

# ACADEMIC GRANTS GUIDE



# MARIST

Office of Academic Grants

2023 Edition



## **A. Purpose of the Office of Academic Grants**

Academic grants at Marist College are pursued from the perspective that research and instruction complement each other and that the enhancement of both is important to Marist College. Grant activities contribute to the continuous renewal and development of the faculty and staff, the education and motivation of students, and the enhancement of the institution's distinctiveness and competitiveness.

The Office of Academic Grants has been established to accomplish the following purposes in the context of Marist as a teaching institution:

1. To identify and research significant grant opportunities that may be appropriate for the Marist community and to inform faculty and administrators about these possibilities.
2. To assist faculty members in obtaining external funding for research projects and activities consistent with institutional perspectives and needs. Funds are sought from appropriate sources to support initiatives that advance a faculty member's research agenda and lead to a tangible product such as an article, presentation, etc.
3. To assist faculty members in obtaining funding for collaborative research projects that provide opportunities for themselves and their students.
4. To assist faculty members in obtaining external support for pedagogical initiatives. Funds are sought to conduct research on educational approaches and instructional techniques, as well as to acquire equipment for faculty and student use.
5. To assist faculty members with the application process for nationally competitive grants and fellowships.

## **B. Grants versus Contracts**

The designation "grant" is typically used when the sponsor is not seeking an immediate and direct benefit from the activity itself but is providing support for work initiated by the principal investigator.

A sponsor typically uses the designation "contract" when there is an explicit agreement for the procurement of products or services.

The Office of Academic Grants is responsible for fostering faculty awareness of potential grants related to their interests or projects, assisting faculty in identifying appropriate funding sources for grants, and facilitating the development of proposals to obtain those grants.

A faculty member who wishes to pursue a grant must receive preliminary approval from the School Dean and Provost's Office. For grant applications that involve faculty from more than one school, prior permission from the Dean of each participating school is necessary. Additional administrative approvals are obtained through the Office of Academic Grants.

Contracts are handled through appropriate administrative channels and are not directly supported by the Office of Academic Grants. A faculty member who wishes to engage in a contract must receive the prior permission of the School Dean and the Provost's Office. The final version of the contract is to be approved by the School Dean, Provost's Office, Chief Financial Officer, and the Executive Vice President.

## **C. Statement on Indirect Costs (Facilities and Administrative Costs)**

Grant applications and administrative costs require the use of college personnel and resources. Grant awards are expected to defray these costs. While it is understood that the recoverable amounts from a grant award may vary and that the amount may be subject to a legislative statute or the prerogative of the sponsor, the full recovery of permissible indirect costs is an essential part of the budget portion of a grant application. To encourage departmental support of grant initiatives, the College will award the faculty member's department a percentage (15%) of the recoverable indirect costs. These funds should be used to support the research activities of the department.

## **D. Statement on Administrative Support**

Marist College provides administrative support for academic grant proposals in specific ways.

1. The Office of Academic Grants assists faculty members with the grant application process. This office is responsible for reviewing the grant proposal for consistency with institutional, sponsor, and government standards, circulating it for internal review and decision-making purposes, and assisting in preparing the line-item budget for final approval and submission. (Pre-Award)
2. The Office of Post-Award provides accounting support and funds management for award proposals. This office manages all disbursements and provides oversight for the submission of required accounting/financial reports. The Office of Post-Award is responsible for the compliance of grant activities and expenditures with all applicable statutes and requirements of the sponsor. (Post-Award)
3. The college administration provides direct oversight of grant activities during an award period. The Dean of the faculty member's School will typically provide this function for a faculty grant. Other administrators may be named for specific awards. The administrator is responsible for overseeing the activities of the grant recipient(s), authorizing approvals when necessary, and ensuring adherence to reporting timetables (Grant Management).
4. School and departmental secretaries generally provide Secretarial and clerical support.

Additional information on grants and contracts is available in the Sponsored Projects Manual on the Academic Grants website.

## **E. Scholarship Implications**

Faculty members should seek grants that result in a tangible outcome and a report that will be critically reviewed. Ideally, a grant experience will lead to some form of publication. For those grants where publication may not be possible, the College will interpret a granting agency's review of a faculty member's report(s) as a form of external peer review. The funding of an academic grant proposal will be considered a positive component of the professional development/scholarship area for a faculty member's annual evaluation.

Grant applications that are not funded but receive a positive review from the funding source are eligible for consideration by the faculty member's Dean as professional development/scholarship activity for the faculty member's annual evaluation.

## **F. What is a good grant for Marist?**

A good grant for Marist contributes to the attainment of the mission of the College, leaves Marist in a better position than before the grant was awarded and advances the faculty member's professional growth and development.

Appropriate grants accomplish the following -- they are grants that.

1. provide funding and support for faculty to conduct research and to engage in projects that otherwise they would not be able to undertake.
2. involve students in the research/learning process.
3. lead to recognition for faculty, students, and the College through the publication, presentation, or sharing of results.
4. are fiscally responsible in that the College benefits from the external support, and the grant activity does not constitute a financial or legal liability.

## **G. Pre-Grant Planning**

Pre-grant planning refers to a collection of activities intended to contribute to the development of a grant proposal by identifying and communicating the internal implications of the grant proposal and by facilitating the acquisition of the necessary approvals. As soon as a faculty member decides to apply for a grant, the faculty member should schedule a meeting with the Academic Grants staff to review the implications for the College, consider potential budget needs, identify any consortia, and subcontract possibilities, discuss the timeline for submission, and initiate the preliminary review.

### **1. Implications**

Grants often have numerous requirements and implications. Equipment, computing services, library services, space, special utilities, human subjects, laboratory animals, hazardous materials, agreements with other institutions, and potential patents and/or copyrights are all areas that must be addressed when seeking preliminary approval. The Office of Academic Grants provides an internal review form and projected time frame sheet for submission based on the sponsor's proposal deadline. The School Dean and Provost's Office must approve the proposal concept at the preliminary stage. If additional requirements or implications exist, approvals from other administrators may be necessary at this stage.

The proposer must agree to the timeline for submission before the development of a full proposal proceeds. The Office of Academic Grants will assist the faculty member in this process.

## 2. Budget

The creation of a grant budget requires a detailed description of what will be done, who will do it, when it will be done, and what the anticipated costs will be. There are many decisions and specifications that are made in the preparation of the proposed budget. Matching funds, release time for faculty and staff, and compensation for new personnel must all be addressed according to institutional, sponsor, and OMB standards. Operating expenses must be projected. Permissible indirect contributions must be included as part of the proposed budget.

## 3. Approvals

There are two layers of institutional approvals for academic grants. The School Dean and Provost's Office approve the proposer's preliminary concept at the first layer. (Other administrators will become involved in the preliminary approval for more complex proposals.) The second layer is the institution's final approval of the completed proposal and budget.

### a. Preliminary Approval

The faculty member should work with the Office of Academic Grants to obtain preliminary approval of the concept. The Grant Request Form consists of a series of "yes-no" questions proposers need to answer for purposes of preliminary approval. The items that are answered "yes" typically indicate a more complex proposal, a longer processing timeline, and the need for additional information and approvals.

At the preliminary stage, an explanation or statement of feasibility will be required for each question with a "yes" answer. For example, if space renovations are required, then an estimate of the relevant cost and time factors for the renovation is to be obtained from the Director of Physical Plant. If matching funds are included in the proposal, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) must review the matching request. The CFO may need to bring matching requests to the attention of the Internal Operating Group (IOG) if a cash match exceeds \$5,000. Thus, ample time needs to be allocated for the review of proposals requesting matching funds.

Feasibility issues must be introduced and addressed at this point. All items marked "yes" on the routing form that

have budgetary implications will require an estimate of costs at the preliminary stage before the School Dean and the Provost's Office approve the proposal concept. More detailed instructions are indicated on the proposal routing form.

b. Final Approval

Ample time should be allocated for the development of a complete proposal and for the approval process. The Office of Academic Grants will notify the faculty member, the School Dean, and the Provost's Office if any areas and items of concern require attention as the proposal develops.

When the grant proposal is ready for final review, the proposer certifies that, to the best of his or her knowledge, the statements in the proposal are truthful, complete, accurate, and achievable. The Office of Academic Grants certifies that the proposal and budget conform to OMB, agency, and institutional standards and circulates the proposal for final review.

The Provost's Office or Executive Vice President signs the proposal at least two to three days prior to the submission of the proposal to allow time for proposal processing. This signature certifies that to the best of the institutional official's knowledge, the statements in the proposal are truthful, accurate, and complete and that the College will comply with the conditions of the award.

## **H. Procedures for Proposal Processing and Submission**

As the proposal is being drafted, the principal investigator is encouraged to consult with his/her dean/department chair and colleagues as necessary and with the Office of Academic Grants to ensure that the project is technically and financially sound. It is particularly important to discuss the need for course release time and sponsor matching or cost-sharing requirements with the dean at this stage. All early correspondence, including any letters of initial solicitation efforts, are to be routed for internal review. (See Proposal Routing Process)

All proposals are reviewed in the Office of Academic Grants before submission to an external agency to determine if the proposal has been approved, incorporates Marist College and sponsor requirements, and is complete.

### *Proposal Routing Process*

The Proposal Routing Form is a required, internal college form used to route proposals for on-campus signatures and also serves as the data entry form for the sponsored projects database maintained by the Office of Academic Grants. Records maintained by the Office of Academic Grants are the official records of the College and are subject to review by auditors and other officials of funding agencies. Information contained on the routing form is also used to generate reports detailing sponsored activity at the College. Timely submission of this form



facilitates these information-gathering activities. The proposal routing form is available by request from the Office of Academic Grants.

The Preliminary Proposal Routing Form should be filled out as early in the proposal development stage as possible (at least one month in advance of the deadline for approvals on Marist matching funds). Faculty and staff who have completed the request have priority in accessing the services of the Office of Academic Grants and other campus offices that assist with processing proposals for external funding.

#### *What the Required Signatures on the Routing Sheet Mean*

The signature of the **Director of Academic Grants** assures that the proposal meets agency guidelines, is in line with Marist College policies, and conforms to OMB budget cost principles.

The signature of the **Principal Investigator (PI)** certifies that he/she will accept responsibility for the implementation of the project and timely submission of all required progress reports. It also certifies that the information on the form and in the proposal is accurate, including the matching obligation, and assures the College that the project will be carried out in accordance with sponsor and College requirements.

The signature of the **Academic Dean** assures the College that the school/division endorses the activities proposed and guarantees any departmental matching in the request. The Dean's endorsement demonstrates the relationship of the proposed activities to the department's overall mission and future goals and implies that the project has departmental support.

The signature of the **Provost's Office** indicates that the proposal is appropriate to the overall mission of the proposing unit.

**The Chief Financial Officer's or the Executive Vice President's** signature indicates that the budget has undergone review, that the indirect cost recovery is acceptable, that institutional fiscal standards have been met, and that other financial considerations, including matching requests, have been met.

Additional signatures may be required. For example, if the proposed activities cross-institutional reporting lines, all individuals impacted by the proposal may be required to sign off. Also, if the proposal commits the College resources, the signature of the Executive Vice President is also required.

#### *Proposal Submission and Required Review Time*

The completed proposal should be forwarded to the Office of Academic Grants at least 7 to 10 days prior to the proposal mailing or submission deadline to allow those with signatory responsibility sufficient time to review the final proposal. Proposals that are submitted late risk delayed processing of the application. It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that all institutional signatures are secured so that the proposal will be received by the sponsor according to their submission deadline.

## *General Application Development and Submission Timetable*

This timetable serves as a general guide in anticipating the time needed to create and submit a proposal application. The scheduling of tasks will be different for each proposal/application developed. **Estimate anywhere from 60 to 120 full-time hours for competitive proposal writing and application development.**

### **120-60 Days before a proposal is due to the sponsor**

- Review the program announcement, guidelines, and instructions with the Office of Academic Grants
- Prepare a concept paper describing the project/research
- Prepare a plan of work with a timeline
- Prepare outline and/or first draft of research/program plan
- Contact human subjects, animal welfare, and biosafety administrators, as needed
- Coordinate with participating organizations/institutions
- Discuss release time, facility and/or needs, cost sharing, and matching funds with the chair, academic dean, or area administrators
- Meet with the Academic Grants Director for consultation and coordination of the proposal
- Prepare a preliminary budget with the Office of Academic Grants
- Fill out and obtain signatures on the preliminary routing form

### **60-30 Days before a proposal is due**

- Prepare preliminary routing to the Office of Academic Grants
- Subcontract arrangements finalized (documented in writing)
- Discuss the cost-estimating process with the Office of Academic Grants' staff
- Submit the complete draft to the Office of Academic Grants for consultation on editing if needed

### **30 Days before a proposal is due in the hands of a sponsor**

- Share draft of proposal with colleagues/dean
- Collect resumes, letters of support, agreements, etc.

### **20-15 Days before a proposal is due in the hands of a sponsor**

- Submit the final draft of the budget and justification, narrative, and sponsor forms to the Office of Academic Grants
- Proofread and prepare the final copy of the proposal
- Working Days before a proposal is due in the hands of a sponsor
- Forward the complete proposal package (including the final budget and all attachments) to the Office of Academic Grants for final review, routing, and submission

## **I. Award Notification**

When an award is made without budget revision, the actions described in the proposed application have been approved for funding and all conditions of the award must be understood and met once the award is accepted. Upon acceptance, the application objectives described by the faculty member in the application are binding. When the Office of Academic Grants receives official notification of an award, the award notification will be forwarded to the faculty member, School Dean, and Office of Post-Award. The Office of Post-Award will discuss the actions required for the successful completion of the grant, provide the faculty member with copies of the budget and any special terms and conditions, and set up an account for the award.

## **J. Agency Negotiation and Award**

Negotiation pertains to the various activities that take place when a grant award does not match the proposal, such as when the sponsor calls for a budget revision. The Principal Investigator, the School Dean, the Director of Academic Grants, the Office of Post-Award, and others, as necessary, will either produce a revised proposal that corresponds to the proffered award or decline the award if budget cuts are such that the work cannot be completed. The Office of Post-Award will ensure that the revised proposal is compatible with agency and institutional guidelines. The revised proposal, including the amended budget and any consortia or subcontract arrangements, must then receive the necessary internal approvals before submission.

Once the College receives official notification of the award, the Office of College Marketing and Communication is responsible for information sharing and publicity on the award.

## **K. Orientation**

An orientation program will be provided for first-time grant recipients by the Office of Academic Grants and the Office of Post-Award at the time that the award is accepted by the College. The purpose of the orientation is to prepare the investigators for the various activities that are required as part of the grant. The orientation will correspond to sponsor and institutional reporting requirements as well as the processes used by campus offices. The award recipient should contact the Office of Post-Award to schedule the orientation as soon as an award is received.

Previous grant recipients may request an orientation session as needed to address specific aspects of the grants they are administering.

## **L. External Contacts**

With the guidance of the Office of Academic Grants, applicants for academic grants should avail themselves of the assistance that may be provided by program officers and other individuals within awarding agencies. Contacts such as these will lead to Marist faculty and staff interaction with agency offices. These external contacts are a valuable source of advice and guidance regarding the scope, content, and funding of proposals being considered for preparation. Some private foundation proposals may require coordination with the Office of College Advancement and the Office of the President.

## **M. Closing of Grants**

The closing of grants refers to the final reporting and accounting activities that are done. The components of this stage are developed and prepared during the post-award period. The attainment of these components is overseen by the faculty member's Dean and the Office of Post-Award.

## **Important Resources**

Academic Grants Website	<a href="https://my.marist.edu/academic-grants">https://my.marist.edu/academic-grants</a>
InfoEd (email funding alerts)	<a href="https://infoedglobal.com/">https://infoedglobal.com/</a>

This guide was produced by the Office of Academic Grants and additional copies can be obtained from the office. More information on funding opportunities and College policies and procedures are available on the Academic Grants Website. For additional information please contact the Office of Academic Grants (Extension 3670, [grants@marist.edu](mailto:grants@marist.edu)) or the Office of Post Award (Extension 2404, Business Office/Donnelly Hall).

## NOTES

