



UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL FLORIDA

FACULTY START-UP FUNDS

Guidelines and Procedures

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Scope

This document outlines the general expectations for the use of start-up funds provided to full-time, research-active faculty. These funds may be offered as part of a hiring package, a mid-career refresh, or a retention initiative. The guidelines below establish the requirement for a pre-approved expenditure plan, clarify allowable and restricted uses of funds, and define the process for requesting extensions when applicable. All expenditures must comply with applicable state and university regulations governing each funding source.

Policy Statement

Start-up funds are provided to support the research and scholarly activities of full-time, research-active faculty. These funds are intended to initiate or accelerate a faculty member's research program, not to serve as a source of ongoing or sustained funding. The amount awarded may vary depending on the expectations for securing external funding and the nature of the expenditures required to meet those goals.

To ensure alignment with institutional priorities, the allocation of start-up funds must be supported by a budget justification and a reasonably detailed expenditure plan. This plan must be reviewed and approved prior to inclusion in the offer letter.

Start-up funds must be expended within three years of the faculty member's start date, or within five years for faculty appointed in the College of Medicine. These timelines reflect the typical progression toward tenure and/or promotion, including the expectation of establishing a record of external funding.

All expenditures must be clearly documented and directly tied to the faculty member's research or scholarly activities. Use of funds must comply with all applicable university policies, procedures, and state regulations governing the specific funding source.

Guidelines

Start-up funds **must be used to support the faculty member's research and scholarly activities, with a particular emphasis on establishing or enhancing their capacity to secure external funding.** The expenditure plan associated with start-up funds must be reviewed by the department chair or school director, and the Office of Research, to ensure that university-related costs, such as shared services or computing infrastructure, are appropriately considered and either included in the budget or clearly communicated to the faculty member.

Typical Allowable Expenses

Start-up funds may be used for the following common research-related expenditures:

- Major equipment and materials/supplies not otherwise available (e.g., shared services)
- Summer salary (limited to four months over three years; up to six months over five years for College of Medicine faculty)
- Post-doctoral scholars
- Graduate and undergraduate student support

Other Permissible Expenses

While less common, the following expenses may also be allowable with appropriate justification:

- Research support staff (e.g., lab manager, research scholar, scientist)
- Research-related travel
- Hardware and/or software necessary for research, if the university-issued laptop is insufficient (must be approved by the college's IT team)
- Research participant costs, with prior approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Animal-related research expenses, with approval from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
- Books, journals, electronic resources, and specialized laboratory or office supplies
- Research publication costs, including open-access journal fees

Additional expenses may be approved by the provost's office upon recommendation from the college or department.

Prohibited Expenses

Start-up funds may not be used for the following:

- Personal items (e.g., clothing, academic regalia, briefcases, employment visas)
- Salary supplements
- Office or lab furniture (e.g., desks, chairs)
- Home office expenses
- Travel not related to research

- Food or alcohol (except when used for research purposes, such as in the Rosen College of Hospitality Management)
- Any costs not directly tied to research or scholarly activity

All expenditures must comply with university policies and the specific rules governing the funding source.

Departure from the University

If a faculty member announces their departure from UCF, no further expenditures from start-up funds may be made without prior approval from the department chair or school director and the college dean. Upon departure, any remaining funds and assets purchased with start-up funds will remain with the university. Unspent funds will be returned to the original funding sources in proportion to their initial contributions.

Procedures

Determining the Amount and Establishing the Designation

Start-up funds must be supported by a detailed expenditure plan developed using the official University of Central Florida template. This plan should include a budget by expenditure category (e.g., travel, summer salary) and a corresponding justification. The plan must be reviewed and approved by the college dean prior to inclusion in the faculty offer letter.

Upon acceptance of the official offer, the college associated with the faculty member's tenure home will create a designation in Workday. The designation must be named using the format: DNxxxxx – Startup – [Last Name], [First Name], and assigned the designation subtype "Startup."

Funding for Year One of the approved spending plan must be allocated no later than the faculty member's official start date.

Budget Plan Modifications

Faculty may request modifications to their approved start-up budget by submitting a request to their college's Finance Business Center. Any reallocation between personnel and non-personnel categories that exceeds 10% of the remaining budget requires approval from the department chair or school director.

Extension Requests

Faculty may request an extension of their start-up fund expiration date in cases of extenuating circumstances, such as delays in lab setup, equipment delivery, or approved personal leave (e.g., medical, or parental leave). Extension requests must be submitted in writing to the college dean at least 60 days prior to the fund expiration date using the Faculty Startup Funding Extension request form.

Upon approval by the dean, the request will be forwarded to the Office of the Provost for final review and authorization. Extensions are not guaranteed and will be evaluated based on the rationale provided and alignment with the original research objectives.