

**SUNY Potsdam  
Administrative Unit  
Assessment Summary Form**

**Administrative Unit: Research and Sponsored Programs    Unit Contact Name: Jack McGuire, Ph.D.**

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**Assessment Year: 2022-2023**

**PURPOSE**

This annual assessment summary form provides the opportunity for units to follow-up on their assessment plans, track progress toward goals, and to highlight actions taken to improve processes and/or efficiencies in functioning that lead to outcomes that benefits students, staff, or the college. These could be process changes or improvements in efficiency, skill level of staff, opportunities for the college, or other aspects over which the unit has a certain amount of control.

**UNIT MISSION STATEMENT**

The Research and Sponsored Programs Office [RSPO] is committed to contributing to the enrichment of the College faculty, staff, and student population by offering assistance to those seeking outside funding to support research and creative endeavors. RSPO provides faculty development events related to sponsored programs. The Office prepares external grant proposals and administers these awards. Additionally, the RSPO provides research compliance services for faculty, staff, and students.

**SECTION 1: ASSESSMENT PLAN FOLLOW-UP**

A key component of the continuous improvement assessment process is regularly following up on [your assessment plan](#). Please review your plan and select one-third of your unit goals, along with related desired outcomes and objectives to report on the progress made.

**Selected Goal**

**Goal #1**

Contribute to the financial well-being and stability of the college and Research Foundation by assisting faculty and staff secure awards which will increase the volume of awards and dollar amounts under management.

**Desired Outcomes/Objectives**

- a. Increase the number of faculty and program directors that submit high-quality applications for sponsored programs/ grants.
- b. Increase the total dollars under management by the RF/ RSPO.
- c. Alter the portfolio under management from predominately state sources to federal sources.
- d. Increase indirect costs recovered from all sponsored awards.

**Related Targets/Measures**

- a. Count the number of applications submitted across years/between years. Target is a 10% increase.
- b. Compare across years the dollar amounts under management (committed funds) by the Research Foundation (RF). Target is a 5% increase.
- c. Compare current grant portfolio (fed, fed flow through, & non-fed) with future year's portfolios. Target is a 5% increase.
- d. Compare current F&A recovery with future year's F&A recovery. Target is a 10% increase.

Describe the progress made toward the selected goal and the related desired outcomes and objectives. Be sure to include steps taken and any information/data collected and results.

- a. Number of applications for funding submitted:

2021/22 **[15]**

2022/23 **[32]**

Target was a 10% increase. Submitted proposals were more than doubled.

- b. Dollars under management (committed funds) by the Research Foundation (RF):

FY 2021/22 [\$3,230,466]

FY 2022/23 [\$3,876,806].

Target increase was 5 %, this demonstrates an 8.3% increase.

- c. Grant portfolio expenditures by: \$federal, \$fed flow though, \$non-federal.

FY 2021/22: \$733,500 (fed), \$1,169,900 (fed flow through), \$1,013,000 (non-fed) (total \$2,916,400) [fed: total = 33.6%]

FY 2022/23: \$960,000 (fed), \$1,252,000 (fed flow through), \$1,215,000 (non-fed) (total \$3,427,900) [fed: total = 38.9%]

Target was a 5% increase in federal grant dollars versus other sponsored sources. This goal was achieved.

- d. F&A recovery; FY 2021/22 [\$270,940]

FY 2022/23 [\$294,072]

Target goal was a 10% increase. A 9.21% increase was achieved, just missing the target.

In all, the RSPO met or exceeded its targets (or nearly so). To make these gains we regularly worked with prospective and current PIs to complete and submit high quality proposals for external funding. While the number of applications completed and submitted for funding is still modest (32), the RSPO offers personalized assistance to all prospective PIs and believes this assistance coupled with other initiatives will increase the number of external grants sought in the years to come. We initiated a new grant writing course release program to increase the number and quality of applications, but it has not been used to the degree expected. Changes in how this program operates will be made to stimulate the number of grant submissions.

Coming out of COVID19 grant slowdown it was expected that grant activity would increase, the \$ under management (committed funds) by the Research Foundation would increase, and this is what happened. The campus's active researchers have ramped-up in their research and some newer faculty are also increasing their grant seeking; in all this accounts for the increase in proposals submitted and awarded.

The portfolio of awards to the campus has also improved (away from non-federal to federal awards). Federal awards are often more competitive but also do not typically cap F&A associated with performing research. (F&A costs are overhead costs associated with operating a university but are not built into the costs of grant proposals but include costs for maintaining IT infrastructure, security, heat, electric, and etc.). The RSPO works with individual PIs to seek and submit proposals for federal awards, but this may take years to achieve, where the successful federal award is won because the PI has received smaller non-federal awards, thereby demonstrating a strong research agenda.

Indirect cost recovery (IDC or F&A recovery) has improved by 9.21%; the RSPO just missed the 10% target. Recovering F&A costs is important because these funds can be reallocated to the campus. Our improved IDC recovery is in part driven by the modest increase in federal awards (from \$733K to \$960k). F&A recovery has also improved because of RSPO & RF actions to renegotiate how we calculate our F&A costs. See section 2.

**Based on the assessment data and information shared above, what planned actions were or will be taken as a result?**

The most effective means to improve the financial stability of the campus for the RSPO is to increase the number of federal grant proposals submitted for consideration and funded. To do this the Office will conduct more outreach efforts to increase awareness and also stimulate interest in grantsmanship. This will include monthly workshops on grant seeking, grant writing, PI collaboration, and grant budgeting. Additionally, the Office will alter the current seed grant programs (i.e. Research and Creative Endeavors, Grant Writing Course Release program, etc.) to stimulate more activity.

**SECTION 2: ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY**

Please use this space to share an example from this past year when you used assessment and data to plan and/or take action. Be sure to include any available information relating to the results and impact. Your example for this section does not need to be directly tied to your previously submitted administrative unit assessment plan.

To increase the F&A recovery to the campus, the RSPO director worked with the RF to renegotiate our federally negotiated indirect cost rates (i.e. on an off campus). This involved an audit of all campus expenditures and working with representatives from the USDHHS. Through this process RF auditors estimated that in any given year, using the outdated formula, we were not recovering tens of thousands of dollars in indirect costs.

In prior years the RSPO's formula for F&A recovery was based solely on salary and wages. In effect, this formula left dollars unrecovered or on the table. With the assistance of the RF, the RSPO switched to a formula that considers more of the direct costs in a proposal (i.e. MTDC- modified total direct costs) and has helped increase the dollars our campus recovers in F&A costs. Additionally, the RSPO has held a firm line in adhering to our federally negotiated rates (59% on campus & 19.3% off-campus) and not lowering them, which had been a common practice in past years.