, affiliated research institutes and as requested by the research community
	11. Provide training opportunities for Researchers and staff related to grantsmanship, agency-specific info-sessions and research administration.
12. Assist the Vice-Principal, Research and Innovation, the Vice-Principal, Administration and Finance, and the Office of the Provost, with the development and implementation of University policies and standard administrative procedures.	

Research Administration – Roles and Responsibilities

RESEARCH FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES (RFMS)	
Central Administration	1. Upon receipt of OSR authorization of grant/contract, assign a FOAPAL in Banner, set up spending budget and provide FOAPAL to researcher.
	2. Provide advance funding to partnering organizations on behalf of the Researcher upon execution of a transfer of funds/sub grant/subcontract agreement and based on fund balance availability.
	3. Prepare and submit invoices to Sponsors based on payment schedules.
	4. Ensure receipt of revenues from all Sponsors as confirmed per notifications of awards.
	5. Together with Faculties, Departments and Fund Holders, ensure that funds are expended and accounted for in accordance with the terms, conditions and regulations provided by the Sponsor and/or policies and procedures of the University.
	6. Liaise with Sponsors and partners on behalf of Researchers and the University.
	7. Record revenues and expenditures relating to research awards and other restricted funds in accordance with the reporting requirements and timelines of Sponsors as well as McGill University.
	8. Prepare and submit financial reports to Sponsors according to set deadlines.
	9. Coordinate with Faculties, Departments and Fund Holders to obtain all required documentation relating to grantee terminations for timely financial report submission to Sponsors.
	10. Coordinate and respond to audits and monitoring visits requested by Sponsors in collaboration with other units such as OSR, Procurement Services and the Researcher.
	11. Monitor and mitigate monthly over-expenditure reports in order that these are addressed on a timely basis.
	12. Develop and execute monitoring and compliance programs geared to detect non-eligible spending or breach of applicable Sponsor policies or procedures.
	13. Provide training for Researchers, FSTs, and administrative and support staff in collaboration with OSR.
	14. Monitor fund maintenance in Banner.
	15. Set up and transfer any remaining balances on grants/contracts that are not required to be returned to the Sponsor to a Research Residual Fund and monitor its activity to ensure that funds are spent on research related activities in accordance with McGill University policies and procedures.
	16. Upon termination of fund and research project, close and inactivate fund in Banner.
	17. Distribute overheads from non-accredited agencies to Faculties and Hospitals as per McGill's predetermined distribution formulas on an annual basis (University Fiscal Year).
	18. Assist the Vice-Principal, Administration and Finance, the Vice-Principal, Research and Innovation, and the Office of the Provost, with the development and implementation of University policies and standard administrative procedures.