

PROCEDURES MEMORANDUM

TO: MCC Staff

FROM: Office of the President

SUBJECT: Procedures for Institutional Grants System

DATE: May 12, 2009

PURPOSE: The purpose of the MCC institutional grants system is to further the mission of MCC through the successful acquisition and management of external grant funding.

SCOPE: This procedure applies to all (1) proposals submitted to external funding sources for the awarding of institutional grants and (2) partnerships on grants to external organizations.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

1. THE MCC INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS SYSTEM

The Grants Office serves as the official College clearinghouse for all grant partnerships. The Office's main functions are to serve as the official link between the College and funders; facilitate internal and external partnerships to secure funding for the College programs and services; provide internal technical assistance and training for ongoing grant management and facilitate appropriate communication methods regarding College grants. The Grants Office holds all official copies of correspondence for all institutional grants and grant partnerships.

A. Facilitation

The MCC Grants Office facilitates a comprehensive institutional grants system to acquire, manage and support funding from external sources, for the purpose of furthering the mission of MCC. The system is designed to provide support throughout the College for the development and management of grants.

B. Technical Assistance and Training

MCC recognizes that technical assistance and orientation to specific grant requirements, grant processes and skills to solicit and manage external funding need to be continuous and ongoing. Specific training components are built into the

proposal development and management systems. Other relevant educational opportunities are also available to MCC employees and Grants Office staff, as needed.

C. Communication

Communication throughout the institutional grants system is critical to the success of grant development and management. A variety of methods of communication at all levels of the organization are used to facilitate the institutional grants system, ensuring clear communications and involvement of key stakeholders.

2. THE MCC INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Grants Development Process has seven key components:

A. Identification of Grant Development Goals and Priorities

MCC faculty and staff identify institutional needs and grant development goals that support implementation of the mission of MCC. Needs are identified through a variety of processes, including strategic planning, experience with students, research and budget analysis. Development goals and priorities vary over time, based on changes such as student demographics, enrollment, area workforce trends and funding opportunities.

B. Initiation of Internal Proposals

Development may be initiated by College faculty or staff, or by the Grants Office.

- 1) When initiated by faculty or staff, preliminary concepts are communicated to the Grants Office. The Grants Office provides a Preliminary Concept Form, which is completed by College faculty or staff. For grants included on the Grants Office calendar for annual renewal, a Preliminary Concept Form for Grant Renewal will be used. For both initial proposals and renewals, forms are sent to the staff member's immediate supervisor and appropriate Vice President(s) for approval to proceed
- 2) When new funding opportunities match identified College priorities, Grants Office staff initiate development with faculty or staff by completing and forwarding a Grant Request for Proposals (RFP) Overview Form. Interested staff complete a Preliminary Concept Form, which is submitted to the staff member's supervisor and appropriate Vice President(s) for approval to proceed with development of a formal grant proposal.

When a proposal is approved, the supervisor and Vice President officially designate the Lead Project Staff and key stakeholders. When a supervisor or Vice President denies a request to proceed, they will provide the Lead Project Staff with recommendations for next steps.

C. Internal Proposal Research and Development

With the support of the Grants Office, the Lead Project Staff develops the initial concept into a formal proposal, completing a Case Statement Form. This process includes research; communications with the staff or faculty supervisor and key internal and external stakeholders; preliminary budget development; considerations of cost-benefit, feasibility and sustainability, and identification of key partners. Other college offices are also involved at this stage with clearly defined roles (see Part E below), as required for the specific project. Typical roles include: Business Office – Review preliminary budget for allowable and expenses, accurate salary and benefits, and appropriate match contributions Facilities – Review project for space or equipment needs Marketing/Public Relations – Provide guidance on marketing strategies.

D. Internal Approval to Proceed and Area Support

In this step, the Case Statement proposal is reviewed and approved or disapproved by the College's appropriate Vice President(s). If approved at this level, the proposal is reviewed and approved by the MCC Executive Vice President. If at any point in the process the Case Statement is not approved, each level of the approval process will be notified and next steps will be communicated by the administrator denying the request. (See flowchart).

E. Identification of Funding Sources and External Proposal Development

The Grants Office facilitates the identification of potential public funding sources. If private funding sources are identified and require a 501(c)3 organization as the applicant, the proposal request will be forwarded to the Metropolitan Community College Foundation (MCCF) and MCCF guidelines and procedures will be followed for application submission. Once appropriate funding opportunities are identified, the Grants Office, faculty and staff confirm: the project development team, roles, work plan and timeline for proposal development. The Grants Office provides technical assistance to support the acquisition of letters of support/commitment, when needed. The Lead Project Staff develops and obtains these letters from all contributing grant partners. Letters of commitment shall include: specific contributions, dollar values and source of contributions and means for tracking and reporting the contributions. Letters of commitment shall also indicate an agreement to abide by grant guidelines, report any relevant audit findings to MCC, and provide copies of products developed as a grant partner.

The grant writing timeline allows draft reviews and approvals by the Grants Office and others, as appropriate. The timeline also provides for a review of the final proposal draft by the appropriate Vice President and Business Office staff according to the work plan and timeline.

F. Final Internal Approval for Submission

The Lead Project Staff provides a final copy of the grant application materials to the Grants Office and the appropriate Vice President. The Grants Office obtains the authorized institutional signatures and submits the proposal according to the designated guidelines. Unless otherwise specified in the application instructions, the authorized signator on the application will be the College President and the grant contact person will be listed as personnel in the Grants Office. Copies of all grant application materials, instructions and implementation guidance are filed with the Grants Office. The Grants Office provides copies to the appropriate college personnel and partners.

G. Pre-Award Interim

The grants development team waits until notification is received and continues efforts following grants management procedures to seek additional funding sources, as appropriate.

3. THE MCC INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS MANAGEMENT PROCESS

There are three major stages in the Grants Management Process:

A. Initial Post Award Process

The Grants Office maintains the official records on all grants, including any correspondence and implementation guidelines from the funder. Within one week of receipt of award notification, the Grants Office provides a copy of the official letter of notification and facilitates the appropriate institutional response. If another College office receives any correspondence from the funder, that office sends the original correspondence to the Grants Office within one week of receipt. The Grants Office must be copied on any correspondence with the funder. Upon award notification, the Grants Office distributes a completed Grant Award Notification and Summary Form and talking points to the grant management team and key internal and external stakeholders. The Marketing/Public Relations Office works with the Grants Office on any internal or external communications regarding grants.

B. Internal Implementation

The Lead Project Staff is responsible for coordinating all grant implementation activity, including meetings; communications with grant team members; support and monitoring of grant progress and fiscal status, and submission of required reports to the Grants Office. Within two weeks of notification, the Lead Project Staff develops an implementation plan, indicating clear responsibilities and timelines for team members and partners. The Grants Office provides the Lead Project Staff with technical assistance, training and orientation specific to grant requirements, including support with the development of Memoranda of Understanding. The Business Office provides an orientation on grant fiscal management, including cost centers, allowability of expenditures, real time budget monitoring and procedures for fiscal reporting.

C. Continuous Monitoring and Reporting

- 1) Internal Monitoring and Reporting To support coordination and communication within the College grants system, the Lead Project Staff provides Monthly Fiscal and Activity Reports to the Grants Office for the duration of the grant. The Grants Office provides regular updates to the MCC Executive Vice President and others, as appropriate. It is highly recommended that Lead Project Staff facilitate quarterly meetings of key project stakeholders. If concerns arise during implementation, either the Lead Project Staff or the Grants Office may initiate meetings or communications to address grant implementation concerns.
- 2) External Monitoring and Reporting According to the work plan and established timelines, Lead Project Staff submit draft reports to the Grants Office for final editing, administrative review and signatures, as necessary. The Grants Office submits all required reports to funders.
- 3) Activity and Budget Amendments When changes in project activities, timelines or budgets are anticipated, Lead Project Staff notify the Grants Office via the Monthly Fiscal and Activity Reports. This allows the Grants Office to coordinate proposed changes with funders, other development activities, the Business Office and other grant projects in operation.

D. Grant Completion, Close-Out and Records Retention

The Lead Project Staff prepares for close-out by ensuring funds are expended or encumbered prior to deadlines; sufficient funds remain to complete remaining grant, or appropriate steps are taken to request no-cost extensions. During the close-out process, the Lead Project Staff submits final grant requirements and reports to the Grants Office. As a resource for future applications and for auditing purposes, reports and other relevant grant records are retained by the Grants Office according to College and grant guidelines. The Grants Office provides final reports to the MCC President, the Lead Project Staff, College Vice President(s) and other key stakeholders, as appropriate.

E. Internal and External Communications Regarding Grants

To facilitate communication, the Grants Office prepares summary materials for key project stakeholders, including goals and objectives, expectations and talking points. The Marketing/Public Relations Office works with the Grants Office and appropriate College personnel to develop press releases and any media coverage throughout the grant period. Grant system procedures and forms also encourage ongoing communication with key stakeholders throughout the grant development process and implementation.

4. GRANT CONTRACTORS AND PARTNERS

A. Memoranda of Understanding

Upon grant notification, Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) are developed with grant partners, consistent with the approved Letters of Support/Commitment provided prior to proposal submission, and in accordance with related MCC policies and procedures.

B. Grant Contractor Selection and Status

Means for grant contractor selection and service rate determination are consistent with both funder and MCC requirements and procedures. When relevant to grant personnel, MCC utilizes IRS guidelines to distinguish employee or contractor status.

C. Grant Contractor Tracking and Reporting

Grant contractors track and report all grant related income, expenditures and services and provide documentation of such to the Lead Project Staff and the MCC Grants Office. The Grants Office provides copies of this contractor financial information to the MCC Business Office. When contractor audit findings are relevant to MCC grants, the Grants Office and Business Office support the Lead Project Staff in developing appropriate internal and external responses. Contractors and partners track and report equipment and supplies purchased with grant funds, including residual supplies and their value.

5. MCC PARTICIPATION IN EXTERNAL GRANT PARTNERSHIPS

Periodically, community organizations request that MCC either actively partner on a grant project or provide a letter of support for a grant proposal that may benefit the College or its students. Because any commitment of College resources must flow through the President's office, all requests for partnership must follow the same approval process as MCC-generated grants.

A. Requests for External Grant Partnership

Opportunities for College partnership on grant applications external to the College are facilitated through the Grants Office. This includes requests for Letters of Support, Letters of Commitment, MOU's and all other forms of active grant partnership. Requests for partnership are initiated through the completion of the Request for External Grant Partnership, submitted to the Grants Office following MCC procedures and policies.

1) Letters of Support

Letters of Support do not require any commitment of resources from the College. Such a letter simply states that the College is in support of the partner's project and goals. The College staff or faculty serving as the external project liaison drafts or obtains and submits a draft letter from the requestor to the Grants Office. The Grants Office reviews, edits and seeks approval and signatures from the College President or his/her designee.

2) Letters of Commitment/Memorandum of Understanding

Letters of Commitment require that the College commit resources to the partnering agency prior to grant submission and/or award. These resources may include funds, facilities, equipment, supplies, or personnel. The College staff liaison drafts or obtains a letter from the requestor and submits the draft to Grants Office. The Grants Office reviews, edits and seeks approval and signatures from the appropriate Administrator(s). Once grant award notification is received, the Grants Office reviews the original Letter of Commitment and supports the staff liaison with the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU is submitted for approval to the appropriate Vice President(s) and others, according to standing MCC procedures.

B. Facilitation of External Project Partnership Agreements and Initial Communications

The Grants Office assists College faculty and staff with internal notification and approval for partnerships; development of letters of support, letters of commitment and MOUs; and communication with the Business Office and other appropriate College staff to identify and track match contributions. The Grants Office submits MOUs and letters of support or commitment for approval by the appropriate Vice President(s) and the College President, obtains appropriate signatures and provides signed letters to partner organizations.

C. Ongoing Grants Office Support

As with institutional grants, the Grants Office supports external grant partnerships through communications, technical assistance and record-keeping. The Grants Office facilitates ongoing communications with key stakeholders and provides technical assistance to support MCC adherence to grant requirements and agreements. The Grants Office maintains the official MCC files for external grant partnerships, including MCC MOUs; letters of support or commitment; copies of the grant application and implementation guidelines; reports and other key communications.

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