

# Collaborative Sponsored Projects

**Policy Owner:** Office of the Vice Provost for Research  
**Effective Date:** July 1, 2017  
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**Policy Contact:** Associate Vice Provost for Research Administration and Development

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## REASON FOR POLICY

Tufts University investigators increasingly collaborate on interdisciplinary projects and apply for and receive sponsored awards where parts of the project take place in more than one department, school, or center. This policy addresses institutional aspects of submitting collaborative proposals and managing collaborative sponsored projects, including the basis for allocation of Facilities and Administration (F&A) recovery amounts to multiple units at Tufts. It is designed to promote and support interdisciplinary efforts of Tufts' investigators in the pursuit of sponsored funding.

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## POLICY PRINCIPLES

A collaborative sponsored project may have one Principal Investigator (PI) or multiple PIs, with one PI designated as a contact PI. In this policy, the unit from which the PI (or the contact PI for multi-PI projects) is submitting a proposal and administering an award is referred to as "lead unit".

The budget for each project in a collaborative proposal should reflect the amount of funds needed to accomplish the work in each unit. Facilities and Administration (F&A) amounts should follow direct costs in each project. Each unit must use the F&A rate applicable to the school or center where it is located on the portion of the proposal budget pertaining to the unit.

F&A recovery amounts will be distributed according to the budgets of the scope accounts. In instances where expenses for activities in other Tufts units are charged directly and scope accounts are not created, F&A is distributed to the lead unit.

### Implementation

When a sponsored proposal consists of multiple projects with discrete budgets and F&A rates, proposal hierarchy functionality must be used in Research Administration System (RAS). Proposal Hierarchy allows for aggregation of individual budgets, key personnel, and documents from individual projects ("Children") into a single synchronized proposal ("Parent") for submission, tracking, and award. After receiving a successful award, OVPR Post-Award office will establish separate accounts ("scope accounts") for the components of the award corresponding to the child projects.

In addition to the approval by the lead unit, child proposal/scope account must be approved by the child/scope department using the *ad hoc* route function in RAS. Please see [here](#) for research administration contacts, or consult with the Lead Research Administrator of the partnering unit regarding the appropriate officials to be added to the route path.

Lead unit has summary level visibility into the “children” in RAS and into the scope account(s) in Axiom and PeopleSoft. “Children” in RAS and scope accounts in Axiom and Peoplesoft do not have visibility into the budget outside of the “child” or “scope” account.

RAS will be used to track instances when interdisciplinary centers facilitate collaborative proposals with no scope account at the center at the award stage.

Interdisciplinary centers use a unique carryforward DeptIDs to capture their portion of retained F&A.

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## DEFINITIONS

**Facilities and Administration (F&A) or Indirect Costs:** Those costs that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective.

**F&A rate:** A device for determining fairly, consistently and conveniently, within the boundaries of sound administrative principles, what proportion of indirect costs each project should bear.

**Negotiated Indirect Rate Cost Agreement (NICRA):** The approved agreement between the cognizant agency and the institution that describes the types of rates, effective period, and distribution base.

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## RELATED LINKS AND INFORMATION

- Tufts University [Institutional Information](#)/Negotiated Indirect Rate Agreement
- Tufts policy on [Application of Off-Campus and On-Campus F&A Rates](#)