

**To:** UNT Faculty members  
**From:** Dr. Tom McCoy, Vice President for Research and Innovation  
**Date:** December 7, 2016  
**Subject:** Updated practices regarding sponsored project funded positions

Late last spring Bob Brown and I convened a committee to consider how we could improve practices to facilitate carrying out sponsored projects, one of the key missions of the university in complement to our core responsibilities in education. The committee brought together representatives from the units that could contribute to improving these practices including the Controller's office, the Division of Finance and Administration, the Provost's office, Human Resources, the Office of Grants and Contracts Administration, College finance officers, and the Office of Research and Innovation.

In addition following the Planning and Implementation Workshop and the Shark Tank initiatives identified, there was one initiative approved that focused in a similar fashion on procedures and processes that were impediments to successful performance of funded research projects. This initiative involving Institute of Research Excellence Directors, Department Chairs and other faculty identified several issues, primarily those encountered when hiring personnel to be supported by sponsored projects. These included practices currently in place that precluded paying personnel supported by sponsored projects at the amount approved by the sponsor in the proposals budget, or delayed creation of positions and their recruitment until projects were awarded, contracts finalized, and ProjID accounts opened. I'm pleased to announce that updated practices have been put in place to remove these impediments to attracting the best candidates for jobs supported by sponsored projects and to enable timely hiring of personnel supported by sponsored projects.

Specifically, positions funded 100% by a sponsored project, including research track professors and scientists, postdoctoral fellows, technical support staff, and graduate students, may now be paid at the salary amount in the approved budget of the sponsored project. This should aid in sponsored projects being able to pay competitive salaries, as approved by the sponsor, to attract and retain the personnel best suited to carry out the work.

In addition, for positions supported 100% by a sponsored project, a job may be opened and advertised as soon as UNT has received notification from a sponsor that a project is to be funded (e.g., via a funding agency's e-mail or letter of intent to fund). This updated practice should largely remove the delay to carrying out successfully funded work caused by having to wait until a ProjID is opened to begin the process of creating the position, advertising it, and obtaining a pool of applicants. The job posting for these types of 100% grant-funded personnel must indicate that filling the position is subject to the sponsor's awarding of the funds.

Mr. Brown and I sincerely thank the faculty members and department chairs who advocated for improving these personnel practices and to the committee for diligent work to update them. We will continue to seek improvements to practices that support the research enterprise at UNT, contribute to solidifying our standing as a Tier One research university, and help enable faculty members and students to succeed in research, scholarly and creative activities.