

The Texas A&M University System

Research Administration Shared Services

Development and Implementation Steering Committee

**Proposed Plan and Model
for the**

Office of Sponsored Research Services

The Texas A&M University System

Proposed Plan and Model for the Office of Sponsored Research Services (OSRS)

March 21, 2011

*Prepared by the
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Executive Summary to The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents

Key Process Steps, Recommendations, Impacts, and Next Steps in the Development of the Texas A&M University System Research Administration Shared Services Implementation Plan

The following summarizes some key process steps that followed the meeting of the Board of Regents in February 2011, and resultant key recommendations, impacts, and next steps identified by the Research Administration Shared Services Development and Implementation Steering Committee (RASS DISC) in the proposed plan for a new shared service entity, The Texas A&M University System Office of Sponsored Research Services.

Key Process Steps (February 4-March 21, 2011)

- Following the meeting of the Board of Regents in February 2011, Chancellor Michael D. McKinney charged Dr. Jeffrey R. Seemann, vice president for research at Texas A&M University and the A&M System chief research officer (CRO), to take the lead and develop an implementation plan for system-wide research administration shared services.
- Dr. Seemann established the RASS DISC to bring together the expertise and guidance of a large network of faculty, principal investigators (PIs), and administrators representing system members and the Texas A&M Research Foundation (RF).
- Members of the RASS DISC met weekly and directly involved CEOs, PIs, faculty groups, and research administration personnel from throughout the A&M System to keep the planning process open, engaged, and transparent. More than a dozen working groups were formed to contribute to this process and deepen discussions on specific areas.
- A web page was created (<http://www.tamus.edu/offices/cro/activities/>) to share information and updates with the research community and ensure transparency on the planning process.

- Key topics addressed in the RASS DISC's implementation planning included finance/human resources, information technology, legal matters, funding and governance, best practices, governmental issues, and Maestro implementation (a software platform under development).

Key Recommendations

- The RASS DISC recommends the creation of a single, system-based Office of Sponsored Research Services (OSRS) to manage both pre- and post-award functions of sponsored research for all system members.
- The transition of all sponsored research administration into OSRS will take place in two phases. Phase I will focus on Brazos County-based system members who conduct research, and Phase II will focus on system universities outside Brazos County.
- The OSRS will initially serve and be staffed by personnel from Brazos County-based research administration offices (i.e., Texas A&M University, Texas AgriLife Research, Texas Engineering Experiment Station, Texas Transportation Institute, The Texas A&M Health Science Center, and the RF).
- The RF will operate as an independent 501(c)(3) within the OSRS and continue to play an important role in providing research administrative services to system members. The RF councilors will be engaged with the Office of Technology Commercialization and Business Development.
- The OSRS will perform functions such as proposal services, contract services, project administration, etc.; receive operational funding based on an equitable assessment to system members; be led by a director who reports to the A&M System CRO; receive oversight/input from system members and from PIs; and report and benchmark on OSRS effectiveness.

- The RASS DISC expects the OSRS to be developed, staffed, and fully operational by September 2011.

Key Impacts

- By FY 2012, formation of the OSRS will result in a reduction in costs for research administration of approximately \$1.7 million (10 percent) and a 50 percent increase in efficiency.
- Efficiency gains will also result in a cost avoidance of \$5 million per year that would have been required to continue to manage \$446 million of new sponsored research at the lower efficiency.
- The OSRS's ongoing development and refinement of best practices for research grants and contracts management, along with full adoption of the Maestro system, will likely result in additional cost savings and efficiencies in future years, as well as increased competitiveness for system member PIs.
- The creation of the OSRS will enhance sponsored research services by applying best practices under a common management and training function,

housed at a central location. Optimal distribution of workloads to research administration personnel also will be more easily accomplished through greater centralization.

- The creation and full implementation of OSRS will position all system members for the growth of their research enterprises.

Key Next Steps

- Important next steps include developing common position descriptions and other relevant human resources (HR) material; finalizing details relating to office space, best practices, funding models, intra-system agreements, and governance; defining responsibilities of the OSRS director and hiring a director or interim director; moving personnel from existing research administration offices to the new OSRS office; and updating existing accounting systems to address key needs (e.g., connections with Maestro on payroll and purchasing).

Background/Underlying Principles/Goals

Background

The process of developing a plan and model for research administration shared services was initiated by a February 4, 2011, memorandum from Chancellor Michael D. McKinney to The Texas A&M University System chief executive officers (CEOs), chief academic officers (CAOs), and chief research officers (CROs). In this letter, Chancellor McKinney requested an implementation plan for a research administration shared services entity—an entity that would support all system members—prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Regents in March 2011.

Dr. McKinney asked Dr. Jeffrey R. Seemann, vice president for research at Texas A&M University, to lead this effort in his additional new capacity as chief research officer (CRO) of The Texas A&M University System. To assist in the leadership of this initiative, Dr. Seemann established the Research Administration Shared Services Development and Implementation Steering Committee (RASS DISC) to bring together the expertise and guidance of a large network of faculty, principal investigators, and administrators representing all system members and the Texas A&M Research Foundation (RF). A complete list of the RASS DISC and working group members is included as Appendix 1.

This plan, developed with input from all of the RASS DISC members and the working groups, includes: 1) a model for establishing a research administration shared services entity; 2) an implementation plan; 3) a proposed timeline for achieving implementation for all system members; and 4) an initial estimate of cost reductions.

Underlying Principles for the Proposed Plan

The plan is based on the guiding principles listed below, as stated by the Chancellor in his memorandum of February 4, 2011:

- All actions must position the system members and our researchers for future research growth,

- A high level of customer service and quality of services for our researchers is a priority,
- All cost savings identified and generated will remain in the respective research units for more direct investment into the growth of the research enterprise, and
- Indirect cost returns will continue to be retained by the system members and administered according to current practices.

In addition to these principles, the RASS DISC worked to define additional principles critical to the long-term success of the new organization. These additional principles include:

- As changes to research administration are being implemented, steps will be taken to ensure there are no disruptions to the services provided to researchers.
- The integrity of the system member's financial accounting data and timely and accurate reporting will be preserved to assure legislative funding and reporting obligations.
- Processes to identify and mitigate risks will be established to manage risks appropriately in the new shared service structure. Responsibility for risks will be designated to the system members.
- Services brought under the new organization will be performed using the most flexible and responsive processes that minimize locally imposed rules or regulations on sponsored contracts and grants.
- There is a commitment to service measurement and evaluation, and an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders as to quality of services.

Goals: Enhanced Services, Cost Savings, Improved Efficiencies, and Research Growth

While the existing research administration offices across the A&M System continue to manage contracts and grants capably and thoroughly, one of the RASS DISC's overarching goals centered on developing a more robust and efficient system that will scale to facilitate a larger and even more successful research enterprise. Through the formation of the new research administration entity for the Texas A&M System, called the Office of Sponsored Research Services (OSRS), numerous changes will help create an organization that provides researchers with enhanced services in a cost-efficient and effective manner. For example, the placement of all pre- and post-award staff at a single location and under common management will facilitate the implementation of best practices and training. Efficiencies also will be gained through economies of scale by necessitating fewer resources (e.g., office space and equipment) to manage larger volumes of sponsored research. Namely, a lesser number of resources will be needed for select allied support services (commonly known as "back office") functions currently supporting multiple research administration offices. Also, closely integrating the RF services into the A&M System will reduce the cost and inefficiencies of interfacing with system members for payroll, reporting, etc.

As the Texas A&M System moves forward with the implementation of the new Research Management Information System EPIK-Maestro (Maestro), additional cost-savings and efficiencies will be gained. Maestro will help to ensure the use of common procedures and the application of best practices to all research administration services. In addition, Maestro is a scalable program developed to manage the future growth of research.

As the changes discussed above become phased-in over the next three years, the RASS DISC anticipates cost reductions in research administration, while maintaining a high level of customer service. At this time, it is difficult to precisely determine the full magnitude of the cost reductions, but RASS DISC estimates that by the end of FY 2012 the changes implemented at OSRS will result in reducing annual research administration personnel costs by \$1.7 million (approximately 10 percent). However, during that period research expenditures will increase such

that the "efficiency" will go up by 50 percent; i.e., the amount of research administered per full time equivalent employee (FTE) will increase from \$1.6 million in FY 2009 to \$2.4 million per FTE by the end of FY 2012. This efficiency gain can also be viewed as cost avoidance, i.e., if the A&M System had done nothing differently (and all other things remained equal), an annual need would have arisen for an additional \$5 million to continue to manage \$446 million of sponsored research.

This cost reduction is expected to be realized primarily through more efficient utilization of research administration personnel. The RASS DISC anticipates that the overall number of FTEs within OSRS will be less than the number of FTEs currently allocated to research administration in the existing offices. However, the mix of skills within OSRS may be different than the current composition of FTEs allocated to research administration. For example, more pre- and post-award staff will likely be needed to meet customer service expectations, while the need for allied support services staff will go down. The RASS DISC continues to work on developing a definition of the specific allied support services that should be included within OSRS versus at the system member.

Resources are scarce for all system members. However, through the creation of the new research administration entity, system members will realize improvements to research administration and, most importantly, cost-savings that will be reinvested in the research enterprise to facilitate the research growth of every system member.

The Transitioning Process

The implementation of this plan is divided into two phases.

Phase I. In this phase the OSRS will provide contracts and grants research administration services to those system members based in Brazos County that have sponsored research activity—i.e., Texas A&M University, Texas AgriLife Research, Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES), Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), and The Texas A&M Health Science Center (TAMHSC)—and will encompass activities currently being conducted by the RF for these and other system members. Additionally, any research administration services being provided by a Brazos County-based system member or the RF to system

universities or departments outside of Brazos County will also be included in this phase (e.g., select services to Prairie View A&M University and Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi).

Section 2.1(c)(1) of System Regulation 15.01.01 defines “sponsored research” as “all research and development activities that are externally sponsored by federal and non-federal agencies and organizations.” As an initial definition, the RASS DISC proposes that OSRS will manage activities with the following characteristics:

- a sponsored research agreement,
- an identified principal investigator, and
- project deliverables.

Any exception to sponsored research grants or contracts being administered within OSRS (e.g., if there are unique sponsor requirements or when it is in the best interest of the system member) must be requested by a system member CEO, with a recommendation from the A&M System CRO, and approved by the Chancellor. Research grants and contracts presently managed by the RF will continue to be managed by the RF until a transition can be made, if appropriate. The most common transition of existing projects to the OSRS will occur as projects reach their renewal date, whereupon a request could be made to the sponsor for permission to transfer the project to the OSRS. Organizations that have other external sponsored activity (i.e., not defined as sponsored research) may use the OSRS, but it will not be a requirement.

For the branch campuses of Texas A&M University—Texas A&M University at Galveston and Texas A&M at Qatar—consideration will be given to include their research activity within OSRS and to assure the practices and procedures established for these entities meet their respective needs. For example, a review of the existing contractual relationship with the Qatar Foundation needs to occur to ensure that the terms of the contract are not violated. Although these services are currently being provided by entities based in Brazos County, best practices will be reviewed with an emphasis as to their effect on non-Brazos County located activities.

Phase II: Many of the interfaces described throughout this document concentrate on the working

relationships between the OSRS and Phase I entities. Acknowledging that the use of technology and enhanced grant management systems has, for the most part, significantly reduced the need for face-to-face meetings, questions remain about the overall effect of distance on the shared service initiative, especially as it pertains to the other system universities outside Brazos County (“other universities”). The RASS DISC anticipates a continued need for common management and best practices in Phase II; but once the respective needs of the other universities have been more clearly identified, certain phased components may require adjustment with regard to their integration. The CEOs, CROs, and faculty at other universities will have an integral role in identifying those needs. In addition, the implementation of research administration shared services at other universities will necessitate that each university be seen as a distinct entity both in terms of its stage of research development and its research administration capabilities and needs. Implementation and governance of OSRS will therefore be designed so that other universities can be treated separately. For this to happen, the OSRS must be sufficiently robust and flexible to be able to accommodate differences among institutions, and to adjust services as other universities reach more mature stages of research.

More will become known following the implementation of the new OSRS for Phase I. Therefore, the proposed plan and model may be adjusted or altered in Phase II. See Appendix 6 for further comment from the RASS DISC System University Campus Issues Working Group.

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Organizational Model and Governance

The Office of Sponsored Research Services

Research administration shared services for the Texas A&M System will be performed by the OSRS, which will act as a Texas A&M System office. A major goal for the OSRS will be to provide quality services to the research community, while maintaining a responsive and cost-effective administrative environment. In order to accomplish this, a governance structure will be established that will assure that both of these objectives are met.

Although OSRS will act as a system entity, contracts and grants will continue to be in the name of the legal entity, i.e., the system member or RF, and expenditures will remain on the respective system member or RF financials. The RF, as a 501(c)(3) within the A&M System (see below), will exist within the OSRS.

Governance: Processes and procedures for the services provided by the OSRS will be established using best practices. In order to assure that OSRS delivers the best quality of service, the office's processes, procedures, and services will be responsive to system member needs, and the best practices will evolve according to changes in the research administration environment. Furthermore, the governance structure for the OSRS will incorporate oversight and input from major users of its services. Additionally, since sponsored research administration involves multiple aspects of every system member's administration and requires decision-making and risk analysis in many areas peripheral to the OSRS (e.g., strategic, legal, financial, personnel-related, performance, compliance, reputational, etc.), stakeholders in all relevant areas will be represented on certain oversight committees for the OSRS.

Elements of the proposed organizational structure (Figure 1) will include the following:

- 1) All OSRS staff will report to a director responsible for the overall management of operations.
- 2) The OSRS director will report to the A&M System CRO.
- 3) All sponsored research pre-award and post-award staff currently assigned to provide services

to a system member will initially have primary responsibilities to that system member to ensure the required coordination and approvals of the system member are in place.

- 4) An OSRS Oversight Committee, comprised of system member representatives, will help oversee the functioning of research administration practices.
- 5) A Council of the System Member Chief Research Officers will provide direct advice to the A&M System CRO and act as a liaison to system CEOs for the broader research policy and topics, including major issues in sponsored research administration. This council will have direct input on the functioning and operations of the OSRS.

OSRS Administration: The director of the OSRS will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the office, including personnel administration (e.g., hiring, promotion, retention, dismissal, etc.), organizational assignments, business administration, capacity sharing, implementation of new policies or procedures, facilities, and other management aspects of the OSRS operation. The director of the OSRS shall serve as liaison to the system member CROs or designated research administrative official. The director of the OSRS will receive direction and counsel from the System Member OSRS Oversight Committee on matters concerning research administration in order to address issues collaboratively and find new solutions to challenges as they occur. Services to be provided by the OSRS include: proposal administration, contract negotiation and administration, project accounting, purchasing, travel reimbursement services, sponsored billings, voucher auditing, and project reporting (Figure 2). Strategic proposal development will remain a system member function.

System Member and Other System Interfaces: There are many interfaces and approvals that must be coordinated between the OSRS and a system member in the life of an externally sponsored project. Examples of approvals provided by a system member may include: approval of proposals (workloads, facility use, personnel, budgeting); cost sharing/

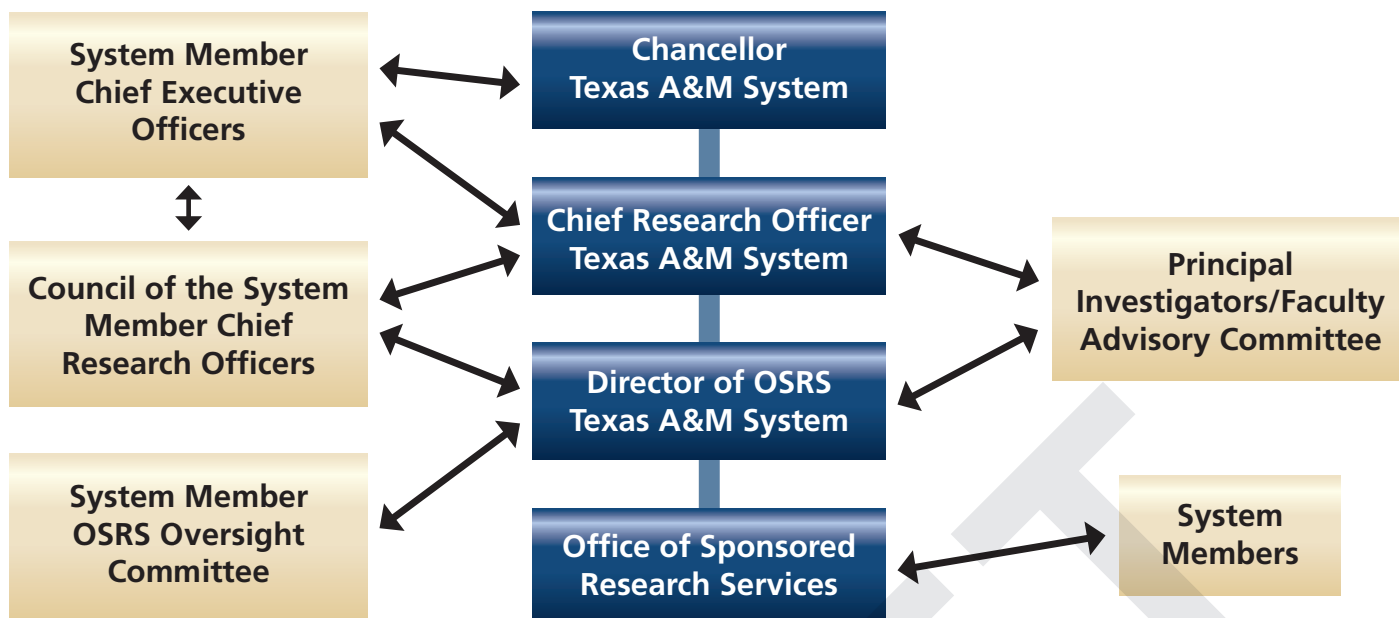


Figure 1: Proposed Governance of the OSRS

matching; facilities and administrative (F&A) rates; classifications; reductions; waivers; voluntary cost sharing; intellectual property arrangements; limited submissions; institutional eligibility; high risks terms and conditions (publication restrictions, large fixed price contracts, etc.); business decisions on contractual risks; salary administration and payroll for individuals working on sponsored projects; financing of interim funding and expenditure overruns; conflict of interest; nepotism; scientific misconduct; fixed price balances; and other system member rules. The OSRS will interface with system members with regard to risk identification and mitigation.

Other major interfaces peripheral to the OSRS shared services functions must be in place between A&M System offices such as the Office of General Counsel and the Office of Technology Commercialization and Business Development, as well as coordination with system members on research compliance issues. Due to the fact that sponsored research administration spans a large spectrum of decision-making, the interface and the working relationship between the OSRS and the system members and other system offices must be effective in order to accomplish the goals for research administration. For example, it may be of value for the Office of General Counsel to assign one or more attorneys to the OSRS on a full-time basis to ensure adequate customer service on legal matters.

System Member OSRS Oversight Committee: An OSRS Oversight Committee will provide direct input to the OSRS director and the A&M System CRO in the determination of administrative policies, processes, best practices, and risk management issues. The membership of this committee will be representative of system members participating in the OSRS. Additionally, ex officio membership from A&M System offices may be included.

Council of System Member Chief Research Officers: System member CROs will serve as advisors to the A&M System CRO on research administration issues and will have direct input on the OSRS. Although the scope of the Council of the System Member CROs is much broader than research administration, issues of major concern or impact will be brought to the council by the A&M System CRO, often with recommendations from the System Member OSRS Oversight Committee and/or the director of the OSRS.

Principal Investigators/Faculty Advisory Committee: This committee will represent the interests/concerns of the system-wide research community in the area of sponsored research administration. They will serve as advisors to the A&M System CRO and to the director of OSRS. The committee will provide feedback to the OSRS, for example, on service levels and best practices. The membership of this committee will be representative of system members participating in the OSRS.

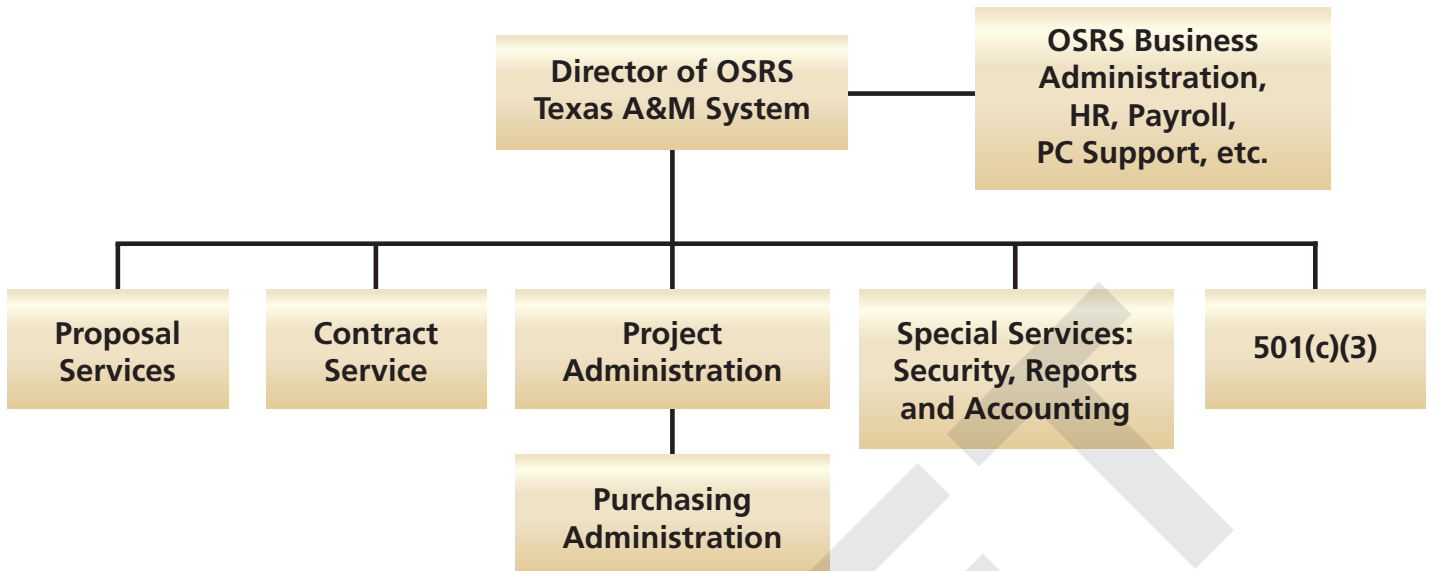


Figure 2: OSRS Operations

OSRS Employees

In Phase I, the staffing of the OSRS will likely be comprised of pre-award, post-award, and allied support services staff (as determined during implementation) currently assigned to the system members or others. The nature of the staff arrangements for other A&M System universities (Phase II) remains to be determined.

While all OSRS employees will be working directly for the A&M System office, their salaries, wages, and fringe benefits could be, for example, budgeted and paid on a revolving income account from the fees/assessments on system members for OSRS services; or, if this model adversely affects the system member, they could be paid directly by the system members for which they are providing services. In either case, the administrative assignment will remain with the Texas A&M System office, and their reporting, supervision, evaluation, and salary adjustment will remain within the OSRS. Any exceptions must be requested by a system member CEO, with a recommendation from the A&M System CRO, and approved by the Chancellor.

Although there are some advantages in a decentralized structure, it was determined that there are more benefits in co-locating all the OSRS employees at

a central location where training, oversight, and redistribution of workload can be more easily accomplished. Any exception to OSRS employees not being located centrally must be requested by a system member CEO, with a recommendation from the A&M System CRO, and approved by the Chancellor. Employees who support the 501(c)(3) corporation will also be housed at the central OSRS location.

Under a single OSRS management structure, research administration personnel will be managed to maximize equity in pay and promotion; to implement common job descriptions for like positions; to enhance and coordinate training; and to ensure evaluations based on common criteria. Due to the size of the OSRS, professional career ladders may provide personnel more opportunities for professional growth and development.

As stated above, whenever possible, employees already serving selected colleges or system members will initially continue to support the researchers in those areas. OSRS personnel will initially be assigned to the system member where they have the most experience with the researchers, the post-award system, and respective system member rules and requirements. However, assignments may change permanently or temporarily to adjust workloads and ensure workload parity. Based on existing system member experiences

and best practices, metrics will be used to optimally assign workload to OSRS staff, such as the number of proposals or contracts administered.

An OSRS Job Audit Committee, comprised of a group of A&M System human resources (HR) professionals, has been established to conduct job analyses of system member staff assigned to the OSRS. They will establish procedures for the job analyses and standards to determine job descriptions and pay ranges.

Transition of RF Employees to State Employment

There are several legal-, financial-, and human resource-type issues that will be addressed in considering the transfer of RF employees to the OSRS, including managing fringe benefits and deciding if employees near retirement may continue to be employed by the RF while working within OSRS.

Phasing and Transition – How to Implement the Plan

The timing of key events associated with the formation of the OSRS is shown in Appendix 2. Key items are listed below:

April 2011: The RASS DISC will begin planning for the transition to a fully consolidated model for research administration on or around April 1, 2011. A subgroup of the RASS DISC will be given the task of drafting a consolidated procedure manual for the OSRS that consists of the best practices identified by faculty in the area of investigator services and by staff in the area of grants administration. The target date for the completion of this manual is July 2011; this document will be updated on a regular basis as services are enhanced.

The RASS DISC will evaluate space needs and availability in April and make recommendations by May 2011. The RASS DISC will enumerate responsibilities of the OSRS director in early April 2011, with the goal of having a completed position description for circulation to stakeholders by mid-April. An interim director for the OSRS may be named during the implementation phase of this plan. Also in April, the RASS DISC will design the functional areas of expertise that will exist within OSRS (e.g., National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, United States Department of Agriculture, Transportation, etc.) and define the allied support services accounting requirements.

Creation of standardized job descriptions for all of the positions within the OSRS will begin in April. The RASS DISC will also begin the analyses of OSRS staffing needs, accounting for personnel from existing system member research administration offices. Staffing needs should be determined by the middle of May. RASS DISC will resolve details for transferring RF employees into OSRS positions. Finally, the legal team will begin to draft the appropriate documentation to facilitate the new OSRS (e.g., agreements between system members, the system, and RF). Legal documentation should be completed by August 2011.

May: Personnel budgets for the OSRS will be communicated to appropriate A&M System CFOs. Also beginning in May, the RASS DISC will begin working with the financial administrators at each system member to ensure that the OSRS staff can have access to appropriate system members' accounts in FAMIS/EPIK and other financial systems as appropriate. This access should be established prior to July. The RASS DISC will assist with identifying candidates for the OSRS director position beginning in May, and establish a process for input from stakeholders in the interview process, which should begin as soon as possible after the candidate pool has been narrowed. (The director will hopefully be hired in June.) Also in May, the RASS DISC should begin the leasing process for space if existing Texas A&M System space is not identified for OSRS. The space should be ready by June 2011.

June: In June 2011, the move of the new OSRS director (or interim director) and select pre-award personnel will commence into the OSRS space. If space is identified within the Texas A&M System, furniture may already be available for OSRS use. If necessary, pre-award administrators coming from the RF could transport and utilize their current computers and furniture. This move should be completed by July.

July: Beginning in July 2011, the RF will submit all proposals in the name of the system member performing the research. The submission of these proposals will continue to be through InfoEd until Maestro can be utilized for routing proposals. Select allied support services staff will begin to move into the OSRS space in July; this move should be complete by August. Also in July, any awards received in the name of the RF with a start date of September 1, 2011 or later will be changed to the system member submitting the

proposal, if allowable by the sponsor. This will allow these projects to be transitioned to the OSRS much sooner and more smoothly. Also in July the OSRS will commence implementation of identified best practices as appropriate.

August: On or around August 1, 2011, the final group of OSRS staff—the post-award administrators and the negotiators—will move into the OSRS space. This move should be complete prior to September.

September: On September 1, 2011, the OSRS should be fully staffed and operational for all Phase I participants. Post-award and allied support services activities will be performed by the OSRS during the transition of RF projects, in accordance with such legal documentation.

October: On or around October 1, 2011, an Institution Integration Committee will be formed with representatives of other A&M System universities and OSRS leadership to consider the timeline and activities necessary to integrate system universities based outside Brazos County in the consolidated OSRS. The goal of this committee should be to facilitate the inclusion of all A&M System research activities into OSRS as of September 1, 2012. (Note that practices and structure may differ for other universities.)

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Services Provided by the New Organization

The following is a list of key services anticipated to be offered by the OSRS in support of sponsored research activities. See Appendix 3 for a more detailed outline.

I. Proposal Services

- a. Proposal Log-in
- b. Proposal Budgets
- c. Proposal Preparation
- d. Proposal Submissions
- e. Proposal Routing
- f. Post Proposal Submission
- g. Sub-Awards
- h. Funding Opportunities

II. Contract Services

- a. Negotiation
- b. Execution of Contracts
- c. Contract Amendment and Modifications

III. Project Administration Services

- a. Project Set-up
- b. Interim Funding
- c. Purchasing Services – Federal Rules
- d. Travel Vouchering
- e. Travel Advances
- f. Voucher Payments and Project Payroll
- g. Sub-Award Management
- h. Accounts Receivable and Cost Sharing Monitoring
- i. Project Coding
- j. Project Close-Out
- k. Project Statements and Reports

IV. Other Services

- a. Support Prairie View Office of Sponsored Programs
- b. Insurance Coverage

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Implementation Issues for the New Organization

The Best Practices Initiation

Critical to the success of the OSRS will be the enhancement of the research administration services provided to the research community. A best-practice initiative is underway to identify the best processes and administrative procedures that can be found within the Texas A&M System and at other universities. Researchers and other individuals knowledgeable of research administration processes are collecting information from the system members to compare practices and to determine those that will best support the productivity of PIs and further the growth of research throughout the A&M System. The best practices of common concern to researchers include (but are not limited to): purchasing on sponsored research contracts and grants, travel reimbursements, advances and processes for filing claims, tuition payments, encumbering payroll on the project, and use of consultants. This initiative will result in a determination of best practices for the operation of the OSRS. As best practices change, this initiative will be an ongoing activity of the OSRS Oversight Committee in consultation with the PI and Faculty Advisory Committee of the OSRS.

See Appendix 4 for a list of “Current Practices” and initial “Best Practices Feedback.”

The Plan for Maestro

The Chancellor approved the development of Maestro in FY 2009. The project was divided into several phases. The first of these included development of the research data management and collaboration system that is delivered in the form of the Researcher and Executive Portal; this phase will be followed by pre-award and post-award processes management capabilities. The improvement of the existing EPIK pre-award module will add to Maestro the ability for principal investigators to develop proposals online and to have the option to share components with colleagues and research administrators. Electronic creation and routing of all proposals will expedite the process. Members’ research administration offices will be able to verify and validate proposal packages, and the OSRS would submit proposals electronically in

the name of the system member to funding agencies, improving compliance tracking and minimizing data entry duplication. EPIK post-award enrichments based on the specified requirements will give Maestro the ability to expedite award acceptance, minimize budget and cost sharing data entry, improve project compliance, and simplify the project close-out process.

The last phase of Maestro development will consist of research financials enhancements such as research sponsor billing, receivable reconciliation, indirect cost calculation and distribution, and research controls needed to be included in Accounts Payable and Payroll systems.

The RASS DISC hopes to have two development teams working in parallel on different modules of the project. This will require some increase in staff to perform other IT functions like maintenance, quality control, and user support. According to this baseline timeline (Appendix 5), the project development cycle is as follows:

- Pre-Award completed in Quarter 3 of Fiscal Year 2013,
- Post-Award completed in Quarter 3 of Fiscal Year 2014,
- Research Financials completed in Quarter 4 of Fiscal Year 2015.

As an alternative, the RASS DISC proposes an accelerated implementation timeline (Appendix 5) that would have four development teams operating in parallel. The Maestro team would recruit one more team and hire consultants to constitute the fourth team. This alternative proposal will require an additional \$2 million for FY 2011, FY 2012, and FY 2013. The accelerated project development cycle would be as follows:

- Pre-Award completed in Quarter 4 of Fiscal Year 2012,
- Post-Award completed in Quarter 3 of Fiscal Year 2013,

- Research Financials completed in Quarter 3 of Fiscal Year 2014.

The continued development and ongoing maintenance of Maestro is fundamental to the success of this plan and a core function supporting the research administration process. Therefore, the RASS DISC recommends the adoption of the accelerated timeline. In addition, the RASS DISC recommends that continued maintenance and support of Maestro become the responsibility of the OSRS after the initial development phase.

Measurement and Evaluation: Benchmarks and Performance Measures

The RASS DISC is committed to creating a productivity and performance management system to track the results of the new OSRS with a set of benchmarks and performance measures. Through surveys, data collection, and other means of measurement and assessment, the following types of activities will be monitored:

- PI satisfaction with services provided and how those services are rendered:
 - Responsiveness, job knowledge, courtesy
- Sponsor satisfaction with services:
 - Responsiveness, job knowledge, courtesy
- Processing turn-around time (e.g., proposals, contracts, purchases, travel vouchers)
- Payment turn-around time (e.g., reimbursements and travel vouchers)
- System member satisfaction for interfaces and working relationship as outlined in a forthcoming System Member Affiliation Agreement
- Cost efficiency
- Proposal deadlines missed
- Accuracy of reports and vouchers processed
- Dollar value of disallowed costs

Performance measure reports will be prepared and distributed to relevant parties (e.g., the System

Member OSRS Oversight Committee, system member CEOs, system member CROs, and the A&M System CRO).

Benchmarks will be established for the cost of providing quality services within the OSRS. Additionally, cost savings will be tracked, and OSRS costs will be compared to the base line cost of the same research administration services that existed prior to the creation of the OSRS. This data will reflect OSRS progress, allowing the A&M System CRO to deliver reports to the Council of the System Member Chief Research Officers and the Chancellor.

Governmental and Financial Considerations

The proposed organization plan of the OSRS was developed to support the distinct structure, financing, and reporting requirements of each of the system members. The OSRS retains the organizational identity of the research contracts and grants and related expenditures of each member so that each will retain the benchmarks and data necessary to meet their obligations as a separate and distinct state entity. By posting research expenditures directly into system member accounting records, the new OSRS will simplify and assist the reporting of research expenditures by the system members.

The plan of the OSRS includes all OSRS employees being administratively assigned to the A&M System office. As stated above, salaries, wages, and fringe benefits for OSRS employees could be paid in a variety of ways. The RASS DISC continues to examine the potential effects of these options to avoid negative effects (e.g., a decrease in general revenue appropriations to those members whose FTEs decrease, or the loss of state funding for employee benefits for those employees currently paid from general revenue funds).

Financial System Requirements

A significant change from current operating procedures would be for research expenditures to be entered directly into system member accounting records by OSRS staff. This operational change may necessitate the need for several software changes to financial systems used by the system members. Below is an initial list of system requirements to be addressed in the system member accounting systems.

- *Security* – Granting appropriate OSRS employees access to system member financial systems to directly enter research accounting activity.
- *Project/Account Set-Up* – This will be addressed as part of the security function. Models will be defined indicating inquiry and entry access for each job description matched with appropriate system member access.
- *Indirect Payroll* – This will continue with current processes in FAMIS and EPIK. Edits are available in both systems to prevent payroll transactions from posting, if there are insufficient funds. In order to report accurately for AFR purposes, direct payroll transactions will post on the system member's books.
- *Purchasing* – Purchase Orders processed by the OSRS must identify the system member requesting the goods or services and be processed through the respective FAMIS/EPIK purchasing systems.
- *State Property Accounting (SPA)* – Data entry and reconciliation of the property information to SPA will remain at the system member.
- *System Member Project Administration and Financial Administration* – Member project administration responsibilities include the approvals of cost sharing and matching funds, payroll corrections, and effort reporting. Financial administration tasks include sponsored research deposits and checks, bank reconciliations, payroll accounting, property, journal entries, and financial reporting.

Cost Methodology for the OSRS

The proposed model for funding the OSRS will likely be based on a model developed to assess Maestro charges to the system members. For example, it was determined there is not a positive correlation between the cost of proposal preparation and the amount of award if the proposal is funded. However, on the post-award side, the number of transactions can be

associated with the total expenditures on the project. The following Maestro cost model is being proposed as a starting point for the OSRS:

- Thirty (30) percent of the cost would be based on the system member's percent of proposals submitted as a proportion of the total number of proposals submitted by all system members
- Thirty-five (35) percent of the cost would be based on the system member's percent of projects to be administered as a proportion of the total number of project to be administered for all system members
- Thirty-five (35) percent of the cost would be based on the system member's percent of restricted research expenditures as a proportion of the total research expenditures of all system members

For the moment, Maestro and FAMIS costs will continue to be assessed separately from the OSRS costs.

If the OSRS expands its services to offer the capacity for administration of other system member contracts (e.g., non-research sponsored contract and grants, service agreements, other Memoranda of Understanding, etc.), then a separate costing methodology may be developed for those services. If a system member utilizes OSRS services, that system member will be charged a fee to make these operations cost-neutral for the OSRS. Optional services may be acquired from the OSRS and billed to the individual system member based upon a similar methodology to the one used on research administration.

Legal Considerations of the OSRS

In providing sponsored research administration services, OSRS will be interacting with system members and the RF on a number of levels. In order for the system members and the RF to have confidence in the relationship established with OSRS, the allocation of responsibilities, the type of services to be performed, and the necessary type and appropriate levels of approvals need to be clearly defined. Moreover, related federal and state legal requirements, as well as grant, contract, and/or sponsor specific obligations should be identified.

Consequently, written documentation will be developed to define these relationships and requirements by addressing the activities to be performed by the OSRS in administering sponsored research projects and the respective responsibilities of the OSRS and the system members. These activities will generally be grouped into pre-award, post-award, and allied support services. The documentation will describe the workflow, necessary approvals, delegations of authority, reporting requirements, and financial matters.

With the transfer of responsibilities to the OSRS, it is important that certain processes now in place at the various system members continue and that the OSRS consolidation of operation does not have a negative impact. In addition, OSRS may need to establish complementary processes. These processes include document management and control, risk management and negotiation of project award terms and conditions, intellectual property rights management, conflict of interest identification and management, and various compliance matters relating to sponsored research projects. OSRS will need to determine if any restrictions are present (e.g., confidentiality requirements) in sponsored research agreements or if any adverse consequences may result from transferring the administration of existing projects to the OSRS.

In addition, there may need to be an agreement with the RF for those sponsored research project awards that are signed by the RF. This agreement would cover the same subject matter as the procedures described above. There may be separate agreements with the RF for OSRS to provide support services for activities of the RF that are related to, but separate from, sponsored research (e.g., management and operation of subsidiary organizations, consulting services, corporate governance and management services, etc.).

The A&M System Office of General Counsel and the Legal Issues Committee will work closely with OSRS to develop the necessary documentation to account for these issues during the implementation stage.

The Role of the Research Foundation within the OSRS

The RF, operating as an independent 501(c)(3) within OSRS, will continue to play an important

role in providing research administration services. Proposals/contracts will normally be submitted/administered by the OSRS and will be in the name of the system member. If there are legal barriers (e.g., indemnification clauses, prevailing laws of another state or nation) that prevent a state agency or institution from executing a contract, upon request of the system member and approval of the director of the OSRS and with concurrence of the system member CEO, the proposal/contract may be executed by the RF on behalf of the system member. The RF will be operated by the OSRS through an agreement for services with the OSRS. Changes in the role of the RF will include: 1) reducing the use of the 501(c)(3) unless justified by something that cannot be provided within the state environment; and 2) reducing the allied support services cost of the 501(c)(3) for grants that will remain RF grants by outsourcing some services to OSRS. Research Foundation employees will become state employees with equitable benefits (insurance, leave, etc.) to those of all other system member research administration personnel moving into the OSRS. Other services that may need to be continued through the RF include insurance, Washington Office Support, and General Services Administration schedules.

Changes in the role of the RF in relationship to the OSRS, as well as the role of RF trustees and councilors will be reviewed by the A&M System Office of General Counsel to assure the new structure will be legal and provide the RF with the appropriate independence needed to maintain 501(c)(3) status. Efforts will be made to utilize the expertise, experience, and extraordinary capabilities of the RF councilors in serving in an advisory capacity on matters of technology transfer, technology commercialization, business development, corporate relations, and related basic and applied research issues.

OSRS Interfaces with System Members on Research Administration Issues

Many day-to-day issues, including the routing and approvals of proposals and contracts, will require streamlined interfaces and delegations to ensure an effective process. Main interfaces involve resource allocation (e.g., indirect cost rates, waivers, reductions, cost sharing, sources of funding, or securing risks), identifying and assessing financial, performance, strategic, reputational, and compliance risks, and

making the appropriate business decisions on risks in terms and contracts. Additional interfaces will be required, including OSRS providing information to the system members for reconciliation and their use in institutional reporting to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Legislative Budget Board, National Science Foundation, etc.

OSRS as Part of the Office of the Chief Research Officer

In order for all system members to achieve their goals of research growth and of enhanced commercialization of research results, related shared services will require an appropriate organizational structure. The Office of the Chief Research Officer will provide the umbrella under which all of the A&M System research shared services can organize and collaborate to streamline research services, resolve issues, and attain synergies and efficiencies. Figure 3 depicts the proposed organizational structure for the Office of the Chief Research Officer.

In reviewing the areas of compliance, it was determined there are two separate categories: 1) financial and project administration compliance; and 2) research compliance. The responsibility for financial and project administration compliance on sponsored research agreements should be centralized within the OSRS, with appropriate oversight by and communication with system members. The RASS DISC recommends that, with the exception of export control compliance, responsibility for the requirements relating to research compliance remain at the system member level, with the Office of the Chief Research Officer providing the centralized function of facilitating compliance. With regard to export controls, the RASS DISC sees the need for the combination of a centralized function at the system level and “boots on the ground” at each system member.

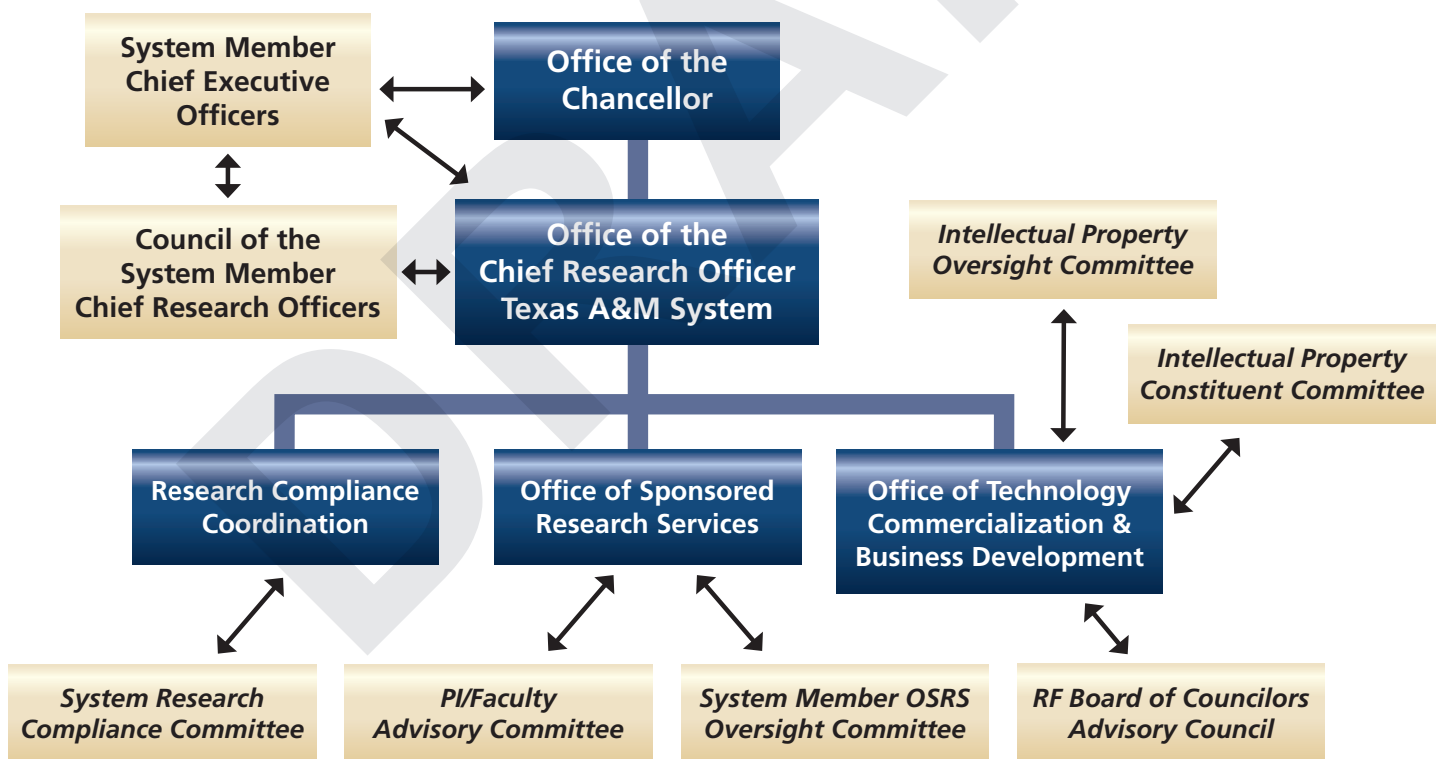


Figure 3: CRO Organizational Chart

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1: RASS DISC and Working Groups

Background

The following working groups, focused on the listed topics, were formed to ensure key issues are adequately addressed and to provide sufficient input from constituents and affected parties. Topics and issues listed for each working group will change as this process moves forward. At present, the working groups are focused on immediate tasks over the next 90 days.

In all cases, the working groups will interact with the main steering committee and with other relevant working groups, as appropriate and necessary.

Research Administration Shared Services Development and Implementation Steering Committee (RASS DISC)

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Jeffrey R. Seemann (chair)	Texas A&M University / The Texas A&M University System
Mr. Don W. Bugh	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Carol J. Cantrell	Texas A&M University
Dr. Pierce Cantrell	Texas A&M University / The Texas A&M University System
Dr. David S. Carlson	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Dr. Luis A. Cifuentes	Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Ms. Betty J. "BJ" Crain	Texas A&M University / The Texas A&M University System
Dr. William "Bill" A. Dugas	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Diane M. Gilliland	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Leonarda Horvat	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Mr. Charles Hrcir	The Texas A&M University System
Dr. James "Jim" R. Joyce	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Dr. Glen A. Laine	Texas A&M University
Mr. Leo J. Paterra	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Mr. Mark S. Smock	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Dr. Angela Spaulding	West Texas A&M University
Mr. Andrew L. Strong	The Texas A&M University System
Dr. Terry L. Thomas	Texas A&M University
Ms. Deena J. Wallace	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Dr. Charles A. Johnson (ad hoc)	Texas A&M University
Mr. Tomas A. Hargis (ad hoc)	Texas A&M University
Mr. Blake D. Petty (ad hoc)	Texas A&M University
Ms. Katherine A. Rojo del Busto (ad hoc)	Texas A&M University

Name	Affiliation
Dr. J. Martin Scholtz (ad hoc)	Texas A&M University
Ms. Rose N. Ndegwa (staff)	Texas A&M University
Mr. R. Jason Whisenant (staff)	Texas A&M University

Subcommittee on Structural/Operational Development and Implementation (SDI)

Name	Affiliation
Mr. Mark S. Smock (chair)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Mr. Don W. Bugh	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Carol J. Cantrell	Texas A&M University
Ms. Diane M. Gilliland	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Dr. James "Jim" R. Joyce	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Mr. Leo J. Paterra	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Dr. Angela Spaulding	West Texas A&M University

Topics and issues from the chair:

- Develop a plan for an A&M System Office of Sponsored Research Services (OSRS), with input from all other working groups

Finance/Human Resources Working Group

Name	Affiliation
Ms. Betty "B.J." Crain (chair)	Texas A&M University / The Texas A&M University System
Mr. Atin Agrawal	Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Ms. Carol J. Cantrell	Texas A&M University
Mr. John W. Crawford	Texas A&M University
Mr. Adam Davidson	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Ms. Linda G. Edge	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Kathryn Funk-Baxter	Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Ms. Carol A. Huff	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Raye J. Milburn	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Dr. B. Don Russell	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Mr. Stephen A. Schulze	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Verna Smith	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Ms. Kathy B. Symank	Texas A&M University
Mr. Joseph Duron (adhoc)	The Texas A&M University System
Mr. Carl S. McKneely (adhoc)	The Texas A&M University System
Mr. Charles Hrcncir (adhoc)	The Texas A&M University System

Topics and issues from the chair:

- Review positions with sponsored research services responsibilities
 - Develop templates or consistent position descriptions (PD) (if necessary)
 - Review compensation and class issues
- Provide options/recommendations for possible human resources (HR) structures once the OSRS is developed
- Assimilate best practices into daily fiscal processing activities (training may be needed)
- Provide options/recommendations for an equitable funding methodology based on specific OSRS variables (e.g., similar to Maestro assessment)
- Provide budget options/recommendations for the OSRS
- Identify options for transitioning employees of the Research Foundation to state employees

Information Technology Working Group

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Pierce E. Cantrell (chair)	Texas A&M University / The Texas A&M University System
Maestro Steering Committee	(See Maestro Steering Committee)
Mr. Carl S. McKneely	The Texas A&M University System
Ms. Freda F. Strzelec	The Texas A&M University System
Mr. Mark J. Schulz	The Texas A&M University System
Dr. Bertis B. Little	Tarleton State University
Ms. Kassandra D. Agee-Letton	Texas Transportation Institute

Topics and issues from the chair:

- Maestro Pre-Award Options: (1) Current Time Line, (2) Alternate Accelerated Time Line Level 1 Funding, (2) Accelerated Time Line Level 2 Funding
- Maestro Post-Award Options: (1) Current Time Line, (2) Alternate Accelerated Time Line
- Grant access to OSRS personnel to appropriate accounting systems in order to post financial and payroll documents using existing business procedures

- Identify information technology (IT) group that will provide desktop support to OSRS

Legal Working Group

Name	Affiliation
Mr. Andrew L. Strong (chair)	The Texas A&M University System
Mr. Scott A. Kelly	The Texas A&M University System
Mr. Steven R. Garrett	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Ms. Deena J. Wallace	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Mr. Cullen M. "Mike" Godfrey	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Ms. Katherine A. Rojo del Busto	Texas A&M University

Topics and issues from the chair:

- Develop relevant agreements, e.g., intra-system agreement and agreement between OSRS and the Research Foundation as a 501(C)(3)
- Address legal issues as they arrive from other subcommittees

Current Practices for Faculty Working Group

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Glen A. Laine (co-chair)	Texas A&M University
Dr. Terry L. Thomas (co-chair)	Texas A&M University
Ms. Marcie Avery	Texas A&M University
Mr. Leo J. Paterra	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Mr. Mark S. Smock	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Carol J. Cantrell	Texas A&M University
Mr. Don W. Bugh	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Diane M. Gilliland	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Dr. Gary Coulton	Texas A&M University - San Antonio
Dr. Susan A. Bloomfield	Texas A&M University
Ms. Marcia Walker	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Dr. Van G. Wilson	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Dr. Jim A. Wall	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Amy B. Caldwell	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Patricia "Patt" Juneke	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Mr. B.L. Harris	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Anna J. Mitchell	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Jana P. Lawrence	Texas A&M University

Topics and issues from the chair:

- Consolidate input from administrative entities and faculty to develop a “Current Practices” model for the OSRS
- Solicit further input from faculty to generate a best practices model for faculty in the future

Funding and Governance Working Group

Name	Affiliation
Ms. Carol J. Cantrell (chair)	Texas A&M University
Dr. Nancy M. Amato	Texas A&M University
Ms. Julie A. Bishop	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Mr. John W. Crawford	Texas A&M University
Mr. Steven R. Garrett	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Dr. Tammy L. Holliday	Texas A&M University - Galveston
Mr. Scott A. Kelly	The Texas A&M University System
Ms. Deena J. Wallace	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Dr. Ambrose O. Anoruo	Texas A&M University - Kingsville
Dr. Lou G. Tassinary, J.D.	Texas A&M University
Dr. Pablo Arenaz	Texas A&M International University

Topics and issues from the chair:

- Develop the following materials: organizational chart, reporting and accounting, delegation of authorities, and required routings and approvals
- Provide input to the SDI chaired by Mr. Mark Smock on governance
- Provide input to the Finance/HR Working Group chaired by Ms. B.J. Crain on:
 - Costing methodology for sponsored research services
 - Costing methodology for other services to be offered
 - Performance assessment and measurement regarding cost effectiveness, efficiencies, response time, satisfaction benchmarks (principal investigator, sponsor, system member, employee), audit, etc.

System University Campuses Issues Working Group

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Luis A. Cifuentes (chair)	Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Dr. Ambrose O. Anoruo	Texas A&M University - Kingsville
Dr. Jeffrey M. Brown	Texas A&M International University
Dr. Gary Coulton	Texas A&M University - San Antonio

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Allan D. Headley	Texas A&M University - Commerce
Dr. Bertis B. Little	Tarleton State University
Dr. Angela Spaulding	West Texas A&M University
Dr. Rosanne Stripling	Texas A&M University - Texarkana
Dr. William "Bill" S. White	Texas A&M University - Central Texas

Topics and issues from the chair:

- How should the proposed OSRS model for Brazos County-based system members be adjusted to optimally meet the needs of other system university campuses?
- Will the structure be flexible enough to accommodate the different needs of these campuses?
- Will these campuses be expected to phase in before Maestro is implemented for them?
- Will there be adequate Maestro training?
- Will all of these campuses phase in at the same time?
- Will the cost structure be appropriate for these campuses, given the fact that these campuses have a different complement of funding sources than the Brazos County-based system entities?
- If costs are higher, will they be justified by significantly better performance, and will the new cost structure be phased in?
- Will the OSRS have any impact on facilities and administrative (F&A) rates on these campuses?
- Will the governance structure allow for truly significant input on the part of these campuses?

Maestro Software Teams, Committees, and Working Groups

EPIK-Maestro Teams

- The EPIK-Maestro Project is a joint effort between six research institutions: Texas A&M University, The Texas A&M Health Science Center (TAMHSC), Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES), Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), Texas AgriLife Research, and Texas A&M Research Foundation. The project consists of several committees/groups that are formed to represent all six

entities and principal investigators by participating in different functions performed by Maestro teams.

Maestro Steering Committee

- The role of the Steering Committee is to determine priorities and approaches to research reporting, uniform coding, and priorities for implementation. This committee is also charged to help in determining how best to obtain synergy between this effort and any future initiatives.

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Pierce E. Cantrell (co-chair)	Texas A&M University / The Texas A&M University System
Ms. Betty “B. J.” Crain (co-chair)	Texas A&M University / The Texas A&M University System
Ms. Leonarda Horvat (ex-officio)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Mr. Mark S. Smock	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Mr. Leo J. Pattera	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Ms. Michele R. Lacey	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Dr. James “Jim” R. Joyce	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Dr. Catherine Hawes	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Mr. John W. Crawford	Texas A&M University
Mr. Ronald G. Carter	Texas A&M University
Mr. Don W. Bugh	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Anna Jo Mitchell	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Diane M. Gilliland	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Dr. William “Bill” A. Dugas	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Dr. Peter Schuerman	The Texas A&M University System
Dr. Michael J. Benedik	Texas A&M University

Maestro Working Group

- The Working Group was established by the Steering Committee to oversee the implementation and to work closely with the project manager on defining new processes or common business practices that will be used to create system requirements for new information system components.

Name	Affiliation
Ms. Leonarda Horvat (project director)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Sreeja V. Sreekumaran (technical lead)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Dr. Shu Jiang (application lead)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Deana Strbevski (application lead)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Amy R. Symm (data warehouse lead)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Mr. Eric D. Fomby (quality control lead)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Mr. Bing S. Wei (infrastructure lead)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Mr. Mark J. Schulz	The Texas A&M University System
Mr. Larry Brown	The Texas A&M University System

Name	Affiliation
Ms. Janet L. Killion	Texas A&M University
Dr. Norman L. Guinasso	Texas A&M University
Dr. Michael K. Lindell	Texas A&M University
Ms. Julie A. Bishop	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Ms. Dana Thomas	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Mr. David W. Hollingsworth	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Susan C. Adams	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Janice M. Konecny	Texas Transportation Institute
Dr. Beverly T. Kuhn	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Kassandra D. Letton	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Diane M. Gilliland	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Patt T. Junek	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Tribbie D. Sandner	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Jane Zuber	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Ms. Michele R. Lacey	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Mr. K. Tye Rougas	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Mr. Bill F. Williams	The Texas A&M University System
Ms. Kimberly M. Rutledge	The Texas A&M University System
Mr. James Webb	West Texas A&M University
Dr. Allan D. Headley	Texas A&M University - Commerce

Researcher Focus Working Group

- The Researcher Focus Working Group was formed to participate in Maestro development by providing input and comments during the prototyping phase. This group is also one of the champions in system implementation.

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Mark J. Clayton	Texas A&M University - Architecture
Dr. Michael K. Lindell	Texas A&M University - Architecture
Dr. Francois P. Gabbai	Texas A&M University - Chemistry
Dr. Roger D. Goddard	Texas A&M University - Educational Administration
Dr. Kimberly J. Vannest	Texas A&M University - Educational Psychology
Dr. Rafael Lara-Alecio	Texas A&M University - Educational Psychology
Dr. Sarah W. Bednarz	Texas A&M University - Geography
Dr. Norman L. Guinasso	Texas A&M University - Geosciences
Dr. Robert D. Hetland	Texas A&M University - Oceanography
Dr. Ann E. Jochens	Texas A&M University - Oceanography
Dr. Dorothy J. Carmichael	Texas A&M University Public Policy Research Institute
Dr. Lynne Opperman	Texas A&M Health Science Center - Baylor College of Dentistry
Dr. J. Martin Scholtz	Texas A&M Health Science Center - College of Medicine
Dr. Jeff D. Cirillo	Texas A&M Health Science Center - College of Medicine
Dr. Emily Wilson	Texas A&M Health Science Center - College of Medicine
Dr. Jim E. Samuel	Texas A&M Health Science Center - College of Medicine

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Lacy Daniels	Texas A&M Health Science Center - Pharmacy
Dr. Kenneth McLeroy	Texas A&M Health Science Center - School of Rural Public Health
Dr. Charles D. Phillips	Texas A&M Health Science Center - School of Rural Public Health
Dr. David R. Boyle	Texas Engineering Experiment Station - Nuclear Engineering
Dr. James A. Wall	Texas Engineering Experiment Station - Texas Center for Applied Technology
Dr. Ben Wu	Texas AgriLife Research - Ecosystem Science & Management
Dr. Raghavan Srinivasan	Texas AgriLife Research - Blackland Research and Extension
Dr. David M. Stelly	Texas AgriLife Research - Soil & Crop
Dr. Charles M. Kenerley	Texas AgriLife Research - Plant Pathobiology
Dr. Brian D. Shaw	Texas AgriLife Research - Plant Pathobiology
Dr. Dennis Hoffman	Texas AgriLife Research - Temple
Dr. Jay Angerer	Texas AgriLife Research - Temple
Dr. Charles R. Long	Texas AgriLife Research - Veterinary Physiology and Pharmacology
Dr. W. R. (Bill) Klemm	Texas AgriLife Research - Veterinary Integrative Biosciences
Mr. Shawn M. Turner	Texas Transportation Institute - Mobility Analysis
Ms. Melissa Walden	Texas Transportation Institute - Planning and Evaluation
Mr. Curtis P. Beaty	Texas Transportation Institute - Research and Implementation
Dr. Beverly T. Kuhn	Texas Transportation Institute - System Management
Dr. Dennis G. Perkinson	Texas Transportation Institute - Transportation Modeling
Mr. Edwin "Ed" N. Hard	Texas Transportation Institute - Transportation Planning

Maestro Executive Portal Working Group

- The Executive Portal Group was formed to participate in the design of the Executive Portal and provide resources to reconcile all reported numbers.

Name	Affiliation
Ms. Julie A. Bishop	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Dr. James "Jim" Joyce	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Mr. Leo J. Paterra	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Ms. Michele R. Lacey	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Ms. Carol J. Cantrell	Texas A&M University
Ms. Becky H. Holloway	Texas A&M University
Ms. Tracy L. Crowley	The Texas A&M University System
Ms. Debra A. Cummings	Texas AgriLife Research
Mr. Ree Kenerley	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Tribbie D. Sandner	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Janice M. Konecny	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Anna Joe Mitchell	Texas Transportation Institute
Mr. Mark S. Smock	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Kay Ison	Texas Engineering Experiment Station

Maestro Regional Working Group

- In Fall 2010 the Steering Committee formed the Regional (TAMUS+) group to lead Maestro portal implementation in remaining institutions of the Texas A&M System not included in the initial efforts, and to participate in the design of pre-award and post-award modules.

Name	Affiliation
Mr. Rod Mireles	Prairie View A&M University
Ms. Becky Torres	Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Dr. Mayra Hough	Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Ms. Natalie Henderson	Texas A&M University - Commerce
Ms. Sarah Baker	Texas A&M University - Commerce
Ms. Nona Williamson	Tarleton State University
Ms. Deanna Powell	Tarleton State University
Ms. Pat Ornelas	Texas A&M International University
Ms. Anne R. Frey	Texas A&M International University
Mr. Juan Cisneros	Texas A&M International University
Ms. Cindy Villarreal	Texas A&M University - Kingsville
Ms. Sandra D. Garcia	Texas A&M University - Kingsville
Ms. Kaaren J. Downey	West Texas A&M University
Dr. Arthur "Pete" Linkins	Texas A&M University - Texarkana
Ms. Veloria Nanze	Texas A&M University - Texarkana
Dr. Charles G. Rodriguez	Texas A&M University - San Antonio
Ms. Stephanie Scott	Texas A&M University - San Antonio
Mr. Vince Riggins	Texas Engineering Extension Service
Mr. Brian Stipe	Texas Engineering Extension Service
Mr. James D. Puckett	Texas Forest Service
Ms. Kathleene Flatt	Texas Forest Service
Mr. Vic Seidel	Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory
Ms. Tribbie D. Sandner	Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory

Topics and issues from the chair:

- Reconcile Executive Portal numbers and release it to system members
- Develop and Review four pre-award modules: proposal general, key personnel bios, compliance, routing

Linked Issues Working Groups

Name	Affiliation
Ms. Deena J. Wallace (chair)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station

- NOTE: The Linked Issues Working Group includes the Governmental Issues, Research Compliance, and Scope of Contracts subcommittees.

Governmental Issues Working Group

Name	Affiliation
Mr. Michael G. O'Quinn	Texas A&M University
Ms. Tiffany A. Britton	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Lauri Deviney	The Texas A&M University System
Ms. Betty "B.J." Crain	Texas A&M University / The Texas A&M University System

Topics and issues from the chair:

- This group will work on mitigating any negative impact resulting from the consolidation of research administration services, such as potential for reduction in general revenue (GR) funding for those system members who have a reduction in FTEs and the consequences of an increase in FTEs at the system level.

Research Compliance Working Group

Name	Affiliation
Mr. Sean D. Rubino	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Dr. Bruce M. Whitney	Texas A&M University
Dr. David S. Carlson	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Dr. Roger Parker	Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Dr. David K. Lunt	Texas AgriLife Research
Dr. Katherine F. Turnbull	Texas Transportation Institute
Mr. William J. "Jan" Faber	The Texas A&M University System
Ms. Michele R. Lacey	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Ms. Ashley N. Spencer	Texas A&M University - Kingsville
Dr. Marcia C. Shelton	Prairie View A&M University

Topics and issues from the chair:

- This group will address the issue of what compliance activities could be handled most effectively and efficiently as part of the Office of the Chief Research Officer.

Scope of Contracts Working Group

Name	Affiliation
Ms. Janet L. Killion	Texas A&M University
Mr. Bill May	Texas Engineering Extension Service

Name	Affiliation
Mr. Mark E. Andrews	Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Ms. Diane M. Gilliland	Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Service
Ms. Julie A. Bishop	Texas A&M Health Science Center
Ms. Anna Jo Mitchell	Texas Transportation Institute
Ms. Jane Zuber	Texas A&M Research Foundation
Dr. Willie T. Trotty	Prairie View A&M University

Topics and issues from the chair:

- This group will address what types of agreements will fall within the OSRS, and the staffing that will still be required at each system member to administer the agreements/contracts that do not fall within the scope of agreements handled by the OSRS.

DRAFT

APPENDIX 2: Implementation Timeline for OSRS

Project Lead - Subcommittee on Structural/Operational Development and Implementation (SDI)

Task Lead	2011									2012					
	04/11	05/11	06/11	07/11	08/11	09/11	10/11	11/11	12/11	01/12	02/12	03/12	04/12	05/12	06/12
SDI/Best Practices	Assemble Procedures Manual														
SDI	Evaluate Space Needs														
Governance	Define Director Job Description / Post														
SDI	Design Functional Areas of Expertise														
HR	Create Standardized Job Descriptions														
SDI	Analyze Staffing Needs / Contributions from Members														
HR / Legal	Waiver of Selected Posting Requirements														
Legal	Draft Legal Agreements														
Finance	Implement Budget Changes in 2012 Budget Process														
IT / Finance	Access for OSRS Staff to Member Accounts														
Governance / CRO	Director Interviews / Hiring Process														
Legal	Begin Space Leasing Process														
SDI	Pre-Award Staff Move to OSRS Space														
SDI	RF Submits Proposal in the Name of System Members														
SDI	Allied Services Staff Move to OSRS Space														
SDI	Awards Received with Start Date after 9/1/11 Moved, if possible														
SDI	Post-Award Staff / Negotiators Move to OSRS Space														
Implementation Team	OSRS operational														
Legal	Pre-Award, Post-Award, Negotiation, Allied Services, and Legal Functions Performed by OSRS for 501c3 via Contract														

APPENDIX 3: Services Provided by the New Organization

The following is a detailed list of services anticipated to be offered by OSRS in support of sponsored research activities.

I. Proposal Services

a. Proposal Log-in

- PI provides basic information necessary to create a record of the proposal in the proposal tracking system (MAESTRO).
- Proposal Administrator (PA)/PI will locate the sponsor guidelines for the proposal. Specific guidelines may be used in cases such as an RFP.
- PA locates editable proposal submission forms
- PA downloads necessary software for completion of proposal
- PA reviews guidelines for any terms and conditions that may be unfavorable to the PI and/or the Institution
- PA prepares exceptions to the sponsor for submission at the proposal stage

b. Proposal Budgets

- PI provides basic budgetary information in order to draft a budget
- PA will provide salary information to PI for “named” employees as well as those positions “to be named”
- PA will verify salaries and benefits of all personnel
- PA will ensure that the budget meets the A-21 requirement of being reasonable, allowable, and allocable
- PA obtains all necessary subcontract documents including forms, budgets, and signature pages
- PA completes required sponsor forms
- PA obtains cost sharing account numbers
- PA prepares Cost Sharing Statement if cost sharing is committed at the proposal stage
- PA ensures that all cost sharing commitments listed in proposal are documented
- PA obtains backup documentation for IDC waivers and in-kind support
- PA verifies that the budget justification matches the budget

- PA ensures that the sponsor limitations/regulations are met
- c. Proposal Preparation
- Complete all budgetary and institutional forms
 - Review material provided by the PI to ensure compliance with sponsor guidelines
 - Assemble the package in the correct order and format
 - Prepare and sign all required institutional forms
 - Convert and upload all documents into electronic portals as needed
 - Perform a Quality Assurance check on the final product
- d. Proposal Submissions
- Make copies including numbering and binding as necessary
 - Mail all hard copies either FedEx or Certified for delivery by deadline
 - Submit electronic version using the appropriate software/portal
 - Track electronic submission to verify receipt by sponsor
 - Access sponsor site and provide a copy of the final submission to the PI for review
- e. Proposal Routing
- Assemble the routing package for circulation
 - Obtain conflict of interest certifications and verify compliance issues
 - Electronically route the proposal to all PIs, heads, deans and System members
 - Periodically track the progress of the routing to ensure timely completion
- f. Post Proposal Submission
- Send a copy of the routing approvals, routing sheet, cost sharing statement, and final proposal to everyone who signed the routing document
 - Input budgetary information into the appropriate accounting system
 - Provide PI with the necessary information to complete humans, animals, rDNA, and/or biohazard approvals prior to award

g. Sub-Awards

- Use the FDP sub-award templates to ensure uniformity of format and terms and conditions, thus making compliance easier for the sub-awardee
- Obtain the sub-awardee's current audit and F&A rate agreement
- Obtain a sole source justification from the A&M System PI on a fixed price sub-award
- Limit prepayment on fixed price agreements so that payments are tied to deliverables
- Do not make funds available to sub-awardees until human and animal subjects compliance issues are resolved and approvals are obtained
- Ensure that the A&M System PI has approved the sub-award or other lower tier agreement prior to our approval
- Ensure that the A&M System PI receives a copy of the sub-award or other lower tier agreement
- Distribute a copy of the approved award to PIs and ensure that they are made aware of specific terms and conditions with which they will need to comply

h. Funding Opportunities

- The Maestro system will use a search engine that accesses numerous federal and private sponsor databases that will be used to identify potential sponsored research opportunities

II. Contract Services

a. Negotiation

- The negotiation processes are intermingled and interdependent upon pre- and post-award
- Negotiator reviews the award terms and conditions in the award document to ensure that they are favorable to the parties involved, including the PI, and the system member
- Negotiator acts as a liaison between the sponsor and the PI
- Obtain all necessary approvals (PI, department head, dean, VPR, etc.) for non-standard A&M System terms
- Confer with the Office of Technology Commercialization on non-standard IP language that leads to a licensing agreement or patent application
- Provide a review of each award by legal counsel if complex legal issues are involved

- Provide a review of each award by OSRS prior to signature
- Ensure that United States export control laws are followed as stipulated in funding agreements
- Ensure that all human and animal subjects issues as well as biosafety issues are resolved and approvals are in place prior to expending funds

b. Execution of Contracts

- Ensure all terms and conditions are acceptable
- Sign contract original(s)
- Forward to sponsor for signature and suspense
- Follow up to secure sponsor signature and forward fully executed contract to post-award

c. Contract Amendment and Modifications

- If no changes in terms and conditions, forward to post-award
- If changes in terms and conditions, see above (Execution of Contracts)

III. Project Administration Services

a. Project Set-up

- Log award into award database and update proposal information in the appropriate accounting system. Update proposals status in tracking system (MAESTRO).
- Forward to project administrator.
- Review and interpret sponsor regulations and any special terms and conditions.
- Seek clarification as needed from sponsor.
- Review project term, deliverables, proposed cost sharing, key personnel, travel, salaries and wages, supplies, sub-awards, equipment, other direct costs, indirect costs, multiple PIs and system member collaboration and multiple budgets, budget restrictions, and re-budgeting guidelines, protocol requirements, and billing and financial reporting requirements.
- With PI, prepare revised budget(s) based on award
- If awarded amount is more than 25% (more/less) than proposed amount, request to route an internal proposal in pre-award.
- Send a copy to PI for concurrence.
- Prepare Notice of Award

- Set up project and account(s) in the appropriate accounting system.
- Distribute Notice of Award to PI, department, dean, etc. and internally.
- Schedule project orientation with PI/staff.
- Request delegations of authority from PI and enter into the appropriate accounting system.
- Scan award file into On-Base.

b. Interim Funding

- Contact sponsor to determine approximate award amount and project term.
- Discuss PI financial needs for 1 to 3 months, and secure a departmental account in the event the award is not funded. Secure approvals.
- Process as project set up (above).
- Review every two weeks to determine status of sponsor award.
- When sponsor award is received, reverse Interim Funding in the appropriate accounting system and add sponsor award. Follow project set up (above).

c. Purchasing Services – Federal Rules

- All purchased goods and services are reviewed by a Project Administrator for compliance with A-21, sponsor guidelines, and any special terms and conditions prior to purchase.
- Approves sole source justification or solicits bids
- Obtains supplier quotation
- Negotiates supplier's terms and conditions
- Ensures compliance with federal debarment regulations
- Issues purchase order to supplier
- Obligates account funds in the appropriate accounting system
- Issues RFPs to potential sub-awardees when PI has not identified a source to participate in the performance of the scope of work during the proposal preparation
- Ensures delivery dates are met by supplier
- Issues P-cards and other credit cards to project staff

- Assists with items damaged during shipment that must be returned to supplier and assists with the receipt of replacement items
- Reviews invoice to ensure supplier quote is reflected correctly and obtain credits if necessary
- Reviews all invoices to ensure compliance with procurement policy
- Reviews all on-campus invoices to determine if billing department has an approved rate on file with Texas A&M University FMO to ensure that federal projects are billed in a fair and consistent manner as others
- Prepares Small and Disadvantaged Subcontracting Plans when required on proposals and assist PI with identifying potential suppliers in applicable vendor categories (small, disadvantaged, HUBzone, woman-owned, veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran owned) that can be utilized in achieving the plan's goals
- Prepares and submits quarterly reports to sponsors and Small Business Administration concerning expenditures in each vendor category
- Works with Small Business Administration in identifying potential new suppliers
- Obtains self-certification forms from vendors declaring their status as small or disadvantaged vendors and records the status in the appropriate accounting system for ordering and reporting capabilities
- Applies for applicable export licenses on research equipment leaving the country
- Advises PI on export restrictions applicable to specific items purchased for project use
- Applies for duty free entry status to U.S. Customs on equipment purchased outside the country
- Assists PI with freight forwarding issues when shipping equipment to foreign ports to ensure that equipment may be returned without large duty charges incurred

d. Travel Vouchering

- All travel agency invoices can be direct-billed.
- Travel reimbursement forms are interactive on-line.
- Travel reimbursements are reviewed by the Project Administrator to determine if the expenses are allowable and sufficient budget is available on the grant or contract. Travel will review to assure compliance with applicable (sponsor) travel policy.
- Travel reimbursements typically, will be processed in seven days.

e. Travel Advances

- Travel advance requests are interactive on-line.
- Travel advance requests are reviewed by the Project Administrator to determine if the trip is allowable on the grant or contract and sufficient budget exist.
- A check or ACH is issued to the traveler, a travel GL is debited and cash is credited. The entire estimated trip costs are encumbered on the contract or grant account.
- Travel advances are typically processed in four days
- Follow up is done monthly on outstanding travel advances and the travel G/Ls are reconciled quarterly.

f. Voucher Payments and Project Payroll

- Receives invoice and determines account number to be charged.
- Obtains expense category approval from Project Administrator.
- Provides PI copy of invoice and obtains approval to pay.
- Coordinates scholarship payments, stipends and tuition payments with Student Business Services and FMO to ensure that student awards from research accounts are timely and correct.
- Expense all payments through the appropriate accounting system (wire transfers, ACH, or check).
- Works with departmental bookkeepers on reimbursement of research expenses incurred on department accounts.
- Reconciles vendor statements to ensure continued credit available to PIs.
- Requests vendor credits as required and assists with vendor problem resolution.

- Review Payroll EPA to determine if expenses are allowable within project term, available budget, NIH salary cap, NSF two-month rule, administrative or clerical justification.
- Assist in encumbering projected salary and fringe on research projects.
- Post rejected salary to correct projects.
- Review and process payroll transfer requests.
- Assist PIs and departmental bookkeepers with salary projections, multiple effort splits between accounts, EPA form completion, calculating corrections, posting after-the-fact expenditures based on time card distributions.

g. Sub-Award Management

- Sub-Award is reviewed for project term, deliverables, and required protocols.
- Review Federal Audit Clearinghouse for the current year fiscal audit
- Review the excluded parties list and Visual Compliance
- When Sub-Award is fully executed complete entry in Sub-Award database setting due dates for deliverables, invoices, protocol renewals, and current audit reports.
- Report per FFATA guidelines
- Follow up monthly on delinquent billings, audit reports, and technical reports. Confer with PI as needed.

h. Accounts Receivable and Cost Sharing Monitoring

- Process invoices automatically generated by the appropriate accounting system.
- Prepare customized invoices based on sponsor forms.
- Post invoices to the appropriate accounting system and review invoices automatically posted to the appropriate accounting system.
- Reconcile every active account monthly for revenue and expenditures, and unbilled receivables.
- Prepare and reconcile Letter of Credit requests weekly or as needed.
- Prepare cash on hand spreadsheets on federal funds quarterly for interest remission to the government.

- Prepare financial reports and submit to sponsors.
- Submit billings and financial reports using sponsor-automated systems.
- Coordinate with PIs when technical reports are required to be submitted with invoices and financial reports.
- Treasury monitors collections and when needed, is Accounts Receivable and the Project Administrators assist.
- Awards with cost sharing commitments are entered into a database and tracked and reported by Accounts Receivable personnel.
- The total committed cost share amount is entered into the appropriate accounting system.
- A notice is sent to the Departmental bookkeeper requesting cost sharing documentation (EPA, copies of vouchers, etc.)
- Upon receipt of cost sharing documentation, the amount of cost share performed is entered into the appropriate accounting system, and updates the database.
- Cost sharing is reported as required by the sponsor, and follow up is done to ensure all cost sharing is received within the project term.

i. Project Coding

- Reviews award documents to determine ownership (sponsor or institution) of project-acquired equipment.
- Reviews award notices to determine equipment-reporting requirements for each project.
- Submits periodic, annual, and/or final property reports to sponsor as required.
- Petitions sponsor for transfer of sponsor owned equipment during contract close-out to another existing contract.
- Records capital equipment project purchases into the appropriate accounting system Fixed Assets.
- Places inventory tag on equipment and records item specific data such as serial number and location.
- Transfers cost shared equipment to system member as required.
- Provides PI annual inventory listing and updates database based upon PI's input.

- Accepts transfer of research equipment for new PIs from their previous institution
- Transfers obsolete or excess equipment to University Surplus.
- Obtains Federal Excess Property or Federal Surplus Property from General Services Administration for use on federal contracts and grants.

j. Project Close-Out

- Notices are sent to PIs 90, 60, and 30 days prior to the end of award to alert them their project is ending.
- No-cost extension requests are submitted to the sponsors, when needed.
- Project Administrators confer with PI on deliverables due, outstanding commitments, and unexpended balances.
- Notifications of closing projects are sent to University Computer and Information Services (to cancel accounts) and Purchasing Services (to cancel credit cards)
- Close-out sheet is routed electronically through:
 - Project Payroll – reviewed for pending projected credits and/or retroactive charges, all payroll approvals received, all Time and Effort certifications completed.
 - Fiscal Operations – Indirect cost audit is completed
 - Accounts Receivable – Sponsor has been final billed, cost sharing completed, closing documents completed, closing adjustment to reduce the budget by the unexpended balance is prepared, and final financial reports are completed.
 - Property – Final equipment report reviewed.
 - Fiscal Operations – All payments received from sponsor.
 - Project Administrator – All technical reports and invention reports received.
 - Post Award – Award files pulled and moved to closed files.

k. Project Statements and Reports

- Prepare a monthly report that documents all proposal activity

- Monthly Payroll Certification reports and account statements are available on-line through the ECPS system. Notices of availability are sent monthly.
- Ad-hoc reports for cost sharing, payroll, projections and expenditures history are prepared upon request.

IV. Other Services

a. Support Prairie View Office of Sponsored Programs

- Provide pre and post award services similar to the services described above.
- Financial Aid Account Administration
 - Establish accounts and set up budgets in the appropriate accounting system.
 - Prepare draw down documents for expenditures
 - Limited reconciliation of federal and state funded Financial Aid Accounts
 - Closing DBR budget entries when award ended and account is fully reconciled

b. Insurance Coverage

- Provide insurance for research projects when required by the sponsor as a Contractual requirement of the research project.

APPENDIX 4: Current Practices and Best Practices Feedback

Current Practices

Activity	Texas A&M University	AgriLife	TEES	Research Foundation & TAMHSC	TTI
Purchasing < \$5,000	Texas A&M University departments have delegated authority to make purchases of equipment, supplies, and services up to \$5,000.00. May use payment cards. HUB vendors encouraged.	Pro Card-does not require a PO; HUB vendors encouraged	Purchase Card available but not required – does not require a purchase requisition; HUB vendors encouraged	Multiple purchase methods available: Pro-Card and other credit cards available to projects. Projects may purchase using RF credit accounts with vendors. Prepayment by check if required by vendor; Small, disadvantaged and HUB vendors encouraged but not required	TTI departments have delegated authority to make purchases of equipment, supplies, and services of \$5,000 or less. Use of HUB vendors encouraged and facilitated through use of State contracts and University/ System-wide blanket-pricing contracts. TTI payment card program implementation in progress.
Purchasing > \$5,000	Requisitions, bids and purchase orders processed through Purchasing Services usually required. State of Texas has awarded contracts that are available for use by TAMU, and departments are highly encouraged to review and utilize the state contracts whenever possible. Purchasing Services administers University and system-wide blanket-pricing contracts. Departments encouraged to purchase equipment supplies and services from Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs).	Purchase handled by agency; Minimum Bids; Hub Vendors	Purchase requisition entered into EPIK and processed by TEES Procurement Office; Competitive bids; HUB vendors encouraged	Expedited purchase order processing available; Expedited RFQ, RFP and RFI processing available; Solicit 3 or more bids, accept as few as 2; In house access to legal and contract related advice; can use state purchasing contracts or other negotiated vendor contracts in order to obtain best pricing; Performance based vendor payment schedule available; Small, disadvantaged and HUB vendors encouraged but not required	TTI departments submit paper requisition to TTI Business Office. Requisition is verified to sponsored research budget. Business Office staff enters purchase requisition to FAMIS Purchasing Module. TAMU Purchasing Services performs bid and purchase order processes for TTI. TAMU Purchasing Services uses State contracts and University/ System-wide blanket-pricing contracts whenever possible. For TxDOT projects, TxDOT must approve requisitions prior to awarding the purchase order.
Travel-Domestic	Per Diem not allowed. Allow reimbursement actual costs for travel on G&C funds. Hotel receipts, no receipts for meals unless a single meal is >0= to \$75.00. Travel advances are available to TAMU employees who are traveling on university business. All employees are eligible for an Individual Corporate Card. Also, Departmental Travel Cards may be used to pay for airfare, hotel, car rental, parking, restaurants and other incidental expenses. EXCEPTION: Travel reimbursement rates for State funded grants and contracts, such as ARP grants from THECB, must comply with State of Texas reimbursement rates.		Actual lodging cost at a single room rate-receipts required; Actual cost of meals up to a max flat rate based on GSA regulations; Per Diem not allowed; If CLIBA and IBA cards used-receipts required; Travel requisition ties together all travel expenditures for a given trip; Use TEES travel voucher	Lodging and meals can be reimbursed by two different methods: 1. Actual lodging with receipts, meals with receipts or with no receipts based on the federal allowance for the location, 2. Per Diem based on location for lodging and meals, not receipts required; travel guidelines primarily based on federal more flexible than state guidelines; Travel reimbursement paid within 7-10 working days	Travel and Advance Request required. Out-of-state travel and registration fees on TxDOT projects must be approved in advance by TxDOT. Per diem not allowed. Actual meals and lodging (single room rate) based on General Services Administration's (GSA) federal travel rates. Due to TxDOT contract requirements, maximum meal allowances for breakfast, lunch and dinner for in-state travel for departure and return days have been established. These meal allowances are based on the departure and return times and the duty point. Some TxDOT projects require meal receipts to be submitted with Travel Vouchers and kept on file in the Business Office for inspection during reviews. Hotel, car rental, and airfare receipts required. Flight itinerary required. Receipts for fuel purchased with personal funds required when using rental or agency vehicles. Use modified electronic State of Texas Travel Voucher form.

Current Practices (Continued)

Texas A&M University		AgrLife		TEES		Research Foundation & TAMHSC		TTI	
Activity	Texas A&M University	AgrLife	TEES	Research Foundation & TAMHSC	TTI				
Travel-International	Per Diem not allowed. Allow reimbursement actual costs for travel on G&C funds. Hotel receipts, no receipts for meals unless a single meal is >0.75 to \$75.00. Travel advances are available to TAMU employees. All employees are eligible for an Individual Corporate Card. Also, Departmental Travel Cards may be used to pay for airfare, hotel, car rental, parking, restaurants and other incidental expenses.		Day to day itinerary required; lodging for actual cost at single room rate; actual cost of meal-receipts required for single meal \$75 or more only, use TEES travel voucher	Lodging and meals can be reimbursed by two different methods: 1. Actual lodging with receipts, meals with receipts or with no receipts based on the federal allowance for the location, 2. Per Diem based on location for lodging and meals, not receipts require; travel primarily based on federal travel regulations which are generally more flexible than state guidelines; Travel reimbursement paid within 7-10 days	Travel and Advance Request form. Request for Foreign Travel form, written justification/explanation, and a full day-to-day itinerary for travel required. Per diem not allowed. Actual meals and lodging. Hotel, car rental, and airfare receipts required. Flight itinerary required. Receipts for fuel purchased with personal funds required when using rental vehicles. Use modified State of Texas Travel Voucher form.				
Airfare	May charge to CBA (Departmental Travel Card). Receipt is required. Travelers should comparison shop for the airfare itinerary that most efficiently (time and cost) serves their travel needs. Flexibility in arrival or departure times will impact the ability to price the lowest cost available fares. *If using state funds must document the exception if not using contract vendor.		Use CLIBA, IBA, or personal card	Including rental vehicle and Lodging: may be purchased from any source; Can be charged to personal credit card; can be direct billed to RF	Contract or non-contract airfares may be used. May charge airfare to TTI's Central Bill Account (Travel and Advance Request form and airfare receipt is required), traveler's corporate travel card, or a personal credit card if card provides more than \$500,000 in accident insurance (proof of insurance required).				
Travel Advances				Issued in 4 working days or less; assists with costs in incurred prior to trip, i.e., airfare, registration	Advances issued for overnight travel only. Requests due in TTI Business Office 5 working days prior to trip for approvals and processing. Advances released no earlier than 3 working days prior to trip. Rush advances may be requested by traveler with little notice due to nature of research program (Ex: weather-dependent research). Pre-advances may be issued earlier for airfare with proof of payment. Traveler may have only one outstanding advance at any given time with the exception of pre-advances. To clear advance, traveler must submit Travel Voucher with any repayment to Business Office within 30 days of completion of travel.				
International Agreements	Governing law can be an issue. May require additional time to process but we have been successful in resolving contractual issues with a variety of solutions	Governing law can be an issue	TEES can agree to the laws of another country or state	Including other states: Able to accept the law of any state or country; able to accept court venue for resolution of disputes in any state or country	Governing law can be an issue. Most international agreements are administered through the RF.				
GSA Schedule	Not aware of Texas A&M offering any services on the GSA schedule.	Federal clauses are problematic for educational institutions	Working to obtain a GSA Schedule	Experience managing contracts with FAR clauses	RF has been working on establishing a GSA schedule for several agencies.				

Current Practices (Continued)

Texas A&M University		Agrilife		TEES		Research Foundation & TAMHSC		TTI	
Consulting Groups	No specific issues with finalizing consulting agreements.	Onerous reporting requirements if lobbying is included		Streamlined review and approval					N/A
Non-Profit Status	University/TAMUS is a governmental instrumentality or political subdivision of a state and not subject to federal income tax.	Not easily recognized since not a 501 (c)(3)	Instrumentality of a political subdivision for the state of Texas, exempt under Sections 115(a) and 170(b) of the Internal Revenue Code	501 (c) (3) status					TTI/TAMUS is a governmental instrumentality or political subdivision of a state and not subject to federal income tax.
Tuition	Charge directly to TAMU sponsored project account by Student Business Services. Comment on Screen 008 in FAMIS is tuition is allowed.	Process payment to TAMU	Tuition posted into ONPAR which will post to TAMU clearing account by then credit clearing account by invoicing TEES for payment	Process tuition reimbursement to TAMU departments which utilize iPayment; Process tuition payments for other TAMUS members as requested					Tuition is posted in ONPAR to a TAMU account then reimbursed by TTI.
Account Balances	Encumbrances tracked against account balance for accurate total. However, payroll will post regardless of whether account available amount is exceeded.	Encumbrances tracked against account balance for accurate total	Encumbrances tracked against account balance for accurate total.	Project expenses are recorded based on specific processing standards to ensure balances are current and reliable; Projects never allowed to overspend (including payroll expenses); Assistance provided to PI and departmental staff with developing budget projections					Accounts are monitored daily for balances using FAMIS reports and reports developed in the Data Warehouse. Some TxDOT projects are allowed to overspend by a certain threshold as long as the overall TxDOT cooperative agreement has available funds. Payroll is not encumbered.
Payroll	Employee payroll processed in department and through university HR and Payroll.	Employee payroll processed at unit and through agency HR	Payroll process at department through TEES HR and Payroll Offices	Project payroll initiated at department; RF reviews payroll expenses for compliance; costs dispersed to applicable RF account; Transfer between RF administered accounts do not require departmental EPA processing					Payroll is submitted to Engineering Payroll at the GL level. Distribution to the individual projects is done internally through screens in FAMIS. Corrections that occur within the same GL are done internally and are not sent back through BPP. Payroll is not encumbered.
Contractual				Able to accept contractual clauses such as: identification or warranty and non-standard default clauses including excess procurement; Exempt from impending 3% withholding requirement from vendor payments for property or services					
Account Set Up				Award set ups usually completed within 2 weeks; PI and staff orientations on sponsor guidelines and RF procedures					
Account Close Out				PI notified 90, 60, and 30 days out concerning remaining balances					
Project cost Pre-audit				Review of all project expenses for allow ability and compliance before posting					
Disbursements				Upon PI's approval of expense: Immediate need checks available in less than 1 hour; Rush checks, Foreign drafts, and ACH payments available within 24 hours; Same day wire transfers available					

Current Practices (Continued)

Activity	Texas A&M University	AgriLife	TEES	Research Foundation & TAMHSC	TTI
Accounts Receivable				Full A/R project support including financial reporting and collections	
Cost Sharing				Regularly tracked and monitored	
Project Insurance				Procures a scientific equipment policy automatically covering against loss or damage to RF owned equipment and all sponsor owned equipment; Procures coverages including professional and commercial liability and various types and limits required by sponsors; Negotiate with sponsors to eliminate unnecessary requirements having to do with insurance coverages and/or limits	
Project Equipment				Project acquired equipment tracked at account level; Special sponsor capitalization levels tracked; Transfer of project acquired equipment with PIs to other institutions upon department and college approval	
Performance Measurements				Performance against best practices monitored monthly, PIs surveyed during project close out	

Best Practices Feedback

COMMUNICATION

- Single point of contact
- Quick turnaround/timely responses
- Informed submission guideline/rules
- Proactive monitoring/communication
- Knowledgeable administrative staff-specific to college/department/grant admin.
- Direct contact with PIs like RF

ACCOUNTING

- Fiscal statement – broken down to match categories notated in grant
- Payroll encumbrances broken down by employee not one lump sum encumbrances
- Credit cards – each grant has its own; no reallocation
- Pre-approve expense; research staff should approve grant expenditures
- Base indirect costs on a percentage of actual direct generated. Specifically, grants on which University faculty are PIs that include subcontracts with other universities use the University direct costs to generate indirect.
- Simple process of invoice payments, purchase orders. No entry required in any payment system by department personnel
- All aspects of monitoring & maintenance of individual grant accounts for PIs – provide timely alerts
- Payroll to/from contracts/grants use AgriLife, Texas A&M University, or TEES (not RF)
- Monitor spending, accounting applications must be user-friendly

WEBSITE

- Detailed/accurate guidelines on website for pre- and post-awards

OTHER

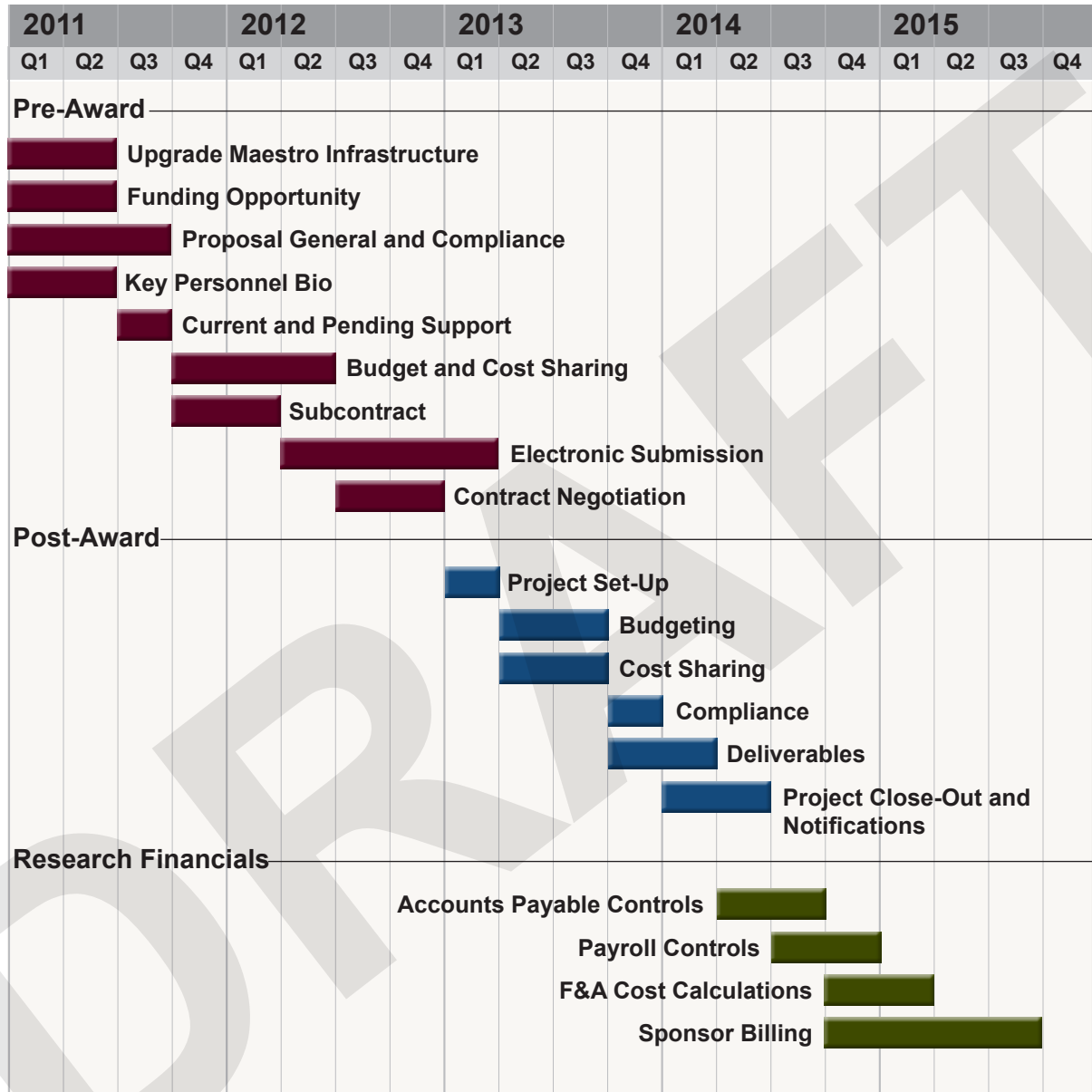
- Allow human subjects to receive monetary compensation as practiced in Research Services
- Research Foundation is very customer friendly and will take care of PIs research grants without overburdening departments. The RF has many qualified personnel that handle the various post-award tasks with great expertise and efficiency. PIs and departments can rely on their wealth of knowledge and are not required to monitor each grant account on a daily basis themselves.

AWARDS

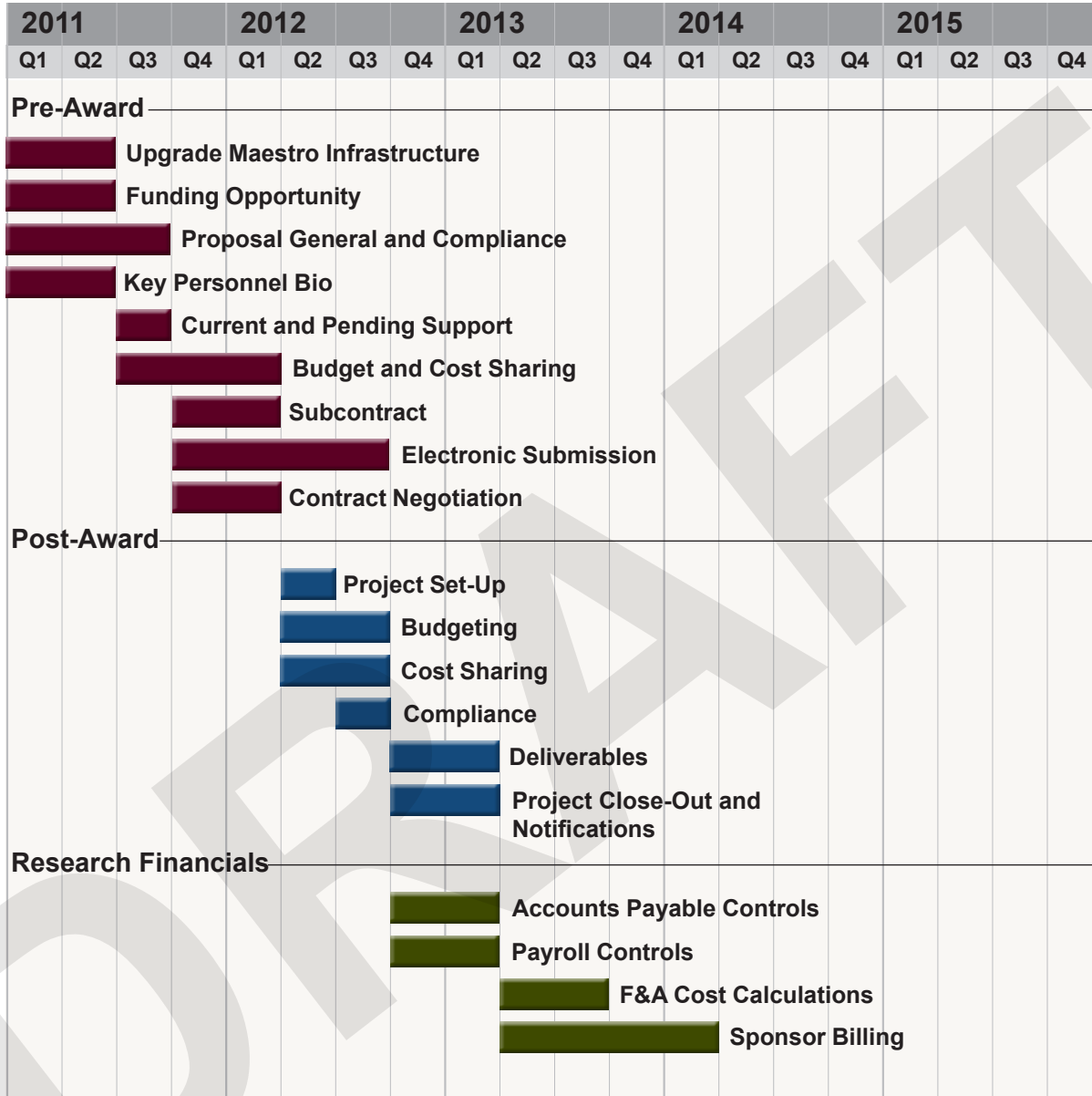
- Adhere to the concept of following the rules on post-award that is consistent with the granting agency that awards the funds – anything less would impede the ability of researchers to carry out the research which is funded by their grants.
 - Follow federal rules for federal grants (which allow per diem reimbursements for travelers and conference participants)
 - Follow state rules for state grants (which are much more restrictive than federal grants)

APPENDIX 5: Current and Alternate Accelerated Maestro Timelines

Current Maestro Timeline



Alternate Accelerated Maestro Timeline



APPENDIX 6: RASS DISC System University Campus Issues Working Group

This Working Group recognizes benefits and cost-savings will accrue from the shared services implementation plan, which has the potential for positively impacting Texas A&M System universities involved in Phase II (i.e., those other than Texas A&M University). For example, sharing best practices, cross training, and transitioning to Maestro will improve efficiencies on all A&M System campuses. System members, however, caution that a positive outcome will necessitate that each university be seen as a distinct entity both in terms of its stage of research development and its research administration needs. Implementation and governance of a shared services model (OSRS) must, therefore, be designed so that these universities can be treated separately. For this to happen, the OSRS must be sufficiently robust and flexible enough to be able to take differences among institutions into account, and to be able to adjust services as these universities reach more mature stages of research.

With respect to governance, these campuses are concerned about having adequate representation on councils and committees. As was stated above, these campuses cannot be considered as one unit. The governance structure that is agreed to by the RASS DISC must allow for comprehensive representation without burdening committees with too many participants. We do favor having each university represented on the main oversight committee as opposed to using a collective subcommittee model. A solution is to build flexibility in the governance structure, which would allow for changes after Phase II implementation when we will have a better idea of our needs. It is also critically important that these campuses contribute to governance not only through their CEOs and CROs, but also through their faculty. Each of these groups will bring different sets of concerns, expertise, and understanding of the issues. All need to be included to ensure full involvement and transparency.

A key concern of our CEOs is to be able to manage the cost of research administration and to have a modicum of control over those costs so that priorities can be set and strategic plans implemented. CEOs, therefore, must have input into how the cost of OSRS services is determined and assessed. First, many of us have a different complement of funding sources than, for example, Texas A&M University, TEES, and AgriLife Research. A cost structure that is favorable to one complement of grant funding (e.g., TEES) may not be favorable to another (e.g., a college of education). Second, most campuses support grants and contracts that are not research and will not be managed by OSRS. This means that even if OSRS handles all research grants and contracts for our universities, they will require having some, yet undetermined, level of administrative support to manage non-research contracts. Thus, the ultimate cost of contract and grants administration will be greater than the cost of OSRS

services. How these are integrated and managed is a key concern for both CEOs and CROs.

The distance between our campuses and the physical location of the OSRS will undoubtedly create some difficulties. While some of the campuses are now receiving both pre-award and post-award services from RF, TEES, and/or AgriLife from afar, experience suggests high quality service and administration requires staff presence on campus. Our faculty, and this is specially the case for institutions that are transitioning to a larger research role, are not as comfortable and experienced with research administration as those faculty from entities involved in Phase I. They benefit greatly from having “boots on the ground.” Oftentimes, and in spite of the best intentions, last minute issues arise that require service above and beyond the call of duty in order to meet deadlines. There is great concern among our members that without strong personal relationships and loyalties, which are critical to the day-to-day accomplishment of research goals, we will encounter difficulties meeting deadlines, particularly as we grow. Finally, research administrators work hand-in-hand with staff in the finance office, purchasing, HR, colleges, departments, centers, and institutes, etc. These relationships are important avenues for sharing information and best practices, and may be weakened by physical separation.

The timeline for full integration needs to be preceded by implementation of the OSRS infrastructure in Brazos County, and the integration of Maestro on our campuses. We are pleased that our integration will follow the initial implementation of OSRS. We caution, however, to not move too quickly, or to charge the implementation committee with setting up the same timeline for all campuses. Also, it is clear that the success of OSRS is tied to the completion and implementation of Maestro. We consider it critically important that migration of Maestro take place on our campuses before considerable transition to use of OSRS services takes place.

Finally, we will be looking quite closely and with some level of trepidation at how, if at all, this new research administration model will impact the negotiated F&A rate on our campuses.