

PROCEDURES MEMORANDUM

TO: MCC Staff

FROM: Office of the President

SUBJECT: Procedures for Institutional Grants System

DATE: August 22, 2022

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

As a department in the Office of Advancement, 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 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) In partnership with the MCC Foundation, plan an annual solicitation plan
- 2) Support concept development and the cultivation of project leads
- 3) Research potential federal, state, local, and private funding sources
- 4) Coordinate institutional approval to pursue external funding for College priorities
- 5) Convene and facilitate internal development teams and community partnerships

- 6) Clarify grant guidance and facilitate proposal preparation
- 7) Write or review and submit all grant proposals
- 8) Compile subaward forms and materials as needed

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
- 7) Ensure compliance with federal, state and college regulations, policies and procedures in coordination with the Grant Accounting office
- 8) Work with MCC Foundation to ensure compliance with IRS or funder requirements.

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

2. The MCC and MCC Foundation 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, advances the College mission, and supports the annual Mission Achievement Plan (MAP) priorities and goals.
- 3) Demonstrate support, at minimum, at the Dean level or above

An initial meeting will be held with Project Lead, Grants Accounting, and other impacted departments to validate project feasibility.

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. In partnership with the AVP for Advancement, 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) An annual solicitation plan approved by Cabinet and College President
 - 2) New Projects
 - 3) Ongoing and continuation projects
 - 4) Award and recognition applications for MCC and college programs
- 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, including quarterly and annual program and budget reviews and closeout meetings.
 - 3) Grants Accounting Office Lead – Grants Accounting Office representative to:
 - a) Facilitate and finalize budget development in the application process;
 - b) Facilitate budget monitoring and reporting, should grant be awarded; and
 - c) Engage Foundation Accounting for grants where funds are not reimbursed to the general fund (e.g. scholarships).
 - 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 formatting and inclusion in the final draft package for final review.

The final review of public applications consists of approvals by the project lead, project lead's supervisor, Grants Accounting Office, and the Director of Grants. The Foundation Executive Director and Grants Accounting will provide the final review and approvals for Foundation proposals.

- G. Requirements for legal documents, including Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), and Intent to Submit Subaward documents, must be reviewed, revised as needed, and approved by the Collee Legal Counsel.

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

For the MCC Foundation, unless otherwise required, the only authorized grant signatory is the MCC Foundation Executive Director, with the Grants Office listed as the key project personnel and the Foundation Accounting listed as the financial representative.

For MCC institutional grants, unless otherwise required, the Director of Administrative Services or the College President are the only authorized MCC grant signatories, with the Grants Office listed as the key project personnel and the Grants Accounting Office listed as the financial representative. In the absence of the Director of Administrative services and the College President, the College's Legal Counsel may fill in as the authorized signatory. The Chief of Staff may approve the use of the College President's electronic signature with the President's knowledge.

The Grants Office obtains required signatures and submits the proposal according to grant guidelines. Copies of all grant application materials, proposal instructions, and written guidance are filed in records housed in the Grants Office. The Grants Office notifies the grant development team of successful proposal submission and provides copies of the submission for their files.

- I. 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, Campus Planning and/or administrative computing representatives can address 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 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, implementation guidelines and amendments 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 or grant manager, grant development team, the Grants Accounting Office and the AVP for Advancement, and others at the College who may be impacted by the project. The grant award summary should include the one-page MCC Grant Award Notification with the grant-specific cost center code, the award from the funder, the approved budget, and any other funder requirements.

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.

Requirements for legal documents, including Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), Disclosure of Lobbying form, Intent to Submit Subaward documents, etc., must be reviewed, revised as needed, and approved by the College Legal Counsel, at all stages of the grant development and management process.

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 project implementation and reporting timelines.

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 project lead/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 Grants Office will establish automatic notifications for due dates, including reports, review meetings, subsequent applications, etc. to ensure deadlines are met on time. The grant manager is responsible for frequent communication with both offices. If the approved project, scope of work, budget, or term modifications are needed, requests will be submitted to the funding agency by the Grant Manager, Grants Office, Grants Accounting or MCC Foundation, where appropriate.

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, including bid processes
- 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 works with the Grants Office to draft reports, as required by the funding agency. Reports may be required quarterly, semi-annually, annually, and/or upon completion of the project. Drafted reports should be finalized by the Grants Office and grant manager at least one 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 or closeout report on

a government grant, the report package must have received approval from the grant manager, the grant manager's supervisor, Grants Accounting Office and the Director of Grants. For private grants, Grants Accounting and the Foundation Executive Director will review and approve in the last week before the report deadline.

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, coupled with a 2-year extension.

Calculated as a percentage of total salaries and wages, including all fringe benefits, the Indirect Cost percentage can be included in most federal and some state 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) the Grants Accounting Office operations, (2) Grants Office operations, and/or (3) the grant-funded department's operations.

The indirect cost rate is not included in private funding requests.

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