

DC Office of Research Advancement Service Commitment

The DC Research Advancement Office is committed to helping USC faculty initiate or expand sponsored research programs. In particular, the office strategically pursues funding opportunities with a targeted focus on large, multidisciplinary research projects. To achieve these goals, the DC Research Advancement Office announces a Service Commitment to all USC faculty.

1. Support for Proposal Development

Requests for Guidance Received More than 60 Days Prior to Due Date

The DC Research Advancement Office will provide: 1) a review of the solicitation; and 2) a competitive assessment of potential for funding. The review and competitive assessment findings will be conveyed directly to the potential PI. If the PI decides to proceed and submit a full proposal, the DC Research Advancement Office can provide some or all of the services listed below:

Team Building

- Identify USC faculty as potential collaborators
- Identify faculty from other universities and organizations as potential collaborators

Proposal Organization and Planning

- Organize conference calls and face-to-face meetings
- Develop outlines of application components
- Create timelines for preparing and submitting applications
- Conduct comparative analyses of existing USC assets
- Conduct analyses of existing projects funded under the targeted program to determine optimal team composition and leadership

Writing & Copy-Editing

- Review drafts for organization and responsiveness to solicitation
- Copy-edit drafts for grammar, clarity and completeness
- Write de-novo text for non-technical aspects of the proposal, e.g., outreach, administrative organization, USC assets
- Creation of graphics, organizational charts and timelines
- Review summary statements and previous reviewer reports to provide guidance on resubmissions
- Generate drafts of support letters from consultants, advisory committee members, and other partners

Budget Preparation

- Assist PIs and school/departmental staff to develop and revise budgets
- Prepare budget justifications

- Identify potential strategies for cost sharing

Administrative & Logistical Activities

- Coordinate collection of required documents from participating collaborators including subcontractors, including biosketches and support letters
- Complete application forms for electronic or paper submission

Proposal Submission

- Coordinate the final on-time submission with the USC Department of Contracts and Grants and other relevant USC offices

Requests for Assistance Less than 60 Days Before Due Date

The DC Research Advancement Office will internally review all requests made less than 60 days before due date. Requests will be evaluated and prioritized based on various factors including:

- Extent to which the proposal involves multiple schools internally at USC and externally with other universities
- Degree to which the proposed research crosses multiple scientific domains
- Budget size, taking into account differences in average funding amounts for humanities/social science vs. science/engineering
- Probability of proposal success
- Current and projected workload of DC Research Advancement Office staff

If approved, the Office of Research Advancement can provide some or all of the services listed above as requested by the PI.

2. Notification of Funding Opportunities

The DC Research Advancement Office tracks current and emerging funding priorities among federal agencies. The office will continue to monitor newly released federal funding opportunities on a daily basis. Faculty will be notified of these new potential funding opportunities via customized email messages.

In addition, the latest news in federal research funding highlights are posted via Twitter and Facebook at these respective URLs: https://twitter.com/usc_dcresearch and <https://www.facebook.com/USCResearchAdvancement>.

3. Federal Outreach

The DC Office of Research Advancement maintains and strengthens ties between USC investigators and federal research sponsors. In addition, the staff also promotes USC research breakthroughs and findings to relevant agencies. Federal program officers have a large amount of discretion in making funding decisions; thus it is useful to

establish a relationship with them before considering applying for federally funded grants. **USC@Federal Mission Agencies ProgramS (MAPS)** is an initiative designed by the DC Research Advancement Office to help faculty identify and meet program officers with similar scientific and research interests. The searchable database can be accessed via this URL: http://web-app.usc.edu/web/ra_maps/search/

For faculty interested in connecting with a federal agency currently not included in the USC@MAPS initiative, DC Research Advancement Office staff will provide guidance as requested. Dr. James Murday, Associate Director for Physical Sciences in the DC Research Advancement Office (murday@usc.edu), is the point of contact for questions about USC@MAPS.

4. Strategy Sessions

Upon request, the DC Research Advancement Office will meet with individual faculty or collaborative research groups to discuss proposal development strategies. Topics include how to assemble a large multidisciplinary team, agency interests, and potential agency matches.

In addition, the Office will conduct a comprehensive search for potential funding opportunities.

5. Submission Procedures

The DC Research Advancement Office works in partnership with faculty and staff to provide support for development of large, complex, multidisciplinary research proposals. The USC Department of Contracts and Grants (DCG) reviews and submits proposals, negotiates and accepts contract and grant agreements, and ensures compliance with sponsor and university policies. The DC Research Advancement Office will work closely with DCG throughout the pre-award process.

DCG is the only USC office authorized to submit on behalf of faculty. Therefore, the DC Research Advancement Office will finalize and transfer all proposal files to DCG **two business days prior to the sponsor's deadline**. If a proposal is not completed two business days prior to the sponsor's deadline and provided to the Office, it is the responsibility of the relevant PI and school/departmental staff to coordinate submission with DCG.

6. Additional Resources and Questions

USC Center of Excellence in Research – DC Research Advancement Office staff frequently participates in the USC Center of Excellence in Research. This university wide resource offers proposal guidance and advice on obtaining federal research funding. Additional information, including the most recent schedule of workshops, can be accessed via this URL: <https://research.usc.edu/about/vp/cer/>

For any questions regarding the DC Research Advancement Office Service Commitment, please contact the Office's executive director, Dr. Steven Moldin (moldin@usc.edu).