



Distinguishing Gifts from Sponsored Awards

Policy Number	4-210.1
Responsible Authority	Vice President for Research
Initiating Authority	Vice President for Research
Effective Date	11/23/2022
Date of Origin	11/23/2022

APPLICABILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

This policy applies to all gift and sponsored award determinations for the University of Central Florida (UCF), direct support organizations (DSO), and auxiliary units, and all faculty, staff, and students involved in the preparation, submission, and processing of proposals and processing of awards for external funding.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Funding derived from sources outside the university is an essential component of the university's financial health necessary to undertake and sustain vital research, scholarship, and education. Due to the varied and sometimes overlapping nature related to the solicitation of external funding, the classification of external funding can often be unclear. The classification of external funding as a gift or as a sponsored award serves as an important step in ensuring the proper stewardship of the funds and compliance with university, state, and federal laws, rules, and regulations. The purpose of this policy is to facilitate the appropriate classification of external funding intended to support sponsored research and provide a review process for instances when the classification remains unclear.

POLICY STATEMENT

The university must manage all funds received in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, and with the specific terms and conditions of any grant, contract, or gift. The university's procedures, oversight, and compliance can differ depending on whether funds received are categorized as a gift or sponsored award. It is the policy of the university that all external support is properly classified, processed, and administered as either a gift or sponsored award per the definitions of this policy and that neither the process by which funds are acquired or the source of the external funding, nor the term "gift" or "grant" will determine how the funds

should be classified and administered. The proper administration of external funding is based on the terms and conditions of the funds received.

Criteria for Classification

The following criteria define how classification of external funds as a gift or sponsored award is determined. However, the presence of all criteria are not necessary and should not prevent an award from being classified as either a gift or sponsored award.

- A gift is made with a primarily philanthropic intent as a voluntary, non-reciprocal transfer of assets to UCF. For funds to be determined as a gift, generally the following criteria are met:
- There are no contractual requirements imposed on UCF, except when a gift is designated for a specific purpose;
- The donor does not expect to receive goods or services in return for the gift other than recognition;
- The award is irrevocable, with or without an expectation by the donor of the timing of expenditures; and
- There is no formal required fiscal accountability beyond those required as part of good stewardship.

A sponsored award in contrast to a gift, will be considered a sponsored project agreement if the following criteria are met and will be administered consistent with the university's policies and procedures for sponsored programs:

- The project commits UCF to a specific line of scholarly or scientific inquiry, typically documented by a statement of work or research plan;
- The project requires a specific commitment of personnel effort, deliverables, or milestones;
- Project activities are budgeted, and the award includes conditions for fiscal reports, audits, or invoicing;
- The project may require that unexpended funds be returned to the sponsor at the end of the project period; and
- The agreement provides for the disposition of either tangible property or intangible property, which may result from the project.

Administration of Gifts or Sponsored Awards

The Office of Research (OR) and the University of Central Florida Research Foundation (UCF RF) are authorized to negotiate, enter into, and execute sponsored research contracts; to solicit and accept research grants and donations; and to fix and collect fees, other Gifts from Sponsored Awards 3 4-210.1 Distinguishing payments and donations that may accrue from sponsored research awards (F.S.1004.22(3),UCF Regulation 2.027), UCF Policy 2-107, and UCF Policy 4-214.

The University of Central Florida Foundation (UCF Foundation) is authorized to supervise and manage all fund-raising activities, fund-raising programs, development employees, and the solicitation and stewardship of gifts (UCF Policy 2-202).

While OR, UCF RF, and the UCF Foundation are all engaged in solicitation efforts and the acceptance of payments and donations on behalf of the university, all are expected to be

responsible for following the procedures required by the university when classifying, accepting and administering funds solicited. Funds solicited by the UCF Foundation that are classified per this policy as a sponsored award will be immediately transferred to OR or UCF RF for acceptance and administration as appropriate.

DEFINITIONS

Commercialization. The process by which a new product or service is introduced into the general market resulting from efforts through technology transfer, venture accelerators, business incubation, and other leading innovative programs supporting entrepreneurial efforts of students and faculty, as well as the local ecosystem.

Development. The systematic use of knowledge and understanding gained from research directed toward the production of useful materials, devices, systems, or methods, including design and development of prototypes and processes.

Gift. A voluntary, non-reciprocal transfer of money or property by a donor, for the charitable purpose designated by the donor. The donor does not expect anything of value in return other than recognition and must release control over the gift. Such gifts may include cash, securities, property, bequests, and gifts-in-kind.

Research. A systematic study directed toward fuller scientific knowledge or understanding of the subject studied. Research includes all research activities, both basic and applied, and all development activities, including the training of individuals in research techniques where such activities utilize the same facilities as other research and development activities, broadly interpreted as all forms of scientific inquiry, creative effort, and scholarly activity.

Sponsored Award. External funding received for the purpose of supporting sponsored research.

Sponsored Research. Research executed by university employees using any university space, facilities, materials, equipment, or property which is financed by contract payments, grants or gifts from any source (UCF Regulation UCF-2.027). Sponsored Research supports research and development, but it also includes instruction, training, professional development, curriculum development, community and public service projects, and Commercialization. Sponsored Research funding instruments also includes cooperative agreement, consortium agreement, and donation.

PROCEDURES

The sponsored research award terms and conditions and the gift terms in conjunction with this policy will determine the classification of external funds received as either a gift or sponsored award. The indirect cost recovery rate will not be the basis for the appropriate classification. Gift funds used for research and development purposes must be assigned to the UCF RF for compliance review, administrative oversight, and proper fiscal treatment and monitoring. When the classification of a gift or sponsored award is not clear, the designated representatives of OR, UCF RF, and UCF Foundation will coordinate, prior to submission of any proposal, to reach a determination as to whether the external funding is a gift or a sponsored research award. In cases of uncertainty or dispute about the appropriate classification of external funds received, the UCF Office of the General Counsel will be the final arbiter. Guidance on classifying external funding received is provided in Table 1. Gift vs Sponsored Award Quick Reference.

RELATED INFORMATION or DOCUMENTS

[UCF Regulation 2.207 Sponsored Research](#)

[UCF Policy 4-214 Proposal Acceptance of Sponsored Awards for Research and Development](#)

[UCF Policy 2-107 Contract Signature Authority](#)

[UCF Policy 2-202 UCF Foundation Donor Solicitation and Recognition](#)

[Florida Statute Title XLVIII, Chapter 1004.22 Divisions of sponsored research at state universities.](#)

[Florida Statute Title XLVIII, Chapter 1004.28 Direct-support organizations; use of property; board of directors; activities, audit; facilities.](#)

[Gift vs Sponsored Award Quick Reference](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions: Gift vs Sponsored Award](#)

[Memorandum of Understanding between UCF RF and UCF Foundation](#)

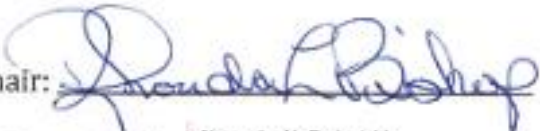
CONTACTS

University of Central Florida, Office of Research, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando FL 32826, phone (407) 823-3778.

POLICY APPROVAL
(For use by the Office of the President)

Policy Number: 4-210.1

Initiating Authority:  Digitally signed by
Winston V. Schoenfeld
Date: 2022.11.14
10:59:00 -05'00' Date: 11/14/2022

University Policies and
Procedures Committee Chair:  Date: 11/20/22

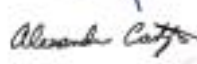
President or Designee:  Digitally signed by
Alexander N. Cartwright
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-05'00' Date: 11/23/2022

Table 1. Policy on Distinguishing Gifts vs Sponsored Award

Quick Reference Summary

The purpose of this document is to assist in distinguishing a gift from a sponsored activity. The table highlights general characteristics of these two funding categories.

	Gift	Sponsored Award
Benefit received by funder from activities funded	Serves philanthropic or personal interest of funder, does not serve the primary business purpose of the funder; received without any expectation of or receipt of direct economic benefit	Serves the primary business or mission interest of the funder, whose basic activities are integrally related to the research plan; benefit received
Specificity of intent of funder	Donor intends the funds to be a charitable gift, as reflected by the absence of quid pro quo; the gift should be used for the substantial benefit of the university; conditions stipulated should be reasonable and serve to direct the funds to areas such as infrastructure, operations, scholarship, endowments	Funder states programmatic objectives to be achieved; typically the result of an outcome driven proposal; generally for research but may be for instruction, public service, training, or other sponsored program activity; defined objectives, strategies, work plans, and/or deliverables
Value exchanged	Funder essentially receives no personal or institutional value in return for the funds given, other than intellectual satisfaction that the activities have been undertaken; no deliverable for work performed or activities accomplished	Funder expects and receives implementation of and/or report of university's funded activities; funder's own mission and/or research agenda is advanced through the university's funded activities; deliverable provided; intellectual property ownership rights
Scope of work	More generally defined; typically no time frame or period of performance. No involvement of human or animal subjects, hazardous materials, proprietary materials, data rights or subcontracts to third parties.	More specifically defined with a clear period of performance; project may involve use of human subjects (IRB) and/or animal subjects (IACUC), hazardous materials; proprietary materials; data

		rights; subcontract efforts to a third party
Persons performing funded activities	Often left to the discretion of the university, college, research center, program or one named individual	Key personnel are named in the proposal/scope of work; changes to key personnel require pre-approval from funder; funded based on the technical expertise of the key personnel; export control restrictions
Budget specificity and restrictions	Budget is general in nature and terms; funder pre-approvals are not required as long as funds are used for donors intended purpose	Budgets are specific; may require variances to be pre-approved by the funder; deems certain costs as unallowable; effort reporting
Progress reports	May be required but are most often general in nature and content	Required, must outline progress toward the specific outcomes/scope of work
Terms of funding	Less detailed	Often detailed; use of the funds stated; may include budgetary restrictions or prior approval requirements; payment may be contingent upon programmatic accomplishments or other detailed reporting
Accountability for use of funds	More moral than legal; no penalties for failing to use the funds	May require fiscal reporting; invoice requirements; return of unallowable expenses; audit requirements; oversight for conflict of interest
Ability of funder to recoup funds	Funds are awarded irrevocably	Establishes the ability to terminate the funding agreement and/or demand repayment of funds if scope of work has not been completed; return of unspent funds upon termination and/or expiration of agreement; return of unallowable expenses
Method of documentation	Check; letter of intent; gift agreement	Binding, typically signed by both parties
Funding Source	Individuals Non-Profit Organizations Corporations Corporate Foundations Family or individual Foundations	Government Agencies Non-Profit Organizations Foundations Corporations Corporate Foundations State Agencies

		Local/County Government Agencies Foreign Entities
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Frequently Asked Questions:

Policy on Distinguishing Gifts vs Sponsored Award

Does the inclusion (or exclusion) of indirect cost factor into determining whether external funds represent a Gift or Sponsored Award?

No. Whether external funds allow for or prohibit indirect costs does not affect the classification of whether those funds represent a gift or sponsored award.

Moreover, the classification of funds as a gifts or sponsored award is dependent on the terms and conditions accompanying the funding. The amount of indirect costs or the amount set aside for management fees does not have any bearing on this classification. The determination should rest only on the whether the various elements of the funding indicate that the funding is a gift or sponsored award, according to university policy.

Is it true that a Foundation award is not a Sponsored Award?

No. Foundations issue grants that may have reporting, deliverable, or financial requirements. These are considered sponsored projects. However, the university maintains special relationships with foundations and trusts and both UCF OR and the UCF Foundation may be involved in the contract, proposal and reporting processes. The OR and UCF Foundation work cooperatively on many foundation projects. Even if the proposal is developed and processed with the assistance of the UCF Foundation, if the award has any of the classifications of a sponsored award as previously outlined, the award will be processed through the UCF OR.

Is it true that if the sponsor says the award is a donation then it is processed as a gift?

No. Many sponsors use the term donation or gift or similar terms when making an award. The determination as to whether or not the award is a gift or a sponsored award is the overall status of the previously described classifications, restrictions, intents, activities, reporting requirements, etc., not the use of a specific term in an award letter.

How can it be a gift if reporting is required?

Reporting is an important aspect of all award types. Donors are entitled to know that their gift was spent for the intended purpose. The more detailed the reporting, both in terms of specificity and frequency, the more likely the award is not a gift, and instead a sponsored award. However, it is important to remember that reporting requirements alone are not determinative of the classification of external funds as a gift or sponsored award.

Is there a dollar threshold?

No. If external funding is a sponsored award, it must go through the OR regardless of its dollar value.

