



The University of Vermont

AMENDMENT 1

SPA 2.0 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

March 9, 2023

The purpose of this Amendment 1 is to increase the number of SPA 2.0 RSEN staff and make minor adjustments and restate the May 12, 2021, **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** between the **Office of the Vice President of Research (OVPR)** and **Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources (RSEN)** regarding the implementation of **Sponsored Project Administration 2.0 (SPA 2.0)**.

Whereas, SPA 2.0, will in effect create a consistent and coordinated approach to sponsored project administration at the University of Vermont by integrating department research administration as a component of SPA, the central sponsored project administration office.

Whereas, SPA 2.0 activities will take effect on July 1, 2021, with the exception of the need for immediate transition of the pre-award positions in order for them to be filled.

Now therefore, in consideration of the mutual agreements contained herein, the Parties agree as follows:

1. The total number of staff supporting pre- and post-award functions is increased to the totals listed below
 - Pre-Award Position – one
 - Post-Award Position – two
2. SPA will recruit for any open positions and have them filled as soon as possible. The Search Committee will include the RSEN representation.
3. The positions will be SPA employees and hired as Unit Pre-Award or Post-Award Administrators. Staffing level determined by the RSEN and SPA to ensure adequate research administrative support is provided to RSEN investigators, staff, and sponsors.
4. SPA will retain final authority over all personnel actions of SPA employees, however, where co-funded positions exist, the RSEN will have input on new hires and performance evaluations.
5. Annually each year and no later than mid-June, RSEN will confirm with SPA the non-sponsored unit chartstring to be used for the 50% co-funding (salary and fringe) of the Pre- and/or Post-Award positions.
6. Any additional positions that may be required due to workload and increased research activities by RSEN will be negotiated separately as an amendment to this MOU.
7. RSEN will provide professional office space, computer connectivity, and functional office furniture in an on-campus unit location (if working in-person) for the positions and any future positions added under SPA 2.0. Working remotely is a viable option following UVM remote working policy.

8. 50% of salary and fringe; miscellaneous office supplies, computer upgrades, travel, professional trainings, and other related costs will be paid for by the OVPR.
9. SPA and RSENR will coordinate reviews of SPA 2.0 at a frequency of no less than annually with a focus on staffing levels, improving processes, electronic research systems, and delivery of support to RSENR investigators, staff, students and sponsors.
10. Every 3-years SPA will conduct a review of SPA 2.0 with RSENR and provide constructive feedback.
11. Pending the results of the 3-year review, which will include a review of the unit's research portfolio and F&A performance, SPA and RSENR will re-evaluate the staffing levels and co-funding of SPA Department Research Administration positions after FY.
12. The SPA 2.0 reviews indicated in 9 and 10 above, do not negate the need at any time, to enter into discussions to determine steps to increase department research administration support, including co-funding additional positions, due to significant changes in the RSENR research portfolio.
13. Any dispute concerning performance of this MOU shall be decided by the appropriate administrative officials of each Party, who shall reduce any decision to writing, including a mutual and equitable termination of the MOU.
14. The operational contacts of this MOU are as follows:

SPA:	Lana Metayer, Director Sponsored Project Administration
	Brian Prindle, Executive Director Research Administration and Compliance
COLLEGE:	Rose Feenan, Assistant Dean for Operations

16. In summary, SPA 2.0 is focused on providing consistent, effective and integrated department research administrative support to RSENR investigators, staff and sponsors with a focus on customer service, good stewardship of sponsored funds and regulatory compliance.
17. SPA thru the SPA 2.0 initiative agrees to provide the oversight and management of RSENR research administration activities that will consist of but not limited to the following:

(List on next page)

Pre-Award

- Assist with the preparation of proposal submissions, completing forms, developing budgets, collect subrecipient proposal information and completing other administrative tasks related to proposal submission, including response to sponsor just in time requests including revised budgets.
- Prepare UVMClick - Funding Proposals, including SF424 system to system Grants.gov submissions.
- Prepare UVMClick - Funding Proposals for Gifts in Support of Research
- Assist with preparing proposals in unique sponsor electronic proposal submission systems, such as Research.gov, FASTLANE, and Proposal Central.
- Assist with finding answers to pre-award questions; initiate and prepare request for Advance Accounts.

Award Acceptance and Set-up

- Assist with negotiation of award terms, as needed.
- Assist PI with award acceptance, review and confirm accuracy of award set-up.
- Collect cost share chart strings for award set-up.
- Complete award data collection form; complete final department review of award set-up.

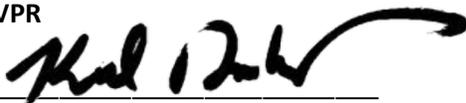
Post Award

- Arrange award kickoff meetings, where needed.
- Manage project and cost share budgets.
- Meet with PI to review award, grant expenditures and spending plans.
- Review faculty effort plans and verify they match actual payroll charges on a quarterly basis.
- Request re-budgeting, where required.
- Monitor project expenditures to ensure all costs are following sponsor terms.
- Review costs to ensure they are necessary, allowable, reasonable, and allocable.
- Prepare and process distributions based on requests from PIs and effort management reviews.
- Respond to questions from unit administrative staff related to purcard expenditures and other financial transaction allocations.
- Seek approval for use of suspense account/s when awards are not set-up; Review suspense on a regular basis to ensure timely cost transfers.
- Oversee fiscal management of USDA NIFA capacity grants.
- Review suspense accounts to ensure timely cost transfers.
- Perform necessary cost transfers.
- Resolve budget checking errors.
- Work with PIs to ensure grants are closed out timely using a proactive approach (90 days in advance).
- Coordinate with unit administrative staff on transaction processing and assist in resolving all issues.
- Assist with pulling together billing back up, where needed.
- Serve as resource to Principal Investigator for all post award questions.
- Seek prior approval for budget changes, when required.
- Manage outgoing subaward monitoring process and collect approvals to pay related invoices.
- Request No Cost Extensions and support other grant modification requests.
- Assist faculty with summer salary requests.
- Assist with audits, as needed.

(Signature page follows)

By signing below, the Parties have expressed their acceptance of the MOU and implementation of SPA 2.0;

OVPR



Kirk Dombrowski, VPR

20 March 2023

Date



RSENR

Allan Strong, Interim Dean

17 March 2023

Date