

Externally Funded Research - Academic Policy

1. Purpose of policy

This Policy provides a framework for the management of externally funded research projects.

It delineates the responsibilities of staff regarding the management of research projects that are funded from an external source.

2. Policy scope and application

This policy applies to all staff who engage in research activity under the auspices of the University.

When undertaking externally funded research, researchers must comply with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, other relevant state and national legislation, and relevant policies and procedures, regardless of the funding source.

This policy does not apply to internally funded research projects – instead refer to the Externally Unfunded Research – Guidelines.

3. Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Term for policies and procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to this policy and are critical to the effectiveness of it:

Contract research: research project funded by an external organisation (not resulting from a competitive application scheme).

Cost Centre Manager: defined as per the Glossary of terms for policy and procedures

Externally funded research: research projects funded by organisations external to the University.

Grant funded research: research project funded from competitive research funding schemes.

Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC): The Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) controls the collection of higher education research data and is designed to ensure the Australian Government's research block grants are allocated in a fair and transparent way and to support the policy intent of the funding.

Research: as defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

Researcher: all staff, higher degree by research (HDR) students, adjunct and conjoint appointments, visiting academics, and research fellows who engage in research activity under the auspices of the University.

Research Master: the University's research project approval system.

Research Professional: external website detailing competitive research funding opportunities.

4. Regulatory Environment

4.1 It is essential for the University to ensure a coordinated and legislatively-compliant approach towards securing research income to undertake research activities. This policy clarifies the responsibilities of University staff applying for external research funding, or negotiating funding for contract research, so that coordination is achieved.

4.2 All staff are required to implement this policy when undertaking research activities at the University.

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Academic Board

RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

DESIGNATED OFFICER

Director, Office of Research

FIRST APPROVED

2 February 2010

LAST AMENDED

17 May 2021

REVIEW DATE

25 March 2025

STATUS

Active

4.3 In its application of this policy, the University commits to:

- Ensuring research at the University is conducted according to the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.
- Ensuring funded research projects comply with the definition of research according to the HERDC specifications.
- Strategically develop research capacity within the University.
- Enhancing the University's reputation regarding research output.

5. Externally Funded Research

5.1 Competitive research grants – researchers are encouraged to apply for grants to support their research (appropriate to their academic experience).

5.2 Contract research – researchers are also encouraged to engage with external organisations, who may offer to provide funds to support research which is expected to realise mutual benefits. 5.3 Approval for research projects must be granted before a project commences. Research Master is USC's research project approval system. Refer to the Externally Funding Research – Procedures for details of the approval processes.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Institutional responsibilities

6.1.1 The University will appropriately report HERDC block grant funding.

6.1.2 The University will provide appropriate support to Researchers, to assist them to secure external research funding.

6.1.3 The University will ensure research funding is appropriately governed, regardless of funding source, in accordance with the requirements of the Financial Management Practices – Operational Policy.

6.2 Researcher responsibilities

6.2.1 To seek appropriate and discipline specific mentorship within the University and externally in their pursuit of external research funding.

6.2.2 Ensure endorsement is granted by the Cost Centre Manager before applying for competitive research grants or commencing contract research.

6.2.3 Verify the project will result in the creation of new knowledge and complies with the definition of research according to the HERDC specifications.

6.2.4 Ensure appropriate governance is in place before a research project commences and comply with the terms of executed Agreements.

6.2.5 Assess and manage any risks to the successful delivery of the externally funded research project.

6.2.6 Comply with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research throughout the project.

6.3 Cost Centre Manager responsibilities

6.3.1 Ensure that appropriate guidance and mentorship is provided to Researchers in their pursuit of external research funding.

6.3.2 Review requests for competitive grant applications and contract research and endorse if appropriate.

6.3.3 Ensure appropriate approvals and governance are in place before a research project commences, and support Researchers to comply with the terms of the executed Agreement.

6.3.4 Manage any financial risks with the Researcher as a result of undertaking the research.

6.3.5 Ensure that all resources required by the Researcher to undertake the resource can be provided by the cost centre.

6.3.6 Support researchers to comply with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research throughout the project.

6.4 Office of Research responsibilities

6.4.1 Review competitive grant applications to ensure eligibility and compliance with external and internal requirements.

6.4.2 Provide non-specialist feedback to Researchers regarding grantsmanship and facilitate competitive grant applications.

6.4.3 Ensure competitive grant applications or contract research proposals describe auditable research as defined under the HERDC specifications.

6.4.4 Provide final approval for the submission and acceptance of grant applications, and for contract research projects to proceed, in line with the Management of Contracts and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) – Policy.

6.4.5 Ensure appropriate governance is in place to preside over approved research projects, which details intellectual property, confidentiality and copyright issues, commercialisation, conflicts of interest, ethics and/or other relevant approvals, reporting, data management, and dissemination of research findings.

6.4.6 Verify that approved external research funding is correctly categorised, according to HERDC specifications.

7. Records management

7.1 Records that provide reliable and accurate evidence of decisions and actions must be captured by all individuals engaged in research activities, regardless of the funding source. All records must be captured in an approved records management system in accordance with the Information and Records Management – Procedures.

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Conflict of Interest - Governing Policy
- Externally Funded Research - Procedures
- Financial Management Practices - Operational Policy
- Fraud and Corruption Control - Governing Policy
- Intellectual Property - Governing Policy
- Intellectual Property: Commercialisation of Research Outcomes - Procedures
- Intellectual Property: Student IP - Procedures
- Management of Contracts and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) - Governing Policy
- Managing and Investigating Breaches of Responsible Research Conduct - Procedures
- Resolution of Complaints (Staff) - Guidelines
- Risk Management - Governing Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct - Governing Policy
- University Consultancy Work - Operational Policy
- University Consultancy Work - Procedures

LINKED DOCUMENTS

- Externally Funded Research - Procedures