



Guidelines for Applying for and Managing External Research Funding

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist Unitec staff to make highly professional and competitive applications for external research funds and to ensure that externally funded projects are managed in accordance with best practice.

Tūāpapa Rangahau, partnering research and enterprise (TR) is responsible for assuring sound management of research and the resources entrusted to it by its research funders and coordination of Institutional research management capability and infrastructure. TR manages the contractual responsibilities on behalf of Unitec; however successful management and delivery of contracts requires many stakeholders to work effectively together. The following outlines some of the roles and responsibilities of various parties in management of external research income.

TR can provide:

- An effective organisational approach to, and capability for the administration of Unitec's research contracts.
- Development and operation of research management systems to support the administration of research funding.
- Compliance with internal and external regulations and guidelines, including institutional, funding agency, and other such regulations for awarded research projects.
- Professional development and training to support necessary staff capability.

TR also has responsibility to monitor and provide assistance for ongoing project and portfolio management to the Research Leader/Principle Investigator:

- Advising staff on funder requirements and terms and conditions.
- Advise staff on management of major and complex projects and assistance with establishing appropriate project management plans.
- Ensuring compliance with contractual requirements (performance, financial, contractual) and acting proactively on behalf of the institution where risk has been identified.
- Manage changes to project and contract variations.

To ensure that the research is conducted in compliance with all applicable financial management and accountability standards. TR is able to assist with:

- Financial statements to investigators and administrators.
- Advice on the accounting of research funds received by Unitec.
- Assist and advise on preparation of financial reports for funding agencies.
- Assist with external audit if required.
- Oversee financial forecasts where required.
- Oversight of accounts receivable.

The Research Leader is responsible for ensuring appropriate engagement with HR and Unitec's HR policies and procedures. TR can assist with these processes and procedures. For example:

- Informing research leaders of their responsibilities in the areas of hiring, compensation and benefits, termination, occupational health, training and employee relations
- Overseeing and supporting the recruitment processes in a timely fashion aligned to the needs of projects and ensuring that Unitec's employment standards and conditions are maintained
- Providing advice to researchers and research administrators in human resources management areas, as needed including the supply of tools and templates to assist in the fulfilment of HR management functions.

The following sections cover guidelines Applications for Funding and Management of Research Agreements.

2. GUIDELINES: APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING

TR will offer guidance to Unitec staff in sourcing external funding and in developing applications for funding. Unitec staff will engage TR's assistance in preparing a proficient bid for funding that complies with the requirements of the funder, as outlined in their guidelines.

To ensure there is time for compliance checking, TR needs at least three working days' notice before the funder application deadline.

For assistance with proposal writing and end-to-end support with the application, TR must be notified at least three weeks before the funder deadline to schedule the time to facilitate this.

The fund applied to should be appropriate and relevant to the nature of the research to be conducted. Only applications of appropriate quality should be submitted to the funder. Applications must be submitted to the funder by the relevant due date.

The applicant's Practice Pathway Group, and in some cases (including for applications of \$1 million or more) the applicant's Executive Dean, must be supportive of the application and be prepared to allow them the time and resources to complete the project, particularly where the amount of funding requested does not include all of the costs that will be incurred in delivering the project.

The application budget should, wherever practicable, adequately reflect the expenses anticipated in delivering the project. The amount of funding requested should include all relevant and real charges, including overheads which should be calculated to compensate staff time and the use of Unitec resources. TR can assist with this calculation and must be approached at least two weeks prior to the funding deadline. Quotes should be supplied if requested in support of the application; TR can assist with procuring these as required. The funds must be spent as per the agreed budget and changes to expenditure must be approved by TR and/or funder, as per the agreement.

The project must be achievable within any stated milestone dates and should be properly resourced.

Only TR has the authority to submit applications for funding via the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Health Research Council and the Royal Society of New Zealand's online portals.

Funding applications for \$1 million or more need to follow a pre appraisal process which begins with a meeting with the Senior Grants Advisor. The template, provided in Appendix 1, is filled in collaboratively between the applicant and the Senior Grants Advisor. Staff must approach the Senior Grants Advisor at least three months prior to the funding deadline.

TR reserves the right, at any time, to stop an application from proceeding.

3. GUIDELINES: MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH AGREEMENTS

Funding contracts/agreements, sub-contract agreements and intellectual property agreements must be reviewed by one of Unitec's Legal and Contract's Advisors prior to signing. TR will be responsible for facilitating this.

Contracts may only be signed by staff with the appropriate level of delegated financial authority and only after receiving approval from a Legal and Contracts Advisor. Intellectual property agreements must also be reviewed by the Dean Research and Enterprise, Tūāpapa Rangahau (Dean, TR) prior to signing.

Unitec may be required to enter into a sub-contract agreement on occasion, for example when a research partner from another institution is involved in the project. A Memorandum of Understanding between Unitec and the partner institution should be in place prior to the submission of the funding application. TR will be responsible for facilitating this.

The contract should stipulate that Unitec will not pay the sub-contractor until Unitec has been paid by the funder. The sub-contractor may expect to receive a contribution towards their institutional overheads and it is important that these were budgeted for in the original funding application.

Copies of any contract arising from a successful external research fund application must be retained and filed appropriately by TR and a fully signed original contract provided to Unitec's Legal and Contracts Advisors.

TR is responsible for ensuring that a project code is created under which the grant will sit and that the Research Leader is advised of the codes they should use to access their funds. TR will ensure that the funder is invoiced regularly and that all research income is coded correctly. Copies of all invoices and expense forms should be retained by TR.

The Research Leader's administrative support person, not TR, will be responsible for assisting the researcher to access their funds, for example by creating purchase orders, paying invoices and processing timesheets.

The Research Leader is responsible (with the assistance of TR) for ensuring that they stay within the budget approved by the funder and they monitor the monthly Income and Expenditure Statements produced by Finance and saved on the H: drive for their project. Any discrepancies should be queried promptly (via TR and/or the applicant's Decision Support Advisor).

Sub-contractors may only be hired where a budget for them has been approved by the funder. An HR approved contract must be put in place before the Research Assistant undertakes any work on the project.

The Research Leader is responsible for ensuring that milestone and/or final reports are produced as required and by the due date. The production and submission of reports should be monitored by TR and copies of all reports retained by TR.

TR (in conjunction with the Research Leader and Finance) will ensure that funding is carried over from one financial year to the next until the contract end date. Funds will not be carried over past the contract end date unless approval has been sought to do so from the funder and TR.

If the Research Leader leaves Unitec, a new Research Leader will be assigned to the project. The responsibility for the administration and delivery of the project will remain with Unitec.

The Research Leader will ensure that an understanding is reached with the funder regarding the use of any leftover funds at the conclusion of the project and will ensure that TR is kept apprised of any correspondence and requirements regarding this. TR should facilitate the return of any unspent funds if requested by the funder.

TR will ensure that files are closed and project codes are shut down when all contractual obligations have been met. The Research Leader will ensure that no further expenditure is incurred on the project after this time and that TR is kept updated on any outputs that may result from the funded project, including by keeping the centralised research outputs database updated.

4. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

[1] External Funding Intranet Page

[2] Conduct of Research Policy

Other related Unitec Policies

[3] Guidelines for Documenting Research Outputs

[4] Research Ethics Policy

- [5] Financial Accountability Policy
- [6] Travel Policy
- [7] Procurement Policy
- [8] Academic Workload Policy
- [9] Intellectual Property Policy

Related Schedules

- [10] Unitec Schedule of Delegations

Related Strategies

- [11] Unitec Research Strategy 2010-2015
- [12] Unitec PBRF Strategy 2008

5. DOCUMENT DETAILS

Version:	3
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Document Sponsor	Dean Research and Enterprise, Tūāpapa Rangahau
Approved By:	URC
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6. AMENDMENT HISTORY

Version	Issue Date	Created/Changed by	Reason for Revision
Draft 1a	24/9/12	Brenda Massey, Grants and Funding Advisor	Updated to include the management of externally funded research.
Draft 2a	1/5/13	Brenda Massey, Grants and Funding Advisor	Updated to incorporate feedback received from the Unitec Research Committee and the Faculty Research Committees.

3	03/11/2015	Brenda Massey, Senior Grants Advisor and Melissa Reynolds Research Advisor	Updated to reflect revised policy process.
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7. APPENDIX 1 – RESEARCH PROJECT APPRAISAL CONSIDERATION FOR PROJECTS OVER NZ\$1 MILLION

This template is intended to provide a preliminary overview of the ability of Unitec and staff to undertake a project on-time, within budget and through to completion. It forms part of the pre appraisal process and should be completed in collaboration with the Senior Grants Advisor. Applicants must have begun this process at least three months prior to the funding deadline.

RESEARCH LEADER:

PROJECT TITLE:

FUNDING AMOUNT:

DURATION OF PROJECT:

PROJECT SUPPORT FROM LEADERSHIP AND COLLEAGUES

Has the Research Leader had discussions with leadership and line management about the project and funding application? *Please attach evidence of Executive Dean's support for this project.*

Have there been discussions about the time and impact the project will have? If yes, please outline the expected impacts on the individuals involved, network and Unitec:

Have there been discussions about the project with colleagues? If yes, has there been any peer-review and input of initial project design? If yes, please elaborate:

ALIGNMENT WITH UNITEC'S RESEARCH STRATEGY

Please attach the Output Table (template available) for previous/proposed outputs relating to this project

Please state how the project aligns with Unitec's Research Strategy, particularly Priority 3 - to improve and support researcher performance. *Are there opportunities for staff members who need*

to improve PBRF ratings, for beginner and early career researchers, will postgraduate students be involved?

RESEARCH LEADER

Please provide a list of projects where the Research Leader has managed projects over \$50,000, including the management of staff/contractors:

Does the Research Leader have capacity/time allocation to manage the project through to completion? How will this be managed within their current workload?

FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Please attach a budget in the format the funding scheme requires, or a standard budget (template can be provided) – please ensure it addresses capital expenditure, overheads including salary costs etc.

Please outline the staff time requirements from Unitec. Will any staff need to be bought-out of their time to work on the project? *Please ensure you address this in your budget.*

Will any staff be employed specifically to work on this project or cover staff time for the project? If so, what additional positions will need to be created? Please include expected proportions and salary rates. *Please ensure you address this in your budget.*

Have any staff salaries been costed to include adequate overheads? *The administration of large grants takes time and this must be factored into budgets. TR can assist with calculations.* Please elaborate:

What agreement has been made for the administration of overheads?

Will there be any Capital Expenditure asset purchases by the project? *Capital Expenditure is any asset purchase over \$500.*
Has depreciation of the asset been taken into financial consideration (and included in the budget) for future years after the project has ended? *TR can assist with the proper consideration of ongoing depreciation costs.* Please elaborate:

What Unitec resources (facilities and equipment) will be required to undertake the project? (E.g. Labs, computers, offices, library support staff, ICT, etc.)

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CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS AND DATA OWNERSHIP AND/OR REPRESENTATION OF DATA

Are there any contractual obligations which require special consideration? For example; representation of data; use of Unitec Institute of Technology name in association with project; confidentiality agreements. <i>In all cases, TR can facilitate the proper legal advice.</i> Please elaborate:

Please outline any agreements (such as an MOU or IP agreements) made (or to be negotiated) with subcontractors or collaborators involved in this project: <i>Please note that the Intellectual Property Policy must be consulted for all IP matters, there may be differing ownership policies with other Tertiary Education Providers.</i>

MILESTONES

Please outline the key milestones associated with this project: <i>It is encouraged that projects are appropriately staged, for example it is easier to manage \$1 million over 10 years, than \$500,000 over two years.</i>
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