

Policy on the Administration of Sponsored Agreements and Gifts

Policy Title	Policy on the Administration of Sponsored Agreements and Gifts
Policy #	05.104.2
Policy Owner	Vice President for Research and Economic Development
Contact Information	Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the AVP of Research Administration at (401) 874-2636
Approved By	President of the University of Rhode Island
Effective Date	April 14, 2025
Next Review Date	No later than April 30, 2030
Who Needs to Know About this Policy	All faculty, staff, and students who are involved in the conduct or administration of research activities funded or proposed for funding at the University by external sources.
Definitions	<p>Sponsored Agreements (Contracts and Grants). Sponsored Agreements are defined as grants, contracts, or other agreements for external funding from a federal funding agency, quasi-federal funding agency, state agency, international agency, foundation, business, corporation, nonprofit organization, or private individual that generally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require the delivery of a product or service, or • Require the delivery of a research or project report that includes, but is not limited to, results, data, findings, surveys, and/or financial information, or • Require specific commitments regarding the levels of personnel efforts, or • Involve stipulations regarding data, publications or intellectual property such as inventions, patents, certain copyrights or licenses, or • Involve facilities and administrative / indirect cost funds. <p>Gifts. Gifts are defined as external funding (and/or donated equipment or goods) that comes from a foundation, business, corporation, nonprofit organization, or private individual that has no required deliverables such as, but not limited to, products or services, and does not require any obligations to the recipient regarding data, publications, or intellectual property such as inventions, patents, certain copyrights, or licenses. Gifts are provided with charitable intent and are tax deductible donations as defined by the Internal Revenue Service and as reflected by the absence of required deliverables or intellectual property rights. Gifts may require fiscal or program reports and attribution of funding support for accountability purposes.</p>

Statutes, Regulations, and Policies Governing or Necessitating This Policy	None
Reason for Policy / Purpose	To delineate between Sponsored Agreements and Gifts, establish basic rules and procedures relating to the administration of Sponsored Agreements and Gifts, define responsibilities in this area between the University of Rhode Island Division of Research and Economic Development and the University of Rhode Island Foundation & Alumni Engagement, and to ensure that the University of Rhode Island and the University of Rhode Island Foundation & Alumni Engagement are in compliance with all Internal Revenue Service requirements.
Forms Related to this Policy	None

Policy Statement

The University of Rhode Island (also, University) sees great value in outside activities that advance and communicate knowledge through interaction with government, industry, the community, and the public. The intent of this policy is to establish basic rules and procedures relating to the administration of Sponsored Agreements and Gifts and the agreed-upon division of responsibilities in this area between the University of Rhode Island Division of Research and Economic Development and the University of Rhode Island Foundation & Alumni Engagement (URIFAE). The importance of establishing a formal distinction between Sponsored Agreements and Gifts is related to federal/state compliance and audit requirements.

1. General Provisions

Generally speaking, the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) within the Division of Research and Economic Development administers Sponsored Agreements, while Gifts are administered by URIFAE.

Please note there may be grants from charitable foundations that require deliverables and/or that require the grant's submission be coordinated with OSP. In these instances, the grant must also be processed and received by the Division of Research and Economic Development, though URIFAE will receive full Gift credit for them as specified by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE).

In some cases, the distinction between a Gift and a Sponsored Agreement is ambiguous and requires consideration of several factors. Refer to Appendix A (below) for guidance. In situations where the distinction between a Gift and Sponsored Agreement is unclear, OSP and URIFAE, in collaboration with the University Controller's Office, are responsible for reaching a determination as to whether the external funding is a Gift or a Sponsored Agreement.

2. Proposal Submission and Acceptance

Sponsored Agreements are processed and received by OSP. All Principal Investigators (PI) must submit their grant/contract proposals and requests for external funds through OSP's grant management portal (e.g., InfoEd) where proposals are approved by the appropriate department chair and Dean's Office and reviewed for compliance with federal, sponsor, and University requirements and ultimately submitted to the funding agency by OSP. Upon receipt of the award, OSP in collaboration with the Office of Sponsored and Cost Accounting, will assist the PI in the administration of their Sponsored Agreement.

Gifts and charitable grants to the University are processed and received by URIFAE. PIs submitting applications through URIFAE do not have to submit their proposals and requests for external funds through the OSP grant management portal (e.g., InfoEd). However, all PIs must coordinate with a member of the URIFAE team prior to submitting a grant application to ensure compliance with requirements of the University and the donor (in many cases, URIFAE will submit the grant application on behalf of the PI). Upon receipt of a Gift or charitable grant from a donor, URIFAE will record the donation and send a letter of acknowledgement to the donor. In most cases, administrative fees paid to URIFAE are applied against a Gift or charitable grant from a donor. Applicable administrative fees will be deposited into a URIFAE account.

Where the faculty, staff, or administrator obtains direct funding for a fellowship award (e.g., Fulbright, Nobel, etc.), the researcher will notify the Vice President for Research and Economic Development upon receipt of the fellowship award.

3. Related Compliance Issues

Regardless of whether the external funds are a Sponsored Agreement or a Gift, any research project must follow applicable University, state, and federal requirements. Furthermore, regardless of whether the external funds are a Sponsored Agreement or a Gift, any intellectual property arising from the use of these funds shall be subject to the University's Intellectual Property policy. Regardless of whether the external funds are a Sponsored Agreement or Gift, adherence to compliance requirements is managed by OSP. Faculty and staff are not authorized to enter into written or unwritten agreement(s) with sponsors and are not authorized to sign contracts that involve the use of any University facilities, space, equipment, and personnel; or involve intellectual property; or create restrictions on publications; or bind the University to an outside party in any way. Only the authorized representatives of the University, designated by the URI Board of Trustees, are empowered to negotiate and sign such agreements or contracts. See the University's *Policy on Approval and Execution of Contracts and Other Binding Documents* for additional information and requirements regarding contracts between the University of Rhode Island, or its Board of Trustees, and any outside parties.

Exceptions

None

Policy Review and Revisions

(Versions earlier than the first policy number may be paper only)

Policy #	Effective Date	Reason for Change	Changes to Policy
05.104.1	June 6, 2023	n/a	n/a
05.104.2	April 14, 2025	Updates Needed	Revisions to Appendix A

Appendix A – Grants vs. Gifts Guidance

An award that meets one or more Sponsored Projects characteristics must be processed through OSP. In instances where an award's characteristics are attributable to both Sponsored Projects and Gifts, OSP and URIFAE, in collaboration with the University Controller's Office, are responsible for reaching a determination as to whether the external funding is a Gift or a Sponsored Agreement. The following tables can be used to guide those determinations.

Award Characteristic	Sponsored Project	Gift
SOURCE OF FUNDS		
Funding provided by an individual	X	X
Funding provided by government agency	X	
Funding provided by private (for-profit or non-profit) entity	X	X

TERMS OF USE OF FUNDS		
Funds are irrevocable		X
Funds are unrestricted		X
Funds have a restricted purpose	X	X
Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200) applicable	X	
Federal Acquisition Regulations (FARs) applicable	X	
Confidentiality of sponsor-provided information	X	
Federal Certifications and/or formal terms and conditions	X	
Use requires compliance office review (e.g., IRB, IACUC)	X	X
Funder-defined scope of work	X	
Specific period of performance	X	X
Sponsor-required prior approval required for budget, scope, or date changes	X	
Funds will be issued to a subrecipient.	X	
Facilities & Administrative (Indirect) costs (Federally negotiated—NICRA)	X	

Actual cost reimbursement (via invoicing)	X	
Fixed fee reimbursement	X	
Milestone reimbursement	X	
Unilateral termination allowed	X	

Award Characteristic	Sponsored Project	Gift
OUTCOMES GENERATED FROM USE OF FUNDS		
Funder benefits	X	
IP owned by funder	X	
Publication restricted or pre-reviewed	X	
Pre-publication review required	X	
Detailed financial and progress reporting (sponsor-specific; dependent on type of sponsor)	X	
Minimal high-level financial and progress reporting		X
No financial or progress reporting		X
URI must return unexpended funds	X	X