

PROCEDURES MEMORANDUM

TO: MCC Staff

FROM: Office of the President

SUBJECT: Procedures for Institutional Grants System

DATE: February 10, 2021

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Metropolitan Community College (MCC) institutional grants system is to further the mission 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 with external organizations.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

1. The MCC Institutional Grants System

The Grants Office serves as the official MCC clearinghouse for all grants and grant partnerships. It serves as the official link between MCC and funders; facilitates internal and external partnerships to secure funding for College programs and services; provides internal technical assistance and training for ongoing grant management; and facilitates appropriate communication regarding College grants. The Grants Office maintains the official record for all institutional grants and grant partnerships.

The system provides MCC personnel with guidance and resources to prepare and submit proposals (Grant Development), as well as assistance to administer awarded grants and contracts (Grant Management). The Grants Office responsibilities are summarized below:

A. Grant Development

- 1) Support concept development and the cultivation of project leads
- 2) Research potential federal, state, local, and private funding sources
- 3) Coordinate institutional approval to pursue external funding for College priorities
- 4) Convene and facilitate internal development teams and community partnerships
- 5) Clarify grant guidance and facilitate proposal preparation

- 6) Review and submit all grant proposals

## B. Grant Management

- 1) Coordinate grant acceptance and notification to key staff and affected departments
- 2) Facilitate orientation meeting to kick-off grant-funded projects and communicate grant requirements and applicable MCC procedures
- 3) Monitor project progress and provide technical assistance to grant managers
- 4) Serve as the liaison between the College and the funding agency
- 5) Assist grant managers in the completion of all reporting requirements
- 6) Support project closeout and maintain all official grant files

The Institutional Grants System consists of procedures that are integral to the success of grant-funded projects, detailed below.

## 2. THE MCC Institutional Grants Development Process

- A. Support Concept Development & Cultivation of Project Leads—MCC staff and faculty with new project ideas requiring full or partial external funding can work with the Grants Office to hone and develop their projects. Project leads will be expected to:

- 1) Commit to proposal development and project implementation
- 2) Ensure the project meets institutional needs and expressed priorities, and advances the College mission
- 3) Demonstrate support, at minimum, from a supervisor at the Dean level or above

Once preliminary project feasibility is established, the Grants Office may begin identifying potential funding sources.

- B. Research and Identify Potential Funding Sources—If a funding source is not identified, the Grants Office will research grantors using its databases and resources. The Grants Office has final discretion when matching projects with grantors.

- C. Coordinate and Secure Institutional Approval—Before proposal development, the Grants Office will seek institutional approval in accordance with requirements for each of the following categories:

- 1) Pre-Approved Project; project list approved annually by College President
- 2) New Project Over \$50,000
- 3) New Project Under \$50,000

- D. Proposal Development—After approvals have been obtained, the Grants Office will identify a grant development team responsible for compiling the grant proposal. The following roles/responsibilities are typical of most grant proposals:

- 1) Project Lead – Primary point of contact and subject matter expert who typically plays a key role in project implementation. Project leads typically compile student and program data; provide a succinct description of the need and work plan; communicate funding needs and identify budget items; and draft the narrative and proposal, according to their ability and capacity.
- 2) Grants Office Lead – Grants Office representative to facilitate proposal development and management of funded proposals.
- 3) Grants Accounting Office Lead – Grants Accounting Office representative to facilitate budget development and budget monitoring, should grant be awarded.
- 4) Other Key Staff – Other MCC staff/faculty who may be impacted by the proposal, should grant funding be awarded, such as individuals in facilities, human resources, or information technology departments. These individuals provide input and data and commit to supporting project implementation, as appropriate.

If the funding source requires the applicant to be a 501(c)(3) organization, the Grants Office will submit the proposal using the MCC Foundation's nonprofit status, with the approval of the MCCF Executive Director. Institutional approval procedures still apply.

The Grants Office will compile and submit other requested documentation, such as: organizational budget, tax exempt status documentation, indirect cost rate agreement, audited financial statements, and board rosters.

- E. Proposal Development Involving External Partnerships—MCC often receives requests from community organizations to either actively partner on a grant project or provide a letter of support or commitment for a grant proposal that may benefit the College or its students. These opportunities are facilitated by the Grants Office in partnership with the requesting MCC point of contact. The management of external partnership grants follows the same processes established for institutional grants.
- F. Finalize Proposal for Submission—When the project lead completes a draft proposal, the Grants Office reviews it and provides edits and feedback. The Grants Office decides when the proposal is considered in final draft form and is ready for final review.

When the Grants Accounting Office has approved the budget, it is sent to the Grants Office for edits and inclusion in the final draft package for final review.

The final review consists of approvals by the project lead, project lead's supervisor, Grants Accounting Office, and the Chief of Staff.

- G. Proposal Submission—The Grants Office is the only office at MCC authorized to submit grant proposals on behalf of the College.

The Grants Office obtains required signatures and submits the proposal according to grant guidelines. Unless otherwise required, the only authorized MCC grant signatory is the College President, with the Grants Office listed as the key project personnel.

Copies of all grant application materials, proposal instructions, and written guidance are filed in the Grants Office. The Grants Office notifies the grant development team of successful proposal submission and includes copies of the submission for their files.

- H. Pre-Award Activities—While awaiting a funding decision, there are some pre-award activities the project lead can do to ensure an expeditious grant start-up.
  - 1) Hiring of New Personnel—working with the Human Resources Office, position descriptions and requisitions can be created and approved, and positions posted with the disclaimer: *Position availability is contingent upon the awarding of external funds*. Applicant selection can commence following grant award.
  - 2) Plan for Space or Equipment—Facilities and/or administrative computing representatives can discuss any space or equipment the project team might need.
  - 3) Other proactive steps, such as planning for curriculum development, faculty release time, room assignments, etc. may be initiated prior to grant award, to allow affected departments time to adequately prepare, contingent on funding.

### 3. THE MCC Institutional Grants Management Process

- A. Initial Post-Award Process: Award Acceptance—For the duration of the performance period, the Grants Office serves as the main point of contact between the College and the funding agency and the keeper of official grant records. Should exceptions be granted, the Grants Office is to be copied on all correspondence between College personnel and the funding agency.

The Grants Office maintains the official records on all grants, including any agreements, correspondence, and implementation guidelines from the funder. If another College office should receive correspondence from the funder, that office should send the original correspondence to the Grants Office for a coordinated response.

Upon award notification, the Grants Office will distribute a grant award summary including official award documentation to the project lead (now, grant manager), grant development team, the College Business Officer and Chief of Staff, and others at the College who may be impacted by the project.

To finalize grant award acceptance, the Grants Office will:

- 1) Obtain signatures, process the agreement, and send acknowledgement letters
- 2) Report the grant award on regular Cabinet and Board of Governors reports

- 3) Work with the MCC Public Affairs Office on any internal/external communications regarding the grant, following funder guidelines as applicable.

When appropriate, the Grants Office will convene a grant kick-off meeting with project stakeholders to discuss the details of the award, applicable MCC and funding agency guidelines, assign roles/responsibilities, review the budget, and set a project timeline.

The Grants Accounting Office will prepare an internal grant project budget, using the funder-approved budget. This budget will contain important cost center information and will be used throughout the project period to monitor spending progress.

- B. Project Management & Award Administration—The grant manager is responsible for coordinating all grant implementation activity, including meetings; communications with team members; support and monitoring of grant objectives and fiscal status, and submission of required reports to the Grants Office. The grant manager’s supervisor is also responsible for supporting grant implementation and ensuring appropriate expenditure of funds.

The Grants and Grants Accounting Offices will provide support and technical assistance throughout the project period. The grant manager is responsible for frequent communication with both offices. If official project, budget, or term modifications are needed, requests will be submitted to the funding agency by the Grants Office.

The Grant Management Handbook is a resource for MCC grant managers to become effective, efficient stewards of external funding, and is provided to all new grant managers upon grant award. The handbook details the following information:

- 1) Grant Responsibility Matrix
- 2) Start-Up Tips and Reminders
- 3) Applicable College Policies and Procedures
  - a) Time & Effort Reporting
  - b) Hiring of Grant Funded Personnel
  - c) Technology & Software Approval
  - d) Travel
  - e) Equipment Purchases
  - f) Contracted Services
- 4) Budget Management and Purchasing Methods
- 5) Allowable Costs Reference Guide
- 6) Tracking Grant Progress and Outcomes
- 7) Grant Reporting and Closeout Procedures
- 8) Other important award information

Reporting and Award Closeout—the grant manager is responsible for drafting reports, as required by the funding agency. Reports may be required quarterly, semi-annually, annually, and/or upon completion of the project. Drafted reports are sent to the Grants Office for review and editing at least a week before the report's deadline. The Grants Accounting Office may also be asked to submit a financial report. For the Grants Office to finalize a grant report for submission, the report package must have received approval from the grant manager, the grant manager's supervisor, Grants Accounting Office and the Chief of Staff.

#### 4. Other Grant Related Operations

- A. Indirect Cost Rate Recovery—Indirect costs represent the expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with a particular grant, project function or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization. A negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (or Facilities & Administrative Cost Rate) is required to place a value on these non-direct costs within grant budgets, and is approved by MCC's Federal Cognizant Agency. MCC's Grants Accounting Office is required to submit an Indirect Cost Rate proposal approximately every two years.

Calculated as a percentage of total salaries and wages, including all fringe benefits, the Indirect Cost percentage can be included in most federal grant proposal budgets, thereby allowing the College to recoup non-direct costs of grant project performance. Allowable percentages up to the institution's negotiated rate may be subject to further limitations or caps as determined by the federal granting agency.

Recovered Indirect Cost reimbursements are directed back to MCC's General Fund, to be allocated at the President's discretion. When appropriate, allocations may be directed to support the general costs of (1) Foundation & Grants Accounting Office operations, (2) Grants Office operations, and/or (3) the grant-funded department's operations.

Adopted 11/15/01; Revised 7/20/06; Revised 9/06/07; Reviewed but no changes 2/22/08; Revised 5/12/09; 3/5/15; 11/17/16; 2/10/21 title changes only