

UAS Match Questions Answered

1. Why does the University only approve mandatory Match (Cost Share) and limit Match (Cost Share) only to the minimum amount required by the sponsor?

Federal Uniform Guidance states that “under Federal research proposals, voluntary committee cost sharing is not expected. It cannot be used as a factor during the merit review of applications or proposals, but may be considered if it is both in accordance with Federal awarding agency regulations and specified in a notice of funding opportunity” (Subpart D, 200.306).

Therefore, UAS only authorizes Match (Cost Share) only to the extent necessary to meet the sponsor’s specific requirement. The University’s financial resources are limited, so it is essential that the use of cost sharing does not overburden departmental resources. The University also strives to protect the integrity of the process by which it is reimbursed for indirect costs and maximize the amount of indirect cost recovery (F&A). Excessive or unnecessary cost sharing has the effect of reducing the indirect cost rate since voluntary committed cost sharing must be included in the research base. [F&A Rate =Indirect Costs/Direct Costs]

2. But more Match (Cost Share) demonstrates the University’s commitment to a sponsor, and the sponsor may then be more likely to fund the project in some cases.

As noted above, match can no longer be used as a factor in merit of a proposal to a Federal agency.

Sometimes a non-Federal sponsor does not explicitly identify the terms of Match (Cost Share), but indicates that increased Match (Cost Share) will enhance a proposal's competitiveness in the sponsors’ review process. Contact the Grant administrator for additional clarification. In such cases the Director will determine the appropriateness of Match (Cost Share) commitments before the proposal is submitted to the sponsor.

3. Can a third party contribute more than the amount mandated by a sponsor to a project? What happens if a third party commits to cost sharing on a project and then fails to provide the support?

Yes, third party organizations can contribute more than the amount mandated by a sponsor. Keep in mind that if the third party is unable to meet its obligation, the bottom line value declared in the terms of the award will still have to be met by the department responsible for the award.

4. Can third parties be audited?

Yes, third parties must be able to certify their cost sharing commitments to an outside auditor.

5. What’s unacceptable to use as Match (Cost Share)?

Equipment already owned by UA; existing UA space; clerical and administrative support salaries, and any costs normally classified as indirect.

6. Why are the items in the list above unacceptable as Match (Cost Share) contributions?

These items are already included in the University’s indirect cost rate calculation (use allowance, interest, and depreciation).

7. Can I use a student’s fellowship or scholarship as Match (Cost Share)?

No. The intent of a fellowship or scholarship is to provide support to a student while pursuing academic endeavors and not to fulfill the obligations of a sponsored program. Fellowships and scholarships are not compensation to the student for conducting activities necessary to a sponsored program. As such, fellowships and scholarships are not appropriate Match (Cost Share) contributions.

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8. A PI is involved in related work that will enhance the proposed project and has access to valuable resources that will contribute the project's overall success. How does the PI relate this information to a sponsor?

These resources or contributions should be addressed in the proposal narrative. **Do not describe additional resources or contributions in monetary terms.** Resources quantified (dollars, hours, etc.) in the budget or budget justification may be misconstrued by the sponsor or auditors as Match (Cost Share) commitment even if Match (Cost Share) is unsolicited by the sponsor. If the resources are misconstrued as Match (Cost Share), the University will be obligated to track and report the resources as Match (Cost Share) contributions in accordance with federal regulations. The Match (Cost Share) must meet all the requirements of the Uniform Guidance, especially 200.306. If these requirements are not met, funding received from the sponsor may have to be repaid.

9. What if I am requesting cost sharing support from third party organizations, but the third party organizations have not confirmed that they will provide support for my project at the time the proposal is submitted to the sponsor?

Match (Cost Share) contributions should be confirmed when the proposal is submitted to the sponsor. If the third party organizations do not contribute to the project, the bottom line value declared in the terms of the award will still have to be met by the department responsible for the award.

10. Can I use unrecovered indirect costs as Match (Cost Share)

Yes, if permissible by the sponsor. The restriction on applying unrecovered indirect costs as cost sharing comes from Subpart D, 200.306 (c): "Unrecovered indirect costs, including indirect costs on cost sharing or matching may be included as part of cost sharing or matching only with the prior approval of the Federal awarding agency." The University strives to protect the integrity of the process by which it is reimbursed for indirect costs. The University will not waive or reduce indirect costs unless a sponsor has established policies regarding indirect cost reimbursement.

11. Can I use my office space as Match (Cost Share)

No, office space is considered existing UA space. Use allowance, interest, and depreciation for UA space are accounted for in the University's federally negotiated F&A rate.

12. Can I use funds from another federally assisted project?

No, according to 200.306 (b)(2), cost sharing for a federally supported project must not be included as contributions for any other Federal award.

13. Can I include funds from a federally supported project as Match (Cost Share) when applying for funds from a non-federal source?

There are several points to consider... The PI must tell the federal sponsor that they intend to do so, and the federal sponsor may or may not approve... Are there equipment and intellectual property rights at issue with the federal project? Does the non-federal sponsor want the information generated from the project to be proprietary? In this situation, it would be advisable for the PI to use the federal support to "leverage" funds from a non-federal source, rather than pledge the federal support as MATCH (COST SHARE). The support from the federal project may be described in non-monetary terms in the proposal narrative.

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14. What does the Uniform Guidance say about Match (Cost Share) requirements on sponsored projects?

Federal Uniform Guidance states that “under Federal research proposals, voluntary committee cost sharing is not expected. It cannot be used as a factor during the merit review of applications or proposals, but may be considered if it is both in accordance with Federal awarding agency regulations and specified in a notice of funding opportunity” (Subpart D, 200.306).

The University is required to handle all cost sharing consistently and in accordance with 200.306, which states that: "For all Federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the non-Federal entity's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all the following criteria: (1) Are verifiable from the non-Federal entity's records; (2) Are not included as contributions for any other Federal award; (3) Are necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of project or program objectives; (4) Are allowable under Subpart E—Cost Principles of this part; (5) Are not paid by the Federal government under another Federal award, except where the Federal statute authorizing a program specifically provides that Federal funds made available for such program can be applied to matching or cost sharing requirements of other Federal programs; (6) Are provided for in the approved budget when required by the Federal awarding agency; and(7) Conform to other provisions of this part, as applicable."

In short, cost sharing commitments offered by the University in support of a sponsored project must be treated in the same manner as are the direct costs charged to the project.

15. How does the University track Match (Cost Share) commitments?

To meet the reporting and auditing requirements of the sponsoring agencies, cost sharing commitments must be charged to a separate match account related to a specified sponsored project (Fund 14XXXX). Cost sharing commitments for faculty and staff salaries, benefits, materials and supplies, and other project costs should be recorded in a match account.