1. PURPOSE

This guidance is being provided to CUNY campuses in order to assist in establishing campus-based procedures for standardizing the activity of applying effort to a sponsored research or program project, as well as, to promote coordination and communications between the Principal Investigator (PI), the Grants Office, and the Research Foundation of CUNY (RFCUNY) in accordance with CUNY Policy to Ensure Consistency in Effort Determination, Reporting & Tracking during the Academic Year (9-month Appointment). This guidance describes the administrative practice required to determine, secure and seek approval for an amount of effort (planned in percentage % or person months) to be included on a sponsored research or program proposal. This standard operating procedure must be applied to all proposals regardless of project size, budget or funding agency to ensure:

- o *A. When submitting an application:*
    All proposed effort in an application is reasonable
- o *B. When negotiating and accepting an award:*
    Any modification to proposed effort is approved by the sponsor
- o *C. During award period:*
    All awarded effort is submitted in a CUNY Staff Effort Notice to RFCUNY

2. SCOPE

Faculty members with an Academic Year (9-Month) appointment receive a total Institutional Base Salary (IBS)[1] during the academic year for their Total Institutional Activities (Total Effort)[2]. When a faculty member submits a proposal, it often includes a level of effort to be devoted to the project during the academic year.   A faculty member must budget, propose, and report the work done on a sponsored project in percent effort. The total effort for all of an individual's activities cannot exceed 100%. Committed effort offered to a sponsor in the proposal

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[1] **Institutional Base Salary (IBS) -** The compensation paid by an organization for an employee's appointment, whether that individual's time is spent on research, teaching, or other activities. Base salary excludes any income that an individual is permitted to earn outside of duties for the applicant/grantee organization. Base salary may not be increased as a result of replacing organizational salary funds with sponsor grant funds.

[2] **Total Institutional Activities** - (**Total Effort**) Activities for which an Individual is paid by the University. At CUNY a faculty member's Total Institutional Activities are Teaching + Service + Scholarly Activities (including Research) = 100% effort.

documents, that is specified and quantified, becomes a binding commitment upon execution of the award agreement.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Grants Office

- Assist the PI in estimating the amount of effort that should be allocated to the project;

- Document and maintain official record of the proposed budget;

- Assist the PI with acceptance and negotiations of grant award;

- Review, document and maintain official records of the PI's Total Effort;

- At the time of acceptance of the grant award, ensure that a sponsor Approved Budget[3] is on file;

- After the fund is set up, in cooperation with the Research Foundation, assist the PI with any necessary re-budgeting of the Approved Budget;

- Submit approved CUNY Staff Effort Notice to RFCUNY

Principal Investigator

- Estimate the amount of effort to be allocated to the project;

- Develop a budget, and if it includes PI and/or Personnel Effort ensure that the current institutional base salary is used;

- Ensure that the effort is a reasonable estimate of effort to be expended in relation to the scope of work/aim of the project;

- Obtain approval from College President, Provost or their designee for the proposed commitment of effort and provide a copy of the approval to the Grants Office;

- Participate in Award negotiations and alert the Grants Office to any negotiations with the Sponsor in order to seek involvement and assistance in revising the proposal budget;

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[3] An **Approved Budget** is the financial expenditure plan, including any modifications to the proposed effort, **Approved** by the awarding party for a grant-supported project or activity.

- Ensure that the budgeted funds adequately cover the scope of the project;

- Ensure that the grant award budget matches either the proposal budget or the sponsor approved revised budget as the budget of record (Approved Budget) shared by both the Research Foundation and Grants Office;

- Certify effort after-the-fact via RFCUNY online Effort Reporting System;

- Ensure project expenses are as budgeted, complying with sponsor requirements regarding reduction in effort and change in status, and seeking prior approval for any re-budgeting of committed effort post award;

- Ensure financial and program records retained are accurate and auditable.

4. GRANTS OFFICE PROCESS

o *A. When submitting an application*

1. Review the scope of work described in the proposal with the PI;

2. Ask PI to establish the amount of her/his effort that will be allocated to the project in order to fulfill the scope of work/aim described in the proposal;

   > **Note:** Help the faculty member understand that it is recognized in an academic setting that teaching, research, service, and administration are often inextricably intermingled. Explain that Effort is not based on a 35 - hour work week but rather is a reasonable estimate of how much time all activities will take in relation to the aim of the Project as well as other University obligations. At CUNY, a faculty member's Total Institutional Activities typically include: Teaching + Service + Scholarly Activities (including Research) = 100% effort.

2. Review and record the % effort of the faculty member's time devoted to each of the following categories: a. Teaching; b. Service; and c. Scholarly activities (including Research). Approved records of faculty effort on activities other than sponsored projects should be provided to the Grants Office by the PI or the responsible office at the campus;

3. Review the faculty member's research profile. This profile should contain all projects funded and proposed. At a minimum, the research profile should capture (for each

faculty member) the following: Sponsor Name, Project Period, Effort (documented in Person Months or %) and semesters (Spring, Fall and Summer). Please refer to summer salary approval and summer salary tracking for more guidelines regarding Summer Salary;

> **Note:** Effort expended during the academic year does not satisfy a commitment related to the receipt of summer salary. Also, faculty members are not permitted to indicate unpaid summer effort in a proposal to a sponsor. Because the University is not obligated to pay faculty salary during the summer, unpaid committed summer effort has no monetary value and therefore may not be included in applications as a commitment of the PI or CUNY.

4. Ensure faculty member has allocated exactly 100% effort. If there is a possibility of being over committed (for example, pending grants) inform faculty member that before an Award is accepted, the % Effort would have to be adjusted and become part of a Revised Budget given to the sponsor prior to an Award being made;

> **Note:** Help the faculty member understand that budget plan is the financial expression of the project or program as approved during the award process. All overlap and over commitment of effort must be addressed with the Sponsor prior to an Award.

5. Calculate the salary equivalent of the % Effort committed using their Institutional Base Salary ("IBS"). For example, if a faculty member estimates 20% of her/his Total Institutional Activities will be applied to the grant, then the sponsor will be asked to award 20% of compensatory salary up to any salary cap[4] limit plus corresponding fringe benefits;

6. Obtain approval from Department Chair and/or Dean or designee;

7. Indicate the calculated Effort and corresponding salary amount on the grant proposal budget;

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[4] **Salary Cap -** A legislatively-mandated provision limiting the direct salary (also known as salary or institutional base salary, but excluding any fringe benefits and F&A costs) for individuals working on grants, cooperative agreement awards, and extramural research and development contracts.

8. If other faculty members are involved in the project, in consultation with the PI of the grant, items 1 -7 must also be completed for each faculty member involved.

- *B. When negotiating and accepting an award*

The time of negotiation occurs when a modification of the proposal and Revised Budget are required. If modifications are required by the Sponsor (either programmatic and/or budgetary), or if there is over commitment/overlap with the PI's Other Support, these modifications must take place prior to accepting the award and hence preceding the issuance of the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). An Approved Budget is the financial expenditure plan, including any revisions, approved by the awarding party for a grant-supported project or activity.

1. Review the faculty member's effort profile;

2. If the PI must adjust her/his effort due to overlap or over commitment, the PI, in conjunction with the Grants Office, must contact the funding agency in order for such modifications to be made prior to the issuance of a Notice of Grant Award (NGA). A Revised Budget[5] then replaces the proposal budget as the Approved Budget for the award;

3. If other faculty members are involved in the project, in consultation with the PI of the grant, items 1 -2 must also be completed for each faculty member involved;

4. Recommend acceptance of the Award and send proposal, award letter and Approved Budget to the Research Foundation.

- *C. During Award Period*

1. Submit approved CUNY Staff Effort Notice to the Research Foundation for processing;

2. Send reminder to the PI to certify effort at the end of the semester;

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[5] Preparing a Revised Budget Pre-award should not be confused with the need to re-budget Post-award.

3. If other faculty members are involved in the project, items 1 -2 must also be completed for each faculty member involved.

5. OTHER COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION PROCESSES

1. If the College or School permits reassigned time from normal teaching in order to work on the research project, the reassigned time approval process must be separate and distinct from applying effort onto a Sponsored Project or Program. The tracking of reassigned time is separate and distinct from both tracking and Certifying Effort on a Sponsored Project or Program;

2. Colleges and Schools may have internal policies on incentives, which may be applicable, and should be implemented in accordance with the College or School's internal policy and procedures.

6. APPLICABLE REFERENCES

- http://www2.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/research/research-compliance/sponsored/Policy-on-Effort-Calculation-Tracking2-1.pdf
- http://www2.cuny.edu/research/research-compliance/sponsored/guidance/post-award/effort/
- https://www.rfcuny.org/RFWebsite/policies/content.aspx?catID=3870