Cradle to Grave Grant Administrative Process

Pre-award Development
All new proposals for externally funded research, regardless of value or funder, must be internally approved through the ACP costing system prior to submission to the funder. This is a requirement for outline proposals and proposals submitted to the funder by another institution or organisation. Staff at Lancaster University have access to thousands of funding opportunities via the university's subscription to RESEARCHconnect. This is a dedicated research funding facility, offering the latest calls from the UK, EU and international research funding landscapes.

Bid Development
Researchers are encouraged to engage with Research Services as early as possible in the application process so that application and costing requests can be triaged and a timetable can be agreed to support the application up to the funder deadline. Depending on the size and complexity of the proposal different levels of support are available from Research Services including costing only, in-depth bid writing assistance and strategic development with four interdisciplinary Senior Research Development Managers. Specialist support is also available for the development of clinical research.

Proposal Approval
The university uses the Unit 4 Business World On costing module (ACP) as both a costing tool and for electronic approvals. Costings are prepared by Research Services and PIs have access to the system to view costing information. ACP distributes proposal approvals depending on the value of funding requested against university financial authorisation levels. Approvers review the full economic cost and recovery rate to ensure a balanced portfolio of projects alongside non-financial benefits and other considerations. These include the quality of the proposal, strategic fit, completion of required supporting documentation, available resources, ethical risk and institutional commitment.

Award Set-up
Financial Approval
Following formal notification of award, approved details are entered against the ACP proposal record as an 'awarded' costing type. If any details of the proposal have changed significantly since the original proposal this is resent for approval using the same authorisation levels.

Due Diligence
At award a due diligence questionnaire is sent to some third parties to complete including a request for three years of financial accounts and evidence of policy documents. The responses are reviewed internally by a university panel to consider the potential risks identified and any mitigating actions that have been agreed. An assessment on whether any preliminary due diligence needs to be completed at pre-award stage is taken by Research Services based on the type of organisation, its location and the university's experience with the partner.

Contract Negotiation
Research contracts are first reviewed by the research development team for financial considerations before being forwarded to the contracts team or delegated departmental contact for review and negotiation. Grants are only started before a signed contract is received in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Head of Research Services after assessing the risk level.

Ethical Approval
The PI is responsible to ensure ethical approvals, if required, are in place before research commences; including for research being undertaken by third parties. Proposals needing ethical review are identified on ACP by the PI which is checked by the Head of Department and Research Services. Following award notification the PI applies for ethical approval via the appropriate Faculty

Research Ethics Committee, this approval can also be gained pre-award if required. The committee reviews the application and any participant documentation giving feedback, comments and approval. The applicant may be required to discuss the application at a committee meeting and can be referred to the presiding University Research Ethics Committee if concerns remain.

Financial Set-up
Once a formal award letter has been received by Research Services the grant is allocated an internal project number (7000 code) on the university's financial system (Agresso). Research Services is responsible for returning any start certificates and acceptance documents to the funder. The PI and relevant Departmental Officer(s) are informed of the project set-up with a link to relevant web guidance and useful information. The procurement team is informed of any awarded grants with equipment budgets greater than £25k. The PI is responsible for ensuring that research does not start before due diligence, contract negotiations and ethical considerations are all approved.

Post-Award Management

The day-to-day administration of research grants is carried out by the PI and their departments; the university advises that large and complex grants should include funding for a project administrator to assist with the workload. PIs are responsible for the financial management and integrity of their research projects in accordance with the funder's terms and conditions, university regulations and the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Advice and guidance is provided by Research Services through central webpages and departmental contacts; training is arranged with partners across the university in all elements of grant management, some of which is also available online.

Financial Management
PIs are ultimately responsible for the financial management of their grants however support is provided by Research Services' Post-Award team, departmental staff, and faculty finance teams. The Post-Award team are responsible for initiating all invoicing and claims by the due date in accordance with the funder's terms and conditions. This is done in liaison with the PI to ensure eligibility of expenditure and full use of the available funds. Post-award also arrange and coordinate any grant audits that may be required either during the lifetime or after the final reporting period. Once all claims are made and final payments have been received Post-Award closes the grant charging any overspends or ineligible expenditure to the appropriate departmental cost centre.

Expenditure monitoring can be undertaken by the PI at any time by using an online Tableau report of Agresso transactions. Grants are also reviewed by Post-Award at points during the grant including, when approving funds for new or amended staff contracts and during invoice or claim preparation.

Invoices are paid by the University's Accounts Payable Team. The standard payment terms are 30 days from the invoice date. Invoices must be submitted in pdf format to invoices@lancaster.ac.uk

Research Integrity
All research involving staff and students should be conducted in line with the principles set out in the university's Code of Practice and shall at all times be legal and transparent following the principles set out in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Responsibility and accountability for research integrity is placed with the PI or Supervisor. These responsibilities include ensuring that all (i) grant milestones are met and reported, (ii) activities and expenditure are eligible within the funder terms and conditions, and (iii) research is conducted according to the approved ethical application. Any allegations of research misconduct are taken seriously and investigated appropriately.

Reporting, Outputs and Impact
Internal and external reporting requirements are supported through a central research information management system (Pure). Research Services supports the reporting of information for internal

university, faculty or departmental strategic planning and external reporting such as HESA and HEBCI. Support for the recording and monitoring of outputs and impact in Pure is available from the library and an impact team; this information is used to report both internally and externally such as for the RCUK ResearchFish submission and the Research Excellence Framework.