Faculty Start-Up Policies & Procedures

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I. Purpose
Start-up funds are an investment and should result in research/scholarly activity that will generate externally funded grants and/or contracts. This policy provides guidance for determining which expenses may be charged to faculty start-up funds. The purpose of this policy is to ensure sound business practices and timely and accurate recording of expenses.

II. Definition
Start-up funds are monies that are committed to a faculty member at the point of hiring. Start-up funds provide a means to obtain necessary equipment and/or instrumentation, supplies, and other items required to initiate a competitive research/scholarly program that will generate external funds.

Typical costs charged to faculty start-up funds include:
- Equipment
- Remodeling and/or renovations of laboratories
- Student salaries, at the graduate and undergraduate levels
- Travel (both domestic and international)
- Supplies
- Other (participant incentives, consultants, etc.)

All expenses from faculty start-up funds should be procured in accordance with University of Texas at El Paso policies and procedures. Equipment purchased with faculty start-up funds are the property of the University. Any unspent balances, equipment, and other items of value remain with the University upon the departure of a faculty member.

All start-up funds must be fully spent within their expiration date which is generally two years from the faculty member’s hire date. Each faculty member must submit a Research Plan and Two-Year Budget before start-up funds can be made available. Start-up funds are allocated in two year increments with the first year’s allocation available in mid-September.

Any monies allocated in the first year and not spent do not automatically rollover into the second year. The faculty member must request a rollover of these funds into the second year. Requests for rollovers must be submitted through the Dean to the VPAA/Provost Office and Office of the VP for Research by May 31 (90 days prior to our fiscal year end). Second year allocations will be available in mid-September, along with any approved rollover amounts.

Under extraordinary circumstances, extensions beyond the start-up expiration date can be requested for an additional semester or two, not to exceed another year. Requests for extensions must be submitted through the Dean to the
VPAA/Provost Office and Office of the VP for Research by May 31 of the faculty member’s second academic year at UTEP.

III. Funding Sources
Start-ups are funded by a variety of sources, such as Departmental funds, College funds, Office of VP for Research (ORSP) funds and Provost/VPAA funds. Funds provided by the Provost/VPAA include LERR (Library, Equipment, Repair, and Rehabilitation) funds that are limited to capital, research equipment and lab renovations. The funds provided by ORSP are state appropriated funds proportional to the University’s average research expenditures over the last three years. These funds can only be used to enhance the research capacity of the University. Departmental and College funds are typically state funds that must be spent before our fiscal year end of August 31.

IV. Limitations
First year start-ups funds will be made available in mid-September, as long as the Research Plan and Two Year Budget have been submitted and approved.

Faculty start-up funds cannot be used to supplement a faculty member’s 9-month academic-year salary. Additionally the following items may not be purchased with faculty start-up funds:
- Repair and/or renovations of buildings considered routine maintenance
- Cost of warranties and similar services related to the purchase of equipment
- Software maintenance
- Entertainment expenses (non-travel related food or beverage items)
- Any type of personal expenses including personal memberships in professional societies
- Any expenses not directly related to the faculty member’s research/scholarly program (PhD regalia, appreciation luncheons, gifts, etc.)

While international travel and participant incentives can be included in a faculty member’s start-up package, they do require special approvals from the VPAA/Provost, Office of the VP for Research and the College and/or Department because of their unique funding requirements.

V. Roles and Responsibilities
The faculty member is responsible for ensuring that expenses charged to faculty start-up funds are in accordance with this policy. The faculty member should work with his/her departmental administrative support personnel to ensure monthly reconciliations of their start-up budgets are performed and shared with them. Questions may be directed to the College Administrative Officer, Office of the VP for Research and/or the VPAA/Provost Office.

VI. Contacts
The College Administrative Officer (CAO) should be the first point of contact regarding start-up funds. For other questions, please contact:
- Office of VP for Research
  - Stephen Aley, Associate Vice President for Research, saley@utep.edu, ext. 8813 or
  - Julio Martinez; Administrative Services Coordinator; jamartinez21@utep.edu; ext. 6307
- VPAA/Provost Office
  - Elizabeth Flores-Casillas; Associate Provost for Resource Management; lizaf@utep.edu; ext. 7872 or
  - Rosa Isela Orozco, Budget Analyst, riorozco@utep.edu, ext. 6024