Process of Obtaining Institutional Cost Share Support

The process for obtaining institutional cost share support, used for investigators requesting institutional resources, is outlined below. **If an investigator is seeking an institutional letter of support with no measurable commitment of resources, please see the OSR website for process guidelines** ([http://www.research.northwestern.edu/osr/docs/Letter_of_Support_Process.pdf](http://www.research.northwestern.edu/osr/docs/Letter_of_Support_Process.pdf)). If you have any questions regarding the process for obtaining cost sharing funds or a letter of support from the VPR, please contact Kelly Morrison, Cost Share Officer (kellym@northwestern.edu).

The process of obtaining institutional cost share support is comprised of four steps:

1. **Notification to the Office for Sponsored Research (OSR) Cost Share Officer by PI**
2. **Development of Cost Share Budget, Justification, and Letter of Support**
3. **Negotiation and Formal Request of Cost Sharing Commitments**

The Cost Share Officer facilitates the process for cost sharing requests, but does not allocate funds from departments, schools, or the Office for Research. The Office for Research does not allocate space.

1. **Notification to the OSR Cost Share Officer by PI**
   (at least three weeks in advance of application deadline)

   The PI or one designated contact person (e.g., a unit research administrator) must notify Kelly Morrison, Cost Share Officer (kellym@northwestern.edu) that cost sharing will be requested at least three weeks in advance of the application deadline. The PI or designate should include the relevant sponsor solicitation or solicitation number. The Cost Share Officer will then communicate with the PI and designate to discuss the upcoming request, clarify key elements, and determine if a meeting is necessary. The Cost Share Officer also advises the appropriate OSR Grants Officer of the upcoming proposal. Please keep in mind that all requests will be accommodated to the best of our ability. On-time requests will receive first priority.

2. **Development of Cost Share Budget, Justification, and Letter of Support**

   The Cost Share Officer will work with the PI and designate to discuss solicitation requirements and guidelines for cost sharing, and offer guidance as the sponsor budget is developed. At this time, the following steps will occur:
   1. The Cost Share Officer will communicate with the PI and designate to discuss the sponsor budget, and PIs and schools involved in the proposal. The Cost Share Officer will also explain different models of cost sharing distributions, expectations of involved schools, and in-kind cost sharing.
   2. PI (or Co-Is at the PI’s discretion) will contact Research Deans to advise them that the cost share request is forthcoming, and to discuss the scientific benefit to their individual school.
3. Cost Share Officer communicates with Research Deans, if necessary, to advise them of any unusual circumstances associated with the upcoming request.
4. Sponsor budget is developed, with the PI considering what will be charged to the sponsor budget and what will be requested for cost sharing.

The cost share budget will be developed alongside the sponsor budget; however, the total dollar value of sponsor budget must be finalized before the cost share budget can be completed. The designate (working with the PI) should develop portions of a cost sharing budget proposal using an OSR-EZ spreadsheet (http://www.research.northwestern.edu/osr/docs/OSR-EZ.xls). The highlighted portions of the following sections should be completed by the department at this time:

1. Cover Page
2. Cost Share Budget Detail
3. Investigator List
4. Sponsor & Cost Share Budget Information

The designate should also send the Cost Share Officer the sponsor budget, which should include a breakdown of the total academic and summer salary being charged for all faculty who are listed as Senior Personnel on the proposal.

If it is the PI or designate’s first time completing the form, the Cost Share Officer is available to offer additional guidance and can provide training as needed.

The Cost Share Officer reviews the completed elements of the OSR-EZ, advising the department if any changes are necessary. The Cost Share Officer then handles the remaining sections of the OSR-EZ:

1. Investigator List - Appointment Breakdown
2. Academic Salary Recovery
3. Cost-Share Distribution (Cash and In-Kind)

Once this is finalized, the Cost Share Officer will send a copy of the final document to the PI and designate, explaining any calculations and confirming PI approval before moving forward with the formal cost share request. At this time, the Cost Share Officer may request additional information to include when making request to Chairs and/or Research Deans. The Cost Share Officer will also provide a draft letter of support to the PI for edits and additions as necessary; the PI will respond with the required information and this letter, once reviewed, will ultimately go to the Vice President for Research for endorsement.

3. Negotiation and Formal Request of Cost Sharing Commitments
(at least two weeks in advance of application deadline)

The Cost Share Officer makes a formal request on behalf of PI to Chairs and/or Research Deans depending on the school’s model for cost share requests. If the school requires individual departmental commitments be gathered, these commitments must be obtained by the Cost Share Officer before matching commitment request is sent to the Research Dean. Chairs and Research
Deans will review these requests and direct any administrative questions to the Cost Share Officer. Requests for further justification or technical information should be directed to the PI.

After reviewing the request, the Chairs and Research Deans will (if approving) provide written approval committing to their portion of the cost share request. Please note that it is at the discretion of the Research Deans to commit on behalf of their school and departments at the proposal stage; Research Dean approval of the cost share is sufficient to commit school and departmental funds (no departmental approval is required by the Office for Research at the proposal stage).

Please note that the way in which graduate student fellowship requests are handled vary from school to school.

Once all school commitments have been collected, the Cost Share Officer will compile all relevant documentation and perform a final administrative review. The Office for Research (OR) will make a decision regarding the commitment of OR funds for cost sharing after the Research Deans express their commitments.

(at least one week in advance of application deadline)

Please note that while we will accommodate your request to the best of our ability, the Office for Research cannot guarantee a letter of support unless an official and complete cost share request is received at least one week before the sponsor deadline.

All cost sharing commitments, including a draft letter of institutional commitment, will be forwarded to Jay Walsh, Vice President for Research, for his review and endorsement. A scan of the endorsed letter will be sent to the PI and all those cc’ed on the letter. The original will be given to the Cost Share Officer who will either send the letter to the PI via intercampus mail, or the PI can communicate with the Cost Share Officer to make arrangements for pick-up.

Post-Award
Please review post-award cost sharing processes document (http://www.research.northwestern.edu/osr/docs/Institutional_Support_Post-Award.pdf).