Suggested sources of match for Vermont Water Center proposals

The USGS requires that Water Center awards show a 1:2 match of Federal to Non-Federal resources; i.e., $2 matching Non-Federal value for each $1 of Federal funding requested. This is a high level of match, but with some ingenuity and willing partnerships, it is possible to obtain this match relatively easily. All matching funds must be from commitments and purchases during the award period, March 1 – February 28 of each year. See the following suggestions for ideas.

Third-Party Matching Support

External, “third-party” matching is the simplest form of matching support. Interested clients and stakeholders may be able provide matching support in the form of cash or in-kind services. In either case the matching external support must be quantified in a letter from the sponsor(s) and shown on the routing forms for your proposal. Elissa.Schuett@uvm.edu can provide a suggested template letter that sponsors can use to document their matching contribution(s). In the case of cash given directly to UVM in support of your proposal it will likely be necessary to create a separate contract to bring the cash into the UVM system. We can help with this process and in the case of a client who might like to support more than one project, the Vermont Water Center can help consolidate the budgets and contracts to simplify the process for everyone. Direct "gifts" from, for example, a foundation can be handled in a similar manner. In-kind services (versus direct cash support) are a valuable and sometimes overlooked resource. In-kind services (e.g., consulting services provided by a partner, subcontracting done on behalf of the project by a client) must be described and quantified and a letter of support will be required from the partnering entity. We are happy to work with you, your partner(s), and your Office of Sponsored Projects representative to determine the documentation required. Note that indirect costs (F&A) should not be calculated on third-party matching funds.

PI salary

PI salary is an important form of match. Due to USGS guidelines, it is possible to count the fringe benefits and the full overhead costs for salaries as match. We suggest that faculty supporting a Graduate Research Project consider allocating a minimum of 2 weeks of cost-shared salary to this type of proposal. If your department will support a greater cost-share, you may certainly do that. On Faculty Research proposals you may also request federally funded support (e.g., for summer salary), but remember that every dollar of federal support requested requires $2 of Non-Federal match.

Overhead (F&A) Costs

By rule the USGS does not pay overhead (F&A) costs to the institutions that host the state Water Centers. This unrecovered overhead can and should be used as match. The sum of all sources of overhead (e.g., salaries, graduate and undergraduate student support, operational costs, etc.) count towards this unrecovered overhead. The combination of 2 weeks of PI salary support and the associated Overhead (F&A) costs can often contribute up to $1 of the $2 required Non-Federal match in many projects. Note that third-party cost share does not carry overhead (F&A) costs.

Graduate Student Support from other, non-Federal resources

Consider matching graduate student support from the Vermont Water Center with other institutional sources of support; e.g. graduate student stipends, tuition support, start-up funds etc. If the source of funding for the other portion of the graduate student support is Non-Federal then this funding as well as the F&A multiplier associated with it can be claimed as match. This is an effective way to stretch your institutional dollars.