Startup Program Budget and Accountability Guidelines

General Guidelines

1. In the current economic climate, budgets are shrinking, or at best, are static; and funding of startup packages limits funding available for other programs. Accordingly, budget requests should include only what is necessary to establish the candidate’s research program and position the recipient to be successful in attracting extramural funding. The assistant vice chancellors for research for Academic Affairs and Health Sciences will work closely with the respective associate dean for research (ADR) and department chair to ensure that startup budgets accurately reflect the candidate’s needs.

2. As a rule of thumb, the level of startup funding distributed over a 3 year period should not exceed the anticipated level of annual extramural funding for the startup recipient while they are at ECU. The amount of startup funds requested should reflect the average level of annual extramural funding in the discipline as evidenced by funding records of existing faculty in the department (e.g., if the average NIH grant in biomedical sciences is $200,000/yr. for 3 years and investigators in the Department of Physiology have a record of receiving $200,000 extramural funding/yr./investigator, then the startup package should not exceed $200,000/yr. for 3 years. The REDE return on investment is through recovery of startup funds via the F&A recovered from faculty members’ extramural awards.

3. A portion of the package must be derived from Academic Affairs, Health Sciences, the college or the department. This is expected to be 30% or more.

4. Up to 70% of the package can be requested from the Division of Research, Economic Development, and Engagement (REDE).

Budget: REDE will fund equipment, supplies and travel necessary for the completion of the project proposed. Research assistants and/or postdoctoral researchers are also funded.

Budget restrictions. REDE will not contribute to the following, although departments and colleges/schools may:

- Academic year faculty salary
- Summer salary
- Financial support for external collaborators
- Effort reassignment/course buyout
- Travel to meetings for dissemination of results
- General purpose computers and software
- Relocation expenses. Laboratory renovations.
- Office equipment and furniture
- Support for graduate students – Departments and programs are encouraged to support the project by utilizing available stipends/assistantships/fellowships coming to them from the Graduate School. REDE may also have some stipends available to allocate to the project. If
support is requested, the level should be consistent with department standards for student compensation. These will be separately listed on the startup form.

**Accountability**

- Acceptance of startup funds by the college, department, and faculty member carries with it an expectation that the recipient will be successful in obtaining extramural funds to help sustain the research enterprise at ECU.

- Recipients will be required to document appropriate use of awarded startup funds and good faith efforts to establish active research programs in annual reports to the Division of Research, Economic Development, and Engagement. Reports will be required:
  1. 18 months after startup initiation, report used to authorize third year of funding; and,
  2. At the end of the startup period (cumulative);
  3. Information should be documented on appropriate report forms.

- Accountability at the department level will be based on the aggregated productivity of recipients in that unit, thereby taking into consideration that there are different strengths of faculty members, a broad array of activities and responsibilities within an academic department, and variable assignments of effort necessary to accomplish the departmental mission. Using institutional records, REDE will document the number of proposals for extramural funding that are generated by current and past startup recipients in the department, the amount of extramural funding awarded to current and past startup recipients during their time at ECU compared to the startup funds expended, amount of state appropriated salary dollars offset by extramural funds to current and past startup recipients, and the amount of F&A recovered in extramural funding. Publication and presentation and productivity will also be considered. The aggregate data will be taken into consideration when the Division of Research is asked to make further investments in the department.

- The appropriate assistant vice chancellor must be informed immediately by the chair or ADR of any changes in the faculty member’s employment status during the startup funding period. Neither faculty nor department may use unexpended startup funds if faculty are leaving ECU; these must be returned to REDE.

*Important Note: Funding comes in part from state appropriations that do not carry over to the next fiscal year. Thus, all funds must be expended in the fiscal year that they are awarded (i.e., all items budgeted must be received, invoiced and PAID by mid-June). Funds not expended will be returned to the state per state regulations. In the event that a recipient is unable to expend funds in the year they are awarded, please contact the appropriate assistant vice chancellor for research (AA or HS) as early as possible in the fiscal year to discuss the most appropriate reallocation of the residual funds.*

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