

Research Infrastructure Enhancement Program – ‘Enhance’

I. OBJECTIVES

To identify and complete the necessary enhancements to the research infrastructure at ASU that will support growth of our research enterprise to \$350M by 2012.

- Document, analyze and improve research administration process
- Distribute research administration functions between ORSPA and the units in a standardized manner
- Upgrade information systems to reduce inefficiencies and provide better control and visibility
- Ensure that all research administration staff have the appropriate training and resources to complete their assigned responsibilities
- Protect interests of the University and Investigators by implementing appropriate levels of compliance and quality control.

II. DELIVERABLES

This project will deliver:

- a. A documented process for research administration from opportunity definition to project closeout. This documentation will include an overall process flow with additional detail on process specifics and a detailed procedure manual that can be used for training and reference.
- b. A plan for current research administration staff allocation to meet the needs of the distributed model.
- c. A plan for hiring that includes funding source and training plans.
- d. Selection and implementation of electronic tools for automation of the research administration process referenced above.
- e. An established continuous improvement program.

III. STRATEGY AND APPROACH

- Document the current process including variation from college to college
 - Each step in the process will be identified and described in detail for the current method. The result will be a series of process flowcharts and an excel spreadsheet with detail for each process step.
- Establish a baseline of performance metrics
 - The team will identify a set of metrics that are representative of the performance of the research administration process. The data needed to assess these metrics will be identified and included in the automation requirements moving forward. Wherever possible, a baseline measurement of each metric will be obtained using manual methods if necessary in order to provide an assessment of the success of this program.

- Document the desired process with improvements
 - Each of the steps outlined above will be analyzed for improvement opportunities and a definition of the desired process will be added to the spreadsheet and any additions or deletions from the process flowcharts will be completed.
- Finalize the distribution of responsibilities between ORSPA and units
 - For each of the steps outlined above, an owner will be defined for both the current and future states so that any ownership changes can be clearly identified.
- Initiate pilot program to refine process
 - The pilot program teams from FSE will review the documentation created in the previous steps and identify the tools and information required to complete each of the steps that have been allocated to their team. This may require new reports, hiring, etc. in order to ensure that all involved have what is necessary to successfully operate within the distributed framework. We will also make the reports and other tools available to the other departments that are currently operating within the distributed framework (BDI, GIOS, and many other departments).
- Select and implement appropriate tools for automation
 - For each of the steps outlined above, requirements for automation will be outlined and summarized for distribution to available vendors as part of an RFP process. COEUS does not respond to RFPs so this analysis will have to be completed internally. Based on the metrics established, the best system for meeting our needs will be selected and implemented. It is envisioned that this implementation will be a separate program that will be managed by UTO with stakeholders from OVPREA and other units.
- Create detailed procedure documentation
 - Although the documentation initially created will be sufficient for a general understanding of the process, there will need to be detailed procedure documents created for each of the steps that will serve as reference material for building curriculum and assisting staff in day-to-day execution of their responsibilities. A sub-committee will be established to complete this task.
- Develop staffing plan based on the finalized distribution of responsibilities between ORSPA and Units
 - Research Administration Mission Statements for ORSPA and Units will be developed
 - Standardized research administration position descriptions, including required and preferred qualifications and compensation levels will be developed for each ORSPA and unit position.
 - Each of the current staff members within ORSPA and the departments will be interviewed to discuss how their career goals fit with the mission and specific job opportunities within ORSPA and Units. A comprehensive list of employees that are involved in research administration in ORSPA or the departments will be created and one-on-

one sessions will be conducted to better understand their experience, interests and capabilities. Ideally, a consultant with experience in assessing these factors will be retained to assist us with this process.

- Outcomes of this process will be assessed to determine how to potentially align existing skills, interested and aptitudes with current staffing needs within ORSPA and Units by shifting existing staff into preferred roles. Alternative organizational structures may also be proposed.
- A comprehensive transition plan will be proposed, including plans to hire new/additional staff to fill transitional or long-term gaps.
- A sustainable system for determining appropriate staffing levels and recruiting and training necessary staff will be developed.
- Develop a training plan and curriculum
 - The current training classes (certificate program, fundamentals course, etc.) will need to be evaluated for their consistency with the distributed model. A training plan and curriculum for all of the various audiences (current and new staff in both ORSPA and the units, senior and junior PIs, etc.) will be developed. We would like to incorporate the latest available techniques for addressing the different learning styles of the trainees and would also like to employ a consultant to assist in this process.
- Implement structure for continuous improvement
 - Although we expect to make significant improvements in the process during this program, we will not cover every facet of the research administration process and there will inevitably be processes that become outdated or do not perform as well as originally expected. This program will create a continuous improvement entity that will periodically review performance and make improvements as needed.

IV. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Development of a process for the distributed model that includes unit buy-in
- Creation of detailed process and procedure documentation
- Selection of a system of electronic tools can scale to meet the needs of ASU's growing research enterprise
- Clear definition of job descriptions, hiring of qualified staff and execution of training
- Implementation of the appropriate level of compliance and quality control
- Implementation of a continuous improvement program to ensure that processes are meeting the needs of researchers and reducing risk to ASU

V. CONSTRAINTS

- Process will be defined and automated tools implemented for the university as a whole as opposed to individual centers or colleges.

VI. ASSUMPTIONS

- Funding will be made available for the electronic tools that are identified as the optimal solution for automation of the research administration process.
- Funding will be made available to meet market level compensation for standardized positions established through this process.

VII. RISK ASSESSMENT

- It will not be possible to identify, hire and train staff as quickly as will be required to complete the rollout of the distributed model and new process by the end of 2008.