

Purpose:

Advance accounts under Dean's Pledges are essential financial tools that allow researchers to begin spending on a sponsored project before the official award notice has been received. This document provides guidance on the purpose, setup, and compliance requirements for Dean's Pledges in university research.

Definitions:

Dean's Pledge: A Dean's Pledge allows an advance account for an award to be set up and activated before the actual award notice has been received. Dean's Pledges are particularly useful when:

- The sponsor has committed funding, but the formal agreement is pending.
- The project has time-sensitive expenditures that cannot wait for final approval.
- Incremental funds for multi-year awards have not been received yet, but additional time is needed before the anticipated funds arrive. This type of Dean's pledge does not include financial obligations.

Key Considerations for Dean's Pledges:

A Dean's Pledge is usually set up when a new award is expected, but the official award notification has not been received yet. As a result, an account is set up before the actual award arrives or is in-house, but setup in InfoEd and PS is delayed. A Dean's Pledge requires provision of a non-sponsored departmental account as guarantor. Many federal agencies have given the University prior approval to begin spending up to 90 days before the start date of the award, if certain requirements are met. If the sponsor has not given the university prior approval, approval will be requested by OSP if the PI submits a Dean's Pledge form (instructions below).

The following considerations apply for Dean's Pledges:

- The department/college agrees to cover any expenses incurred should the award fail to be made or if the final terms of the award deem certain expenditures to be unallowable. This is indicated by providing a non-Fund 500 chartfield string on the Dean's Pledge Form. The college is fully responsible for any charges made to an account under a Dean's Pledge should an award or amendment not materialize.
- The PI has well-founded reason to believe the funding is imminent.
- The department/college has determined the risk/benefit of establishing the advance account under a Dean's Pledge.
- The PI is responsible for adhering to any sponsor-imposed rules regarding pre-award costs.

Advance funds under a Dean's Pledge are not appropriate for projects that are subject to publication restrictions, foreign national restrictions, export control regulations, or data security requirements. In

such circumstances, appropriate protocols must be put in place (e.g., Technology Control Plans and/or Data Security Plans) before work can commence. Other research integrity and compliance aspects (e.g., human subjects, animal subjects, etc.) must also be addressed before performance can begin.

Submitting a Dean's Pledge:

If a Principal Investigator (PI) would like to request a Dean's Pledge for a new or existing award and funding has been delayed by the sponsor, a Dean's Pledge form can be submitted by following these steps (also see figure 1 below):

1. The PI fills out and signs the [Dean's Pledge form](#). All fields on the form need to be completed.
2. Include supporting documentation:
 - a. correspondence from the funding agency pertaining to award status
 - b. a copy of the budget for the amount of the Dean's Pledge
3. Once the PI has signed the form, the PI must send the form along with the above referenced supporting documentation to their dean.
4. Once the form has been signed and approved by the dean, the PI is responsible for submitting the form, along with the above-mentioned supporting documentation, through the [Dean's Pledge Intake Form](#).
5. The Office of Sponsored Projects reviews and processes the request for account activation under the Dean's Pledge.

Financial Management & Compliance:

Allowable Expenses

Dean's Pledges should only be used for expenses directly related to the anticipated award, such as:

- Salaries and stipends for research personnel
- Equipment and supplies necessary for project execution
- Travel costs for research-related activities

Accounts set up under Dean's Pledges should be closed or converted to regular accounts once the award is received. PIs and administrators must track expenditures to avoid overspending. If the award is delayed or canceled, the department/college must cover incurred costs under the account indicated on the Dean's Pledge form.

Accounts set up under Dean's Pledges must adhere to:

- **University Financial Regulations** – Policies governing pre-award spending.
- **Sponsor Guidelines** – Terms set by funding agencies regarding allowable costs.
- **Federal & State Laws** – Compliance with regulations such as Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200)

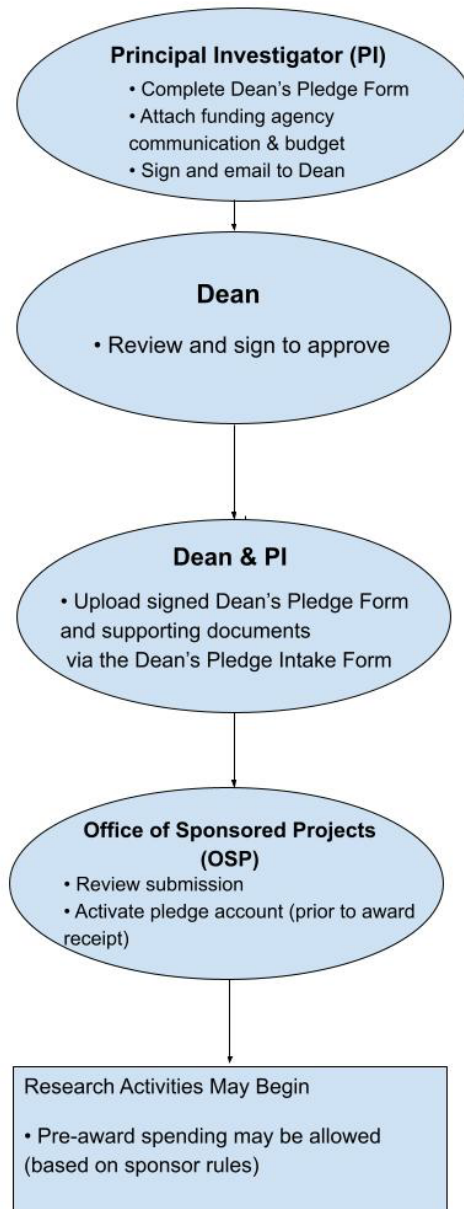


Figure 1: Steps to submit a Dean's Pledge.